

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Globalization in Africa and Beyond: The Quest for Global Ethics

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ABSTRACT

One of the most popular concepts in recent times is globalization. Globalization is a complex and multifaceted concept that has generated controversy from its meaning, its tenets, and its future as well as whether it is serving the interest of all or it is benefiting just a few countries or individuals in the world. Throughout the process of human development, philosophers have constantly worked to clarify the meaning of right and wrong, justice and injustice, of fairness and basic human rights. These had won philosophical concepts that can be very useful in reasoning about globalization in praxis to Africa values. Globalization has also produced benefits and harms. Globalization is a process integrating not just the economy but, culture, technology, and governance. This paper examines some of the ethical problems of globalization in this 21st century.

Keywords: Globalization, africa, ethical problems, global ethics.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the process of human development, philosophers have constantly worked to clarify the meaning of right and wrong, justice and injustice, of fairness and basic human rights. These had won philosophical concepts that can be very useful in reasoning about ethics. Ethics is the branch of philosophy that studies the actions of the human person relative to right and wrong (Echekwube, 2005). Ethics refers to a set of standards used to judge the rightness or wrongness of a person's relations to others in terms of truth and justice. It is a guiding principle that helps us decide between what is right and what is wrong. The field of ethics covers moral judgments and voluntary actions as to what is right and what is wrong. Ethical behavior means that the individual behaves in the right way which will be accepted by the whole society. Ethical Decision-Making Factors are standards, rules of conduct, perceptions and moral judgments regarding what is right or wrong (Öznur & Guven, 2012). Ethical standards and morality are concerned with rules of conduct that are thought to be essential for the preservation of organized life and society.

Omeregbe (1993) asserted that an immoral society is a sick society permeated by dishonesty, fraud, selfishness, injustice, corruption, embezzlement of public funds and other immoral acts. Trust among peoples, actions that do not harm others and behaviour that respects

the legitimate rights of others are the essential core of organized society. If these standards of behaviour threaten society by making life unpleasant or "inhuman" or even making life unbearable to others then something must be done and the earlier the better for the society in question.

Globalization is a form of human social cooperation with both good and bad aspects. The process of globalization is not restricted to the economic sphere alone. It also has social, political, environmental, cultural, religious dimensions, among others. Globalization is a process integrating not just the economy but, culture, technology, and governance (Robert, 2010). The purpose of this paper is to determine the ethical role of globalism in this 21st century. The question is on how to implement it ethically.

CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION

The literature stemming from the debate on globalization has grown in the last decade beyond any individual's capability of extracting a workable definition of the concept. In a sense, the meaning of the concept is self-evident, in another, it is vague and obscure as its reaches are wide and constantly shifting. According to Friedman (1999), globalization is the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies to a degree never witnessed before - in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than before, the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world. Robert (2010) described Globalization as the coalescence of the economies and cultures of this planet. Globalization refers also to the processes of change which underpin a transformation in the organization of human affairs by linking together and expanding human activity across regions and continents.

Globalization has been used rather loosely to stand for a variety of things: the shrinking of the world into a global village, the awesome changes brought about or mandated by the revolution in information technology, the collapse of boundaries between different worlds, expanding the connectivity of all forms of interaction. Globalization facilitates the removal of barriers among nations of the world, thereby giving social relations unhindered access (Ogar & Ogar, 2018; Okeke and Akpan 2012; Akpan 2017). The unique characteristics of globalization often include increased capital mobility, a decline in costs of transportation, computing, and communications. Other goals of globalization from the economic perspective include (a) internationalization of production accompanied by changes in the structure of production, (b) expansion of international trade and services, and (c) widening and deepening of international capital flows. All these imply a more connected world.

CONCEPT OF GLOBAL ETHICS

Global ethics is a new term that has emerged over the decades. It seeks to find a solution to contemporary ethical issues. Global ethics is a critical inquiry into the nature and justification of values and norms that are global (Ogar et al, 2016). Iroegbu (2005) said that global ethics is the theory and practice that uphold the universality of moral acts. Hans Kung (2005) defined global ethics as the necessary minimum of common values, standards, and basic attitudes. Öznur & Guven (2012) described Global ethics to have emerged from an agreement among societies,

corporations, and other organizations regarding the appropriate ethical frameworks and behaviors in a given situation. It is also assumed that global business ethics take into account moral attitudes and moral reasoning. It covers basic human interactions; respect of different, trust with counterparts and uprightness.

