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GLOBALISATION AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS OF MASS MEDIA, ITS IMPLICATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICA: ISSUES AND WAY ADVANCING

ABSTRACT

This paper examines globalization and international politics of mass media, its controversy to the development of contemporary Africa: issues and way advancing. Media is among the speedy development of technology that exchange information due to its technological proficiencies that enable information to be swiftly and widely disseminated around the globe through the acts of international politics and globalization. This act of massive dissemination of information through the media made it imperative for power holders to control the global affairs using media and consequently subjugated African development. The paper is undergirded with social exclusion theory. Qualitative data was used. The paper argues that Africa, since post-independence had been under subjugation by the hegemony power of the developed world in terms of media control on Africa. Globalization and international politics of mass media was marked by an unprecedented dictatorship of west leading to the suppression and muscling down of contemporary Africa. The paper concludes that the struggle by the African state in globalization and international politics of mass media against the hegemony power of Europe and USA is extensively denied and resulted in both international and domestic pressures that eventually forced backwardness in African development.

Keywords: Globalization, Mass Media, International Politics, Development, Western Hegemony.

Introduction

Globalization as the interaction between people in different parts of the world is not a new concept but has been taking place for years, which connected Asia, Africa, and Europe. Philosophy, religion, language, the arts, and other aspects of culture spread and mixed as nations exchanged products and ideas which cannot be achieved without the role of international politics of mass media. The speed of globalization has increased phenomenally through mass media and this increase has been facilitated by improved technology in areas of transportation and communication. (Konyeaso, 2016).

Globalization as a societal interdependency, is a process that encompasses various activities of international integration involving multiplicity of transnational transactions, ideas, trade of goods and services, international capital flows, FDI, migration, and spread of technology. Despite the fact that the effect and definition of globalization has been attempted by many authors, the word continues to mean very different things to different people as observed by Genyi, Timikoru and Akila, (2017) “that the effect of globalization can also be on the political, economic, cultural, religious, demographic, military and environmental spheres”.

Today, as a major force in the world system, globalization enhances trans-borders’ interaction which in turn mixings all aspects of the process, specifically; in economic, historical, technological, social, political and cultural etc. To Edgadju (2007), it refers to the increasing economic interdependence among countries of the world through the increasing volumes of cross-border transactions in all spheres of life in recent times.

In this globalized era, the heroine of the mass media in information dissemination in international politics is no longer in uncertainty. It is in short, the mass media more than anything else that has made the world a global village, hence, we talk about globalization. Of course, the driving force in international diplomacy and international relations find expression more on the basis of interests which impinge on economic, political and cultural considerations (Didiugwu, 2011). These benefits are advocated mainly by the mass media which in most cases, assign images and sets agenda for relationships among nation states. The mass media in this regard is a controlling, prevailing and the most influential weapon of public opinion and actions of people around the globe.

Thus to say then, the mass media is crucial in understanding the power play of international politics. It served in some situations as a controversy to the development of contemporary Africa and this makes it paramount to understand its role in the globalization process for a good grasp of the new shape of world politics.

Theoretical Framework (Social Exclusion Theory).

The concept of social exclusion has been refined and quantified, along with those of poverty, deprivation, and differentiation. The history of the term “social exclusion” can be traced back to France, where it first appeared in Klanfer’s *L’ exclusion sociale: Etude de la marginalité dans les sociétés occidentales*, published in 1965 (Momose, 2021).

Social Exclusion Theory explains how individuals or groups are systematically marginalized from social, economic, political, and cultural opportunities within a society. The theory highlights that exclusion is not merely about poverty but extends to the lack of access to essential resources such as education, healthcare, employment, and political participation. Silver (1994) argues that social exclusion results from structural inequalities and institutional barriers that prevent certain groups from fully integrating into mainstream society. A central premise of the theory is that exclusion operates through multiple dimensions, including economic, social, and political factors.

