Globalization and Some of Its Impact on Education and Culture

(Dr. Mohd Abbas Abdul Razak)
Department of General Studies
Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciecnces
maarji2020@yahoo.com

Abstract

Globalization and Some of Its Impact on Muslim Education and Culture

In the history of Islam, the fall of Baghdad in 1258 indicates the decline of the Islamic empires. The fall of the empires also marked the fall of the Islamic civilization and intellectualism. As the Islamic empires fell one after another, starting with Baghdad, this left the Muslims in a pathetic condition, hardly able to regain the prestigious position once they held on the world stage. The internal conflicts within the Ummah, also in a way failed them in making any significant contribution during the great Industrial Revolution that happened in the West. After that, Western colonization of Muslim lands, to some extent deprived them the success of reconstructing and regaining the great civilization once they had during their heydays. Evers since the fall of Baghdad, the Muslims are constantly bombarded with challenges they have to face in maintaining their faith, culture and heritage. In modern times, after their independence, one of the serious problems they have to face is globalization. Globalization which started some time ago is an ongoing thing that cannot be stopped. It is a multi-faceted phenomenon which ramifies into all areas of the human life. Since the idea of globalization is a thing that comes from the rich and affluent countries of the West, many in the developing and third world countries welcome it with much delight as it offers them a great deal in terms of capital flow which promises prosperity. Others perceive it with a doubtful and skeptical attitude by questioning as to what are the hidden agendas of globalization. To them, globalization is a new agenda of the West to re-colonize the East. It is seen as a new approach of how the Western hegemony can be imposed on the political, economic, social, cultural and other aspects of the people in the East, particularly in the Muslim world. In the light of the present world scenario, this paper intends to explore what globalization is all about, what sort of impact it has on the Islamic civilization, very particularly in the areas of education and culture. Since globalization is irreversible, the paper also aims at discussing on how the Muslim countries should strategize in facing the ferocious onslaught of the tidal waves of globalization that have touched their shores.

Keywords: Globalization, Impact, Education, Culture & Re-colonization

Introduction

At the moment globalization is a buzz word in everyone's lips. Since two decades ago until today, this topic has caught the attention of many concerned people worldwide, governments, scholars at the academia, business community worldwide, economists, students, NGOs'(non-governmental organizations) and others who have been conducting research on the intricate issues that are interwoven around globalization. Seminars, dialogues, conferences and other sorts of meetings held by governments and universities on the issues of globalization all over the world are mainly concerned on its benefits and disadvantages. Besides that, in the international forums, the most discussed and debated issue is on the question of who will be the real gainers and losers of globalization. By identifying the winners and losers, governments and concerned parties can prepare themselves well to make strategic plans to meet the challenges they have to face with the coming tides of globalization. Most scholars state that globalization is something devised by the West and directed towards the developing and underdeveloped countries of the

world. It ramifies into many areas of the human lives like economics, politics, culture, sociology, etc.

Globalization has happened and it is an ongoing process. It is a multi-faceted phenomenon, which goes into all areas of human life. Since globalization comes from the rich and affluent countries of the West, countries that comes under the categories of the developing and underdeveloped countries are skeptical as to whether they can benefit from it. Within this paper the researcher would like to explore some of the definitions of globalization and how globalization has affected the culture and aims of education in the countries in the East. Besides that, this paper also intends to identify how Western culture penetrates into the Eastern culture through globalization. Finally the paper discusses on the issues as to whether globalization can be regarded as colonization in disguise.

The Golden Age of the Muslims

During the Golden Age of Islam (750-1258), Muslims were in the forefront in conquering knowledge through scientific research, exploration and expeditions. In their pursuit of mastering new knowledge and technology, Muslims were prepared and open to the idea of learning all that is positive from the earlier civilizations. As such they borrowed ideas from the Indians, Persians and Greeks as a way of enriching their own civilization. While pioneering into many scientific research works, Muslims were also equally interested in mastering Greek philosophical thoughts and the human sciences. The zeal they had for philosophy brought them closer to the ideas of the ancient philosophers like Socrates (469BC-399BC), Plato (427BC-347BC), Aristotle (384BC-322BC) and others.[1]

In realizing the fact that not all ideas of the Greek philosophers were acceptable to their Islamic worldview, early Muslim scholars used the approach of adopt, adapt and assimilate or integrate. Through this methodology, the early Muslim scholars took all those ideas which were non-contradictory to their religious values and faith. The scholars of the Golden Age of Islam not only borrowed ideas from others but they went on to further expand and come up with some new, original and innovative ideas. This was the spirit and culture of learning that was prevalent during the early Muslim era of knowledge expansion and exploration. Similarly, Western scholars too had borrowed ideas from Muslim scholars during the Golden Age of the Muslims. Europeans learnt philosophical ideas of the Greek from the translated and annotated works done by the Muslim scholars. Moreover, they also learnt from many pioneering works done by Muslim scholars and scientists in the field of medicine, astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, algebra, trigonometry, etc. At the moment, only a few Western scholars duly acknowledge the

