

## Globalization and Educational Change: The McWorld VS Homo islamicus

Samsoo Sa-U<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Globalization gives impact to education in many ways. Schools are challenged to reform due to the global force and expected to produce the high-quality human capital to serve the economic growth. The current education and school curriculum produce the Homo economicus rather than the decent Homo islamicus balance the materialism and spiritualism towards the social justice. Role of school reform and curriculum to response the new direction was discussed in this article as educational perspective.

**Keywords:** Globalization school reform school curriculum economic need integration

Objectives

### Introduction

Globalization, an idea and a time that has come to most sectors of the economy, is now having an impact on education. For decades, the academic research enterprise has been global. Now, however, the instructional mission of campuses is also being affected by these global forces, as are too a variety of related service functions (Hawkins, 2006).

Many countries, is confronted with economic recession at present. It is a very crucial problem that has to take a very long time to recover. Factories and business companies have to cut down their employment size. Unemployment problem has thus become increasingly serious. I believe effective curriculum which responds the economic needs and at same time achieve the integration objectives can help to produce the good human capital that can balance the materialism and spiritualism towards sustainable development. Thus, the main thing which we, as educators, have to realize is that what the educational

---

<sup>1</sup> Instructor, Teaching in Islamic Education Program, Faculty of Education, Yala Rajabjat University 95000

concepts that can bridge the materialism and spiritualism towards sustainable development and the role of school reform and curriculum to response.

### Research Objective

This paper aimed to compare the concept of education towards globalised forces as conceptualized by western and Islamic perspectives.

### Research method

Documentary research was conducted to reach the conclusion. Data were analyzed by content analysis method.

### Results

#### Globalization and Its Impact on Education

Education is forced to response the global force. Carney (1999) argues that globalization is having a major impact on education in five majors' ways:

- The organization of work and the work people do.
- Educated labor force
- Quality of national educational system
- Information technology
- Transformation of world culture

From his point of view, it can be said that the challenges which academic institutions face in restructuring to meet the demands of the globalized economy of the future. The gloablaizion are interrelated to various factors and different dimensions. From this argument, it can be shown the impact of education and labor force from Michaelowa (2004). on the positive effect of development assistance on primary enrolment. According to her model (Figure 1), education seems to play the important roles to produce the labor force that towards with bring the economic growth and better quality of life in the globalised era.

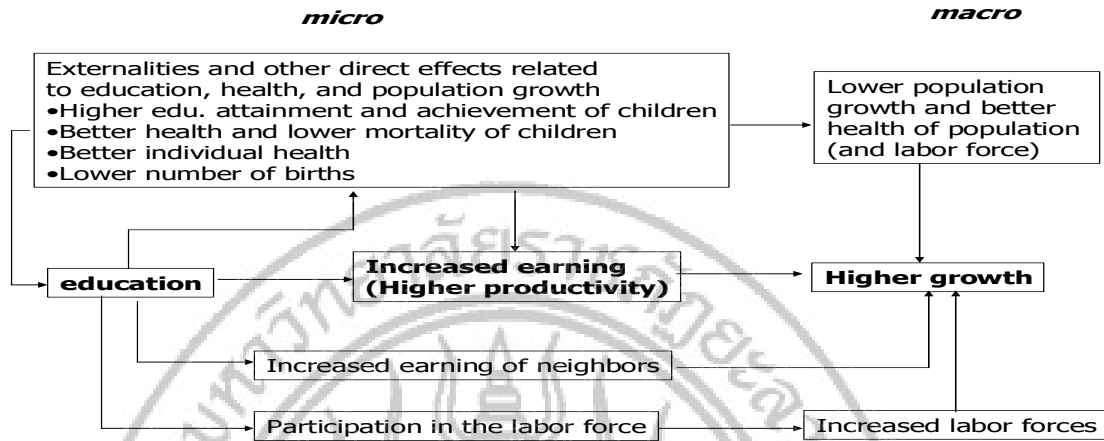


Figure1 The connection between education and labor force

Source: Michaelowa (2003)

#### Global Change Force and School Reform

Globalization brings good things in many ways. No one can deny its impact on education. According to Halliger (1998) the globalization's impact manifest in the USA, Europe, Australia, Canada, Japan and have an even greater impact in Southeast Asia.

