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Globalisation and the Muslim *Ummah*: Issues, Challenges, and the Ways Out

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Abstract: Globalisation is a phenomenon and a process that is aspiring to transform the entire world into a single political and economic system through the rapid movement of goods and people across the planet in the most rapid speed ever witnessed in the history of mankind. This paper is a theoretical and conceptual research which investigates the dilemmas of the Muslim *ummah* in the era of globalisation. The problem is the way the global forces are threatening to obliterate all cultures and civilisations in favour for non-conforming Western political and economic arrangements. The research uses a qualitative method of data collection and analysis. Secondary sources are also used in the data collection. Books, journals, internet sources, and institutional reports are used for this research. The data gathered is analysed and interpreted using content analysis and thematic expressions. This research discovers that the Muslim *ummah* has been facing many challenges and issues, such as cultural impoverishment, educational and technological backwardness, economic emasculation, internal strife, ideological battles, and domination of the hegemonic world powers. Additionally, this research suggests that, despite the challenges faced by the Muslim *ummah* in the globalisation era, this process of globalisation provided many benefits to the *ummah* which it is utilising and should continue to utilise. This research recommends that the way out of the current predicaments of the Muslim *ummah* is to resort to the pure teachings

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of Islam, unity, diversity, and intellectual challenge, where other cultures and civilisations can be utilised through using knowledge and dialogue instead of spreading hostility and violence.

Keywords: Globalisation Challenges, Civilisation, Culture, Globalisation and Islam, Muslim *Ummah* in the Age of Globalisation.

Introduction

Globalisation is a force and process that is linking the world's economy into a framework of a unified process across the globe rapidly (Thernborn, 2006). It is an ideology and a process (Gilpin, 2001), which transformed the world's political and economic order through internationalisation, hegemonisation, transcendental free-trade policies, and liberalisation of economic and political policies. Globalisation has been perceived as a phenomenon that is currently taking place and which is not clearly understood in all its dimensions and ramifications, owing to the changing nature of the world in modern times (Simon, 1998; Friedman, 2000). Many scholars (Hoogvelt, 1997; Stiglitz, 2001; Gosh and Guven, 2002; Heywood, 2011) have argued that globalisation is both a positive and a negative process, according to the shape and advantages of the international actors. The scholars explained that globalisation has many detrimental effects on the weaker or developing countries because of the hegemonic domination of the world's superpowers in the realm of international economics and politics.

The Muslim world falls within the category of the weaker or developing nations being dominated at the international arena by the powers of the Western world, both economically and politically. The demise of the golden era of Islam and the weaknesses of the Muslim *ummah* heralded the success of the Western world during the crusades and, later, the colonisation of the Muslim states which fractured and fragmented the Muslim countries into smaller entities out of the *Khilafah*. The Muslim *ummah* entered the era of globalisation with the weakness of lesser technological advantages, which gave the Western powers the edge to dictate the world's political economy (Ahmed, 2015). After the Cold War, the USA and her allies succeeded in emerging victoriously as a uni-polar power in 1989, when the Soviet Union collapsed. The ascendency of the USA and her allies led to the ushering in of a

'New World Order' system, synonymous with 'globalisation', or the Americanisation, internationalisation, hegemonisation, and imposition of Western economic and political values forcefully on third-world countries (Ameli, 2013). The domination of the Muslim *ummah* created crises, issues, and many challenges that the *ummah* is finding difficult to tackle, such as political oppression, economic exploitation, cultural emasculation, internal strife, social stagnation, external military aggressors, and technological backwardness. However, globalisation should not be totally regarded as a negative scenario to the Muslim world, considering the many benefits that the *ummah* is deriving from the inter-relationship with the other countries and international actors, such as the propagation of Islam through the media, intellectual discourses, and utilisation of the positive aspects of trade relationships and technology transfers (Mohammadi, 2016).

This study is a conceptual and theoretical attempt to examine the nature and dimension of globalisation, the emergence of globalisation, and the dilemmas of the Muslim *ummah* in this New World Order to proffer the feasible way out. In doing so, the study takes into consideration the interaction and civilisational relationship between the Muslim world and the Western world, and how these relationships led to the issues and challenges that the Muslim world is facing.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

This paper is a theoretical and conceptual paper which relies on a qualitative approach to data collection and data analysis. The research used secondary sources for data collection. The sources consist of books, journals, internet sources, and reports from international institutions and agencies. This is due to the nature of the topic being broad, diverse, and highly complex, which makes it difficult for data collection using primary sources, such as questionnaire administration and personal interviews. Indeed, for clarity of analysis and discussion, it will be practically impossible to study a topic of this nature using primary sources in a wider geographical spread of the Muslim *ummah* which cuts across all the five continents in the world. Thus, secondary data was collected. The data obtained is discussed by using thematic analytic interpretations and content analysis, where a small rich data was expanded and discussed in relation to the existing literature on the

subject matter of study and the framework of analysis that are used in the study.