Economically, exclusion manifests in restricted job opportunities, unfair wages, or limited access to financial services, reinforcing poverty and inequality (Levitas, 2006). Socially, marginalized groups face discrimination and stigmatization, weakening their sense of belonging and social capital. Politically, exclusion is evident when certain groups are denied the right to vote, participate in governance, or influence policy decisions. These overlapping dimensions make social exclusion a complex and self-perpetuating issue that requires multidimensional interventions. Another key aspect of the theory is the role of institutions in reinforcing exclusion. Government policies, labor markets, and social structures often determine who gains access to opportunities and who is left out. For instance, poorly designed mass media in Africa especially in the globalized era can limit the developing countries access to progress both sociocultural, economically and politically thereby reducing their chances to benefit in global development.

Similarly, discriminatory hiring practices in the labor market further widen the inequality gap, making it difficult for marginalized African countries to break free from exclusion. This institutionalized exclusion demonstrates how social structures shape individual experiences and opportunities. Social Exclusion Theory also emphasizes the psychological and emotional effects of exclusion. Individuals as developing countries especially the African continent who experience exclusion often suffer from low self-esteem, depression, and a diminished sense of agency, which further reduces their ability to engage in productive activities. For example, if there will be universality in mass media free initiatives and broadcasting for both the developing and the developed countries, there will emancipation for African development. However, the success of such policies depends on effective implementation and the removal of systemic barriers that perpetuate exclusion. Despite its usefulness, Social Exclusion Theory faces criticism for being too broad and lacking a clear definition of exclusion. Some scholars argue that exclusion is context dependent and varies across cultures and societies, making it difficult to apply a universal framework (Atkinson, 2019).

The strengths of social exclusion theory lie in its ability to provide a framework for understanding how power imbalances and systemic issues can lead to marginalization and exclusion of individuals and groups. It highlights the multi-dimensional nature of exclusion, encompassing economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions, and acknowledges that exclusion can occur at various levels, from the individual to the global. Social exclusion theory is a powerful framework for understanding and addressing complex societal problems like poverty, inequality, and marginalization. It goes beyond simple income disparities by focusing on the multiple ways individuals can be excluded from full participation in society, considering social, political, and economic aspects that is to is holistic in nature (Ewa, 2013). While challenges exist in its application, the theory remains crucial in shaping efforts toward social justice and equality.

The Relationship Between Media and Society

The relation between media and society is very thought-provoking and multifaceted in its nature. As society is dynamic and heterogynous, so also is media technology embryonic where indications show the linking between media and society are contextual across time and place and heterogeneous across societies and media type.

It is to say that for any society to continue to progressively develop there must be an existence of transmission, by communication so to say the mass media play vital role in any societal development if it is used judiciously. In the view of Poepsel (2018), communication systems can be used as weapons. The evolution of mass communication tools is the story of increased capacity to do the same good and evil things people have always done in societies and between them.

Considering with the global population and massively technological inventions to coexist with other societies even as we are constantly aware of our dissimilarities and of possible threats that may have existed before but now are much easier to see.

In relationship between media and society, media play role in power control in politics, economic control and in social and cultural affairs', is the politics of representation in media industry and content. Dissemination of information on the societal segmentation like race, gender, age, class, etc are portrayed through the media. McQuail (2010), depicted four basic themes in connecting media and society. These are: 1. Power role and Inequality; 2. Social integration and identity; 3. Causing social change and development; and 4. Bridging space and time. These roles are, however, not always and universally positive or negative. Often, culture variations determine the theoretical and practical nature of media role. For example, critical and post modernists may be critical of media power role and positivists may have pro-power assumptions.

It is paramount for us to know media have long had a voice and a role in politics, by Influence on Laws and Governance and acting as a watchdog, that offer readers and viewers with news coverage of issues and events, and also offer public forums for debate. In other word, media support or lack thereof can have a substantial inspiration on public opinion and governmental action.

Sometimes the media appear willing or unwitting participants in chasing stories the government wants them to chase; other times politicians find themselves chasing issues that the media has enlarged by its coverage. Over the decades, political scientists, journalists, politicians, and political pundits have put forth many arguments about the media's power in influencing the government and politicians (Willis, 2007).

Globalization, its Implication to the Development of Contemporary Africa

In Africa, its position in the international system has been considerably weakened by the fact that it has been losing the race for economic development in general, and human development in particular, to other regions, these poor performances by African countries accounts in part for the political and social instability and rise of authoritarian regimes that have characterized much of postcolonial Africa, further weakening the ability of African countries to deal effectively with globalization (Ibrahim, 2013).