SOME ETHICAL PROBLEMS IN GLOBALIZATION

Ethical problems are human-related and arise only when an individual interacts with other people. Ethical conflicts then occur when people perceive that their duties toward one group are inconsistent with their duties and responsibilities toward some other group including oneself. Thus, ethical conflicts occur to balance the inconsistencies between various parties such as self, organization, customer, vendor, competitor etc. It is observed that the difficult problems in business ethics occur when it is necessary to find a balance between profits and the broader social good. Ethical problems in regard to individual, institutional or social ethics are abundant. We shall list and discuss only nine of them in this write-up. They are;

1. Pollution
2. Desertification
3. Depletion of ozone layer
4. Encapsulation of humankind into machine
5. Production of weapons of mass destruction
6. Genetic engineering
7. Abortion
8. False advertisement of goods, services or information
9. Production and sale of harmful products

Pollution

Globalization has brought about various forms of environmental pollution in the Africa continent and beyond. Environmental pollution has been described as the contamination of the environment by biological, chemical, and or physical agents that are harmful to human, animal or plant, life, and the general environment, and may arise through the natural events, industrial and human activities or the interaction of all (Otukong, 2002). The Pollution of the Africa continent has attributed to the increase in industries, burning of fossil fuels to run the industries, machines and for the transport of both raw and finished products to different places. Iroegbu (2005) said the unrestrained and uncontrolled exhumation of industrial waste has made clean air a very rare commodity in industrialized countries. Cancer and other diseases in consequence multiply in geometric progression (Ogar, 2010). Chernobyl people and children of USSR and other areas are still heavily suffering that largest nuclear pollution in history that took place on April 26, 1986. The Soviet nuclear accident emitted up over 8 tons of highly radioactive material into the Soviet air. The impact of the exploratory and extractive activities of global forces - Shell whose operation in Nigeria alone accounts for 14 % of its total global operations, Mobil Agip, Chevron, Texaco, Total, etc. have basically affected the social organization of the Ogoni people and the Niger Delta in general (Kelbessa, 2007).

Desertification

Desertification is the persistent degradation of dry-land and ecosystems by variations in climate and human activities. In Africa countries, desertification is caused by a combination of factors that change over time and vary by location. These include indirect factors such as population pressure, socioeconomic and policy factors and international trade as well as direct factors such as land use patterns and practices and climate-related processes. Desertification affects a wide range of services provided by ecosystems to human products such as food and water, natural processes such as climate regulation, but also non-material services such as soil conservation. Iroegbu (2005) said that desertification is the direct consequence of the unbridled exploration of the world's forest by human greed and quest for so-called development progress. And the consequences are immediate: more heat and sun rays, and more dry land. Desertification affects the livelihoods of millions of Africans, as it occurs to all continents. The overuse of natural resources due to increased demand and also the removal of ecosystems due to population growth has had a large negative impact on the Africa environment and beyond. Extensive deforestation has occurred world-wide with the logging industry being fuelled by the need for disposable products.

The Ozone layer depletion

The ozone layer depletion entails the wearing out of the amount of ozone in the atmosphere (Iroegbu, 2005). The Ozone absorbs solar ultraviolet radiation that makes it impossible in it for proto-chemical production. This in turn effectively blocks almost all destructive solar radiation that can descent and heats up the earth's surface and thereby burn to ashes its inhabitants. The Ozone layer protects the earth's crusts and feeds back the vegetation and atmospheric contents that make life, not only possible but also favorable. The ozone layer depletion in Africa is caused as a result of the emission of chlorofluorocarbons, methyl bromide, halons, methyl chloroform by manufacturing industries and their products. Other chemicals that naturally destroy Ozone are Noy, Hox, Cix, which belong to Nitrogen, Hydrogen and Chlorine families. The consequences of the persistent over-exploitation, over industrialization, and manipulation on nature and the brute contents of the cosmos is the rapid termination of lives in Africa which is gearing to the destruction of the earth's planet.