[1]Mohd Abbas (2011), *Contribution of Iqbal's dynamic personality theory to Islamic psychology: A contrastive analysis with Freud and selected mainstream western psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.
-Imron Rossidy (1998), *An analysis of al-Attas' and al-Faruqi's conceptions of Islamization of knowledge: implications for Muslim education*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

great contribution made by the Muslims in inspiring and introducing the West towards science and scientific explorations.[2]

Much of the scholastic works accomplished during the Golden Age of the Muslims were either diminished or came to a standstill during the Mongols invasion of Baghdad led by Hulagu Khan (1217-1265) in 1258. During the Mongols invasion, not only great numbers of Muslims were butchered, but also their libraries with large volumes of books and original manuscripts were burnt to ashes. The era between the fall of Baghdad and the European colonization of Muslim lands in the 18th and 19th centuries kept the Muslim scholars occupied in their own polemic in the area of Islamic jurisprudence. In addition to this, they were also busy bickering and discrediting one another.[3] This condition held them back from advancing any further in the field of science and technology. This situation persisted for very long in the Muslim world even during the dawn of the Industrial Revolution in Britain. During the Industrial Revolution, the West had managed to advance many steps ahead in the areas of science and research, leaving the Muslim world lagging behind. The Muslims who earlier did many pioneering works in the field of science either produced little or showed no progress in their research works while the Europeans made giant strides in science during the Industrial Revolution.[4] (Mahathir Mohamed, 2003).

In modern times, the brunt of Western subjugation on Muslim countries is still obviously seen in how these countries are impoverished and left behind in the many sectors of nation building. The educational and technological gaps created by colonization are huge and noticeable when compared to the rich and affluent countries in the West. Though at the moment all Muslim countries are liberated and some in spite of having rich natural resources is still no where closer of being on par with the advanced nations of the world. In a way colonization has also made Muslim countries very much dependent on the West, particularly in the areas of knowledge, science and technology. In turn, this state of dependence has given the West an advantage in maintaining their control over their former colonies from afar. Colonization in the modern era is no longer physical in nature but more of controlling the hearts and minds of the people in the developing and third world countries. This new form of colonization, better known as neo-colonialism is done via the use of modern means of telecommunication that do not require the colonizers to be physically present in the countries of their interest. The latest form of control used by the West in imposing its supremacy over the East is through globalization. Many experts in area of globalization indicated that this term actually refers to re-colonization in the subtle form.

---

[2] Mohd Abbas (1997), *Human nature: A comparative study between western and Islamic psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Hasan Langgulung, Hasan (1981), *Beberapa tinjauan dalam pendidikan Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Pustaka Antara.
[3] Mohd Abbas (1997), *Human nature: A comparative study between western and Islamic psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.
[4] Mahathir Mohamed, (2003). *Globalisation and the new realities*. Subang Jaya,Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications (M) Sdn. Bhd.

What is Globalization?
According to Kilminster, the word Globalization first appeared in the Webster's English Dictionary in 1961. Going back to history, the word Globalization was first coined by Roland Robertson. This scholar believes that globalization is a pre-modern phenomenon that has already started in the fifteenth century with the European colonial policy of expansionism to subjugate most parts of Asia and Africa. Through colonialism the Western superpowers then tried to expand their power and influence on the underdeveloped countries in the world. The motto behind the coming of the Western powers was based on their three Gs'; gold, glory and gospel. With regard to the last mentioned, the Europeans were driven by the zeal and passion for the propagation of Christianity (mainly the Catholic version of Christianity) to the Asians and Africans whom they thought were steep in their animistic beliefs.[5]

With the coming of the Western powers to Asia and to other parts of the world, they brought along their culture, custom, and language, system of administration, law and order in having their hegemony over the countries that came under their control. When they managed to establish themselves through all these means that was the time that they imposed their hegemony on the inhabitants of the countries they had colonized. As to the moral issue, whether it was good to colonize another country, the Westerners have always justified that the countries that they had gone in are either primitive or underdeveloped. As such, their presence there is to provide knowledge, education, culture, religion, progress and development. On the whole, the Europeans justified their act of colonizing others as a process of civilizing the uncivilized people of the world.

