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Manhize: An Epitome of Glocalisation in Zimbabwean Industrial Policy Space

ANDREW HWITITI, KEVIN GWATIDZO, MALVIN MALINGANISO¹ AND RUMBIDZAI MPAHLO

Abstract

The article is based on a study that explores the Manhize Steel Plant as the epitome of glocalisation in Zimbabwean industrial policy. Glocalisation has become a developmental approach that integrates local ideas into the globalisation drive. Glocalisation has changed development in the world as it has led to the inclusion and recognition of diversity through the localisation of development. The inclusion of localisation in the development drive helps create context-specific transformation. The problem that the research looks into is the eradication of westernised communities created by globalisation by the inclusion of localisation. The research uses a qualitative research approach with a bias towards the exploratory research design. The study uses secondary information as the data collection method. Thematic data analysis as the method of analysing the findings of the study was used. The findings reveal that the Manhize Steel Plant is testament to the epitome of glocalisation as the company is developing infrastructure and providing developmental initiatives, solving local challenges such as unemployment, infrastructural development, while creating global market share. The study concludes that the Manhize Steel Plant has significantly improved local infrastructure, exemplifying glocalisation. The study recommends localisation of all foreign direct investments (FDI) in Zimbabwe to implement contextual development to reduce externalisation of development from local resources.

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Keywords: development, homogeneous, localisation, externalisation, FDI, infrastructure

INTRODUCTION

Globalisation is often used to refer to the economic integration that is apparently taking place in the world through the increasing flow of capital and trade (Khondker, 2005). The term ‘glocal’ and the process noun ‘glocalisation’ are formed by telescoping global and local to make a blend (Featherstone *et al.* (2003). The term was modelled on the Japanese word *dachakuka* which originally meant adapting farming technique to one’s own local condition (Monden, 2008). In the business arena, the term was adopted to refer to global localisation (Beck, 2000). Robertson-von Trotha (2022) asserts that glocalisation is used by Japanese marketing experts to indicate that products of Japanese origin should be localised. Through this, they advanced that products should be suited to local taste and interests, yet becoming global in application and reach (Robertson, 2020). This has given the understanding that development of products in most countries has been modelled around the resistance to homogenisation of the world as products are made to keep their local taste while being innovated to gain the global interest on the market.

Smith *et al.* (2024) allude that globalisation has become a problem for the developing countries that hold corporate companies from developed countries as most of them have failed to reduce poverty. Globalisation is concerned with the exchange of products and services multi-nationally leading to the establishment of foreign companies in other countries (Emmanuel *et al.*, 2022). The process of globalisation in developing countries failed to account for the diversity in local areas (Sobocinska, 2021). This led to the under-development of developing countries that hosted multi-national companies as the local problems and solutions were ignored.

The issue of globalisation has led to the development of multi-national companies that do not develop the localities or offer solutions as they send their profits back to the mother company. The failure of globalisation has been pointed towards the lack of localisation of the products created. The study problematises the need for adoption of global products and services to meet the needs of the local market in Zimbabwe. The study examines the strategies used to glocalise the Zimbabwean industrial policy at Manhize Steel Plant to adopt the global production of steel to meet the local demands of the country.

The aim of the study is to understand the strategies and processes of glocalisation that are used to adapt the global steel production to fit the Zimbabwean context and solve the challenges in the country. The main objective of the study is to assess the glocalisation processes at the Manhize Steel Plant. The objective is to find out if these glocalisation processes can sustain the development of Zimbabwe through harnessing of local resources. The study is unique, since no similar study has been done on the topic of glocalisation in Zimbabwe on Manhize Steel Plant. The study adds to the existing body of literature on glocalisation in industrial policy, assessing its effectiveness and recommends solutions where gaps have been identified. The study will assist policy-makers in the adaptation of global products to fit the local context to solve the challenges faced. The study outline is an introduction, conceptual framework, a literature review, followed by a methodology section and then the findings, a discussion of the findings and a conclusion and recommendations are presented. It is against the backdrop of the failure of the globalisation process that the study seeks to understand the successes of glocalisation as Zimbabwe localises development.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section of the study presents the conceptual framework on glocalisation by creating the relationship between globalisation and