The Framework of Analysis

The study adopted two theories in explaining the context of the subject matter, the literature, discussion, and analysis. The two theories are systems theory of international relations and the doctrine of *Jahili* society.

Systems Theory of International Relations

Systems theory is one of the most used theories in interpreting domestic politics, international politics, and globalisation. The systems theory evolved from the biological sciences with the works of Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, who studied the human body as a system and sub-systems that function independently but interact co-ordinately. The theory was later adopted by sociologists, Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton, who used the sociological viewpoint to study the society as a functional system which has many systems or sub-systems that operate independently but relatively. David Easton, a political scientist, adopted the systems theory to study political interaction. It was later expanded at an international stage by some scholars (McClelland, 1965; Modelski, 1961; Kaplan, 1962; Deutsch, 1964; Waltz, 1967; and Rosecrance, 1966).

Systems theory is a strategy used for the comprehension of the nature of relationships among nation-states and international actors at the global stage. It is simply a strategy of the identification, measurement, and examination of relationships within the global system and its sub-systems. It examines the linkages and genesis of the interactions of nation-states in the global world (McClelland, 1965, p.45). Kaplan (1962) identified that the systems theory at an international stage has different levels of interactions which are uni-polar, bi-polar, and multi-polar (Kaplan, 1962, p. 4). A uni-polar system allows for a dominant one world superpower which has the capability of hegemonic control of the world's politics and the economy as experienced during the kingdoms of Babylon, Assyria, the Greeks, the Romans, and Islamic, and presently, the American dominance. In this system, there would be a tendency for war, cultural domination, political and economic domination, and

frequent occurrences of exploitation. Weaker states are at the threat of extinction by the superpower in a Hobbesian state of nature.

The bi-polar system is an international relationship where two-dominant superpowers with equal capabilities for competition emerge with alliances from different nation-states, as witnessed during the Cold War (1945-1991) between the United States and the Soviet Union. This type of system enables for a balance of power and a choice of alliance. However, the certainty of outbreak of war is high as in the uni-polar system. The multi-polar system is a situation at the global level where many competitive blocks emerge at the international system with equal powers for challenge and balance of power. This system is more stable and peaceful than the other two. In the context of this study, the Muslim world is faced with a uni-polar system of dominance from the USA and her allies, which succeeded in bringing the world closer to their political and economic ideologies than any time in the history of the world. This allowed for the imposition of the American system and values on the Muslim world because of their possession of superior firepower and technology, in addition to a buoyant economy and manipulative politics.

The Doctrine of Jahili Society

Sayyid Qutb, in his famous work, "Milestone", formulated the "doctrine of the *Jahili* society", where he made some assumptions in explaining the current conditions of the Muslim *ummah* in relation to the other countries in the globalisation era. Qutb (1990) postulated four basic assumptions from the thesis. The first is the notion that the demise of the 'Golden Age' of Islam dwindled the Muslim *ummah* into sins that were committed by the *ummah* which equates or even surpasses that of the pre-Islamic Arabian *Jahiliyyah*. These sins consist of fornication, adultery, usury, gambling, assassination, alcoholism, and materialism. These sins weakened the Muslim *ummah* and allowed for the supremacy of its enemies over it. The second notion is the emphasis of the evil and negative effects of colonialism on the Muslim world. Through colonial domination, the Muslim world was scattered and shattered, had its resources plundered, was culturally devastated, economically exploited, and had its political institutions obliterated and social settings altered. In this way, the enemy or the Western world succeeded in imposing their institutions, systems, cultures, and ideologies on the Muslim world, which are not compatible with the pure Islamic teachings.

The third assumption expressed by Qutb (1990) is the impact of the Cold War on the Muslim world, where the ideological rivalry between the USA and the USSR polarised the Muslim world into pro-capitalist and pro-communist supporters. The aftermath of the Cold War, which favoured the USA and her allies, led to the ascendency of the Western capitalist or the American economic and political systems in a New World Order called 'globalisation', where the mastery of modern science and technology provided the USA with the leverage of dominating the world comfortably. Finally, Qutb (1990) postulated that the Muslim world will be able to extricate itself from the social malaise, economic exploitation, political domination, and cultural emasculation of the West by resorting to the pure teachings of Islam only.

