

THE STRING BETWEEN NEO-LIBERALISM, NEO-IMPERIALISM AND GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

The string between Neo-liberalism, Neo-imperialism, and globalization is very complex because they seem similar with likely features and end goals. This study aims to unravel the mystery, the strings, between the concepts. Historically, they are all linked to the history of slavery, colonialism, and Neo-colonialism, and understanding the basics and desires for them is the foundation of Neo-liberalism, Neo-Imperialism, and Globalization. Kwame Nkurumah opined that Imperialism is the last state of colonialism. Colonialism is linked to Slavery; Neo-colonialism is linked to colonialism; Neo-Imperialism is linked to Imperialism; Neo-Liberalism is linked to Neo-Imperialism; and they are all converged in globalization. This article is geared towards making the exposition clear *in strictosensu*. There are dual arguments between the concepts. But one thing is clear: the developing world or the global south has been at the receiving end of the implementation of those contemporary issues in global and advanced political conditions. This work will expose those conditionless conditions.

Keywords: Philosophy, Neo-liberalism, Neo-Imperialism, Globalization

Introduction

Neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization are all concepts that have influenced the social, economic, and political landscape of the world in different ways. Neo-liberalism is a free-market economic theory that emphasizes privatization and deregulation. Neo-imperialism, on the other hand, is characterized by the use of military and economic power by developed nations to dominate developing countries. Globalization is the process of increased interconnectedness among countries as a result of trade, investment, and technology. This paper will explore the relationship between these concepts and how they have contributed to shaping the current global order. The central thesis of this paper is that the interplay between neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization has created a global system that benefits the interests of the wealthy and powerful while further marginalizing the poor and vulnerable.

Originally, one cannot pontificate on these concepts without talking about slavery and colonialism. Slavery aided the colonial masters in their bid to colonize Africa and in subsequent resource exploitation, which they institutionalized under their imperial governance. Using largely secondary material, this study finds that slavery and colonialism laid the foundation for neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism globalization, and postcolonial conflicts in the global south (Siddiqui, 2012). It is noteworthy that four major factors drive the push for slavery and colonialism and later Neo-liberalism, Neo-imperialism, and globalization. The factors are a quest for survival, economic prosperity, and a desire for domination and control.

Neo-liberalism

Neo-liberalism is a free-market economic theory that advocates reducing government intervention in the economy, promoting market competition, and minimizing the role of government in social welfare. It emerged as a response to the economic downturn of the 1970s when governments increased their intervention in the economy. Neo-liberalism became the dominant economic theory in the 1980s, with the implementation of policies by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Siddiqui, 2012). The neo-liberal agenda involved a plethora of policies, such as privatization of state-owned enterprises, deregulation of financial markets, and trade liberalization. By encouraging market competition and reducing government intervention, neo-liberalism aims to promote economic growth and development. However, critics argue that neo-liberal policies have increased poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. They contend that neo-liberalism has favored the interests of big corporations while marginalizing small businesses and workers, and creating a race to the bottom in terms of labor and environmental standards. Moreover, critics suggest that the deregulation of financial markets led to the global financial crisis of 2008, which caused massive economic disruption and social upheaval (Siddiqui, 2012).

Critics of neo-liberalism argue that the dismantling of the welfare state, privatization of public services, and deregulation of markets have eroded social protections and increased inequality. They argue that neo-liberalism undermines democracy and weakens the social contract between the state and citizens, leading to the erosion of public trust in government. Furthermore, neo-liberal policies have been implicated in the collapse of health systems, education, and other essential services, leaving many people without adequate protection or basic rights (Siddiqui, 2012).

Neo-imperialism

Neo-imperialism refers to the use of a country's economic, military, and political power to gain and maintain control over other countries or regions. It is characterized by a shift from formal colonialism to a more indirect mode of control. Neo-imperialism has its roots in the colonial era, where colonizing countries would use their economic and military power to extract resources from their colonies. Examples abound in Africa. All the francophone countries are still being controlled by France. France and the US have military bases in these countries (Giroux, 2003).. The Niger Republic crisis at present is a testament to this. The practice of neo-imperialism typically involves the use of military intervention, political subjugation, and economic influence. Neo-imperialism is often associated with interventions in countries' affairs to pursue strategic or economic interests. These interventions can include regime change, economic sanctions, military intervention, political subjugation, and economic influence. Neo-Imperialism is often associated with interventions in a country's affairs to pursue strategic or economic sanctions and military intervention. Neo-imperialism has been used to justify Western interventions in resource-rich countries in the Middle East and Africa under the guise of democratization and humanitarianism (Escobar, 1995).