Production of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Wars in Africa countries and beyond have been made so nasty and gruesome by high technology that deterrence must now assume the upper hand. The entire world can be destroyed 10 times over in any contemporary warfare among the superpowers. This is the expertise of modern military technology. Military technology is a formidable zone. The persistent bombing in the Northeastern states of Nigeria and beyond by Islamic terrorists have destroyed millions of lives and properties. The atomic bomb of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are only an introduction to what the perfected Hydrogen bombs, guided missiles, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction can do today. On land, sea, and air, from home and on the battlefield, new technologies of speedy defeat at a minimal loss are the fortunes of the superpowers of today (Leonard, 2018).

Genetic Engineering

This is the technological programme of experimenting with the genes and other elements that make the human being. This has various motivations: to cure or improve their quality, to prevent their contaminations with diseases and more recently to manufacture babies for those in need but who are unable to have them through the natural process. Reproductive technology consists of In Vitro Fertilization, artificial insemination/surrogate motherhood, transfer and/or freezing of embryos, cloning, and stem cells. In Vitro Fertilization takes place when an egg from a woman is fertilized by sperm from a man in an artificial womb in the laboratory. Sperm and ovum banks now exist to ensure constant supplies. Artificial Insemination takes place when the fertilized fetus is transferred to any woman: the original owner of the egg if at her demand, to a woman for her close agreement. Transfer and / or freezing of embryos now permit people to decide on which type of baby, when and how to have such babies and meanwhile allow technicians to experiment. Cloning is the reproduction of the same examples of the embryo such that one copy has the same biological constitution like the others. This portends to bring in a revolution in medical science as one could replace not only parts but even whole organisms and entire beings with their clones. Stem Cells research is the rediscovery of the root cells that constitute the human body or the bodies of other organisms. Stem cells enable medical experts to replace sick or injured cells in a sort of spare parts shop of the human body. It will ensure the maintenance of the being continued long existence (Iroegbu, 2005). Despite the enormous contribution of genetic engineering in remedying human predicaments many Africa ethicists, religious people and otherwise still condemn the wanton destruction of life via laboratory experimentation as immoral, unjust as well as aggression, even murder against the unborn.

Abortion

Abortion is the forceful termination of pregnancy deliberately. Abortion According to Peschke, (1978) abortion is the removal of the non-viable human being from the mother's womb by human intervention, whether by killing the child before removal from the womb or whether by exposing the child to a certain death outside the womb. Abortion is the killing of innocent life because human life begins at conception. Killing a human being is wrong. The fetus is an innocent human being who has a unique genetic code as a unique individual. Abortion has been legalized in some countries of the world. The Nigerian government has attempted to legalize it right from the 1991 Babangida government regime but has not succeeded even though the pressure is still on presently. However, in some other countries, abortion has been legalized. Onimhwo (2005) said Japan is the first world country to legalize abortion in 1948. In 1970, the House of Commons in Britain passed David Steel's Bill for the legalization of abortion. American Supreme Court ruling of 22nd January 1973 not only legalized abortion but allows women the freedom and choice of killing their unborn babies even a day before the actual delivery. To eliminate human embryos remains radically an unethical act that is evil in Africa (Bisong and Ogar 2016).

Encapsulation of Humankind into Machine

Encapsulation of the human being is the bottling, enslavement, and conversion of the person into the restrictions of gadgets. This means man is put into a machine. Without his machine nowadays, he can neither live, nor move, nor have his being. The complicated conglomeration of gadgets is housing a human being on his or her way to the moon or other planets. Inside the missile, one will see an astronaut equipped for space flight into the planet. In his gadgetry to the moon or mars, he is more of a robot than a human being. He is no longer free, safe or alive except in this complicated myriad of instruments. And once there is a little miss, a touch or wrong button, hold your breath! He is shattered, blown-up like the burst tube of a vehicle being driven at 300 kph. Should the human being, therefore, be treated as a mere machine? Is he not more a proto-machine, a mere means to mechanical engineering and technological fabrication? Where would lie the difference between the machine and its maker? And who would be the master, the controller of the universe? For Rene Descartes the Frenchman and the father of modern Western Philosophy, man is a thinking thing (subject). For hyper-technology, man is a thinking tool (object). Between the Cartesian and the technological, there is an ocean of difference: that between subject and object, Person and thing, him/her and it. That difference has grave consequences: materialism, instrumentalism, and objectification of everything. Man is no longer a man but something lying there for use by technologists and others (Iroegbu, 2005).

