Globalisation and the competitive market forces have generated a massive growth in the knowledge industries that are having profound effects on societies, their economies and educational institutions. One of the effects of forces of globalisation is that educational organisations, having modelled its goals and strategies on the entrepreneurial business and neo-liberal model, are compelled to embrace the corporate ethos of the efficiency, accountability and profit-driven managerialism. Hence, the politics of education reforms in the twenty-first century reflect this new emerging paradigm of standards-driven and outcomes-defined policy change (Zajda 2015, 2020a). Some policy analysts have criticized the ubiquitous and excessive nature of standardization in education imposed by the EFA framework (Carnoy 1999; Burbules and Torres 2000; Meyer and Benavot 2013; Zajda and Rust 2016a, b; Zajda 2020c).

Whether one focuses on their positive or negative effects, at the bottom line, there was an agreement that the policies and practices of educational development had converged along the consensus built at the multilateral forum (Carnoy 1999).

With this in mind, I would like to re-define ‘globalisation’, from a social, political and cultural transformation perspective, as a new dominant ideology of on-going cultural convergence, which is accompanied by corresponding economic, political, social, technological and educational transformations (Zajda 2020c). Such a process is characterised by increasing economic and political interdependence between nations, and which ultimately, transforms the ethnocentric core of nation-state and national economy. This was already exemplified by Wallerstein’s (1979) world-system concept map model of social change (which is still relevant as a major theoretical perspective on explaining globalisation) where ‘the world system’ is a network of unequal economic and political relationships between the developed and less developed nations. His model of the world-system is also relevant to theories of
social stratification and discourses of inequality. Social stratification is commonly defined as unequal distribution of socially valued commodities, such as power, status, occupation, education and wealth.

What then is ‘globalisation’, given its multi-dimensional nature? Is it a ‘market-driven process’ only, that imposes a neo-liberal economic discipline, and which represents the triumph of global capitalism? If so, is it spearheaded by multinational conglomerate? Is it connected to the discourse about modernity (Giddens 1990; Robertson 1992)? Is it also driven by intensified modes of competition that compresses the time and space aspects of social relations’ (Giddens 1990)? These are some of the questions arising from a critical perception of a multi-dimensional nature of globalisation.

The phenomenon of ‘globalisation’ refers, in general sense, to people around the globe being more connected to each other than ever before, to a quantum-like pace of the international flow of communication, knowledge and money, to consumer goods and services produced in one part of the world being increasingly available in all parts of the world, and to the explosion of international travel.

**Globalisation and Its Effects on Societies**

More than ever before there is a need to understand and analyse both the intended and the unintended economic, social and political effects of globalisation on the state, political economy, educational systems, and individuals across the globe. One of those developments is a growing inequality and social stratification globally. That the income gap between high income and low income nations has increased was acknowledged by the International Monetary Fund (2002):

That the income gap between high-income and low-income countries has grown wider is a matter for concern. And the number of the world’s citizens in abject poverty is deeply disturbing. But it is wrong to jump to the conclusion that globalization has caused the divergence, or that nothing can be done to improve the situation. To the contrary: low-income countries have not been able to integrate with the global economy as quickly as others, partly because of their chosen policies and partly because of factors outside their control. No country, least of all the poorest, can afford to remain isolated from the world economy (International Monetary Fund 2002).

Recent data from the World Bank indicates that in developing regions, the proportion of people living on less than $1.25 a day fell ‘from 47 per cent in 1990 to 22 per cent in 2010’ (see also World Bank 2019; OECD 2018a, b; UN 2020). Some 700 million fewer people lived in conditions of extreme poverty in 2010 than in 1990 (The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015; see also Edward and Sumner 2013). According to OECD report (2013), economic inequality has increased by more ‘over the past three years to the end of 2010 than in previous twelve’. The report also noted that inequality in America in 2012 ‘exceeds the records last reached in the 1920s. The United States has the fourth-highest level of inequality in the developed world’ (OECD 2013).
Furthermore, the evolving and constantly changing notions of national identity, language, border politics and citizenship, which are relevant to education policy, need to be critiqued within the local-regional-national arena, which is also contested by globalisation. Current education policy research reflects a rapidly changing world, where citizens and consumers are experiencing a growing sense of uncertainty, inequality and alienation. Teune (1998) argued that forces of globalisation have produced a new divide between rich and poor nations:

What is becoming global depends of the level of complexity of entities within countries. The more complex entities, educated individuals, high technology firms, higher educational research institutions, and new technologies, are the first into the global system. More complex, more wealthy countries are also the first in. The least developed parts of the world are breaking away from hierarchal state authority into fragmented groups...So there are two worlds of human societies...one that is part of a global society and another that is set loose from hierarchal control and engages in activities that seem to be dissociated with anything global at all other than technologies that enhance group solidarity and the destruction of enemies. But both phenomena are part of the process of globalization, thousands of tribes co-existing in a complex world society (Teune 1998).

**Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation**

The term ‘globalisation’, like post-modernism, is used so widely today in social theory, policy, and education research, that it has become a cliché (Held et al. 1999). Explaining the origins of globalisation, Waters (1995) argued that globalisation was the ‘direct consequence of the expansion of European cultures across the world via settlement, colonialisation, and cultural mimesis’ (p. 3). Waters’ analysis of the nature of globalisation immediately highlighted its two major and interconnected dimensions—economic and cultural. Other writers focused more on political, social, pedagogical and technological dimensions of globalisation.

In recent years, the construct of ‘globalisation’ has become a ubiquitous signifier in education and social sciences and there is a need to analyse the paradoxical complexity and ambiguities surrounding connotations and denotations attached to the term by different individuals, who employ a rich diversity of perceptions, disciplines and methodologies. By finding some common features and differences we may be able to provide a more meaningful paradigm in pedagogical discourse. Globalisation has been described as ‘the most over-used term in the current political lexicon’. It refers both to the compressions of the world in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa and the ‘intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole’ (Bromley 1996, p. 120).

Globalisation, due to its paradigmatic complexity and a vast multitude of competing and contested interpretation and usages, is not an easy term to define. The most intriguing thing about the use of the term ‘globalisation’ in the mass media and in Internet communications is that it is used ‘without any explicit definition whatsoever’ (Robertson and Khondker 1998, p. 27). As Robertson and Khondker (1998)
explained, the term ‘globalisation’ is ambiguous and has acquired multitude of meanings:

the word ‘globalization’ has become so fuzzy and used with such a variety of different meanings that a general theory of globalization must acknowledge and incorporate various discourses. The most prominent current usage of the term ‘globalization’ is undoubtedly associated with the global expansion of the market form of economy (Robertson and Khondker 1998, p. 27).

In attempting to offer a pragmatic but evolving definition of ‘globalisation’ that is inclusive of a symbiotic relationship between ‘skyscraper economies’ and ‘shanty towns’ one should focus on the increasing transnational processes and interdependence, and also international discourses concerning the unequal distribution of socially valued commodities, such as wealth, income, education and power, as well as the nature of the changing patterns of the global economy, and global human rights, equality, environment, and other significant issues related to a world system. Today, economic rationalism and neo-conservative ideology, has become a dominant ideology, in which education is seen as a producer of goods and services that foster economic growth (Apple 2004). Ideals of human rights, social justice, ethnic tolerance, and collectivity are exchanged for key concepts from the discourse of global economy, including productivity, competitiveness, efficiency and maximization of profit (Zajda et al. 2006; Biraimah et al. 2008; Zajda 2008c, 2020a; Zajda and Rust 2016a, b). Education has been affected by the crisis of the welfare State and the weakening of civil society. As such, it has shifted its focus, from the ‘learning of meanings’ to the ‘learning of earnings’ (Zajda 2015).

Furthermore, the real problem lies not so much in defining globalisation as a phenomenon, but in understanding and critiquing its intended and unintended consequences on nation-states and individuals around the world (Biraimah et al. 2008, p. xvii). Definitions of globalisation have varied from one author to another. Some have described it as a process, while others as a condition, a system, a force or a phenomenon of time and place. In the last two decades (1990–2008), there has been a virtual explosion of interest in globalisation among comparative education scholars, and policy analysts (Appadurai 1990a, b; Banya 2005; Bray 2005; Cheng 2005; Daun 2005; Giddens 1990, 2000; Robertson 1992; Waters 1995; Arnove and Torres 1999; Sklair 1999; Carnoy 1999; Stromquist and Monkman 2000; Welch 2001; Crossley and Jarvis 2001; Carnoy and Rhoten 2002a, b; Arnove 2015; Geo-JaJa and Zajda 2005; Rhoads et al. 2005; Rust and Jacob 2005; Sabour 2005; Zajda 2005a, b, 2020b; Zajda et al. 2006; Biraimah et al. 2008). Yet, there is still no visible general consensus, from the literature, as to what constitutes its fundamental characteristics or core processes. In general, globalisation literature is divided between economic, social and cultural dimensions of globalisation. Rust and Jacob (2005) argued, from a political economy perspective, that globalisation was defined, dominated and controlled by giant transnational corporation and market forces, which, at were times, almost borderless:

Globalisation involves the transformation of space and time, transcending state territories, state frontiers, and historical traditions. Whereas international relations embody the notion
of transactions between nations, global relations imply that social, economic, political, and cultural activities disengage from territorial authority and jurisdictions and function according to more immediate imperatives of worldwide spheres of interest. Through globalisation the economy is dominated by market forces run by transnational corporations owing allegiance to no nation state and located wherever global advantage dictates (Rust and Jacob 2005).

