

Managing Universities' Collaboration in a Globalized World

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Abstract— It has been widely argued that globalization has affected almost all aspects of human life. Rapid increasing of global trade and investment facilitated by advanced innovation in information and transportation technologies have brought the world becoming more and more interdependence resulted also in the rapid increasing of 'people on the move' and exchanges of goods and services between nations. A globalized world is a reality facing every human being, a reality which no one can predict its likely future, but many would agree that globalization is an irreversible reality, which despite ample opportunities it provides for the improvement, it also brings with it many adverse impact to human life. Education is one area where the paradox of globalization can't be avoided to occur. The asymmetric consequences of globalization on education sector can no longer be ignored. It is within this context that this paper would argue about the importance of managing universities collaboration and networking issues. Many have argued that establishing collaboration and building-up networking among universities is one among many answers to face the challenge of globalization on education. Collaboration and networking is needed to help the adaptation process of education system in order to deal with the impact of globalization. However, what short of collaboration and networking should be established. This paper argues that non-strategic collaboration and networking by universities often increased the widening gap of the world just as it occurs in the economic area as investments and trade controlled by developed nations. It is in an urgent need to take into consideration of building strategic partnership among universities as it manage collaboration and networking among them, a condition very much required in the current globalized world. A strategic partnership, this paper would further argue, is a kind of collaboration and networking established based on a principle of education for all; that education is a public good needed universally, while nations and universities in this respect can learn from each other regardless of stage of development.

Keywords—Education, Education Collaboration, Globalization, University Networking.

I. INTRODUCTION

As stated in the abstract, this paper would argue about the importance of collaboration and networking between universities in a current globalized world. It has to be, however, a strategic collaboration where the strategy should be established based on a principle of education as public good needed universally, and regardless of stage of development, work together under a common need.

The paper starts by reviewing the so-called perspectives on globalization where different arguments on the nature and impact of globalization will be revealed. This will be followed by an examination of impacts of globalization on education,

while the last part contains arguments about the importance of building strategic partnership among universities, a condition very much required in a current globalized world.

II. PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBALIZATION

Globalization here is generally defined as "the reality shaped by an increasingly integrated world economy, new information and communications technology (ICT) that leads to the emergence of an international knowledge network" and this reality has been very much supported by "the role of the English language, and other forces beyond the control of academic institutions" (Altbach, et al, 2009).

David Held, Anthony Mc Grew, David Golbart, and Jonathan Perraton (1999) have eloquently identified three perspectives on globalization, namely the hyperglobalist, the skeptical, and the transformationalist. Each perspective provides a general conceptual contour of globalization and proposes different arguments regarding general factors behind globalization and its overall impacts on development.

For the hyperglobalist, globalization is a new epoch in human history. It is characterized by the declining relevance and authority of nation-states, brought about largely through the economic logic of global market. What has been happening, according to this perspective, is 'economies are becoming denationalized'.

However, authors within the hyperglobalist camp not always have a similar opinion when they assess the value of changes caused by globalization. Although they may agree on the general factors behind globalization and it's likely outcome, there seems no agreement on whether the forces of globalization are good or bad. For example, while the neo-liberal tends to see it as good forces, the neo-marxist sees it the other way around.

With increasing international trade, the neo-liberal hyperglobalists argue that economic growth will be pushed up and this in turn will help equality (Wolf, 2005) which in the process would also help downsize poverty (Bhagwati, 2004). According to this view, equally, globalization stimulates movement of investments internationally and therefore helping the increasing of economic growth (Singh, 2005). Furthermore, it is argued that liberal policy regime through free-trade is good for economic growth and development, good for poverty reduction, and equally good for keeping a lid on income inequality.

In short, increasing globalization through widening of international trade and expansion of capital and investment means more opportunities for employment and jobs; provides equal opportunities for achieving economic growth, a requirement needed for the distribution of income equality,

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which is a tool for poverty reduction, and all lead to increasing development, future prosperity for the people of the world. Nearly all countries have a comparative advantage in one way or another so that every nation could be a winner in tapping economic benefits under globalization. However, the neo-marxist within the hyperglobalist sees this with high suspicion, believing that global capitalism only creates and reinforces inequalities between nations.

Contrast to the above perspective, the skeptical perspective views current international process as more by fragmented and regionalized than globalized. According to the skeptical perspective, current processes of globalization show at best regionalization. It is argued that most part of developing countries have been increasingly marginalized under globalization. Scholars within this perspective also see global capitalism as a myth, because states are still important though corporations are getting more influential too.

Furthermore, skeptical perspective rejects the notion of the development of global culture and global governance structure. They mostly argue that the hyperglobalists are over optimistic in seeing the positive impact of globalization. As a matter of fact, critics contend that inequality in and between nations and poverty are not only still prevalent throughout the world, but in fact tend to increase too since 1980 (Dollar, 2007). If China is excluded from the economic growth often used by the globalists (Wade, 2007) then the story of the world economic growth would tell different story about the world equality and poverty reduction (LeGrain, 2003).