The negative impacts of globalization on Africa

Tendon (1998), states that the cold war which was born out of the process for globalization has had significant consequences for Africa. During its height in the 1960's and 1970's, the cold war witnessed the emergence of authoritarian regimes in the form of one-party or military regimes. This was largely a result of the support of the two blocks to keep African countries in their respective camps. This has in turn, substantially reduced Africa's international negotiating power and its ability to maneuver in the international system. In sum then, the cold war and its demise has worked against democracy and economic development in Africa.

Specific impact of globalization on Africa were identified according to Oyejide (1998) in the political sphere, the most important consequence is the erosion of sovereignty, especially on economic and financial matters, as a result of the imposition of models, strategies and policies of development on African countries by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

Economically, globalization has, on the whole, reinforced the economic marginalization of African economies and their dependence on a few primary goods for which demand and prices are externally determined. This has, in turn accentuated poverty and economic inequality as well as the ability of the vast number of Africans to participate meaningfully in the social and political life of their countries (Ibrahim, 2013).

As a result of the cultural domination from outside that goes with globalization, African countries are rapidly losing their cultural identity and therefore their ability to interact with other cultures on an equal and autonomous basis, borrowing from other cultures only those aspects that meet its requirements and needs.

The scientific and technological forces unleashed by globalization have facilitated the extinction of the indigenous development of technology and distorting patterns of production in Africa.

Globalization on the whole impacts negatively on the development and consolidation of democratic governance. One form of this is the reduction of the capacity of governments to determine and control events in their countries, and thus their accountability and responsiveness to their people, given the fact that the context, institutions and processes by which these decisions are taken are far from democratic.

Globalization, by insisting on African countries opening their economies to foreign goods and entrepreneurs, limits the ability of African governments to take proactive and conscious measures to facilitate the emergence of an indigenous entrepreneurial class (Mowlana, 1998).

Globalization has encouraged illicit trade in drugs, prostitution, pornography, human smuggling, dumping of dangerous waste and depletion of the environment by unscrupulous entrepreneurs. Globalization has freed labour across boundaries and facilitated brain drain. It facilitated “brain drain” in developing countries, thus reducing further their human capacity (Ibrahim, 2013).

International Politics of Media and its Implication to the Development of Africa

International news agencies have played vital roles in the growth and development of mass media, they provided on –the politics, advertisement reports of events and critical issues pressurizing the earth, but it has been observed that there exist imbalances and discrepancies of their reportage which has not portrayed the African state in good light. This one- sided propagation against the part of the developing countries creates unfair treatment by under reported issues related to the African content. It is to say that

the deleterious reportage has led to some implications on both the economic, political and socio-cultural aspects of African development.

In Africa, as developing states, it is observed that there is unfair and harmful coverage of their regions by the mass media of developed countries including some of the global broadcast stations. In the view of Uche (1996), the developing countries are irritable that the media of the advanced countries particularly Western nations continue to describe their regions in the negative as areas of earthquakes, military coup d'état, economic chaos, conflicts, hunger, famine, humanitarian crises, political instability, HIV/AIDS, inefficiency, and corruption among others".

Makunike (2011) substantiates the above point when he states that in the United States of America for instance, for listeners or viewers to be interested in news out of Africa, it must be negative; conform to the traditional stereotype in its spotlight on grotesque and sensational events; it must show misery and woe, corruption, mismanagement, starvation, primitive surroundings and in the case of Nigeria for instance, chaos and outright anarchy. He further expounds on the coverage pattern of Africa in the American media: We hear of famines and coups but not the rejuvenation of the cities and the cultural vitality of its village life; about oppression and massacres but not education, self-help and political development; about poaching and habitat destruction, but not ongoing action or efforts at conservation, reforestation and environmental awareness.

For instance, Kalyango (2011), compared the news gathering goals of gatekeepers with public attitudes regarding the coverage of Africa by CNN. Results showed not only dissonance but also a disconnect between CNN news producers and Uganda's viewers' perception of their two major local stations. Although CNN was the focal source of transnational news in 2004 in Uganda, its appeal had diminished with viewers by 2008 as they considered its coverage largely biased and ill-motivated towards Africa.