localisation. Globalisation is the ever-changing economic and socio-political international interactions that pose challenges to public policy theory (Lodhi, 2021). Globalisation has brought challenges to the sovereignty state through the creation of borderless economies (Rodrik, 2012). These economies favour the integration of the state into the world economy, limiting state interference in the economic activities. Cerny and Prichard (2017) allude that globalisation fails to acknowledge the existence of differences in contexts by creating a homogeneous economic and political environment. The failure of globalisation to recognise the diversity led to the need for the infusion of localisation in globalisation to protect local identity while creating global products.

The inclusion of localisation has been a strategy in the Asian countries that has been used in the creation of products or services for the global market by adapting them to local culture (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2012). It has created economies of value through value addition into a cultural identity into the global markets. It is the forging of a synergy between globalisation, global governance and local relations, hinging on domestic peculiarities (Cakmakli *et al.*, 2017). Thornton (2000) argues that it is the maximisation of the peculiarities of different localities, mixing them with global trends. To be indifferent from the loopholes that globalisation possess is to be blind to the antics within international politics (Folorunso *et al.* 2022). The phenomenon of globalisation has some challenges that can expose local societies to dangers such as creation of homogeneous societies.

This led to the mixture of development initiatives with local ideas to maintain the local taste. Glocalisation entails the process of global forces interacting with local realities, leading to the adaptation of global phenomenon to fit local context (Eren and Henneberry, 2022). Globalisation has often fallen short of diversity of local context. This has led to glocalisation in most developing countries to avoid

homogenisation by foreign companies (Emmanuel, Ramsey and Samkari, 2022). Glocalisation plays a critical role in covering the shortfalls of globalisation through the incorporation of local cultural values and traditions into a specific product or service. Glocalisation has become the bridging gap between creation of products that addresses the local problem with a global market appeal.

The issue of glocalisation has become an important development approach that addresses dominant approaches that reduces other developmental initiatives. The combination of globalisation and localisation harnesses the diversity of context-specific approaches. Glocalisation becomes an important part of development as it helps countries integrate international initiatives into the local context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the literature review on glocalisation through the lenses of the failure of globalisation. The post-1945 era saw the processes of reconstruction beginning to be managed through various institutional organisations under the leadership of the United States (Yalin, 2023). In the process, the United Nations, as the main international political organisation and the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which would seek to shape economic structures were created (Wathen, 2020). This led to the developed countries aiming to conduct domestic and foreign trade on a liberal axis through liberalisation (World Bank,, 2015). This led to the process of globalisation that Robertson (2012) observes as a dual dynamic of the universality of particularism and the particularisation of universality in the 20th century. The process of globalisation brought to the fore fundamental contradictions of the modern state and capitalism termed the ‘globalisation paradox’ by Rodrik (2012). The process of globalisation aimed at integrating economies globally. This was in contradiction to the policy of the sovereign states, leading to the collapse of various economies in developing countries.

The failure of globalisation was due to its not recognising diversity and national borders as these had connotations on the specificities of demands each nation-state had. Glocalisation emerged through the need to think globally, while acting locally (Robertson, 2012). Roudometof (2015) argues that the co-existence of globalisation and localisation creates a development that answers the problems of society. The interplay of the local and the global immerses each other in an irreversible transformation and the outcomes of both processes mutually reinforce each other in glocalisation (Yalin, 2023). This phenomenon has continued to advance in all socio-economic and political structures worldwide (Roman, 2006). Khondeker (2005) asserts that glocalisation does not eradicate differences as, instead, it acknowledges diversity as a fundamental element. In light of this glocalisation is like a fragmented light wave of globalisation at the local level (Robertson, 2020). The notion of authenticity presented as locality is a product of the global and heterogeneity constitutes the characteristic of the structure (Ritzer, 2003). Glocalisation is the localisation of policies guided by international organisations to create a global design manifesting at the local level.

