

Foreign Aid as Globalization and Induced Investigative Journalism Practice in Nigeria

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Abstract: Scholars of African origin have lamented the negative development of globalization as opposed to campaigns in support of globalization and liberalism in developing countries. However, both groups agree that foreign aid is antithetical to sustainable development in the continent. Apart from a domination of western model in media education and practice with its success stories and associated challenges, in the last three decades, foreign aid to independent media outlets has shaped the practice of investigative journalism in Nigeria. Recent evidences show a direct positive relationship between support from foreign donors and improved reportage of critical national socio-political issues by media houses and journalists in Nigeria. However, empirical evidence on the validation of the degree to which investigative journalism practice induced by western model and aid determine Nigeria's global ratings on crime, corruption, economy, education and government remains scanty. This study investigates this observation using cross-sectional and panel data, and reveals the positive and negative economic and political gains. Recommendations are suggested to the concerned stakeholders based on the conclusion.

Keywords: Foreign Aid; Globalisation; Media practice; Nigeria; Investigative journalism

1. Introduction

The discourse on Africa's underdevelopment aided by historical incursions by the western world resonates each time the development challenges of the continent are engaged. Walter Rodney's (1972) hatred for globalization and capitalism (as the problem of Africa) as against self-development and socialism is contested by Calderisi Robert (2006). While Rodney blames colonialism and subsequent control of African economies by the West (through globalization), Calderisi sees a continent that has refused to take charge of its destiny even after its freedom from foreign

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intrusion and renewed capacity to participate in international economic system (globalization). The hole in Calderisi's defence of foreign aid in Africa's development history is summed up in his words that:

There is an economic case for foreign aid, too, best expressed in the establishment of the World Bank in 1946. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as it was then called, was set up to promote the continued expansion of world trade after World War II. Its purpose was not charity but self-interest. Rebuilding the war-battered economies of Germany and Japan and helping other much poorer countries climb the economic ladder were seen as fundamental to ensuing global prosperity. Everyone was expected to benefit from the process: Rich countries would have ready markets for what they already produced, while poorer countries would supply raw materials and eventually move into light manufactures as richer countries shifted into more sophisticated products (p. 156).

Having realized that such a relationship will forever maintain the domination of the rich few countries over others, his discourse actually changed from seeing international economic, political, social and cultural melting pot (globalization) and not foreign aid as the catalyst for economic development. However, globalization itself, not minding its immediate and long term effects on African economies, has been seriously criticized as antithetical to local development. This is because the supposed mutual benefits only accrue substantially (in real terms) to one of the cultures or economies that is globalized. As captured by Boaventura de Sousa Santos, cited by Haruna and Ibrahim (2014, p. 99), "globalization is always the successful globalization of a given localism". This discourse of elite domination in ideas, culture, politics, economy and technology by the superimposed economy on other economies is dominant in literature on globalization.

If globalization favours elite western domination and cannot support qualitative development in third-world countries, can foreign aid, an off-shoot of globalization come to the rescue? Scholars, such as Abuzeid (2009) and Andrews (2009) have explained the ineffectiveness of foreign aid on development challenges in Africa. Apart from the fact that debt servicing, rescheduling, negotiation and re-negotiation create a cycle of dependence and or modern-day slavery, among other considerations, the powerful influence of the donors on the operations of the recipients make foreign aid or grants undesirable for real bottom-up-of-the-pyramid development in developing countries. About \$1 trillion that were shipped to Africa in the last fifty years as foreign aid only produced a negative growth of GDP per capita. The continuation of foreign aid, Abuzeid (2009) observes, has the potential

to perpetuate existing corruption, create multiple distortions in the public sector, foster the emergence of a “rentier state” effect, and delay pressures for reform. The situation is worse in Nigeria, a country emerging from economic recession with years of dependence on foreign loans to service recurrent expenditures and provide infrastructures.

2. Statement of the Problem

The ineffectiveness of foreign aid on sustainable development in Africa has been reported by Abuzeid (2009) and Andrews (2009). Findings of these studies hold that perpetuation of existing corruption, continued domination of developing countries by the donor countries, poor per capita growth of the GDP and over-dependence that kills local growth will continue with foreign aid.