This thesis by Qutb (1990) is a clear explanation of the present context of the Islamic world under the age of globalisation which makes it applicable within the context of this study. Although Qutb (1990) overlooked the benefits that Islam and the Muslim world derived from globalisation such as expansion of knowledge through the modern technology, easy movement of goods and services, communication among the Muslim world, and the propagation of Islam using the interconnectivity of the world, especially in Europe and America, the thesis espoused the dilemma and chaos of the Muslim *ummah* in the contemporary time.

Literature Review

In this section, an attempt is made to critically review some related literature in the subject matter of study to provide the means for identification of the literature gap and contribution to knowledge. The literature is reviewed thematically in the following sub-headings: conceptualisation of globalisation, genesis of globalisation, agents of globalisation, and the emergence of globalisation in the Muslim world.

Conceptualisation of Globalisation

The concept of globalisation has been assembling the riots of connotation and denotation among the global intellectuals. It is a concept that has not been accepted with a sacrosanct meaning, feature, dimension, history, and impact. It is simply perceived by different scholars with different

views, depending on the schools of thought, intellectual sentiment, and other influential factors. One common feature that accompanies the conceptualisation of globalisation is the rapid collapse of national boundaries and internationalisation and institutionalisation of international economics and politics (Hoogvelt, 2001, p. 69; Thernborn, 2006). In another view, globalisation is conceptualised as the emergence of a new global economic order in which transnationalism has become formidable with the institutionalisation of a uniform global financial system through the free movement of capital and corporations across the continents, and the advancement of the politics of regional integration (Gilpin, 2001). Furthermore, globalisation is seen as a multiple cycle of a policy, an ideology, a process, and a strategy (Heywood, 2011; p. 34). It is the resurgence of a complex web of interdependencies and interconnectivities - politically and economically - at a global level, unprecedented in the history of the world (Heywood, 2011, p. 35).

Globalisation is a phenomenon that has promoted good fortune for the fortunate countries and many adversaries for the unfortunate countries. It is a process of liberalising international trade for economic cooperation and global political cooperation (Stiglitz, 2002, p.4). Globalisation is a concept that is used to refer to the rapid economic and political transformations across the society in the contemporary world, owing to the challenging nature of the domineering push of a global market economy and transnational corporations (Amoore, 2002, p.4). Globalisation is the most important change in human history, which is known as transnationalism or a process that interconnects individuals, groups, economies, and politics across all geo-political borders (Ritzer, 2011, p. 2).

Globalisation is a wide concept, in terms of the complexity of the regions, cultures, actors, and the process itself which has its genesis in the past, its manifestations and visibility today, and impact in the future (Sheffield, Korotayev, and Grinin, 2013). Globalisation is identified as an unjust arrangement where there are unequal trade arrangements, exploitation through patent rights and profits repatriation, and a rapid movement and expansion of multinational corporations between the capitalist countries and developing countries (Stiglitz, 2006). Stiglitz (2006) further explains that the planet is under a dominant danger of oblivion in this unfair arrangement and the feasible way out is to democratise globalisation where fairness in trade negotiations and

other political arrangements can be promoted. In a contrary view to the statement by Stiglitz (2006), Friedman (2002) conceived globalisation as an unavoidable and a bulldozing process beyond the control of nation-states which threatens to extinct cultural barriers, collapse trade borders, incorporate economies of the world under one system, and trans-nationalise politics across the globe in an irreversible manner.

In the current globalisation era, Muslims constitute of a population that contributes in the global cultural diversity, socioeconomic settings, political classes and ethnicities, as well as civilisation. Thus, globalisation in the Muslim world has both positive and negative conceptualisations. For most of the Muslims that are inhabiting in the Third World countries or backward economies, globalisation is a negative task that made it impossible for the welfare of the Muslim *ummah* and that is responsible for the impoverishment of the Muslim world. In other segments, globalisation has been seen as a positive phenomenon that provides the opportunity for the Muslims to access huge volumes of knowledge through technology, move across the world easily and rapidly, and to propagate Islam across the globe in addition to economic inter-relationships with other parts of the world (SUNY LEVIN Institute, 2008). Accordingly, as observed above, globalisation is a contested term that is difficult to conceptualise since societal settings, political affiliations, culture, religion, and perceptions differ and influence the understanding of the term. One unique position adopted by this work is the fact that globalisation is undoubtedly a process and an ideology that is transforming the globe rapidly through institutionalisation and internationalisation of a single trade and political policy.