It was these broadcasted damaging and unfair information about Africa by the international politics of mass media of the developed countries of the West that led to the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate. According to Uche (1996), "NWICO was a clamour or intellectual discourse of the 1970s and 1980s by the countries of the South or less developed countries at the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Non-Aligned Movement which centered on the nature, content, direction, quantity, fairness, balance and objectivity in worldwide news flow that was dominated by the media and news agencies of the industrialized West." African delegates at that conference supported by the defunct Soviet Union argued that the bulk of the news or reports generated

and disseminated by the major Western mass media were negative or unfavourable to developing countries in every sphere of the effect of globalization.

The implications of the biased reporting of African countries by the dominant Western mass media, include; Economic, political and social-economic implications. For the average person in the Western world who has never experience to be in Africa, the information about the continent is largely sourced from the domineering mass media of the West, created a very negative and pessimistic perception of developing countries by citizens of the industrialized societies. Such people tend to view the African continent as one that lacks borders, countries and identities (Garrick,2012).

Economic Implications

The initial significance of this gloomy outlook of Africa is the negative effect on foreign direct investment (FDI). Developing countries like in most African state are depending on western aid instead of encouraging investment, and this investment is not necessary the FDI, because the African continent can as well invest on herself. However, the FDI play vital role in national development.

But the selfish and biased coverage of Africa buttresses the negative images of the region consequently defunct and affects the flow of FDI into in Africa. To elucidate this opinion, Survey recently accompanied by Ernest & Young, the study show, over 500 business leaders from the Western world were divided into two groups, consisting of those doing business and those not doing business in Africa. When they were interviewed, findings highlighted a significant perception gap between the two groups. Those that are not doing business on the continent had a largely pessimistic view of the continent and the here say effect the attractiveness of Africa. and their prospect of doing business there was very low while those already doing business there were confident in the region's growth. (Garrick, 2012).

Prominent Nigerian impresario, Tony Elumelu has had multiple interviews on CNN. on November 12, 2013, which was featured in an article titled "Tony Elumelu: The 'Africapitalist' who wants to power Africa". Another interview was on CNN's "Marketplace Africa" on June 11, 2019. Additionally, he had an interview with Richard Quest on "Quest Means Business" on September 26, 2023 In order word, organized artificial scariness was created, re-echoed the same point he stated that negative portrayal of Africa in Western media has scared away several foreign investors from Africa in some critical sectors except areas such as telecommunications and extractive industries. This is a problem that was consciously created to

keep Africa in check and recurrently obstruct her advance progress and development. Moreover, through the constant promotion of standard stereotypes in which the continent is portrayed as a place of foremost natural disasters such as earthquake, volcanic eruptions, droughts, floods and other pandemic. Insecurity and violent, conflicts and militancy is also served as a means to invalid African continent. All this fallacy and delusion make it very difficult for the developed world who depends on these media for information to project into any kind of investment in Africa, since it is filled with negatively influenced by the report of a corruption, diseases vulnerability and the array of no peace.

Political Implications

Politicians of developing countries allege that there exist western unfairness to the news that is printed about Africa, by the dominant news station of the west, seem to make the news about Africa only when there is a devious reflection about the continent for example the report death, when people die of starvation or kill each other, when there is genocide and massacre or riots will be the things of joy to be at the top headlines of their news and always citing the bad side of some corrupted leaders reference them as if all African states have nothing to show, meanwhile all the positive news about natural phenomenon, the beauty of our landscaping agricultural production, love and development projects in industrial growth are disregarded as if there not in existence.

This unscrupulous light sets up for the African continent is deliberately made for disregard and disrespect from the influential hegemony of the west. Negative reportage, indecorous information and blind assimilation of it have contributed in weakening African development.

The tacit conclusion is that nothing can work in Africa and no form of government is possible, let alone a democratic one. Africa has therefore been mostly described as a continent of missed growth opportunities, and the 'paradigm of doom' (Chege, 1997).