Especially on the impact of foreign aid and globalization on journalism and mass media development in Nigeria, Odozi (2014), Moge kwu (2006) and Bofo and Wete (2002) have explained that the current domination of Western models of teaching and practicing journalism in the country could be traced to globalization and foreign aid. Though there are positive contributions of globalization to socio-economic development of the country, the weaknesses of this dominant paradigm of development (which superimposes the donors on the recipients), have been cited as antithetical to sustainable development. These scholars lament the crises of identity, cultural confusion, irrelevance, foreign orientations and lack of initiative that characterize media education and practice in Nigeria, a country caught in the web of globalization. In Nigeria, many organisations have trained journalists as their investment in investigative journalism.

In line with its objectives of helping to fight corruption in Nigeria, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation declared about \$9 million in funding to advance accountability and anti-corruption efforts in Nigeria. This, according to *the Premium Times* (2017), constitutes “grants that are part of the Foundation’s *On Nigeria grant-making*, which seeks to reduce corruption by building an “atmosphere of accountability, transparency, and good governance in the country.” *The Premium Times* reports that MacArthur foundation aims to achieve this by giving (financial) support to non-profit organisations. With particular reference to the media industry, the foundation is set to focus on enhancing investigative journalism and reducing corruption in the electricity and education sectors, two services that Nigerians report as being critical but difficult to access due to corruption. In essence, investigation,

advocacy, accountability, and transparency” constitute the focus of the Foundation (Premium Times, 2017).

In the meantime, the International Centre for Investigative Reporting, ICIR, had in May, 2017, announced the names of 15 Nigerian journalists to participate in the second phase of its investigative journalism training programme tagged Open Contracting Reporting Project, OCRP. The OCRP, an initiative of the ICIR in collaboration with the Public and Private development Centre (PPDC), was funded by the MacArthur Foundation. The aim was to build the capacity of Nigerian media houses to sufficiently report and investigate budget and procurement issues in order to bring about transparency in contracting processes” (ICIR, 2017).

The ICIR (2017) reports that, the capacity building programme symbolizes the most robust support and recognition for investigative journalism as a mechanism for promoting accountability, transparency, and good governance in Nigeria. Citing the West Africa Coordinator for the McArthur Foundation, Kole Shettima, who announced the grants, the expectation of the foundation on the grants was to help in strengthening Nigerian-led anti-corruption efforts and reduce “petty” corruption. Primarily, the grants were meant to support trainings for journalists on investigative field work and data-driven reporting in Nigeria media space.

It is clear that many developed countries have and are investing in media development in the developing countries. This foreign donation, riding on the wheels of globalization (liberalization, global democracy and international inclusiveness), has come with some motives interpreted in empirical and public discourses as both positive and negative. Our focus in this study is to determine the possible effect(s) of foreign aid-induced investigative journalism on Nigeria’s crime, corruption, economy, education and government ratings at the global arena. It is important to closely watch and analyze Nigeria’s global ratings in the specific areas within the time that foreign donors released money to private media agencies for the training and empowerment of journalists to cover critical areas of corruption, crime and the economy. The question is: what has happened to Nigeria’s global ratings since the donors released the grants to assist investigative journalism in Nigeria?

3. Research Questions/Hypotheses

1. What is the correlation between foreign aid induced investigative journalism and country's global rankings in economy, education, crime, corruption and governance?
2. To what extent did foreign aid-induced investigative journalism influence country's global rankings in economy, education, crime, corruption and governance?