Genesis of Globalisation

There are divergent views on the genesis of globalisation by different scholars. This study settles for the one provided by Thernborn (2006) which identified five waves of globalisation historically, as presented below.

The First Wave: This spanned the period of the late 1700s to the early 1900s. It is the earliest foundation and manifestation of the transformation of the world into a global village. Economic globalisation got its root from this wave, starting with the Roman Empire in the 15th century and its many wars of invasion, the Han Dynasty in China, and the explosion

of the Muslim traders and explorers across the globe during the Islamic Golden Age. The years from the 1700s set the wheels for the rapid emergence of globalisation at the global stage, stretching towards the period of the First World War. In this stage, the economies of many countries were linked together in different trade roles, such as suppliers of raw materials, manufacturers of finished goods, service providers, and foreign investors. During this wave, European powers and the USA engaged in slave trade and, later, colonisation of world territories by the European countries (namely, Britain, France, Spain, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and others) of areas, including Australia, Asia, South America, North America, the Pacific, and Africa, focusing on exporting their industrial goods and importing raw materials. The 1800s, therefore, became the root for the unprecedented expansion of international trade and globalisation of capital on a larger scale as compared to the previous period. The Industrial Revolution made this expansion possible.

The Second Wave: The second wave happened between 1915 and 1947, which was the period that experienced the two World Wars, and that had affected the process and the urge for internationalisation and globalisation. The globe witnessed economic depression and political crises of war, disputes, and disasters. Taxes were raised up, and many buoyant economies suffered backwardness which minimised the international transfer of capital, investments, and trade. During this stage, the impact of the Second World War compelled the colonialists to start surrendering political independence to the colonised. However, the institutionalisation and imposition of the European political system, economic structure, cultural values, and domination made the colonised countries to remain actively participating in the global economic and political systems as subservient partners to the world's economic powers. This phenomenon kept the globalisation process going forward.

The Third Wave: This wave manifested from 1947 to 1970. This was the era of the consolidation of globalisation and its reinforcement. After the end of the Second World War in 1945, the past economic depression and political tensions started calming down gradually. The scenario of global advancement and trade improvement re-emerged. International organisations, international financial institutions, and international trade relationships and agreements emerged, such as the United Nations (UN), General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Bank for Reconstruction and

Development (IBRD), and many others. It was also the era that set the foundation for regional integration and economic alliance in which regionalism started, as in the case of the European Union (EU). The period recorded the famous ideological battle of the Cold War between the United States of America (USA) and her allies and the United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and her allies, or the ideological warfare between capitalism and communism, or Western Europe and Eastern Europe. The USA and her allies would later emerge as the winners of the ideological tensions in 1990, when the USA triumphed after the demise of the USSR. This scenario is seen by this study as the perfect stage in which the destiny of globalisation forces and era was sealed and perfected.

The Fourth Wave: The years between 1970 and 2014 was the fourth wave in which globalisation became an inevitable order in the world. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, tariffs and all hurdles to free international trade were dismantled, economic reforms and adjustments were introduced, the world's economy was deregulated, multinational corporations began moving freely across the globe without much restrictions, and regional economic and political cooperation were established, such as Northern American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), South African Development Commission (SADC), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and many others. It was also an era of global promotion of liberal democracy and democratisation. This wave recorded the collapse of national boundaries and free movement of goods and services around the globe.

The Fifth Wave: This wave started in 2014 and is ongoing. This is the wave of the 'New World Order', where the forceful consolidation and extension of globalisation is in the most rapid stage ever witnessed in the history of the world. There are suspicions that it might be coming to an end just the way any ideology or process is passing historically. This is because of the serious global financial crises, recessions, and unforeseen future contingencies that happened in 1997, 2008-2009, 2013-2014, as well as the 2015 to 2018 recession and global oil and financial crisis. Free market economies associated with globalisation is censured for the engineering of the crises. There are calls for nation-states to regulate their economies and reduce internationalisation of

their economies to a certain level. The Brexit or British exit from the EU is a case in this context as well as the declaration of the United States of America under President Donald Trump to withdraw from many global trade agreements which he declared as harmful to the American economy. Recently in Africa, on 20th March 2018, Nigeria withdrew from signing a single trade agreement by African countries citing American reason as their justification.