More and more, development practitioners are realising that all social concerns are globally interdependent (Flem *et al.*, 2017; Can *et al.*, 2020). Power differentials dominate the relations between the global and local interaction in development (Roudometof, 2015). Glocalisation is the paradigm that leaves room for underprivileged voices (Lalayants *et al.*, 2015; Yang 2021). Robertson (1995) argues that glocalisation was not simply a homogenising force, but also a vehicle through which economic, structural and cultural heterogeneity can take place. Szulecki (2011) observes that glocalisation is an ongoing conversation that leaves room for the power and efficacy of local actors, as opposed to the hegemony of the global discourse and actors. In light of this, it can be argued that glocalisation acts as a strategy to give power to local voices in the processes of development. It recognises that power is not unilateral,

but that, as global ideas and forces interact with local places, a mix of resistance and reformulation occurs (Fouquet, 2008; Persson and Erlandsson 2014; Payne and Askeland, 2016). Voices that are ignored in the predominant globalisation story are found and heard in the glocalisation process.

Glocalisation has become a process of bridging the gap between countries and their citizens making the voices of the underrepresented heard in the development processes. de Burgh-Woodman (2014) argues that glocalisation is a process of continuous interdependence among nations and the citizens. However, migration and labour flows are even more stringent and less globalised than they were about a century ago (Jain *et al.*, 2012; Rai and Deng, 2016; Sumirat and Adhikara, 2021). The process of glocalisation emerges as a vital framework for adapting global ideas and practices to fit local conditions (Hanka *et al.*, 2011). Glocalisation allows the emergence of paradiplomacy which denotes international relations conducted by subnational or regional governments (Swyngedouw 2004; Cornago *et al.*, 2016). The synergy between glocalisation and paradiplomacy lies in the ability of local governments to contextualise global agendas to suit local needs. while simultaneously influencing these agendas through international partnerships (Ingleby 2006; Tong and Cheung 2011; Wang 2018; Utomo, 2024). The process of glocalisation has strength to improve the localisation of international agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which developing countries have been struggling to localise.

The core values of the glocal world are syncretism which pulls together the best ideas from a wide array of thoughts to formulate a new ideology (Kraidy, 2003; Shamsuddoha, 2009; Holland, 2022). Glocalisation focuses on the creation of an inclusive development framework that promotes voices from across society. Utomo (2024) argues that glocalisation has hedonism as a core value which is the belief that everything is relative and there are no absolutes. Smith

(2013) argues that glocalisation is the creation of global products that considers the voices of the local communities. Smith (2023) argues that to glocalise, McDonalds had to remove pork and beef from the menu of its Indian restaurants with the Big Mac being replaced with the Chicken Maharaj Mac. Abdulraheem (2023) argues that there are various organisations that are glocalising to fit the local needs of their customers, for example Starbucks, adapting their products for the Indian market, Netflix varying its showings based on viewer location and Apple adjusting its marketing strategy for Japan. Glocalisation is about the creation of an inclusive development which has a mixture of local identity with a global appeal to be representational and marketable.

The reviewed literature shows that glocalisation has become instrumental in the creation of an inclusive development framework which is representational of the global and local views. Glocalisation has emerged as a process of redressing the errors of the dominant perspectives that ignored the localities within development, leading to the failure of globalisation and liberalisation. Glocalisation has provided solutions where globalisation has ignored areas such as diversity and the views of those who lack power within society. Glocalisation has become a strategy towards localisation of international agendas. This approach of glocalisation in developing countries can be used to integrate SDGs.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research used the qualitative research approach which is based on the non-numerical method of gathering data. The appeal of the qualitative approach in the study is that it allows the data to emerge from the findings without deducting them using the hypothesis, as the approach is inductive (Haralambos and Holborn, 2013). The study uses the qualitative approach to examine glocalisation at the Manhize Steel Plant. The research uses the exploratory research design to understand the stakeholders' contribution towards apathy in

Zimbabwe as the area has not been well explored. Hunter *et al.* (2019) note that an exploratory research design's allure is that it allows the research to explore areas of study that are not well explored. The design allowed the research to analyse the glocalisation processes at the plant.