In addition to the historical evidence to the topic of globalization, Jan Aart Scholte[6] gives various meaning to the word globalization. In his opinion, there are five broad definitions to the word globalization. The first one explains that globalization is another word for internationalization. This definition explains the growth in international exchange and interdependence among the countries in the world. Next he explained globalization as liberalization. Through liberalization, countries remove restrictions on the movement of capital from one country to another by applying 'open', 'borderless' economy. The third meaning to the word globalization means universalization. In this context, globalization is a process of spreading various objects and experience to people living in the four corners of the world. The fourth, meaning to globalization is referred to Westernization or modernization (to the Americans it is the Americanization of the world community). Through the Westernization process, the pre-existing culture in the underdeveloped countries is replaced with the Western culture. The last definition given by Scholte explains globalization as deterritorialization. This concept explains that incidents and events that happen in one region of the world is not confined to a particular region but they are being transported and shared by other regions of the world through modern means of telecommunications.
Finally, the modern day experts in the studies of globalization expound that globalization means free flow of capital, people, news and information via electronic media from one country to another, without being subjected to any form of restriction imposed by governments in the world. Globalization explains the scenario whereby people of the world live in a borderless world

---

[5] David Block & Deborah Cameron(2002), *Globalization and Language Teaching*,London: UK:Routledge,p.2
[6] Jan Aart Scholte in http://www.infed.org/biblio/defining globalization, Retrieved: 10th August,2011

without any geographical restrictions and the world will be transformed into a single global village.

The Changing Aims of Education

Education long ago in the distant past which started as a private enterprise was at the beginning mainly concerned in producing man with knowledge and skills for his well-being and for his salvation in the hereafter. Definitely this was true during the Western medieval time and in the early Islamic era after the time of the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). As political systems and boundaries and demarcation lines differentiating one country from the other were drawn, governments' involvement in education came to be seen clearly through the establishment of the public schools.[7] The reason for such an involvement seen by the government was to have a good grip on its citizens. By having a hold on its citizens, the government was able to have a common ideology inculcated and transferred on to its citizens. As a result of this effort a common patriotic feeling was expected on the part of the citizens towards the nation-state. With this aim, nations around the world carved out plans for their citizens to be imbued in the knowledge of citizenship. This was thought by the authorities as a means to enhance the individual's cohesiveness with others in the society. In turn, such an effort is expected to bring unity among its citizens for having common goals in the hearts and minds of its citizens.

In conclusion, the idea of having public schools was to see education as means of transmitting knowledge, skills expertise, values, civilization, language, culture, customs and religion from one generation to the other. To the question of what education is all about can be well understood by the following definition:

> Any process, either formal or informal, that shapes the potential of a maturing organism. Informal education results from the constant effect of environment, and its strength in shaping values and habits cannot be overestimated. Formal education is a conscious effort by human society to impart the skills and modes of thought considered essential for social functioning. Techniques of instruction often reflect the attitudes of society, i.e., authoritarian groups typically sponsor dogmatic methods, while democratic systems may emphasize freedom of thought.[8]

All these lofty ideals and ideas of education that started with the establishment of public schools are now being overshadowed or overridden by the relentless pounding currents of globalization. Though the old ideals of education are still there, much of today's perception on education and the reason why parents sent their children to school has somehow been forgotten due to globalization and modern day lifestyle. Living in a modern and globalized world, education has been sought and seen as a passport for achieving good life that promises material gains. Much of the emphasis of the lofty ideals and ideas that have been there all the while as the aims of education is slowly disappearing. Though it is not wrong all together to seek knowledge for

---

[7] Nicholas C. Burbules & Carlos Alberto Torres(2000), *Globalization and Education*, New York:USA:Routledge,p.3

[8] Online Encyclopedia, http://education. yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry/education, Retrieved: 10th August,2011.

material gains, but to be solely motivated to seek material gains through education and learning makes the seeker of knowledge less concerned for the community and the well-being of the nation state. People of a country become more individualized and egocentric. As this concept towards education expands, it will certainly create problems to the existence of a country in terms of having a common goal and national identity as a people belonging to a single nation.

Impact on Education
Explosion of knowledge and information in the era of information technology has somehow helped the globalization of education. The introduction of computers and internet and other technology-mediated learning through the use of VCD, CD-Rom, Email, E-Chat, database, webpage, LMS, digital library, etc have helped in the dissemination of information and knowledge to millions around the world. The emergence of technology-mediated learning has revolutionized the teaching and learning process. For instance, through the digital library, a researcher can get access to books and research works done in other parts of the world without having the need to travel.[9] He has the opportunity to view articles, journals and other literary works with the help of his computer and the internet. Through the use of internet, VCD, course-wares and other electronics gadgets the learner can get access to knowledge and information twenty-four hours in a day without having to go and attend lectures in the lecture-halls. The development in the information technology has also challenged the Islamic scholars and experts in technology to employ the latest technology in teaching and learning of Islamic Studies. At present, lessons on Islamic Studies have been made available in VCDs, DVDs and CD-ROMs. Modern means of Islamic propagation and knowledge has been made available through the Internet and web-pages.

