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TRADE POLICY, COMPETITIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT IN GHANA

A. D. AMARQUAYE LARYEA AND BERNARDIN SENADZA*

Abstract

This study looks at trade policy over the years and the extent to which it has affected competitiveness and employment. Using a theoretical framework of comparative advantage theory and its recommendations of free trade we examine the nature of policies pursued since independence and evaluated the results of these policies. Policies pursued immediately after independence involved a large amount of government involvement in economic activity and the use of controls to allocate resources. The price mechanism was frowned upon and critical prices like the exchange rate were fixed and not adjusted in the face of economic fluctuations. The result was a decline in economic performance which was quite severe. Following this the government of the day embarked on the Economic Recovery Programme which moved the economy to a greater application of the price mechanism. This was followed by a series of policy interventions in the trade sector and a greater encouragement of foreign investment. The result was a revival of economic growth and the improvement in the trade sector. However in spite of this job growth remained anaemic and the private sector did not perform as expected. Although there was an improvement in competitiveness as measured by the real exchange rate and also as measured by other indicators there were still areas in which performance was low in terms of competitiveness. This includes the bureaucracy, labour standards and infrastructure in general. Thus recommendations made address the areas which we found to be deficient in spite of the general improvement in performance.

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ACCOUNTABILITY IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES: THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION AND SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE

LYDIA APORI-NKANSAH*

Abstract

After a violent conflict in Sierra Leone, the government collaborated with the United Nations to set up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone to address the abuses of human rights that had occurred during the conflict. This case study seeks to analyse the transitional contexts of Sierra Leone against the backdrop of the policy choice of retributive and restorative approaches for transitional justice in the peace-building process of that country. It has been found that critical to determining the appropriateness of the policy choice of the TRC and Special Court are the prevailing national and international political dynamics, socio-economic and cultural conditions, the peace equilibrium of the transition, as well as the state of the already existing accountability mechanisms. This study has implications for the United Nations, governments of post-conflict societies and the International Criminal Court (ICC) in their quest for accountability for war crimes and human rights abuses.

Introduction

Since the 1980s, many states transitioning from complex political emergencies or conflicts have sought to pursue accountability for war crimes and human rights abuses as part of their democratization and or peace-building process (Humphrey, 2003). The challenge though has been how best to manage the consequence of a violent past (Skaar, 1999).

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THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS AND AFRICA

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Abstract

The last third of 2008 was traumatic and eventful as the whole world started panicking, because the US finally conceded the fact that there was a credit crunch which was adversely affecting her economy. President Bush quickly announced a \$700 billion bailout plan and asked Congress to pass a bill. Congress did and he signed it into law. On assumption of office, President Obama has asked for a further \$870 billion to be injected into the US economy. Efforts are being made all over the world, not necessarily only to find solution to the crisis, but more importantly, to insulate economies from the outfall of the crisis. In Africa, the African Union (AU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the various sub-regional blocs have discussed the issue. A high level conference, sponsored by the International Monetary fund (IMF) and hosted by the Government of Tanzania, was held in Dar-es-Salaam (March 11-12, 2009), specifically to discuss the crisis and options for Africa.¹ This paper is an attempt to throw more light on the crisis, juxtaposing it within the African problematique. It gives a general overview of the crisis within the context of international political economy. The effects of the crisis on various parts of the world are discussed, emphasis being placed on the developing countries. The focus on Africa is made by recasting the African situation and placing it within the global turmoil. The contention here is that, as is the case with contagion, Africa cannot be insulated from the global effects of the crisis. She has no choice but to take immediate steps towards insulating herself

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TEACHING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: TECHNIQUES, APPROACHES, PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

O. P. DOKUN OYESHOLA, YINKA AJAYI
AND TEMITOPE FAVOUR JIBOYE*

Abstract

In the era of the Cold War International Politics was centred on military security and unqualified economic growth to maintain it. Inevitably, this led to arms race at the expense of social expenditures of many nations. This inadvertently promoted environmental degradation among others and the neglect of the developmental concerns of developing countries in particular. The Non-align Movement, New Economic International Order and development assistance for instance, were not given the attention they deserved. International politics of the period could be understood and tolerated in the context of a bi-polar world. But now technological advancement and environmental degradation global warming have changed all that. The world is now a global village and the threat of environmental degradation to the ecosystem is increasing. In fact, the possibility of the collapse of the ecosystem is very real. From this point of view, Politics that recognizes collaboration, mutual support and human sensitivity must replace that of hitherto rootless and destructive competition of blind market forces in business. International Relations as a discipline, has an indispensable role to play. In the African context, this paper discusses techniques, approaches, priorities and challenges before International Relations if its relevance to global politics will be maintained.

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RESTORING THE DIGNITY OF THE CHILD THROUGH FATHERS' PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIAN HOMES

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Abstract

This paper explores the nature and nurture controversy in the upbringing/socialisation of the child from the behaviourists' approach which suggests that human behaviour is malleable and that the environment has a lot of influence on it. The family holds the key to our lives as it lays the foundation for the psychological, moral, and spiritual foundation for the overall development of the child. The influence of the family through fathering has been examined from the premise of nature and nurture controversy. The role of the family in the socialisation process cannot be underestimated. Invariably, the father's and mother's significant roles in the socialisation process are invaluable in restoring the dignity of the child. The mother, the father and the child have important roles to play in this unit. Some of these roles are learnt through socio-cultural inheritance while others are learnt over the time through socialisation.

Researches have shown that fathers' active participation in the family could reduce the incidence of violence, drug abuse, violent illegal activities, and school truancy. When the youths are involved in the above vices, they lose their dignity. Some of them run away from homes and become fugitives and this exposes them to more danger – the girls become promiscuous while the boys incline to gangsterism. Withdrawal of father's love is associated with problems in children, such as negative self-esteem, academic difficulties, bad behaviour and depression. The fathers also have rewarding experience by active participation in nurturing their children.

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ANALYSIS OF FARM-INPUT CHARACTERISTICS IN CRUDE-OIL- POLLUTED AND NON-POLLUTED CROP FARMS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

OJIMBA, THANKGOD PETER*

Abstract

The study focused on analysis of farm inputs characteristics in crude oil polluted and non-polluted crop farms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The objectives of the paper were to analyze and evaluate the expenditure and quantity of farm inputs used in crops farms in study area. Primary data was collected using multistage sampling procedure. A total of 340 questionnaires were administered to respondents, but only 296 were retained as suitable for analysis. The results showed that mean value of expenditure on fertilizers purchased (in U.S dollars equivalent) by farmers was the highest (\$74.68) expenses incurred, followed by hired labour (\$68.67) and cost of farm plots rented (\$47.18) in crude oil polluted farms in Rivers State. The farm inputs analyses were similar in the non-polluted farms category. The results of the study also showed that the costs of fertilizers, machinery and seed dressing were higher in crude oil polluted farms than in the non-polluted farms because of the possibility of re-fertilizing, dressing the seeds more than once after the initial dressing and re-ploughing, harrowing, etc. The total expenditure on farm inputs used in crude oil polluted farms (\$336.28) was higher than that of the non-polluted farms (\$297.66). Therefore, more farm inputs were found to be used in the crude oil polluted farms than in non-polluted farms category, hence the higher level of expenses incurred.

Keywords: Farm inputs, fertilizers, crude oil polluted farms, non-polluted farms, Rivers State.

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