4. Literature Review

What connects mass media, foreign aid and globalization? Let us first of all state that another catalyst for socio-political and economic transformation and good governance is the mass media. Especially in Nigeria, the mass media have been part of the campaign for a corruption-free system, improved standard of living, social justice, commitment to social change, good governance, and political empowerment and accountability as the fourth estate of the realm. This potency of the mass media was long seen by the Western world, which culminated in the wholesale importation of Western models of teaching and practicing journalism into Nigeria (Odozi, 2014). This imbalance is noted by Wete (2002), cited by Odozi (2014), who laments the cultural shallowness and irrelevance of African journalism practice dominated teachers, curricula, textbooks and practitioners with foreign orientations. At best, as observed by Moge kwu (2006) and Boafo and Wete (2002), cited by Odozi, foreign contents and beliefs in journalism education in Africa will only produce a continent in crisis of identity, swimming in the labyrinth of globalization. However, Peter Golding (1977, p. 293) allays our fears concerning the effects of globalization on journalism practice in Nigeria (especially), stating that the development will rather produce "an integration into a dominant global culture of media practices and objectives as developed in the advanced industrialized societies". This submission has received criticisms from many scholars (Boafo and Wete, Moge kwu, Odozi) who believe that differences in social realities would and should forever account for how journalism is taught and practiced.

Why did the US government spend \$600 million on media assistance a decade after 1989 and what has informed the consistent annual investment of about \$650 million as media assistance to developing countries? Again, what motivated an Italian non-

governmental organisation (NGO) “GAO” and the Terra Nova Coordinator in Mali to collaborate with some Malians to purchase broadcasting equipment, start a radio station and train Malian technicians after Moussa Traore was ousted during the revolution of 1991? This cooperation led to the establishment of Radio Bamakan as the first independent radio station midwived by foreign money. Another historical account of foreign aid in the African media industry could be traced to 1989 when governments from the West, NGOs, foundations and many other donors deliberately charted a path of media assistance to Africa with a motive to develop the media systems and stations in Africa as outgrowths of Western media (Myers, 2014). With over 2000 private and community radio stations and 300 independent television stations as at 2014, the impact of media assistance on media boom in Africa cannot be over-emphasized. Myers has listed examples from Benin, Cote d’ Ivoire, Nigeria, Madagascar, Tanzania, Mali and Uganda to accentuate this media boom, tagged as opportunities for empowerment, political accountability, interactivity and democracy by analysts, investors and donors.

The question of motive has also been answered by Myers (2014). The researcher has linked foreign aid for media development in Africa to international politics. It has represented a movement to unseat ‘big men dictators’ and promote democracy in Africa by empowering local leaders and ordinary citizens to agitate for democracy. Big donors have also used the instrument of foreign aid to clamp down on corruption and countries working against reforms and liberalization. This is followed by the economic (with a dot of political) interest in media operation. The scramble for the media market has been keen with an eye on advertising money and combined opportunity of reaching both the urban and rural areas by media owners. Foreign donors have also been interested in sustained change and political reforms in forms of peace, promotion of rights of women and the minorities, empowerment of unions of journalists to fight exploitation and anti-press laws, and coverage of development issues (Myers, 2014).

What are some of the effects of globalization, as documented in previous studies, on social, economic, political and media development in some countries. Orozalieva (2010) seeks to understand the economic, social and political impacts of globalization on the Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Central Asian countries in general. Findings show successful economic growth in these countries is not explained by the forces of global, liberal democracy. Instead, political integration and cooperation through regionalism among Central Asian countries could explain the development. Nwokah and Adiele’s (2015) preoccupation is an assessment of the socio-economic

impact of globalization in Nigeria, comparing the differences of these impacts in the public and private sectors. Skill development, commitment to and positive attitude to work are the major socio-economic contributions of globalization to both sectors. However, greater impact is recorded in the private sector than the public sector.

The study conducted by Sapkota (2011) is an evaluation of the impact of globalization on quality of life (human development), gender development and human poverty in developing countries. The comprehensive indexes and important elements of globalization promote human and gender development and reduce notably human poverty. Trade improvement and access to ICT are significant areas that increase human development. Guru, Manjappa, Radhika and Kumar (2014) examine the effect globalization on media management in India, reporting media consolidation and diluted developmental obligations of the media in modern India as the products of globalization. Most of the respondents cite reformulated media imperialism (60.06%) and conflicting responsibilities required of the media (77.81%) as examples in India.

5. Methods

5.1. Sample and Data

We gathered cross-sectional data from the previous study (Oyedele, Lasisi and Kolawole, 2018) which established a direct positive relationship between support from foreign donors and improved reportage of critical national socio-political issues by media houses and journalists in Nigeria. The study examined categorical and related sensitive socio-political issues (accountability, crime, economy, education, and corruption) reported in 2014 and 2017.