Although this scientific and innovative way of learning has made modern man to get access to knowledge and information fast and efficient, the downside of this means of getting knowledge has made people learn in a more personalized way which cuts off much of their interaction with the community/society and drive them more towards material gains. This idea has been heralded long ago, by a well-reputed psychologist:

> Modern man is alienated from himself, from his fellow men, and from nature. He has been transformed into a commodity, experiences his life forces as an investment which must bring him the maximum profit obtainable under existing market conditions.[10]

Another aspect that is missing in the personalized form of learning is the interaction with the tutor or teacher. The proponents of teacher and student face-to-face interaction believe that it is very important for the leaner to get acquainted with the teacher by physically being present in front of him. Besides that, raw information and data can be more meaningful when they are properly explained by the teacher.

---

[9] Douglas Kellner(2000), "Globalization and New Social Movements: Lessons for Critical Theory and Pedagoggy" in *Globalizaion and Education*(ed). Nicholas C. Burbules & Carlos Alberto Torres, New York: USA: Routledge, pp.299-321.

[10] Eric Fromm(1995), *The Art of Living. London:* Thorsons,p.67

> We live in a human space where proximity between teacher and students make tangible communication possible. Body language, tone of voice, personality and emotion are all indispensable elements in the formal activity of instruction. More than the facts, we need the elusive intimation of how they are being received, comprehended and evaluated. Teachers convey more than the subject matter under discussion. No matter what the topic they also embody something of what it means to be a human being.[11]

The above is very true with the teaching of Islam, especially in the learning of the holy Qur'an and other serious understanding of the faith and practical aspects of Islam for those who are new to the religion and for those practicing Muslims who are still at their basic level of understanding the religion.

Along with the wave of globalization, western universities realized that a great opportunity was available in the third world countries, particularly in Asia and Africa, which were once the colonies of the West, to open campuses there. Many foreign universities and colleges came to sell their education, and their degrees and diplomas to the local students in the third world countries which generates huge some of profit for their educational enterprise. Besides that, distance learning and twinning programmes were also offered by the foreign universities in the developing countries. As a result of this, the cost of gaining access to higher education has risen tremendously. Due to higher fee structure, local students from the lower income group in the third world countries find it difficult in getting a tertiary education. At many time these universities are mainly driven by market forces. As such they offer courses to cater for the job market.

English as a Dominant Language

Due to the establishment of foreign universities, and the use of software developed in the Western countries, the internet and other technology-mediated learning have made the learning and mastering of English as an inevitable thing for the people in the developing and underdeveloped countries. A case to state, in Malaysia in the year 2003, to meet the challenges of globalization, the government introduced the teaching of mathematics and science using English as a medium of instruction. This ruling by the Ministry of Education in the country, made teachers teaching the subjects to get a mastery of English, the use of internet, computer software and skill. This ambitious mission on the part of the Malaysian government caused it a great deal of money in training the teachers and in providing all the logistics to be used in their classroom teaching. This innovative classroom teaching using computers, LCD projectors and internet was viewed by the government as an enhancement to the oldest technology available in the teaching profession that is the use of blackboard and chalk. In spite of the smooth running of the programme, due to the pressure exerted by the Malay linguists and political activists, the Malaysian government decided to revert to the old way of teaching the two subjects by the year 2012.

---

[11] David Walsh (1999), "Plato Meets Technology" in *Washington Post*, 14th September 1999, p. A29

The greater usage of English in the underdeveloped and developing countries in the world has created lucrative business for the publishing houses in the United Kingdom and United States. These publishing houses in these countries are the feeder and provider of the relevant books, software and other materials needed by those countries that want to use English as a medium in disseminating knowledge and information. Once again, in looking into who are the real gainers if English becomes that dominant language, surely without any doubt one would say that it is the West.

Besides that the impact of the media or communication technology is so powerful and it has great influence on the masses of a country. People can be emotionally awakened within a short span of time through news disseminated through the media. A few examples can be mentioned on how powerful the media can be when utilized as a tool for the propagation of news and information. The Algerian people's revolution seeking independence against the French rule was successfully done with the aid of the radio broadcast. Lenin too was successful in propagating communist ideology by using film as a powerful media in achieving his ambition. The third example to quote was the Iranian revolution that overthrew the mighty Shah of Iran. This people's revolution was able to defeat the tyrant Shah by merely using audio-tapes that carried the voice of Imam Khomeini who was at that time living in exile in France. This revolution was actually a great success in the history of the last century, in getting rid of injustice done by Shah to his people. Last but not least, the prodemocracy movement in China which gathered large number of students at Tiananmen Square protesting against the communist rule was also done through the use of computer bulletin boards and network. Although the prodemocracy movement was crushed down by the Chinese government, at the end, this movement has sent a message to the communist regime of how powerful the media can be as an instrument if given a chance in mobilizing the masses for a common cause.[12]