Having examined the genesis, it is pertinent to note that there are forces behind the emergence and consolidation of globalisation across the globe. This includes among others, as observed by Sule (2005), imperialist or capitalist countries, the United Nations international financial institutions such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and International Monetary Fund (IMF), multinational corporations, and international economic agencies and trade agreements such as General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT), World Trade Organisation (WTO), and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Discussion and Analysis

This study aimed at establishing the nature of globalisation, the issues that are affecting the Muslim *ummah*, and the challenges related to them. In doing so, the theoretical approach was adopted as discussed in the methodology. The secondary sources were also employed in this analysis.

The Positive Correlation of Islam and Globalisation

Religion is an institution that existed since the beginning of mankind on earth. Globalisation, as discussed above in the five waves, has been a process that has been taking place since many centuries. It is believed that the first actual wave or attempt to unify mankind and globalise the world started with religion when the world's dominant religions, such as Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam scrambled to secure areas of influence and gain followers across all parts of the world. These religions made several efforts in advancing their ideologies, culture, trade, politics, and economy around the globe (Khaled, 2007, p. 5).

Islam is an ambassador and an agent of globalisation, and the two concepts became related during the years 650-850, when Islam expanded rapidly from the Arabian Peninsula to the Mediterranean, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Balkan regions. This led to the expansion of the Islamic cultural, social, educational, and civilisational values globally. The dimension of the expansion reached its peak under the Ottoman Empire when the Islamic world controlled Europe, North Africa, and the Middle-East (Khaled, 2007, p. 5).

This study accepts the position that Islam is an important part of globalisation. The attempt to globalise the world was started with the competition among the world's dominant monotheist religions in scrambling for followers. Islam became the most universalised religion with the highest followership and control in the record of the history of world's religions in some periods of time, and presently, the second, in terms of the world's population (Radhakrishnan, 2004). Islam advanced the cultural, political, social, and economic systems of its faith for more than 1400 years across the globe before the emergence of the contemporary globalists. Indeed, the present champions of globalisation might have borrowed a leaf from the Islamic exploration of the globe in modern times. Some of the perceived positive aspects of globalisation that Islam is benefitting from were identified by SUNY LEVIN Institute (2008), as follows:

1. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the Muslim world into other parts of the world and from other parts of the world into the Muslim world helped in job creation, poverty reduction, and improvements in the standard of living;

2. Expansion of trade and accelerated social mobility created cultural permeation that helped in the propagation of Islam in Europe, America, China, and other non-Muslim countries;

3. Modern information and communication technology assisted in information dissemination and integration of knowledge;

4. Cultural gap was drastically reduced where physical and intellectual interactions permitted for a more settled ground in the understanding of diverse cultures and religions;

5. Simplification of religious teaching   is made accessible and affordable through the Internet and modern means of communication; and

6. Muslims are brought closer to each other through the collapse of boundaries of nation-states, decline in cultural barriers, and other benefits.

From the above points, if one reflects on the theories adopted for this research, there is a relativity and applicability in the context of knowledge. Taking the systems theory of international relations, it assumes that nation-states, relate, behave, and interact with each other at the international level based on their statuses and capabilities. It assumes or predicts cultural integration and mutual benefits from the relationship, especially in a multi-polar system which the present world is facing today. The seemingly short-term uni-polar powers of the USA and her allies is declining radically with the emergence of China as an economic and political power; the continued relevance of Russia in the international known as the system; the revolution in Southeast Asia, known as the 'Asian Tigers'; and the emergence of new blocks and alliances at the global level, such as BRICS. Thus, the international relations are a symbiosis in making the benefits spread across the nation-states. However, their benefits may not be the same. Powerful countries will always have their way in decision-making and other international issues.

In the second theory, the doctrine of *Jahili* (Qutb, 1990), it can be established that Qutb (1990), in his analysis, agreed that the sophisticated Western scientific and technological advancements have brought many developments and benefits to the Muslim world to some extent through interactions and educational dialogues. He, however, stresses that the benefits that the Muslim world derived from the relationship with the West are lesser than the negative influence that it gained in the process which threw the *ummah* into the *Jahili* style of living. Therefore, the theory can support the above submission of the benefits, even if it has many reservations.