Moreover in Germany, the vocational system has faced significant challenges since 1990, including the impact of German unification; challenges posed by globalisation and the shift from a production-based to a post-Fordist economy; changes related to the European Union, migration, and immigration; and demographic changes within Germany that have affected both students and teachers in the system (Idriss, 2002).

In United States, Lipman (2002) underlines that inequality brought up by globalization in USA , especially the "white supremacy" and "upper-middle-class residents" that obviously have perpetuated a system of inequality in Chicago's public schools.

In Bali, Indonesia, It explores the school's response to four key components of Gandhi's model of Basic Education (Nai Talim) and shows that the claimed curriculum is framed by two contradictory discourses: a globalization from above discourse and a

Gandhian discourse of tolerance and peace, more consistent with a globalization from below discourse (Tamatea, 2006).

Moreover, for Asian country the Global educational ideal has infected through the society as Hallinger (1998) states “What kind of education western nations provide and are demanding similar quality for their children (p.495).” For this reason, to response the globalization some special schools have established through the internationally educational value as innovation schools in many country for example: the Smart School in Malaysia and *the Thridhos Three Generation School* in Thailand.

As part of the dramatic modernization of its education system, Stewart (2005) describes how various countries are preparing students for the interconnected world of the 21st century the changing for school due to the globalization :

“The People's Republic of China is developing an increasingly international focus in its schools. English is now the second language of China and will be taught to all students from third grade on. China's schools are teaching world history and world geography, and the Project on Education for International Understanding is updating textbooks through the addition of more international content. Schools are encouraged to host visiting international teachers, especially from English-speaking countries. Teachers are encouraged to study abroad, and schools are strongly encouraged to form sister-school partnerships with schools in other countries. While these changes have not yet extended to its vast rural areas, where basic education is still underdeveloped, China's intention is clearly to prepare young people to be able to function in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan have focused on the adoption of master plans to put high-speed computers in schools as a means of connecting their students to world knowledge. In this way, these nations are also encouraging more student-directed work to supplement the traditional teacher-directed approaches.” (Stewart ,2005 , p.230)

Consequently, it can be said that every part of the world are influenced by globalization. Schools and academic institutes are required to have decent strategic planning in order to response the global forces. According to Carney (1999), the globalization's impact on educational reform strategies comprise three dimensions as shown in Table 1:

**Table1** Globalization's impact on educational reform strategies

Impacts	Objectives	Issues
Competitiveness-driven reforms	To improve economic productivity by improving the quality of the labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decentralization</li> <li>- Standards</li> <li>- Improved management of educational resources</li> <li>- Improved teacher recruitment and training</li> </ul>
finance-driven reforms	to reduce public spending on education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shifting public funding from higher to lower levels of education</li> <li>- the privatization of secondary and higher education</li> <li>- the reduction of cost per students at all schooling levels</li> </ul>
Equity-driven reforms	to increase equality of economic opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lowest-income groups with high-quality basic education</li> <li>- Woman and rural populations that lag behind educationally</li> <li>- Student 'at risk ' (low income) , special needs students</li> </ul>

Source: summarized from Carney (1999)

It can be seen that the interconnection between education policy and the economic, political, and cultural processes of globalization plays important roles in present especially it affects directly to school reform system around the world. Hence, educators and schools and system leader have to response to this demand wisely, unless they will lose public suppose, resources, able student (Halliger, 1998).