Not only the coming of globalization has made English as a dominant language of the world but it has also marginalized many local languages in Asia and Africa. Consciously or unconsciously, the learning of English language as an international language has brought foreign culture and way of living to most countries in the East and to other parts of the world in general. This invasion of foreign culture and way of life can obviously be seen in the way the young ones (the third generation of citizens) talk and dress in the countries that have attained independence from the West. This is also true with many youth in many Muslim countries. Muslim youths nowadays like to put on T-shirt which carries symbols and labels that are obscure in manner and wear jeans which are cut intentionally to expose parts of their body to be seen by others. Many Muslim scholars are of the opinion that such a manner of dressing as immoral and un-Islamic in nature. Besides the dress, the youngsters too like to eat fast food like KFC and McDonald, drink Coca-Cola and entertain themselves by watching American movies. All these behaviors and preference for American items and way of life is causing the local culture to slowly disappear substituting

---

[12] Douglas Kellner(2000), "Globalization and New Social Movements: Lessons for Critical Theory and Pedagoggy" in *Globalizaion and Education*(ed). Nicholas C. Burbules & Carlos Alberto Torres, New York: USA: Routledge, pp.299-321.

with foreign culture. In the process of globalization, the changing life-style of the people of the underdeveloped countries indirectly makes them adopt and apply the foreign value systems. This in turn has caused the local and Islamic value system to slowly diminish as it comes under the onslaught of the Western culture and value system.

Impact on Culture

The proponents of globalization argue that it has brought rapid development to many parts of the world by bringing people in the third world countries out of their backwardness and old ideas, and put them on par with the people of the developed countries in the world. According to Chandra, the proponents of globalization highlight the following positive aspects of globalization:

1. Foreign direct investment (FDI) has helped to reduce poverty by creating jobs and improving incomes.
2. The expansion of trade and foreign investment has accelerated social mobility and strengthened the middle class.
3. New communication and information technology have helped disseminate knowledge in many fields of study and disciplines.
4. Communication is cheaper and easier. Costs of telephone call as well as travel have fallen.
5. This makes it easier to understand one another. Communities, although heterogeneous, can be more cooperative now and there are more means of understanding each other.
6. Globalization makes it possible for humanity to have compassion for each other when calamities-natural or man-made-affect others.
7. Issues such as human rights, public accountability and problems faced by women are brought to the fore and addressed.
8. The rights of women are highlighted and the problems many women face are now addressed.
9. All of these are conducive to religious teachings. [13]

In the Muslim world, scholars can generally be classified into two main groups with regards to the issue of globalization. The first group claims that globalization is not too bad and idea as it has some positive contribution in terms of trade and direct foreign investment creating plentiful job opportunities in the underdeveloped and developing nations. The second group deems globalization as bad because it is a Western idea or ideology that works well to their benefit. According to this group, globalization is actually colonization in disguise. They further believe that the West has not changed in their mindset in their ambition like in the past which brought them ploughing the waves to subjugate the East in greed of power, riches and dominance over the weak and downtrodden. Through their direct subjugation of the East and Africa, they have managed to plunder all the wealth of the under-privileged countries. Globalization as seen by these scholars is nothing new than the old colonization, except it is done in a more subtle manner, from distance by using sophisticated media like cable and satellite TV, internet and

---

[13] Chandra Muzaffar(2002),"Globalization and Religion: Some Reflection", http://www.islamoline.net,Retrieved : 19 October,2004.

other modern means of communications. In describing the nature and contents of globalization designed by the West, Mohd Kamal has candidly explained in these words:

> Facing the challenges of globalization with all the negative impacts of Americanization, secularization, materialism, neo-imperialism, debt-bondage to World Bank and IMF, unilateralism, militant liberal capitalism, global media conglomerates' manipulation and deception, impoverishment and homogenization of culture, bullying by the powerful, imposed liberalization, dominance of the global market, international and regional competition, commodification of education, environmental degradation, moral decadence, high tech crime, violence and war-all these and more at a time when the Muslim world is divided, weak and poor.[14]

Going deep into contemplation and analysis of what has been stated by Mohd Kamal will reveal that globalization has brought Western culture and way of life to the East and to the rest of the world. At many times these values are atheistic in nature that does not regard the Supremacy of God Almighty. Through globalization, secularism practiced by the West is also transported to the homes and minds of the people in the East, disrupting their Islamic and Eastern family core-values that are already there in existence. Secularism is a way of life that separates things and actions into two-all that belongs to God and all that belongs to the state. The two states of affair cannot mix. The dichotomy that is prevalent in their everyday life gives people in the West to think of God only when they are in the places of worship and when they are elsewhere, they can behave and do anything and everything that suit their selfish desires. Such a philosophy of life is very opposed and contradictory to the Islamic and Eastern life style where people live very much attached to their religious beliefs.