We also gathered panel data from the World Economic Forum which releases the Global Competitiveness Index yearly. Specific pillars, indexes and sub-indexes that align with the descriptions given by Oyedele, et al., (2018) for the issues reported by the journalists trained through foreign aid were chosen from the index dataset (2008 to 2017). We found Global Competitiveness Index appropriate because it is the only index that aggregates different sources in addition to its surveys before ranking economies on socio-economic and political issues. The selected cross-sectional data were in frequency count while score (0-100) for the ranking of each variable in the Global Competitiveness Index was chosen. Quantitative secondary data analysis was the design adopted for the study. The cross-sectional data were extrapolated with the

panel data (Armstrong, 2001). We took this approach because we intended to understand the extent to which the foreign aid induced investigative journalism practice could have impacted the country's global rankings beyond the period studied by Oyedele et al., (2018).

5.2. Measures

5.2.1. Dependent Variables

Nigeria's global competitiveness rankings within institutions, business sophistication and higher education and training pillars were the dependent variables. Sub-indexes within the institutions specifically formed the dependent variables under the institutions pillar, while the business sophistication overall ranking was adopted as the dependent variable for the economic status of the country. Organized crime and quality of education under the security sub-index and higher education and training respectively represented the dependent variables for crime and education rankings. These variables, according to the World Economic Forum, determine the relative capacity of countries to provide enabling environment for their citizens to succeed (World Economic Forum, 2017).

Table 1. Global Rankings Variable Description and Data Source

Variable	Description	Data Source
Diversion of public funds ¹	Efficiency and behaviour of public officeholders towards growth and development	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Public trust in politicians ¹	Efficiency and behaviour of public officeholders towards growth and development	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Irregular payments and bribes ¹	Efficiency and behaviour of public officeholders towards growth and development	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Favouritism in decisions of government officials ¹	Efficiency and behaviour of public officeholders towards growth and development	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Transparency of government policymaking ²	Commitment to open policy by the public officeholders	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Quality of education ²	Governments' behaviour towards growth and development of educational system and people in education	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Wastefulness of government spending ¹	Efficiency and behaviour of public officeholders towards growth and development	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017

Organised crime ¹	Efficiency and behaviour of public officeholders towards improved security and peace building	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017
Business sophistication ³	The quantity and quality of local suppliers and the extent of their interaction based on the enabling environment provided by the government	Global Competitiveness Index 2007-2017

- i. Sub-index under the main index of pillars
- ii. The main index under the pillars
- iii. Pillar

5.2.1. Independent Variable

The independent variable of this study was the foreign aid induced investigative journalism in which Nigerian independent news media reported sensitive national issues and their relatedness after receiving foreign assistance (Oyedele, et al., 2018). In all, there were five independent variables –accountability, corruption, crime, economy and education within national issues. Accountability, corruption and both constituted the variables for the relatedness. By this, we leveraged on Oyedele et al's (2018) relational categories. The conceptual (issues reported) and relational categories were used as values for the analysis separately for the independent variable.

Table 2. Foreign Aid Induced Investigative Journalism Practice Variable Description and Data Source

Variable	Description	Data Source
Accountability	Poor governance or administration involving untouchable newsmakers	Oyedele et al., (2018)
Crime	Criminal activities involving impervious newsmakers because they hold certain offices or are in highly placed positions	Oyedele et al., (2018)
Corruption	Financial or budgetary issues involving untouchable newsmakers because they hold certain offices or are in highly placed positions	Oyedele et al., (2018)
Economy	Sensitive economic issues involving untouchable newsmakers because they hold certain offices or are in highly placed positions	Oyedele et al., (2018)
Education	Educational problems involving untouchable newsmakers because they hold certain offices or are in highly placed positions	Oyedele et al., (2018)