The study uses secondary information as the data collection method through the use of newspaper articles and website reports, with the criteria of inclusion based on key words Manhize Steel Plant. Snyder (2019) indicates that a literature review-based study has strength due to the fact that it can help a research to build new insights based on the literature, allowing for the filling of the gaps. The study uses thematic data analysis to analyse the findings of the study. The allure of thematic data analysis is, as observed by Clark (2012), that the thematic data analysis method identifies, categorises and classifies data into recognisable themes that can be easy to follow for the reader.

FINDINGS

This section presents the finding of the study on the glocalisation in Manhize as a development strategy to cater for the national development needs. *The Herald* (22 October, 2024) carries a story that Dinson Iron and Steel Company (Disco) has created glocalisation in Manhize as it set to create a world-class downstream steel fabrication enterprise, while providing employment and generating a revenue of US\$5 billion annually. The company is creating a global product while creating solutions for the local society through employment creation and boosting the economy which is the epitome glocalisation. *The Chronicle* (21 June, 2024) carries a story that as Disco intends to create a global steel enterprise, it will also solve the local problem of unemployment by providing 3 000 jobs on its initial phase. The Manhize Steel Plant presents glocalisation as the company that is ming there is providing a global enterprise to help locals with employment. *The Herald* (23 February, 2023) has a story that to

reduce the challenges of unemployment, Disco will employ 20 000 people in a decade, producing world-class steel. The Manhize Steel Plant is playing a critical role in fostering glocalisation as it is harnessing local resources to produce global market products, while solving the challenges of unemployment bedeviling the country.

The Herald (16 January, 2024) carries a story that while Disco plans to create a global steel production , it intends to establish infrastructural projects such as rail, road networks and provide a dam for domestic irrigation and industrial operations at the plant. Disco is glocalising as it is creating a global steel plant, while also planning on solving some of the problems facing Zimbabwean communities such as transport and water availability in poor smallholder communities. *Ming Zimbabwe* (17 June, 2024) reports that the company operating at Manhize signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of Zimbabwe to undertake the refurbishment and construction of 1 000km of railway line to ensure uninterrupted transportation of goods. Through these infrastructural development projects, the company is helping in solving local problems such as transport and mobility crises evinced in traffic congestion and road accidents. This will be the ripple effect extending beyond the steel industry, seeing that the company is solving problems faced by locals while maintaining its presence on the global market.

The Sunday Mail (23 June, 2024) carries a story that Disco is set to expand its tentacles into cement production and lithium value-addition. The company will be engaging in glocalisation through solving one of Zimbabwe's biggest challenges, the lack of value-addition on local resources. *The Sunday Mail* (31 December, 2024) carries a story that Disco will engage in local beneficiation of steel, instead of exporting raw iron ore as Zimbabwe will now produce value-added steel products, creating employment for those making the products. The glocalisation at Manhize aligns with SDG 9 which focuses on industry, innovation and infrastructure. *The Chronicle* (7

March, 2024) carries a story that steel production will stimulate infrastructural development projects, thrusting production across all sectors in line with the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) towards an upper middle-income economy by 2030. The Manhize Steel Plant represents the epitome of glocalisation as it shows all the values of the phenomenon, such as syncretism and inclusive development.