Production and Sale of Harmful Products

Cigarette smoking is associated with lung cancer, heart diseases, and some other serious ailments. Yet millions of cigarettes are being produced and sold daily. Industries in charge or producing and selling the product always put the ethical burden daily on customers. Many people say no one is forced to smoke or even overfeed, but everyone is free to do what he or she wants. And some want to smoke, even among those who prohibit it, including medical personnel. Where does morality lie when business firms produce and sell products known to be harmful to people? Further, if we are to ask, do drunken drivers and careless smokers not allow others their legitimate rights to life and safety? Do they fulfill their social responsibilities when they risk their lives and shorten them? But the liberal economist and capitalist may retort when all these hard and harmful products are banned from the markets, how will the society know where to draw line? Is this not a restriction of freedom or enterprise and even of the individual autonomy of the person to determine and run his or her life as he or she pleases? Should some peoples' values be imposed on all others? The answer to the above questions could only be found in Business Ethics.

False Advertisement of Goods, Services or Information

Advertising is one of the most powerful socializing forces in culture. It is one of the ways in which Africa merchants and manufacturers market their goods. It makes people know, remember and trust the familiar name. But in promoting a company or brand name the advertiser does stake his reputation on it, which places a high social value on advertising. It sells more than products. Advertising sells images, values, goals, and concepts of who we are and who we should be... They shape our attitude and our attitudes shape our behaviour. It has become an

inescapable phenomenon; it, therefore, calls for moral agents in Africa and beyond to ask among other questions: how does advertising work and how might it influence us as members of the society? These and other important questions face both the advertiser and the consumer of both his goods and services. Misdirected advertisement can become a tyranny (Izibili, 2005).

GLOBAL ETHICS AS A WAY FORWARD

Environmental ethics is a relatively recent study in applied ethics; it is experiencing a speedy growth. Environmental ethics analyzed environmental issues with the aid of traditional theories (Izibili, 2005). Environmental ethics begins with two basic assumptions; firstly, that human behaviour towards the natural world should be governed by moral norms, and secondly that we are charged with some responsibilities towards nature. Philosophers generally recognize that there must be a degree of moral relationship between human beings and their environment (Bassey and Nwoye, 2018). Environmental ethics presents and defends a systematic and comprehensive account of the moral relations between human beings and their natural environment. Its ethics has two outstanding reasoning theories; Biocentric and Ecocentric ethics.

Biocentric ethics is an ethical theory that evaluates natural things from the fact of their having life. It sees everything that has a life as possessing an inherent value. It does not consist of ethical rules, but of an attitude of life, which is best described with what Albert Schweitzer, its earliest proponent, calls "reverence for life" (Ikegbu & Diana-Abasi 2017). It does not ask, like utilitarianism, deontology and natural law, "what should I do?" it rather asks, "what type of person should I be? Emphasis is on the moral character. It implies the development of what Paul Taylor calls "biocentric outlook," the conviction that all living species of living organisms form rational or irrational, is the criterion for moral standing; moral rights do not depend on any hierarchy among the living things. Ecocentric ethics extend moral consideration not only to all-natural objects but also to ecological systems, processes, and relationships. The focus is on ecological communities, not just as a collection of individual organisms, but as a nexus of interdependencies. It concerns itself mainly with the relationships between the parts and whole, and with the dynamics of change that holds the whole together (Amuluche, 2005).

The ethics of technology pursues this questioning to the ultimate being of human being himself: what, why, from, where, and to where is man? Accurate to this situate technology correctly in the crescendo of human reality. The conglomeration of different disciplines, opinions, and systems understand man to be the micro-world. Of the four species of the human reality: his knowing, acting, having and being – it is rationally self-evident that his being is the ultimate receptacle of the other three engagements. Gabriel Marcel has argued in his book "Being and Having", that we have to be, not conversely.