Issues and Challenges of the Muslim Ummah in the Globalisation Era

There is no doubt that globalisation is the era that poses the greatest challenges to mankind entirely and specifically, for the Muslims. This is

owing to issues that are leading to conflicts, misperception, domination, exploitation, and many other challenges. These issues and challenges are identified by this study and presented below for discussion and analysis.

Global Agenda

There are certain policies or agendas recognised and prioritised by the champions of globalisation, as identified by Sule (2005), which includes liberal democracy, liberalisation of the economy, eradication of poverty and diseases, gender equality, arms control and disarmament, war against terrorism, and environmental sanitation. These agendas, summed up, are referred to as the 'New World Order'. These issues pose a serious challenge to the Muslim *ummah* because of their sharp contradictions to Islamic culture, values, and teachings in some parts of their doctrine. Taking liberal democracy as an example, Islam is democratic in nature with the command for consultation by Allah in the Holy Quran in Chapter 3 Verse 159 and the constitution of the *Shura* council during the *Khilafah* of Umar. The point of departure and the bone of contention is the sacrosanct divinity of Islamic Shari'ah law, uncompromising and eternal for mankind. The attempt to push democracy at the global level will relegate or is relegating the Islamic concept of *Khilafah* and Shari'ah, if the modern constitution provided by liberal democracy is adopted. In the case of the liberalisation of the economy, the relationship seems to be an asymmetrical relationship, where the Muslim world which has over 70 per cent of oil reserves are pushed to open their national territories for investment in strategic oil and other sectors. This is exploitative and domineering in nature.

The arms control and disarmament are a deliberate and strategic political movement to disarm and weaken the Muslim countries from countering the security threat of the Western world. The war against terrorism is a stigmatisation targeted towards the Muslims, particularly those identified as practicing Muslims, to deter them from reversing to the holy teachings of Islam through the politicisation of the Muslim identity.

In theorising this issue or challenge, the system theory recognised the essence of the conflictual nature of a uni-polar hegemonic system at an international level which tends to lead to war, conflict, and domination. This is the situation the Muslim *ummah* is undergoing, under the

dominance of the USA and her allies. From the other perspective or
theory, Qutb (1990) suggested that the interaction or colonial exploitation
of the Muslim world by the Western world led to the incorporation and
emasculation of the Muslim *ummah*, when their culture was obliterated
and replaced with rotten Western amoral attitudes, making the Muslims'
lives a *Jahili* one. Thus, this challenge is difficult to counter for now,
except for a radical reversal towards the pure teachings of Islam made
in the Muslim world.

Cultural Issues/Challenges

The world is presently faced with the issue of cultural assimilation
and moral decay. The rapid spread of culture at the international level
is aided with the advent of modern science and technology, and free
flow of information. Cultural clashes or domination has been predicted
earlier by the Western scholars. Lewis (1990) argued that Muslims are
envious of the West because of their superior technology, economy and
politics, and that has led to cultural clashes between the West and the
East or the Muslims. Additionally, Fukuyama (1996) stressed that even
though the USA faced ideological battles and challenges from Russia
and the Muslim world, it was able to triumph in the contest because
of its superior culture, making the end of history and the end of all
ideological contests, with the US culture being supreme at the global
level. Huntington (1996), on the other hand, hypothesised that the future
of world conflicts will not be due to religion, politics, or economy, but
rather through the clash of civilisations between the East and the West.
All these arguments are presented to make a case in support of the
ascendency and supremacy of the Western culture and civilisation.

On the other hand, Qutb (1990) argued that the Muslim culture and
civilisation was influenced negatively during its contact with the Western
world. He identified the effects of imperialism, colonialism, and Western
technology and communication as the drivers of immoral sins in the
Muslim world. Al-Mawdudi (1998) also supported the above position
of Qutb (1990). The Islamic perspective of culture and civilisation
does not encourage the clashes of civilisations or the supremacy of one
culture or race over another, except by purity and morality of the society.
The Holy Quran in Chapter 49 Verse 13 mentions that all mankind is
equal. They are differentiated by race, culture, skin colour, and history
to determine who is the most pious before Allah. In a Prophetic Hadith,

the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in his final sermon that there is no distinction between the Arabs and non-Arabs, or black and white, except by fear of God as reported by Muslim in Hadith 1218. Therefore, Islam does not encourage or support the clashes of culture or civilisation but it finds itself faced with such clashes and cultural domination.