Critics argue that neo-colonialism reinforces global inequality and supports the interests of the wealthy and powerful. They accuse the powerful countries of concentrating economic and political power at their disposal to exploit the developing world for their gain while leaving the poor majority behind. The use of military force also violates the sovereignty of other countries and undermines the principles of democracy and equality. Again, the use of unequal distribution of wealth and power perpetuates colonial legacies of marginalization, exploitation, and abuse of human rights in developing countries (Barrow, 2009).

Globalization

Globalization refers to the process of increasing interconnectedness between economies, societies, and cultures of different countries. It is driven by advances in communication technology, transportation, and international trade. Globalization has been underway since the mid-twentieth century but has accelerated since the 1990s. The impact of globalization on neo-colonialism, neo-liberalism, and neo-imperialism is significant. Globalization has facilitated the integration of markets, enabling corporations to exploit resources and labor from developing nations more efficiently. Additionally, globalization has enabled developed countries to exert their economic and political influence on developing countries. Multinational corporations have become more powerful than governments in many countries, leading to a decline in national sovereignty (Randolph, 2012).

Critics argue that globalization has increased inequality within and among countries. Developing countries have become increasingly dependent on exports, often at the expense of local industries and agriculture. Line Mouaffac (2016), quoted by Charles Nweke, (2018) opined thus:

Globalization is a form of colonization. The colonial powers of today do not need military might and occupation to control the minds and destinies of billions of people in their former colonies. They just need values.

Furthermore, the rush to attract foreign investments has led to a race to the bottom in terms of labor standards and environmental protection. The unequal distribution of wealth and power has resulted in social, economic, and political unrest in many countries. Some also argue that globalization has fueled cultural hegemony and the replacement of local identities with global ones. Julius Ihonvbere (2002) thought that:

Globalization is just a more liberal or shorthand name for imperialism, domination, exploitation, marginalization, and the overall reproduction of the injustices, inequalities, and poverty that characterize the relations within and between nations.

The String Between Neo-liberalism, Neo-imperialism and Globalization

Neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization are interconnected concepts that have significant implications for global development and governance. Neo-imperialism relies on economic power rather than direct political control. Conversely, neo-liberalism aims to create a free-market economy without government intervention. Globalization facilitates the spread and consolidation of these concepts, resulting in a complex interplay between developed and developing countries. It is essential to understand the relationship between these concepts because they have significant effects on the distribution of power and wealth across the globe. Developing countries are still vulnerable to economic subjugation, political subversion, and cultural marginalization. Neo-imperialism has deep roots in the colonial era, and even though it has morphed into different forms in the modern era, the fundamental nature remains the same. The primary beneficiaries of these forms of oppression are powerful countries, multinational corporations, and the wealthy elite.

Understanding the complexities of neo-imperialism, neo-liberalism, and globalization is critical for anyone interested in issues of social inequality, economic development, and democracy. It is essential to recognize the enduring legacy of colonialism and imperialism, and how it shapes contemporary global politics and economics. While some may view these concepts as necessary for economic progress, it is necessary to balance economic growth with social justice and development that is truly sustainable. Achieving that balance requires a more equitable distribution of power and resources across the globe, accompanied by greater democratic accountability (Dicken, 2015). In recent decades, the global economy has undergone significant changes, often referred to as globalization. This process has been driven by a combination of neo-liberalism, and neo-imperialism. These two phenomena are often used interchangeably but are distinct concepts that heavily influence the economic and political landscape today.

Neo-liberalism, on the other hand, is an economic ideology that advocates for the reduction of government intervention in the economy. It promotes free trade, deregulation, and privatization as a means of increasing efficiency and growth. This approach has been heavily criticized for exacerbating inequality, environmental degradation, and social unrest.

Neo-imperialism occurs when a developed country exercises influence over a less developed country or region for its benefit. This can involve military interventions, the installation of puppet governments, economic sanctions, or cultural imperialism. Neo-imperialism operates through the global economy, where developed countries often have more power, which they use to secure resources and markets for their businesses. These two concepts converge in globalization, the process whereby the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Globalization can facilitate the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultures, but can also promote neo-liberalism, and neo-imperialism. Globalization has been instrumental in perpetuating

inequality and environmental degradation and has been criticized for its impact on labor rights and cultural diversity (Held & McGrew, 1999).