Another important thing about globalization that is contradictory to the religion of Islam is the Western idea that states education should be value-free. Knowledge and education are sought for knowledge and it does not link the individual with God almighty. In Islam, knowledge is sought for self-improvement that humbles down man in the presence of his Creator. Knowledge is sought for the enlightenment of the human soul that brings man closer to God. In contrast to the Islamic concept of seeking knowledge, most people in the West believe that knowledge is value-free. Other than this, the Western attitude of non-judgmental in the things they see, acquire, experience and assess is not applicable in the context of the Muslim society. Islam calls on the Muslims to take a stand by being judgmental. One has to be clear in his mind as to what are the things that have been approved and shunned by the Qur'an and the Sunnah with regards to the human relationship. By referring to the religious guidelines, one can easily distinguish between what is good and permissible and what is bad and should be avoided.

Parents, teachers and religious leaders in many Muslim countries fear that the call by proponents of globalization that states free flow of information, can be really detrimental to the family and

---

[14] Mohd Kamal Hassan (2003), "Setting the Muslim Mindset in Malaysia: Facing the Challenge of Globalization",Keynote address delivered at the International Conference on Teaching and Teacher Education, Kuala Lumpur, 16th September,2003

social structure of the Islamic and Eastern society. They fear that globalization transported via the internet and other modern means of telecommunication will somehow transport the Western hedonistic life-style. Many of these ideas and ideology that come along through the media and internet bring along ideology and way of life that are contradictory to the Islamic belief system and Eastern culture. One particular area that is feared by parents, among the many things that come from the West, is sexual perversion. Under this category, homosexuality, lesbianism and other forms of sexual perversion are something that cannot be allowed and practiced in Muslim countries. In Islam, these forms of human relationship are not acceptable under the Islamic Syariah (Islamic Law). In the West, the rights of the individual for his/her desires to be fulfilled which do not cause harm to another human beings is allowed though this might go against their religious beliefs. Islam forbids homosexual and lesbian marriages, and describes this sort of relationship is seen as an adulteration to the institution of family that has been thing sacred and ordained by God Almighty.

Besides that, children if left unchecked to use the internet are exposed to the danger of entering into websites that display pornography and other unhealthy and unethical information. It is believed that such information can corrupt their innocent and tender hearts and minds. It is feared that children that gain access to such information on the internet will be trapped in a vicious circle that might lead them into other social ills.

The exponents of globalization have also highlighted that globalization abolishes cultural differences among the diverse and multi-lingual societies of the world. Globalization promotes homogenous society changing the world of its heterogeneous nature that has been created by God Almighty. The present scenario in the world clearly shows the process of homogenization is taking place and this is an ongoing thing. Dominance of English language as an important international language, obsession for American lifestyle in terms of their fast food like KFC and McDonald, preference over American banded items like clothing, music and movies are clear indicators of the homogenization of societies in the world is taking place.

How Should Muslims Respond to Globalization

Globalization has started without being realized by a large section of the Islamic Ummah. Since the tidal waves of globalization have already started to touch the shores of the Islamic countries, efforts need to be taken to prevent them from causing damage to their faith and Islamic way of life. As it has been understood from the preceding discussion that globalization is irreversible and inevitable the Muslims have no choice but to prepare and safeguard them to confront its onslaughts that come from all directions.

In realizing that something need to be done, Malaysia's former Prime Minister Tun Mahathir has said the following in one of his addresses to the Islamic Ummah on the issue on globalization:

> Muslim countries and Muslim governments have a duty to ensure that globalization will not result in the marginalization of their countries as happened with the Industrial Revolution and Industrial Age. We cannot afford it this time. If once again we miss this opportunity to keep pace with the radical and rapid

advances now being made with technology and the sciences, and the changes they cause to the world's perceptions of things, the new ideas and concepts in human and international relations; if we miss all these and fail to handle them, then we will not only be marginalized, but be dominated and hegemonised permanently.[15]

According to Tun Mahathir, during the last Industrial Revolution that took place in the West, the European nations used their creative intelligence and came up with a lot of breakthrough in the areas of science, technology and medicine. They made many discoveries with the creations of many items that became very essential for a better living for the modern man. The many machineries discovered by scientists and scholars benefited them in making them as advanced nations in the world later on. While the Europeans were making new discoveries, the scenario in Arabia was quite different. The Arabs at that time were still debating on minor issues of fiqh (jurisprudence) and other issues regarding which school of thought (mazhab) is more superior to the other. That time of the Arabs compared to the Golden Age of Islam, the Muslims were creative, productive and prolific and contributed a lot in the fields of philosophy, astronomy, medicine, algebra, etc. which later benefited by the Europeans. Baghdad, Cordova, Syria and Egypt became centers for knowledge and learning which invited the Europeans to flock around in these centers and to learn from the scholastic works produced by Muslim scholars.

Tun Mahathir's call is a reminder for the Muslims not to ignore and stay away from the events and progress that are taking place in the area of information technology, multi-media, e-learning, e-commerce, etc. If the Muslims choose to stay isolated from others in this era of globalization then the Muslims will be the ones who will be left alone and become the losers compared to the rest of the world. A wise thing to do by the Muslims is to be active in mastering the new technology and use it for a good purpose that can bring progress, development and economic benefit to themselves and for the rest of humanity.