The Western culture permeated all scopes of the Muslim life, in terms of language since the English language has been globally officialised, dressings, food, and the family's way of life. Even though the globalisation process succeeded in making the Arabic language to become the third most popularly used language at the global level, it has been disadvantaged in many aspects. The system theory of international relations identified that in a world with a uni-polar system, there is the tendency for war, conflicts, and emasculation of the weaker states economically, politically, socially, and culturally because of the hegemonic advantage that the powerful country has over the weak ones. This is the case that is happening with the Muslim world contemporarily under globalisation. However, the Muslim world made a significant progress during the globalisation era, in terms of advancing their culture, particularly with modern communication systems where Islamic teachings reached all angles of the world and the rapidness of movement of goods and services that made the Muslims have easy contact with other parts of the world and influenced them in many aspects.

Economic Challenges

The economy of the world has been made a unified structure at the international level with the establishment of the various economic and trade agreements, such as the World Bank, IMF, GATT, WTO, UNCTAD, and regional economic alliances in the form of NAFTA, LAFTA, EEC, SADC, ASEAN, ECOWAS, and others. The major challenge posed to the Muslim world is the economic situation and position of the Islamic economic strength, in terms of competition with the Western world or the developed nations. Most of the trade agreements were selfishly forged when the Muslim countries were under colonial domination without their inputs or consent. As a result, the Muslim world found itself in a compulsory economic relationship that is ubiquitous in a polarised trade arrangement. This created a room for the exploitation of the Muslim economy by the developed capitalist world. Despite possessing more than 70 per cent of the oil reserves in the world, very

few countries in the Muslim world are able to utilise the benefits and
develop economically. With the exception of Saudi Arabia, Qatar,
United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei Darussalam,
most of the Muslim countries are impoverished and stagnated (SUNY
LEVIN Institute, 2008).

In applying the theories in this aspect, the systems theory of
international relations emphasises that countries of the world inter-
relate in sub-systems that function independently but co-ordinately,
consisting of economic and other sub-systems. The emergence of uni-
polar hegemonic world power will usher in a weak international relation
where the dominant superpower will escalate its grip on the weaker
states for its own interest. This is the case between the USA and her
allies and the Muslim world in this current globalisation era. On the
other hand, the doctrine of the *Jahili* society propounded by Qutb (1990)
suggested that colonialism and imposition of the Western economic
systems across the Muslim world threw the Muslim *ummah* into the
lifestyle of the *Jahiliyyah* unprecedented in the history of the world, and
that has been made possible because of the adoption of the detrimental
Western economic systems of usury, capitalism, and inequality.

However, one cannot totally deny the economic benefits that the
Muslim world gained in the globalisation era, among which is the
advancement of the Islamic financial system at the global level adopted
by many non-Muslim countries as an economic alternative to depression
and recession. This has miraculously worked out favourably, uplifting
the ideals and economic values of Islam globally. Foreign investment
and technology transfer also benefitted many Islamic countries that
positioned themselves strategically.

Social Challenges
The Muslim ummah is faced with serious social crises. All the Muslim
countries are configured under the title of 'developing countries'
or 'Third World Countries'. These are the countries that are facing
poverty, hunger, disease, malnutrition, civil wars, communal clashes,
unemployment, low levels of technology, poor living standards, and
other indicators of backwardness. The global system is entrenched with
economic exploitation, political domination, cultural consolidation, and
social exclusion for this part of the world through an unjust arrangement.
The social settings of the Muslim world have been turned into that of

Jahili, as observed by Qutb (1990), with individualism, nuclear family settings as opposed to the Muslim culture of extended families, mode of dress, food, language, and educational system altered negatively. Qutb (1990) emphasised that the Western educational system was introduced in the Muslim world with harmful ideologies like those of Marxism, Darwinism, and other ideologies related to different religions which are studied by the Muslim ummah, causing them to be derailed from the aim of pure Islamic teachings. The Western educational system succeeded in relegating the Qur'anic teachings and Prophetic Hadith, and influenced the learning process negatively.

On the other hand, the system theory of international relations hypothesised that a uni-polar system of international relations will lead to domination, exploitation, and cultural emasculation of the weak countries by the world's dominant hegemonic powers. The superpower will push for its national interest, unrestrictedly, and will impose its values and ideas forcefully around the globe. This is what the world is experiencing today. There was a prediction of the clash of cultures or civilisations by Huntington (1996) between the East and the West. This, by implication, means that the Muslim world is still relevant and its social system is not totally obliterated. It will either bounce back to challenge the Western culture or social settings, or it will continue to struggle in a disadvantageous status which will present a minor check on the excesses of the Western social domination.