6. Results

In this section, we first present summary of the results of Oyedele et al., (2018), which is the basis of the current study, before the presentation of the current study's results using the stated research hypotheses. Oyedele et al., (2018) found that the fund received by the media organisations and the training of the selected journalists improved the coverage of sensitive issues by 18%. The scholars also discovered that the journalists frequently stressed accountability, corruption and a combination of the two in their reportage of the sensitive socio-economic and political issues. These findings led us to the current findings presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

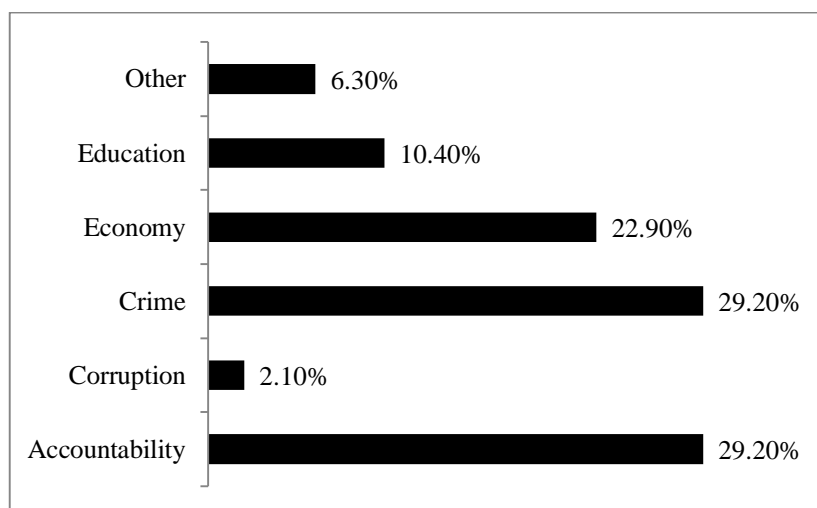


Figure 2. Sensitive Socio-Political Issues Reported after Training and Foreign Aid Intervention

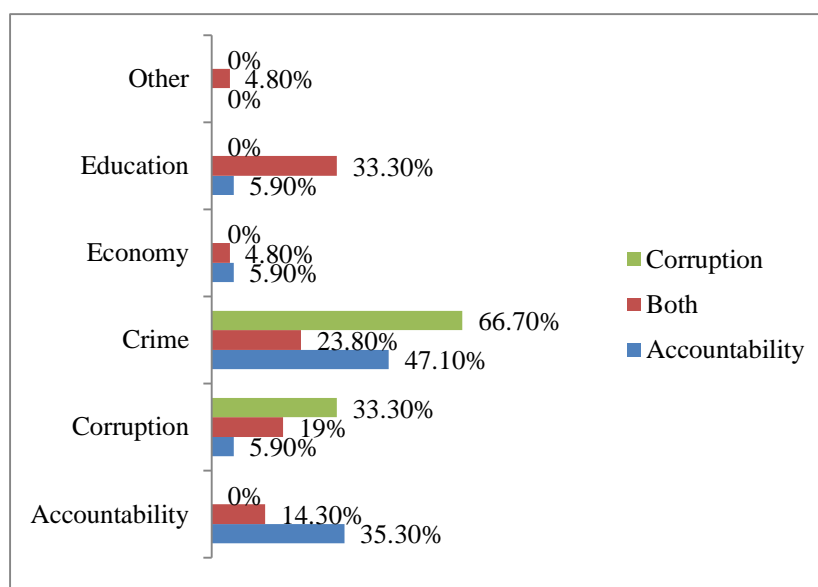


Figure 3. Issues Related with the Investigative News Reported after Training

Table 3. Correlation Coefficient for Foreign Aid Induced Investigative Journalism and Nigeria's Global Rankings

Foreign Aid Induced Reportage	Coefficient
Foreign Aid Induced Corruption Reportage	
Diversion of public funds	-.636*
Public trust in politicians	.136
Irregular payments and bribes	-.869**
Favouritism in decisions of government officials	-.152
Foreign Aid Induced Economy Reportage	
Business sophistication	-.277
Foreign Aid Induced Accountability Reportage	
Transparency of government policymaking	-.421
Wastefulness of government spending	-.264
Foreign Aid Induced Crime Reportage	
Organised crime	.003
Foreign Aid Induced Education Reportage	
Quality of education	-.643*