Paralleling the development of multinational industry was a vivid example of a global electronic finance market that exchanges more than a trillion dollars a day (Bergsten 1988, quoted in Rust and Jacob 2005).

Globalisation as a Construct

First, as suggested earlier, there are numerous definitions and perceptions of globalisation. As described in the Globalisation Guide (2002), nearly 3000 definitions of globalisation were offered in 1998 alone. Second, there are contested interpretations of globalisation. The conservatives’ definition of globalisation as the turning of the world economy into a single market, and in terms of education its marketisation, constant cost-cutting and facilitating closer links between it and the economy, threatens the ability of many communities and nation-states to localise quality education or increase GDP through tax revenues and trade regulations. To some critical theory researchers, globalisation means economic hegemony from the North in terms of providing the sole model to be adopted by the nations of the globe (Apple 2004; McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005; Rhoads et al. 2005, Zajda 2014a). Stanley Fischer (2001) in his speech ‘The Challenge of Globalization in Africa’ stressed that ‘globalisation’ was a multi-faceted concept, containing many important ‘economic and social, political and environmental, cultural and religious’ dimensions, which affected everyone in some way:

Its implications range from the trade and investment flows that interest economists, to changes that we see in our everyday lives: the ease with which we can talk to people all over the world; the ease and speed with which data can be transmitted around the world; the ease of travel; the ease with which we can see and hear news and cultural events around the world; and most extraordinarily, the internet, which gives us the ability to access the stores of knowledge in virtually all the world’s computers. Equally remarkable, internet technology is not particularly expensive or capital intensive—but it is human capital intensive, and therein lies one of the implications of globalization for economic and social policy.

Fischer also stressed that globalisation was not new and that the idea was as ancient as history of human civilization:

…Globalization is not new. Economic globalization is as old as history, a reflection of the human drive to seek new horizons; globalization has usually advanced, though it has sometimes receded—most importantly, during the 1930s, the prelude to World War II (Fischer 2001).

According to Robertson (1992), on the other hand, the concept of globalisation was associated with reconstructed notions of space and intensification. He believes that
‘Globalisation as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole’ (Robertson 1992, p. 8). Stiglitz (2002) develops the theme of interdependence in claiming that ‘Globalisation has been accompanied by the creation of new institutions that have joined with existing ones to work across borders’ (Stiglitz 2002, p. 9). Held et al. (1999) suggest that globalisation may be thought of as ‘the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life’ (Held et al. 1999, p.2). The range of dimensions, Held et al. observed stretch ‘from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual’. Held and McGrew (2000) describe globalisation as a complex phenomenon affecting different cultures across time and space, and that the construct denotes ‘time-space compression’ due to ICTs, ‘accelerating interdependence’ among nations, and a general economic and cultural ‘global integration’ (Held and McGrew 2000, p. 3).

**Globalisation Discourses as a Concept Map**

In reconceptualising globalisation as a paradigm in comparative education, I would like to distinguish at least four of the many overlapping globalisation discourses:

- the regional/civilizational discourses, such as those of North and South America, East and West, Australasia and South East Asia
- ideological discourses of Left and Right addressing pro- and anti-globalization (development thesis) perspectives
- disciplinary discourses, within intra-disciplinary theories in major disciplines, including politics, economics, cultural studies, education, sociology and media studies (see also Robertson and Khondker 1998)
- poststructuralist and postmodern discourses of globalisation, with their critique of the Grand Narratives.

**Pro-globalisation and Anti-globalisation Researchers**

As a theoretical construct in social theory, ‘globalisation’ has acquired considerable ideological and emotive force among pro-globalisation and anti-globalisation researchers alike. Pro-globalisation scholars argue that there is growing evidence that inequalities in global income and poverty are decreasing and that globalisation has contributed to this positive economic outcome already during the 1990s:

…the World Bank notes that China’s opening to world trade has brought it growth in income from $1460 a head in 1980 to $4120 by 1999. In 1980, Americans earned 12.5 times as much as the Chinese, per capita. By 1999, they were only earning 7.4 times as much. The
The gap between rich and poor is also shrinking with most nations in Asia and Latin America. The countries that are getting poorer are those that are not open to world trade, notably many nations in Africa (http://www.globalisationguide.org/03.html).