Other form of safeguarding the Ummah that can be undertaken by Islamic countries in this era of globalization is by cutting down on their dependency on the West in terms of technology, which also includes in the area of multimedia and software development. Mental dependency on the West is a form of colonization. So long as the Muslim countries and leaders depend on the West for technology and expertise, they will be subjugated and put under their control. Islam as a way of life of the Muslims does not encourage them to be ruled by others and live under the hegemony and dictates of others who preach against their religion.[16]

Besides that, oil rich Muslim countries should make attempts to re-channel their multi-billion investments from America and Europe to some of the developing and poor Muslim countries in the world. By doing that, it is hoped that the disparities between the rich and poor Muslim countries can be eradicated. This action also confirms what has been emphasized in the Qur'an, that we should help one another, and this is also deemed as a praiseworthy deed in the sight of Allah SWT.

---

[15] Mahathir Muhamad(2003), *Globalisation and the New Realities,* Subang Jaya,Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications(M)Sdn.,P.53.

[16] Amer Al-Roubaie (2002), Globalization and the Muslim World, Selangor,Shah Alam: Malita Jaya Publishing House,pp.90-102

On the question of internet as a powerful tool in disseminating knowledge and information and what should be the Muslims stand on this matter. As there are good and bad in the internet usage, Muslims should be smart to use this tool for getting knowledge and information. They should also use it to their advantage in the promulgation of Islam, although some outside the religion may want to use it for spreading profanity and sexual perversion. Besides that, the internet can also be used to stay connected with the rest of the Ummah living in other parts of the world.

Another important effort that needs the attention of Muslim countries is their willingness to invest in the area of reach and development. This ability to do research during the Golden Age of Islam brought them to the pinnacle of their success and made European scholars to come to their centers of learning and research. After that period, due to complacency Muslims lost all the good qualities as good researchers to the Europeans. As a result of this, the Ummah started to lag behind the Europeans. Apart from that, colonization which forced Muslims into poverty also in a way made the strength of the Ummah to dwindle drastically. Even after attaining independence from the Western colonial powers, the Muslims have yet to reclaim the status they once had prior to the fall of Baghdad in 1258. In realizing this predicament, Muslims should exert themselves diligently in conducting research. This in turn will break their mental dependency on the West.

In the area of news broadcast, the Muslims cannot rely totally on the Western media like CNN, BBC, ABC and other international news agencies. At the moment, there has been a small breakthrough in the area of news media with the emergence of Al-Jazeera. Before this, the Muslims like the rest of the other nations were all dependent on the Western media to know what is happening in the Islamic world and other regions of the world. Most of the time these Western medias provide a bias reporting of what is happening to the Muslims. Through the manipulation of the media, the West has portrayed the Ummah as one that is dangerous, backward and one that is posing a threat to the world community. All these false reporting and prejudices can be contradicted with the Muslims having their own news media broadcasting the truth by reporting the actual and factual happening in the Muslim world.

All the strength and riches cannot help the Muslims to fight the tides of globalization if the whole Muslim world does not come together as a one united Ummah. The lesson taught by the Qur'an calling the Muslims to get united (Al 'Imran: 103)[17] has yet to be materialized fully by the Muslims ever since that verse was revealed to the Prophet of Islam SAW. Besides this, the Westerners have also taught us that, "United we stand, divided we fall". It seems that the Muslims have not learnt from their bitter experiences of the past living under subjugation and their failures have not taught them lessons to mend their ways to attain the status Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an as the best Ummah (Khaira Ummah). Being united under organization like the OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries) gives the Ummah its lost dignity in the eyes of the other nations of the world. The state of being united makes the Ummah more vocal in sending a common message to the UN when making decision pertaining to the problems faced

---

[17] "And hold fast, all together, unto the bond with God, and do not draw apart from one another. And remember the blessing which God has bestowed upon you: how, when you were enemies, He brought your hearts together, so that through His blessing you became brethren; and [how, when] you were on the brink of fiery abyss, He saved you from it."(3:103). Translation from Muhammad Assad(1980),The Message of the Qur'an, Gibraltar:Dar al-Andalus Limited,pp.82-83

by the Muslims, be it political or economic. People like Tun Mahathir, Chandra and Mohd Kamal believe that the UN, World Bank and IMF are all part of the forces of globalization, working to the advantage of the rich and powerful nations of the world. If the Islamic Ummah is weak and not alert of the forces that are at work to destroy it then it will suffer forever in the hands of the predators of globalization.

Another portent strategy to face globalization by the Islamic Ummah is to strike a balance between the physical development of the nation with the spiritual and moral development of its people. Without the spiritual and moral development all other developments will not guarantee to bring real success and prosperity to the Muslim countries.