Political Challenge

The Muslim world is facing a political challenge that it never faced for the past 1400 years. The international political system was configured for many centuries to consolidate and extend the control of the world by a very comity of nations who advance their agendas at the global level. The establishment of the United Nations (UNO) and its umbrella bodies was done when the Muslim world was under the colonial and political control of the designers of the system of the UN. This enabled for a domination of political decisions and imposition of political ideas and values across the globe. It has been observed in the literature that one of the global agendas is the liberal democracy, aggressively and radically pursued by the USA and her allies after the demise of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. The major decision-making body in the UN is the Security Council in which the Christian-professed countries of the USA, Britain,

France, and socialist China and Russia form the membership. The
United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) remains a mere round-
table discussion without any political impact. There is no single Muslim
country that possesses a permanent membership, except on temporary
representation for a period of two years only.

In justifying the above assertion, the system theory of international
relations identifies that whenever the world is faced with a uni-polar
system, the domination and political control of the world will be
stronger by the superpower as it is being witnessed presently in the
UN and other international political agencies. The Muslim countries
are disadvantaged because they lack a permanent representation that
will allow them to speak out in the UN. Qutb (1990) prophesied that
once the Muslim *ummah* abandons the pure teachings of the Qur'an
and Sunnah, they would be overwhelmed by their enemies. This is the
scenario in the Muslim world when the lifestyles turned into that of the
Jahili with fornication, adultery, gambling, usury, and other forbidden
sins being taken for granted, allowing for the Western world to secure
political control of the world comfortably.

Development Challenges
The Muslim world is facing the challenge of development in all
of its ramifications, such as the provision of critical infrastructure,
eradication of poverty, provision of gainful employment with adequate
compensation, technology transfer that was blocked from the developed
world through a deliberate strategy of foreign direct investment in the
Muslim world and trade mark and patent rights protection, and corruption
in the Muslim world and among its leaders and their subservient attitude
towards false Western paradigm models that throws the Muslim world
further into the malaise of underdevelopment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that globalisation is a contemporary process
that the entire world is witnessing, which is basically about the rapid
and unprecedented pronto movement of capital and people across the
planet, challenging the national boundaries to collapse for free trade and
free movement of goods and services. It is established that globalisation
is a process and an ideology of the Western capitalist world of the

USA and her allies, which was heralded by the Cold War's ideological battle between the capitalist USA and the communist Russia from the 1940s until the 1980s, when the USSR collapsed in 1989 which was tantamount for a free and comfortable ascendency of the USA as the only superpower in the world under a uni-polar system identified by the system theory of international relations. The study concludes that there are issues associated with globalisation, such as the genesis, agents, and the global agenda, which are all pursued by the dominant capitalist world.

The study also concludes that the Muslim world is faced with many challenges under the current dispensation of globalisation. These challenges do not refer to the notion that globalisation is entirely evil and that it has no benefit at all in Islam and the Muslim *ummah*. Indeed, the study has succeeded in establishing the fact that globalisation has benefitted from the Muslims and Islam, and the Muslims, in turn, have also benefitted from globalisation such as in the economic, cultural, technological, social, political, and educational aspects. However, despite the benefits accrued to the Muslim *ummah* under globalisation, there are negative consequences or challenges that threaten the progress of the Muslim world as discussed. The study, therefore, suggests that for the Muslim *ummah* to extricate themselves from the challenges identified in this study, the following recommendations are relevant:

- Muslims should not withdraw from the relationships brought by globalisation. Instead, they should re-strategise in their approach towards the economic and political relationships with the West in such a way to ensure for a mutual benefit;

- The Muslim world should device a means of securing a global alliance with the other competing blocs, such as China and Russia, as a check against the excesses of the USA;

- The Islamic world should adopt an intellectual approach to issues, such as the dialogue on terrorism, Shari'ah, *jihad*, fundamentalism, culture and other issues of contention between the West and the Muslim *ummah*;

- There is a need for a resort to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah in theory and in practice, being the unchangeable and universal timely provisions that are enduring until eternity;

- There is need for Islamisation of knowledge to counter cultural and social domination;

- Muslims should device a means of local utilisation of their natural resources' endowment, especially oil, to stop the exploitation of the Western capitalist world and overdependence on Western technology for survival;

- There is a need for an improved and sustained research on scientific and technological knowledge in the Muslim world; and,

- There is a quick need for the advancement of military technology and proliferation of modern warfare for self-defence and external aggression, if the need arises.

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