

Chapter 4

Globalized Mathematics Curriculum: Could It Ever Be Possible?

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ABSTRACT

It is a known fact that the world now is a global village. Almost every aspect of human endeavor is moving with space in this era of digitization and movement with ethos of ages. The teaching of mathematics has been polarized in term of introduction of cultural diversity from other countries. Within standardized curricula, concepts and teaching are largely dissociated from the knowledge and skills a child brings into the classroom. Unless learners realize that mathematics exist in their very own world, beyond school walls and beyond a Eurocentric worldview, many of them will continue to complain about it as boring and uninteresting. Universalizing the curriculum for the sake of simplifying assessment or selling textbooks is not going to minimize the anxiety or even hatred that many students feel towards numbers. Conversely, introducing everyday mathematics into curricula will help students understand that math is something related to their culture.

INTRODUCTION

It is a known fact that the world now is a global village. Almost every aspect of human endeavour are moving with space in this era of digitization and movement with ethos of ages. Everything is now globalized. The teaching enterprise is not left out most especially mathematics.

In an attempt to do justice to this paper, a reflection has to be made to my secondary school days. I remembered in the late 70s till mid 80s where expatriates from Ghana, Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Eritrea culminated Nigeria teaching market. These expatriates were either teaching mathematics and sciences except on few occasion where they teach Christian Religion Studies. So, in a way the teaching of mathematics has already been polarized and pluralized in term of introduction of cultural diversity from these countries on Nigerian students.

Another experience was that of brain drain whereby some scholars are leaving the shore of Nigeria for greener pasture across the global into countries such as South-Africa, USA, Australia, Belgium, Lesotho, Botswana, Kenya, Zimbabwe among others. The lesson from this was that acculturation is very imminent in such circumstance like this. There is bound to be alien introduction of culture as reflection of such in the teaching and learning to those that teach mathematics where a particular language explanation has no equivalent.

Other experience worth sharing is that of the happening in Nigeria as a result of situation whereby mathematics from the western part move to teach in the North, South and Eastern part of the country as a result of unemployment. There is no way that one culture cannot be force or introduce unknowing during the teaching and learning of mathematics. Similar to this is parent job mobility where pupils/students moved along with their parents during transfer from one location to another to earn their living. This is common among military, police, federal staff with this, cultural pollution is inevitable. This inevitability lead to multicultural education way of learning mathematics. A typical example is that of Ajegunle in Lagos state, Nigeria.

International conferences and collaborations also lend credence to the aforementioned discussions of possibility of globalized mathematics curriculum. We (mathematics educators) unknowing import foreign variables as a result of our attendance in international mathematics conferences, seminar, symposium, workshops and international collaboration with colleagues in other part of the world. We have argued elsewhere that global collaboration is essential for moving the discipline forward in this globalised world - at the same time avoiding the colonialism of the past and allowing the discipline to play its role in bridging the ever-increasing gap

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