Technology has its legitimacy and sole justification in humanity. Only in so far as it is at the service of the human being is it justified not only to exist at all but equally to develop, operate and diversify. Rationally, the moment technology ceases to be at the service of human beings, worse still, if it comes to be at his anti-service, destruction, or at the diversion of his authentic ends: intermediary or ultimate: technology ceases to be a valid human project. This means to say that technology is made for man, not man for technology. This is another way of

saying that while technology is the terminus *a quo* of human ingenuity; while humanity is the terminus *ad quem* of technology.

The ultimate good at which all other goods are directed is the teleological arrival of man at perfect happiness. This is a fact for which technology does not supply its attainment, but for which it gives some of its instruments. Many have lamented that the actual stand of technology in the developed nations calls for concern, indeed an urgent one. Albert Schweitzer a German-speaking scholar is one of the prophetic voices that spoke out against western technological exploitation of creation. In his book, *Civilization, and Ethics*. He powerfully argued that a misbalanced view of man as mere matter led to the jaundiced civilization monster that is the present state of western life. Man's spiritual and moral in a word, the human element was forgotten. Thus he said that we surrendered completely to a naïve satisfaction at our magnificent material achievements and went astray into an incredibly superficial conception of civilization (Iroegbu, 2005; Edor 2016).

Martin Heidegger in his standard work on the subject under discussion titled: *The Question Concerning Technology*, gave a dialectical analysis of the technological dilemma. In his technology question, he said things are that way because of the nature of technology itself to catch hold of a man. The operative concept for Heidegger is Enframing. Enframing is the putting into a frame or constriction, the potentialities of the universe by the technocratic man. It is a sort of enslavement and surely a restriction of the man himself. But while human beings are so enframed and therefore restricted, manipulated, instrumentalised and exploited that they lose their naturalness and spontaneity, yet the enframing remains at the same time an active calling-forth and challenging claims to man's rationality.

An appropriate ethics of science and technology must see them for what they are: servants of humanity. More than Heidegger's technological optimism, and surpassing the brutally negative critique of modern technology, we need a realistic and effective approach to the technological dilemma. Technology must be made wise by being made to be integrated into goodness for man and the universe in which he lives. Bio – technology ethics considers the risks, abuse and negative sides that technology comports. It takes these seriously and advises on how to eliminate them. An example is toxic waste that makes our universe uninhabitable. There must be wise laws that control their production, management, and disposal to avoid disasters to the human family. Finally, science and technology must be at the service of the human person. The being must be the loving master of creation put at his disposal by the author of creation

Business ethics is a discipline that seeks to understand business codes to determine how much they can influence the outcome or end product of the business entrepreneur. Keith (1989) says that the only ethical duty of the producers and the sellers to people with these views is to warn the buyer of these harmful products and inform them of the possible risks of using the product. In line with Keith the Federal Government of Nigeria while permitting to advertise these harmful products, at the end of the advertisement there is always a caption that says "smokers are liable to die young" or the Federal Ministry of health warns "cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health". This may not be seen to diminish smoking but at least a reminder that he or she was not warned.

Properly speaking, one would say that certain things must be prohibited that others may flourish and good health is one such value that should flourish at the cost of forbidding a tobacco-free market to all, especially the youth. People are of course free to decide but it must be based on informed consent. Also, the society members with their current value system must decide on what is the best policy for the welfare of its members on the whole.

CONCLUSION

Globalization has become a powerful and invisible god of our 21st-century universe. This has both positive and negative implications. On the positive side, it has proved itself to be a big brother to the human condition; helping, solving and alleviating the human condition. Globalization has opened great treasures to human expertise. Globalization has not always been a one-way process. Without a doubt, globalization is an irreversible process in accord with natural laws. Since the pain caused by some aspects of globalization is undeniable, the real issue is whether the negative effects of its sweeping processes can be ameliorated - and the positive effects enhanced. This is because it is apparent that globalization has come to stay. Globalization will be what people make it. No system is an end in itself. It must be at the service of the human person; it must serve solidarity and the common good.

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