#### **School Curriculum and Economic Needs: McDonalised education**

Globalization has impacted the majority of the world's modern workforce, making competencies once considered essential for productive professionals within a regional or national economy no longer sufficient in a marketplace with crumbling borders. McWorld or McDonaldization, a term sometimes used to describe the spreading of McDonald's restaurants throughout the world as the result of globalization, and more generally to describe the effects of international McDonaldization of services and commercialization of goods and services as an element of globalization as a whole (Wikipedia, 2006), can be described the requirement of school curriculum to serve economic needs .Hence, academic institutions are expected to provide skills training for the labor force of the community of nations, to a large extent, in fulfilling the requirements of commercial activity (Abanteriba, 2006). To prepare global-ready graduates for a workforce that requires inter- and multi-cultural competencies that ensure success in dealing with the serious social, political, and environmental threats that have come about from the advance of globalization. Bremer (2006) points out those institutions of higher education must change their priorities and objectives and include pivotal international educational experiences in their curricula.

The classic debate on this issue that brought up by Noll (1985) that whether schools should serve nation economic needs or not. The matter is while students are needed to learn skills that are necessary for the improvement of the society, school might become increasing captive to the profit-motive of business and industry. However, unavoidably, it seems that we need to reform the curriculum to produce the human capital to serve to the

economic needs. Various concepts and curricula were introduced into the schools. For example Bremer (2006) underlines that the Global Workforce Development (GWD) which curricula redesigned to enable students to become globally competent upon graduation.

Vidovich (2004) finds that school in Singapore and Australia have both been actively pursuing an agenda to build a unique internationally-oriented curriculum, in a context of globalization, but also within the constraints set by national/State curriculum frameworks, examinations and league tables.

I agree that students are the future good labor force or human capital, but what kind of educated labor is needed. Here, my point goes to reclaim the characteristic of Homo economicus that is described bases his choices on a consideration of his own personal "utility function". Economic man is also amoral, ignoring all social values unless adhering to them gives him utility. Some believe such assumptions about humans are not only empirically inaccurate but unethical (Wikipedia, 2006). I argue that these traits might not fit the concept of 'good man' in Islamic point of view. Hence, to produce the skilled labors suppose to be who able to fulfill the need of local community in particular and country in general, and at the same time has the attribute as good Muslim as well as good global citizen. However, I believe that theoretical and technological skills are not sufficient for a good human capital. The curriculum has to be turned into a more radical and politicized and much concerned on a moral aspect.

#### **Integrated Objective Curriculum: Teaching for Social Justice**

As I mentioned before, the moral aspect has to be considered in order to produce the human capital who can balance the materialism and spiritualism at the same time. I believe that to crate the globalization cannot create the quality, equity and social justice to human being. Hence, the school curriculum has to change on the basic values of love, care, and equality for all humanity.

The concept of Homo economicus has to be modified and added the element of ethical manner or moral aspects. This concept this is closed to the concept of the global



citizenship. In recent decades, educational and curricular reforms worldwide have been designed with the goal of preparing citizens for the challenges of globalization, which has been thought to require the broadening of children's occupational perspectives beyond conventional geopolitical borders and cultures (Wing-Wah Law, 2004). According to Davies (2006), the notion of global citizenship is too abstract to be valuable in driving curriculum policy and active citizenship for students. However, she points out that it has three of the key aspects of an active role of citizenship: a concern for social justice; rights; and culture and cultural conflict.

In United Kingdom, Tasneem (2005) describes There has been a resurgence of interest in global education in the UK as global issues are included within the requirements of citizenship education in national curricula. It seeks to answer the question: in what ways is global citizenship being mainstreamed? While in both Hong Kong and Taiwan have emphasized generic and transitional skills, and developed tripartite frameworks for citizenship education at local, national, and global levels (Wing-Wah Law, 2004).