Socio-cultural Implications

The west wanted to insinuate cultural imperialism on Africa, despite the fact that the assumed we are far different to them in terms of pigmentation, anatomy and traditions. According to Corby (1995), they depicted the inhabitants as "simple, hospitable, authentic and kind in line with the myth of the "good savage." It is also a land where time is believed to flow differently, if at all." This recurrent stereotype of African people strengthened by the media is a weapon the West has used over the years in severing the socio-cultural relations between the West and other developing countries. Some of those antics include the

representation of the African continent as the “dark continent” which extends to take in the supposed darkness, dullness, impenetrability and the occult side of the world.

Furthermore, the Western perception of African people is that of primitive, irrational, superstitious, lazy as well as incapable to plan or care for themselves. When these characteristics are transferred to “know how” and professionalism, the result is a picture of individuals and groups possessing poor cognitive and operative capacity, ill-suited for managerial positions and depending on outside aid for any emergency (International relations and the media, National Open University of Nigeria, module, 2022).

In the opposite side of the matter, the cultural imperialism, where by the mindset of Africans especially young people want to be like and live like the people of the West because they are superior, to us and we try adopt and adapt everything about them because we are inferiors.

A good example played out in South Africa during the burial of the late South African leader Nelson Mandela, preference was accorded all the Western/foreign media such as CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera and the likes, over the local news media coming from other parts of Africa, one of which is TVC News, a PAN African station based in Lagos Nigeria. Most of these foreign media correspondents were allowed entry into the main venues of all the centres used for the burial of the late icon, while most, if not all other news agencies having African origin were shot out, and allowed to make do with scanty reports they could possibly grab or gather from around the South Africa venues.

In a similar situation, the stadium venue that hosted all of the world leaders in attendance, including the U.S. President Barack Obama, none of the four TVC News’ correspondents were allowed access into it. That, from experience, was because anything and everything coming from the Western world is considered superior to those with African origin. This is because of the global media’s impact (International relations and the media, National Open University of Nigeria, module, 2022).

The western world has developed their capability and manipulated their ways of how to disseminate information round globe in line with their desires and intention which may go against development of Africa but because of inferiority we bestow to our self we cannot challenge this authority and question their intention and to developed our capacity of mass media who will as well challenge the concept of globalization.

This imbalance is what creates the problem and when the system is like this, it hinders international cooperation and interventions as well as creates a barrier between the citizens of developed and developing

countries specifically Africa, with the former feeling superior and the later feeling inferior because of difference in coverage.

Conclusion

The globalization and mass media played a key and leading role in the international politics. The media, not only performed its traditional role of supplying the people with information about the daily events that affects their lives, but also assumed a responsive role of shouldering the burden of the African society by fighting an overzealous dictatorship and oppression of the west. Despite the fact that for years, Africa have been exploited by the western world in pursuit of self-interests, the oppression on Africa by superpower nations in terms of globalization, prolonged backwardness among the majority of Africans and the worse scenario is if one compared to what the international politics of mass media portray about Africa. Having taken a look at global news agencies and the economic, political and socio-cultural implications of their negative reportage of Africa it became obvious what the western media can do and have succeeded in using as a neo-colonial tool to shape opinions in Africa and control its affairs from far away as a result of the imbalance in globalization and information's using superior technology and professional expertise and hegemony have enabled western news agencies and journalists to provide information of their intentions. So to say that the struggle by the African state in globalization and international politics of mass media against the hegemony power of Europe and USA is extensively denied and resulted in both international and domestic pressures that eventually forced backwardness in African development.

Recommendations and ways advancing

Based on the literature and findings obtained from this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Economic development strategies and Policies should be created to Africa by Africa to overcome those formulated by outsiders.
- ii. Control of brain drain on the human capacity of the state is necessary: Globalization make no limitations and relatively freed labour movements. But for African countries this has aggravated the problem where by the most qualified indigenous African that will bring development to their continent continue to developed the west.

- iii. From the media perspective: That powerful mass media of the African countries still need to do more to improve on their coverage beyond Africa to meet up with the standard set for the globalized world.
- iv. The hegemony of the developed world like USA and the Europe related to the mass media control shall be check, where by there shall be balance in information not focusing on negative reports from the African region.
- v. There should be more programmes on the global TV networks where African journalists can tell the African story and portray the good of the region, just as the Al Jazeera model that has gained worldwide commendation should be replicated by African countries.

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