In short, true that globalization brings more opportunities, but that would only good for those who are ready enough to compete and gain more from the competitive nature of globalization and less or maybe none for those who are not ready to compete in the globalized world.

Fundamentally differs from the two previous perspectives is the transformationalist perspective, which is on the opinion that there is no single cause behind globalization and the outcome of processes of globalization is not determined. The skeptic authors argue that the power of national governments is growing. They tend to agree that a new world order is developing, but its exact nature is still not clear yet. The transformationalist is basically aware about positive opportunities provided by globalization, but also sees its adverse negative effect, and therefore generally suggests finding prudent policies that needs to be considered in order to be able to take advantages from the opportunities opened by globalization, while at the same time reduce its adverse impacts. It is within this argument that a strategic position is important, because 'strategy' is key answer for survival in the continuing globalization process.

True that globalization can be seen from different perspectives. One thing is certain, however, that due to its nature and scale, the potential effects of globalization are many and far-reaching. Globalization has major implications on regional and national economies, and in turn, affect economic growth, resources availability, and even the role of the states.

III. GLOBALIZATION & EDUCATION

Globalization, a key reality in the 21st century, has already profoundly influenced higher education. The key word is internationalization where various policies and programs are adopted by universities and governments and implement it as a respond to the phenomenon of globalization. These policies are typically include sending students to study abroad, setting up a branch campus overseas, or engaging in some type of inter-institutional partnership. Indeed, universities have always been affected by international trends and to a certain degree operated within a broader international community of academic institutions, scholars, and research. (Altbach, et al, 2009).

However, education is one area where the paradox of globalization can't be avoided to occur. Just like in the area of economy, the asymmetric consequences of globalization on education sector can no longer be ignored. This is due to the fact that education, long has been regarded as a public good, increasingly becoming part of an industrial service sector, where nations compete to each other in order to get the best out of education, which in the current globalized world becoming a 'commodity' that can be traded just like other economic commodities (Willem te Velde, 2005).

Furthermore, the 21st century realities have magnified the importance of the global context. A universal means of instantaneous contact and simplified scientific communications have been formed due to increasing advanced of information and communications technologies. At the same time, however, these global changes "ave helped to concentrate ownership of publishers, databases, and other key resources in the hands of the strongest universities and some multinational companies, located almost exclusively in the developed world" (Altbach, et al, 2009).

Consequently, education in a globalized world would slowly contribute to the asymmetric consequences leading to wider division among nations. As a result, education deficits currently not only "can hinder a society in isolation", but educational deficits "can be even more detrimental to a country's economy and development" (Bloom, 2006). As a matter of fact, one out of ten great global crises that needs global solution is access to education, while nine others are climate change, communicable diseases, conflicts, financial stability, governance and corruption, malnutrition and hunger, migration, sanitation and access to clean water, subsidies and trade barriers (Lomborg, ed., 2004).

Tullao, Jr (2003) contends that as the consequence of globalization, the traditional institutions are broke down because globalization has brought about unequal consequences. He then identifies areas of higher education where globalization has had its effects, and those are in the areas of enrolment, governance structure, functions, roles, and delivery (Tullao, 2003: 4-8). But most important is when Tullao assert that "the impact of globalization on education in developing countries becomes more pronounced by widening of the knowledge gap brought about by technological divide" where many "in developing countries may not be able to exploit the tremendous opportunities offered by the explosion of knowledge and the benefits of the ICT revolution because of insufficient resources" (Tullao, 2003: 8).

For some the impact of globalization on higher education offers exciting new opportunities for study and research no longer limited by national boundaries. For others, especially those in the developing countries, the trend represents an assault on national culture and autonomy. Globalization has reshaped education policy in many developing countries. The growth of knowledge and technology has been affected critically by the process of globalization. This process requires national government, especially those in developing countries to reform higher education sector in order to meet the needs of a global academic industry.

The impacts of globalization to higher education in developing countries are multiple. First, different from education in developed world that aims to enhance the existing educational system, globalization in developing countries transforms the society through education that would bring them closer to those in the developed countries. As a result of lack educational framework, developing countries need assistance from developed one to reform their educational system. International agencies play a significant role in helping the developed countries to change the national education system through variety of development packages that is not specifically designed according to the needs of each nation. This is particularly true for the developing nations experiencing troublesome such as poor governance, financial crisis, political turbulence and so on. The real example is the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) injected by the IMF during the recovery period in many countries that was badly hit by the financial crisis. In fact, many countries are heavily in debt and resulting increased poverty and dependency to richer nations, despite the IMF's claim that they will uplift the people's life. Thus many people could not afford to pursue higher education, even for primary education. Indonesia provides a good example for this. Some African governments in the 1980s and 1990s also suffer from forced deregulation, resulted in disastrous for growth and the well being of millions of people (Emeagwali, 2011, 1).