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The Pearson correlation results in the above Table 3 indicate the connection that foreign aid induced investigative journalism has with seven of the nine global rankings for Nigeria out of the nine studied. Foreign aid induced corruption reportage had a significant negative connection with diversion of public funds ($r = -.636$, $P <$

0.05) and irregular payments and bribes ($r=-.869$, $P<0.01$). The correlation was not significant for favouritism in the ranking of government officials' decisions ($r=-.152$, $P>0.05$). Foreign aid induced education reportage equally had a significant negative connection with the quality of education's ranking ($r=-.643$, $P<0.05$). However, the correlation was not significant for business sophistication ($r=-.277$, $P>0.05$), transparency of government policymaking ($r=-.421$, $P>0.05$) and wastefulness of government spending ($r=-.264$, $P>0.05$) under the reportage of economy and accountability respectively.

Table 4. Tests for Partial or Full Influence of Foreign Aid Induced Investigative Journalism on the Country's Global Rankings

Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised	T	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²
	B	S.E	Beta				
Accountability	-1.204	.992	-.394	-1.213	.260	0.155	.050
Corruption	-27.107	6.414	-.83.1	-4.226	.003	0.691	.652
Crime	0.001	0.159	0.003	0.008	.994	0.000	-.125
Economy	-.513	.629	-.277	-.817	.438	0.077	-.038
Education	-.532	.244	-.643	-2.373	.045	0.413	.340

Table 2 shows the outcomes of a simple linear regression carried out to ascertain the extent to which foreign aid induced investigative journalism impact Nigeria's global rankings. According to the data, a strong and significant predictor was found for corruption (69.1%) while induced investigative journalism partially influenced education (41.3%), accountability (15.5%) and economy (7.7%).

7. Discussion of Findings

The negativity of the foreign aid induced investigative journalism to the variables under the corruption and quality of education means that the higher the coverage of the corruption, education and their related issues, the more Nigeria's rankings in diversion of public funds, irregular payments and bribes, quality of education, and favouritism in decisions of government officials increased and decreased from 2008 to 2017. This is also obtainable for the business sophistication, transparency of government policymaking, and wastefulness of government spending but the extent to which they moved in negative direction with the foreign aid induced investigative journalism was not strong.

Our results could be situated within Sapkota's (2011), who found that globalization promotes human development and reduces poverty, an indication that reportage of sensitive issues by the media connected with the global rankings of country negatively could put governments on their toes to offer qualitative leadership and programmes to the citizenry. Our results also align with Guru, Manjappa, Radhika and Kumar's (2014) findings which established that globalization enhanced media consolidation in India.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

We have explored correlation and relationship between induced investigative journalism as globalization and country's global rankings in accountability, crime, corruption, economy and education. Findings have shown that foreign aid does not influence the media reportage of sensitive socio-economic and political alone but also has significant impact on how public and civil societies responded to global ranking institutions' measurement of good governance, corruption, economy and education. On the other hand, results have established that media foreign aid as globalization can only have high quantitative influence on corruption ranking of Nigeria having induced the independent media outlets and journalists towards quantitative reportage of the issue. The main lesson from the emerged results is that foreign donors used their system to restructure independent media outlets towards internationalization of sensitive socio-political issues reportage which contributed to the poor ratings of the country. Despite this, developing countries should not be afraid of globalization because evidence has shown that it has positive contributions.

However, this study might show deficiency by using two years to extrapolate the impact of foreign aid as globalization within the context of investigative journalism practice on country's ranking. In line with this, investigation of foreign aid trained investigative journalists in the years not covered by Oyedele et al., (2018) can result in a better interpretation of the findings of this study.

As the driver of development and growth in Nigeria, it is imperative for the Nigerian media and practitioners to report more sensitive socio-political issues towards improved or declined global rankings to enable governments and other concerned stakeholders make informed decisions on human, capital and infrastructure development in the country. Foreign donors, as enablers of media consolidation towards improved socio-economic and political development, need to reexamine their contributions by reducing the influence level on media systems.

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