I argue that the global citizen even though has a moral aspect, but it is not much emphasized obviously on economic needs. Hence, I believe that at the Islamic point of view, according to Anwar Ibrahim (1996) in his book *the Asian Renaissance*, the concept of *Homo Islamicus* can be promoted as a good human capital. I notice that this concept is closed to the Curriculum produced by Sukree (2006). It is the curriculum of Islamic based education for Public Administration Program, Yala Islamic College, Thailand. Sukree (2006) states that due to his model, students expected to be (1) a good and able student to fulfill the need of local community in particular and country in general, and (2) good Muslim men and women who automatically could become good citizens through peaceful path as a hopeful means for attaining sustainable peace in the Hereafter. Here, I can point out that the way that curriculum responds to the economic needs of country and at the same time achieve the integration objectives is curriculum has to produce the good man who has ability to handle the economic.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

Ramalhoto (2006) believes that a new basic function of the university institution "to teach students to be critical about any kind of information" and presents perspectives, efforts and three proposals for the establishment of a system for managing globalization and technological and scientific change. However, I believe that effective curriculum which responds the economic needs and at same time achieve the integration objectives which is can help to produce the good human capital as well as the concept of Homo islamicus that can bring the social justice to human and society.

## References:

- Abanteriba, S. (2006). Development of strategic international industry links to promote undergraduate vocational training and postgraduate research programmes. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 31 (3), p.283. (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Anwar Ibrahim. (1996). *The Asian Renaissance*. Singapore: Times Books International.
- Bremer, D. (2006). Wanted: global workers. *International Educator*. 15 (3), 40-46.
- Carney, M. (1999). *Globalization and educational reform: what planners need to know*. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, UNESCO.
- Davies, L. (2006). Global citizenship: abstraction or framework for action? *Educational Review*, 58 (1), p. 5. (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Hallinger, P. (1998). Educational change in Southeast Asia: The challenge of creating learning systems. *Journal of educational administration*, 63, 492-509.
- Hawkins, B.L.(2006). Globalization, internalization and EDUCAUSE. [EDUCAUSE Review](#), 41 (4). p. 80. (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>

- Idriss, C.M. (2002). Challenge and change in the German vocational system since 1990. *Oxford Review of Education*. 28, (4), pg. 473 (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from the <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Michaelowa, K. (2004). Aid Effectiveness Reconsidered- Panel Data Evidence for the Education Sector. *HWWA Discussion Paper 264*. Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWA). Retrieved October 19, 2006, from <http://www.assortis.com/newsletter/download/edu010012.pdf#search='Michaelowa'>
- Noll, J.M. (Ed). (1985). *Taking sides: clashing views on controversial educational issues*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Connecticut: The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc.
- Ramalhoto, M.F. (2006). Transforming academic globalization into globalization for all. *European Journal of Engineering Education*. 31 (3) .p.349 (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Stewart, V. (2005). A World transformed: how other countries are preparing students for the interconnected world of the 21st century. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 87 (3), pp. 229-232.
- Sukree Langputeh. (2006). The Islamization of the discipline of public administration in a Thai higher education institute: the experience of Yala Islamic College. *Workshop papers of the international workshop: Voice of Islam in Europe and Southeast Asia, 20-22 January 2006. Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand*, pp.140-145.
- Tamatea, L. (2006). Gandhian education in Bali: globalisations and cultural diversity in a time of fundamentalisms. *Compare*, 36 (2), p.213. (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Tasneem Ibrahim. (2005). Global citizenship education: mainstreaming the curriculum? *Cambridge Journal of Education*. 35 (2), p.177. (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Vidovich, L. (2004). Towards internationalizing the curriculum in a context of globalization: Comparing policy processes in two settings. *Compare*, 34 (4), p.443. (Abstract). Retrieved October10, 2006, from <http://proquest.umi.com>

Wikipedia. (2006). Homo Economicus. Retrieved October 10, 2006, from the World Wide

Web:

Wikipedia. (2006). McWorld. Retrieved October 10, 2006, from the World Wide Web:

Wing-Wah Law. (2004). Globalization and citizenship education in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

*Comparative Education Review*, 48 (3), p. 253-274.