Second, neoliberal globalization drives local wisdom away from the people towards a global values set up by global actors. By submitting education according to global rules propagates by the world culture theorists¹ (Kathryn 2003, 1), means local context should be abandoned so that the goal setting up by the global actors is attained. These actors have constructed certain ways perceived as "right" that should be followed by others without appreciating local, existing frameworks. Hegemonic nature of global culture resulted in a moral and a social dilemma of fundamental consequence for some local cultures (Morgan 2005, 4).

Third, driven high demand of 'international' status, many local universities suffer from collapsing as a result from

¹ Kathryn (2003, 1) contends, there are two very different perspectives on schooling around the world. One is comparative education theorists who emphasize national variation; Second, world culture theorists who believe to the model of modern mass education spread from a common source. They also certain that schools around the world are becoming more similar over time. Education is rather converging toward a single global model than diverging.

foreign universities operating across border. Some major universities have successfully managed to "open branch" in other countries and operate as a niche/sister universities. Better service, facilities and quality of these universities have won many local people attention. Parents send their children to these university branches in hoping to experience a brighter future. In Indonesia's case, as result of deregulation in higher education, foreign universities are welcome to establish branches in big cities. People with high level income who previously ready to afford for national private universities, prefer to send their children to these universities since they don't need to state universities with a highly competitive test.

Fourth, different education system among countries complicates with different economic level, creating a wide gap in academic world in developed and developing countries. Higher education in developed countries perceived as the source of knowledge production and centre of excellence, whereas those in developing countries are considered as users. Hence, in Immanuel Wallerstein word, this lag has created a 'centre-periphery' dichotomy. University rank has always placed universities from the 'centre' in top position since they can assure quality of education. Whereas, universities from developing countries, due to low economic wealth, they suffer from poor academic performance and have limited opportunity to grab equal position with those come from developed countries.

The globalization of education in the last decade can be observed from significant increasing in numbers of programs and institutions operating internationally (Altbach, et al, 2009). Branches of reputable higher institutions from developed countries are established in developing countries. The problem is that opportunities to engage internationally from most resource-deprived institutions are very limited. In fact, according to Altbach, et al (2009) that "inequality among national higher education systems as well as within countries has increased in the past several decades." As the result of all these: "The academic world has always been characterized by centers and peripheries" where "The strongest universities, usually because of their research prowess and reputation for excellence, are seen as centers" and "The wealth of nations and universities plays a key role in determining the quality and centrality of a university or academic system". (Altbach, et al, 2009). The ending is clear; most developing countries and its higher institutions are at a significant disadvantage.

IV. STRATEGIC COLLABORATION & NETWORKING

In facing the situation of education in globalization, this paper sees collaboration and networking among universities is an urgent need in order to channel the effect of globalization more on the positive side. Following the arguments examining the implications of globalization, there would be various ways where collaboration and networking among universities can be established.

However, there seemed to be two general trends, namely standardization and harmonization of higher education. The former tend to emphasize on the establishment of mechanism where higher education needs to be 'standardized' based on the best practices achieved by many higher educational institutions or universities in developed countries, meaning

that those at the developing countries follow the path of those at the developed countries. Harmonization, on the other hand, preserves to maintain the 'unique characteristic' of each institution.

The paper argues that the problem from following the harmonization path is the readiness of universities in developing countries to compete in this globalized world. Insufficient resources for that competition would end up in asymmetric situation because of inabilities of universities in developing countries to exploit the tremendous opportunities offered by the explosion of knowledge and the benefits of the ICT revolution in the current globalization era.

Therefore, the best possible way is collaborating via harmonization path, but taking into consideration a principle that nations and universities in this respect can learn from each other regardless of stage of development. It is true that competition by the globalization of the world would also occur in the field of education where universities become agents involved in these competitions. Consequently, a movement toward standardization of education cannot be avoided, but it should be going through harmonization path first.

It is in this point that universities need to underline that a strategic partnership requires parties involved to treat each other equal. It is only with this principle that collaboration and networking on education can be used as a mechanism by universities where the adverse of globalization can be minimized.

V. CONCLUSION

It is clear that globalization has had major impacts on education globally. Increasing influence of globalization has been far-reaching. The market and economic nature of globalization have also driven industrialization of education globally. The wealth of nations and universities plays a key role in determining the quality and centrality of a university or academic system. Consequently, most developing countries with many of their higher institutions are placed in a very difficult situation.

This situation calls for the need of establishing a strategic collaboration and networking that requires taking into considerations right balance between the principles of standardization and harmonization. Failing to obtain this balance means that asymmetric impacts of globalization on education for developed and developing countries would continue.

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