in addition, the Manhize steel company is the epitome of glocalisation as the phenomena is associated with syncretism that is pulling together the best ideas and inclusive development. The Sunday Mail (31, December) has a story that the development at Manhize is evidence of glocalisation as it fosters skills transfer through collaboration with other institutions to train workers in steel manufacturing. This will solve the problems facing Zimbabwe, that of the mismatch. *Ming Zimbabwe* (17, June 2024) carries a story that social investment in healthcare, education and housing is part of the plant's corporate social responsibility to provide inclusive development. ZBC News (17 July, 2024) has a story that, with a strategic vision, investment in sustainable technologies and a commitment to community development, Manhize is not just producing steel, but it is building a foundation for Africa's industrial future. The Manhize Steel Plant is creating development, while transforming Zimbabwe from being an agricultural economy to a steel industry-based economy. This can help Zimbabwe as agriculture continue to face negative impacts of climate change.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study is to understand the strategies and processes of glocalisation used to adapt global steel production to fit the Zimbabwean context and solve the challenges in the country. The study findings reveal that the Manhize Steel Plant is creating glocalisation through the creation of global steel production, while providing employment for the locals. Zimbabwe has been facing

challenges such as high levels of unemployment which has become a national security threat. The company has moved to globalise its production to meet international steel demands, while solving the domestic problem of unemployment. In support of these findings, are Malik, Chaudhry and Javed (2011) who observe how glocalisation foreign direct investment improves employment in developing countries, allowing global corporations solve local development problems. The iron and steel investment by Disco ranks Zimbabwe among global steel manufacturing hubs solving the country's unemployment problem. This investment has potential to solve Zimbabwe's socioeconomic challenges through the creation of iron from iron ore, thereby creating employment and boosting the economy. The production has potential to solve local problems while creating global investments and allowing the country to produce steel from ore, as opposed to the current production from scrap metal.

The study reveals that the iron steel plant at Manhize is the epitome of glocalisation as it has a ripple effect of the iron production influencing development and solving the country's current developmental problems it is facing. Zimbabwe currently is facing challenges in infrastructural development and the steel production company offers to develop infrastructure. This shows that the Manhize Steel Plant is an epitome of glocalisation as it is the creation of a global enterprise while solving developmental challenges. The company indicated plans to develop water supplies for smallholder farmers to combat climate change. Similar to the study is Foster (2023), who argue that glocalisation has an impact on infrastructure development by increasing competition, collaboration and innovation. The study findings also reveal that the Manhize Steel Plant has become the epitome of glocalisation as it has solved some of the challenges that Zimbabwean societies continue to face, such as value-addition. The global steel giant is creating beneficiation for local resources, while creating economic development. The company has enabled the country to export value-added steel than the ore

which was exported in this past. The plant has created a chance for the country to develop infrastructure, while also developing other sectors such as agriculture through the manufacturing of pipes and other steel products. The Manhize Steel Plant has become the epitome of glocalisation as it has allowed the development of syncretism through manpower development and value-addition training across other sectors. This inclusive development.

From the Zimbabwe industrial policy, lessons can be drawn through understanding that an industrial outfit should aim for a global market share, while solving local challenges. In light of the above, it can be argued that the Manhize Steel Plant is a testament of the highest level of glocalisation as it has enabled the country to integrate NDS1 with the pursuit of the global market share by Zimbabwean companies through teaching value-addition.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the study is to understand the strategies and processes of glocalisation used to adapt global steel production to fit the Zimbabwean context and solve the challenges in the country. The study findings reveal that the Manhize steel company is the epitome of glocalisation as it has led to infrastructural development, employment and value-addition in the country. The steel plant has provided solutions to the current socioeconomic challenges facing the country. The study concludes that the Manhize Steel Plant is the highest level of glocalisation providing solutions to the socioeconomic challenges such as poverty and unemployment. The study also concludes that the plant is the highest point of glocalisation as it has provided a chance for the localisation of SDGs through infrastructural development. In a nutshell, glocalisation has seen the integration of the NDS1 in Zimbabwe, leading to the transformation of socioeconomic challenges. The Manhize steel company has become a prime example of glocalisation where all players interested in foreign

direct investment in Zimbabwe, can take a leaf from to support the country's industrial growth while maximising their profits.

The study recommends policies that allow collaboration between companies in Zimbabwe to create manpower development. It advances the implementation of devolution policies to allow regions endowed with minerals to benefit from infrastructural development across these areas. The research advances the implementation of policies that demand manpower development initiatives from foreign companies to allow human capital development. The study recommends all foreign companies to invest in infrastructural development.

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