Philosophical Perspectives

Philosophy offers various perspectives on the relationship between neoliberalism, neo-imperialism, globalization, and their impacts on humanity's social and political order. While some scholars argue that neoliberal policies and globalization promote equality, others contend that they lead to social and economic inequality, jeopardize cultural diversity, and support neo-imperialistic agendas. For instance, Thomas Pogge, a German philosopher, states that neoliberalism and globalization have perpetuated the uneven distribution of resources and income across the world, resulting in the marginalization of the poor and the proliferation of power elites in countries. Pogge argues that such unequal distribution is a form of structural injustice that poses a threat to global peace and security (Pogge, 2008). Similarly, Judith Butler (2004), an American philosopher, focuses on the impact of imperialism and globalization on cultural and political diversity. In her book *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Butler argues that neoliberalism and globalization have facilitated the spread of hegemonic values and norms that marginalize minority cultures and suppress their traditions and identities. The result, she contends, is the destruction of cultural diversity and the homogenization of human experience.

The above perspectives suggest that neoliberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization are complex concepts that provoke diverse philosophical interpretations. It is, therefore, challenging to conclude whether these phenomena are reversing humanity to a Hobbesian state of nature or not. However, most philosophers agree that these concepts have significant ramifications on the social, economic, and political order of the world today.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the string between neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization has resulted in complex economic, political, and social relationships between developed and developing countries. While proponents argue that globalization creates opportunities for growth and development, critics see it as a means of perpetuating exploitation and inequality (Harvey, 2006). The recent military takeover of government in Niger Republic and other African countries are testament to this argument. It is alleged that the French continued to exploit the economies of their former colonies with little or no benefits to their former colonies. This is the reason they support the worst of us to be the leader of the best of us. It is imperative for policymakers, international organizations, and civil society to critically evaluate the impact of globalization on different regions to address the outcomes of these phenomena. The interplay between these phenomena remains a controversial topic of debate. While some argue that

globalization has the potential to lead to greater prosperity for all, others claim that it perpetuates existing power imbalances between developing nations and their developed counterparts. The rise of neo-liberal policies across many countries is often seen as a form of economic imperialism, leading to greater inequality and the marginalization of those on the fringes of society (Martinussen, 1997).

One of the most significant criticisms of globalization is that it fails to adequately consider the needs and perspectives of poorer nations and people. In many cases, the expansion of global trade has led to a complete overhaul of traditional industries and agricultural practices, which has had devastating effects on indigenous communities. Some scholars argue that this can be seen as a form of neo-imperialism, as corporations and governments from developed nations can exploit the resources of less developed nations for their benefit (Gills & Thompson, 2006). Another common criticism of globalization is that it has led to a race to the bottom in terms of labor and environmental standards. Developed countries often outsource labor to developing nations to take advantage of lower wages and weaker labor regulations. This has resulted in sweatshop conditions and a race to the bottom in terms of wages and working conditions. Additionally, many industries have taken advantage of lax environmental regulations in developing countries, leading to pollution and other environmental problems (Gusumiriza, P, 2019).

As globalization continues to transform the global economy, it is clear that the phenomenon is closely interconnected with the concepts of neo-liberalism, and neo-imperialism. The relationship between these phenomena remains complex and it is clear that they have had far-reaching impacts on the world economy and political landscape. In conclusion, the string between neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization remains a significant topic of debate among scholars and policymakers. While proponents of globalization argue that it can have a positive impact on the world economy, critics claim that it perpetuates power imbalances between developed and developing nations, leading to poverty and marginalization. More research is needed to fully understand the impact of these often interrelated phenomena on the global economy and political landscape. Globalization is like a two-edged sword. If you hold it by the handle you can use it to your advantage. But if you hold it by the blade, it will not only cut you but destroy you. It is noteworthy that the need for survival, economic advancement, and craving for domination and control are the drivers of neo-liberalism, neo-imperialism, and globalization. It is good to agree with Chinua Achebe (1984), in his Book, *The Trouble With Nigeria*, that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely that of leadership.

The problem of Africa is in Africa and the solution is in Africa with Africans. Globalization is an idea whose time has come. Nothing could stop it. The global south, especially Africa needs to brace up and be counted as beneficiaries of this global world by getting the right leadership with capacity, competence, compassion, and, most importantly, character. Leadership is what is required to harness the gains of globalization in the global south or developing world. This leadership is also required in fighting the menace of neo-liberalism and neo-imperialism.

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