

HOW NEOLIBERAL POLICES HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DETERIORATION OF EDUCATION IN LDCs LACK OF RESOURCES

THE LACK OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND THE BLEAK FUTURE FACING THE YOUTH IN LDCs IN GENERAL

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Main features of neoliberalism

- Neoliberalism refers to an economic theory that favours free markets and minimal government intervention in the economy.
- It is generally associated with policies of economic liberalization, including privatization, deregulation, globalization, free trade, austerity and reductions in government spending in order to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society
- The Neoliberal context mostly prioritises a "growing economy" ideology over the holistic well-being of people's lives and this has been detrimental to LDC's.

What are the implications of neoliberalism?

- Globally, the rolling out of neoliberal policies has led to a additional of harmful socioeconomic consequences, including increased poverty, unemployment, unproductive labour force, and deterioration of income distribution (Rotarou and Sakellariou 2017; Collins et al. 2015).
- These policies, first introduced to African states through Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) during 70's deepened negative impacts and these are still being felt today.
- Neoliberal policies detrimental because their *"one-size-fits-all"* approach doesn't account for specific needs in different LDC's.
- Neoliberalism believes that people are best serviced by markets freedom, and little intervention by the state.
- Subsidies to most essential elements of social services such as health, education are cuts off

Neoliberal education policies - Role of Government

- In terms of education, it promotes marketisation policies and transferring services into the private ownership rather than government control.
- Confined to creating and defending markets.
- Basically, for neoliberal policies, there is less government regulation and intervention.
- All functions are better discharged by private enterprises – prompted by the profit motive to supply goods and services.
- IMF, WB, WTO supports LDC's developmental plans with neoliberalism policies and population mirrored.

How does neoliberalism affect education?

- Neoliberalism has brought fundamental changes to the way schools of education prepare professional educators;

- Among them is the pressure for education department to produce fast-track teacher preparation programs that bypass traditional requirements.
- Education is now seen as a tool for market gains rather than a public good.
- Quality education being compromised as private sector cannot match the increasing population and demand for education
- Resulting in government failing to priorities education sector in fiscal support

Zambia Implication or experiences on Education for example

- Teachers especially youth are graduating every year but no employment as the government which is the largest employer is failing to adopt them due to privatization
- Private schools are few and cannot absorb the majority of the teachers graduating from colleges
- Corruption now rising as teachers want to be employed
- Quality education is being compromised as teacher pupil ratio is unbearable, for example a class is now having 120 pupils for one teacher instead of 40 pupils
- Children after walking long distance to school are seating down on the ground and there are no desks and chairs, school buildings are made of thatch, pole and dagger which are posing a risk to children
- Imposition of user/school fees hit the poor at a time when cost of living is increasing and incomes reducing causing many to be left out and this has continually manifested – now there is no free education for all.
- ***Reduced budget allocations towards education in order to focus on debt servicing and economic performance also detrimental.***
- Focusing on providing only 'free primary education' (government) with minimal provision for secondary, tertiary and vocational education and training is detrimental as many who benefit from free primary education can't afford further education and this affects the productivity of the nation at large because people don't have necessary skills needed in order to participate in the market economy.
- Even though NGOs are aiding education in Zambia and that of the rest of LDCs, the fund seeking process is very competitive and conditions that are attached to funds by donors sometimes set them back.

FOCUS: Lack of job opportunities

Globalisation backed by Neoliberalism lead to opening up of markets therefore leading to increased competition such that infant industries continue to suffer.

- since many were retrenched during Structural Adjustment programmes (SAP), competition for jobs among adults and youths increased.
- policies pertaining to business to harsh for e.g. Small start-ups to survive and lack of capital, education, technology prevent success in business thus reducing employment opportunities for youths.
- Casualization of labour in nearly all LDCs is another economic challenges since industry cannot manage to employ labour force due to profit making and mismatch of structural job opportunities since majority of young people donot have competitive skills in laouta force.

Measures to be done

1. Support national developmental strategies – Financing for development (FFD) from perspective of the right to development (RTD) according to Saad Alfarargi Special Rapporteur on the right to development in journal south views no.217,14 May 2021
2. Responses to global economic impact of covid-19 pandemic
3. Increase resource to developing countries by upholding official development Assistance (ODA)
4. Multistakeholder approach
5. Social Accountability is critical
6. Human rights-based approach HRBA to sustainable development by international community
7. Relaxation of conditions that come with aid/funds
8. Education must be seen as an investment rather than a system to only grade and rank people.
9. Budget allocations towards education must be increased.
10. Practical education and skills like entrepreneurship should be involved in curriculums to ensure that individuals excel beyond the classroom after minimum qualifications like Grade twelve certificates
11. Bursaries and allowances should be extended to more students

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