Is Globalization equal to Colonization

The researcher is of the opinion that, the five definitions provided by Jan Aart Scholte are all true in one way or the other. All these definitions that explain globalization as Internationalization, Liberalization, Universalization, Westernization/Modernization and Deterritorialization when analyzed will reveal the true nature of globalization.

If colonization is to suppress and oppress others to make one nation to stay high and mighty, definitely globalization shares a lot in common with colonization. Globalization is an idea and ideology that comes from the West, is mainly intended to make them rich and to put them high above the Asians, Africans and others. Globalization is in fact colonization in disguise. Using it as a tool and a means, the West intends to control the hearts and minds of the young and old in the underprivileged countries of the world. They control us with a press of a button using the internet, international media and other modern and sophisticated ways of telecommunication. The manner of controlling the developing and poor nations of the world from far was clearly witnessed during the Asian economic downturn in 1997-1998. Due to the manipulation of the stock-market in the Asian region by Western currency-traders and foreign fund managers, all the 'Tiger Economies' like Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia, Philippines and others suffered a lot due to devaluation of their currency. All economic strength built by these countries after their independence within the period of 40-50 years fell significantly making these countries impoverished overnight.[18]

Conclusion

In analyzing the impact of globalization on education, the researcher agrees that it has some good and bad effect on the people in the developing and underdeveloped countries. Education should not be separated from its lofty ideals that aim at producing good individuals as well as good citizens who will have a good relationship with God Almighty, fellow human beings, with the environment (flora and fauna). These countries should invest more in education. Governments in these countries must monitor all institution of higher learning especially the ones established by the West so that they offer affordable education for the people to gain tertiary education.

---

[18] Mahathir Mohamad (1998), The Challenges of Turmoil, Subang Jaya, Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications (M) Sdn.,pp7-13

On the cultural front, good and healthy culture that comes from the West via globalization should be imitated and followed leaving the bad and immoral culture that is detrimental to the existence of the society. The culture of doing research and development, reading and exploring and conquering of new ideas are positive things that we can follow.

The researcher feels that people in the third world countries should not totally reject everything that comes from the West. The people in the East, particularly the Muslims should have an open mind to examine all that come from the West and should pick and choose whatever that is relevant to their needs and discard all that are dangerous and harmful to their existence as a community and nation. Certainly the Muslims cannot live in their own enclavement in total seclusion and isolation running away from globalization. They must view globalization as a challenge and look for a solution to overcome this problem. Contribution of a Muslim towards looking for a solution for the betterment of the Islamic Ummah is deemed one form of Jihad in the path of Allah.

Bibliography

Al-Roubaie, Amer (2002), Globalization and the Muslim World, Selangor,Shah Alam: Malita Jaya Publishing House.

Block, David & Cameron, Deborah (2002), *Globalization and Language Teaching*, London: UK:Routledge.

Burbules, Nicholas C. & Torres, Carlos Alberto (2000), *Globalization and Education*, New York:USA:Routledge.

Chandra Muzaffar(2002),"Globalization and Religion: Some Reflection", http://www.islamoline.net,Retrieved : 19 October,2004.

Fromm, Eric (1995), *The Art of Living. London:* Thorsons.

Hasan Langgulung, (1981), *Beberapa Tinjauan Dalam Pendidikan Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Pustaka Antara.

Imron Rossidy (1998), *An Analysis of al-Attas' and al-Faruqi's Conceptions of Islamization of Knowledge: Implications for Muslim Education*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

Kellner, Douglas (2000), "Globalization and New Social Movements: Lessons for Critical Theory and Pedagoggy" in *Globalizaion and Education*(ed). Nicholas C. Burbules & Carlos Alberto Torres, New York: USA: Routledge.

Mahathir Mohamad (1998), *The Challenges of Turmoil*, Subang Jaya, Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications (M) Sdn.

Mahathir Mohamed, (2003). *Globalisation and the New Realities*. Subang Jaya,Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications (M) Sdn. Bhd.

Mohd Abbas (1997), *Human nature: A Comparative Study Between Western and Islamic Psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

Mohd Abbas (2011), *Contribution of Iqbal's Dynamic Personality Theory to Islamic psychology: A Contrastive Analysis with Freud and Selected Mainstream Western Psychology*. Selangor: International Islamic University Malaysia.

Mohd Kamal Hassan (2003), "Setting the Muslim Mindset in Malaysia: Facing the Challenge of Globalization",Keynote address delivered at the International Conference on Teaching and Teacher   Education, Kuala Lumpur, 16th September,2003.

Muhammad, Assad (1980), *The Message of the Qur'an*, Gibraltar:Dar al-Andalus Limited.

Online Encyclopedia, http://education. yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry/education, Retrieved: 10th August,2011.

Scholte, J.Aart (2011), in http://www.infed.org/biblio/defining globalization, Retrieved: 10th August, 2011.

Walsh, David (1999), "Plato Meets Technology" in *Washington Post*, 14th September 1999, p. A29.