Anti-globalisation researchers maintain that the gap between the rich and poor nations of the world was increasing between the 1960s and the 1990s, as demonstrated by the findings of the World Bank. The UNDP 1999 Development Report revealed that the gap between the richest and the poorest nations had grown from 30 to 1 in 1960 to 82 to 1 in 1995:

...over the past ten years, the number of people earning $1 a day or less has remained static at 1.2 billion while the number earning less than $2 a day has increased from 2.55 billion to 2.8 billion people. The gap in incomes between the 20% of the richest and the poorest countries has grown from 30 to 1 in 1960 to 82 to 1 in 1995. By the late 1990s the fifth of the world’s people living in the highest-income countries had: 86% of world GDP—the bottom fifth just 1%. 82% of world export markets—the bottom fifth just 1%. 68% of foreign direct investment—the bottom fifth just 1%. 74% of world telephone lines, today’s basic means of communication—the bottom fifth just 1.5% (http://www.globalisationguide.org/03.html).

Recently, the UNDP 2019 Development Report Inequalities, reported on inequality, stating that the ‘evidence was everywhere’:

The evidence is everywhere. So is the concern. People across the world, of all political persuasions, increasingly believe that income inequality in their country should be reduced. These new inequalities—both between and within countries—are hugely consequential. Shaping 21st century societies, they are pushing the frontiers in health and longevity, knowledge and technology. These are the inequalities that will likely determine people’s ability to seize the opportunities of the 21st century (pp. 1–10).

The World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE) developed by UNESCO, highlights ‘high and rising inequality as one of the United States’ most pressing economic and societal issues’ (World Inequality Database on Education 2017).

Globalisation and Socio-Economic Transformations

As above demonstrates, globalisation can be seen to be associated with the processes that define the new forms of social stratification, where the gaps between the rich and the poor are growing and expanding daily. For instance, if a company decides to transfer its business operations to another region/country, where labour is cheap, taxes are minimal and profit margins large, then its workers become unemployed or unemployable. The great financial crisis of 2007–2008, resulted in the collapse of major banks, construction companies and other industries, where middle-range executives, who earned in the excess of $100,000, suddenly found themselves without jobs, exemplify the inherent dangers of fast-track ‘riches to poverty’ global syndrome. Similarly, the coronavirus economic recession (COVID-19), or the great lockdown and shutdown, which started on February 2020, had affected many industries and workers. Many have lost jobs.
Meanwhile, the income gap in the late 1990s, between the fifth of the world’s people living in the richest countries and the fifth in the poorest has grown from 30 to 1 in 1960 and 74 to 1 in 1997. This has some serious consequences on ‘debt’ economies, which were in economic crisis due to inflationary pressures as well (Argentina in 2002, Russia during the 1990s, etc.). By 1996, the resulting concentration of wealth had ‘the income of the world’s richest individuals…equal to the income of 52 percent of humanity’. ‘The most comprehensive data on world incomes, based on household income and expenditure surveys, find a sharp increase in inequality over as short a time as 1988 to 1993’ (The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 2002).

Some critics view globalisation as a process that is beneficial—a key to future world economic development—and also inevitable and irreversible. Others regard it with hostility, even fear, believing that it increases inequality within and between nations, threatens employment and living standards and thwarts social progress. Economic ‘globalisation’ is a historical process, the result of human innovation and technological progress. It refers to the increasing integration of economies around the world, particularly through trade and financial flows. The term sometimes also refers to the movement of people (labour) and knowledge (technology) across international borders. There are also broader cultural, political and environmental dimensions of globalisation.

Globalisation, in view of its economic and cultural dominance, where progress and development are used as performance indicators to evaluate other nations and their well-being, affects and dislocates, in one sense or another, local cultures, values and beliefs. Globalisation, with its imposition of relentless and boundless consumerism, competition, and market forces, invited ideological and economic wars and conflict among individuals, communities and societies at large. Rust and Jacob (2005) believed that education and education policy change play a significant role in the globalisation agenda:

The contemporary educational reform debate has been taken over by so-called neoliberal groups that popularise a special language not found in conventional education discourse. This language is based on a free-enterprise economic metaphor. According to this metaphor, a productive society and system of education are based on individual interest, where people are able to “exchange goods and services” in an “open marketplace”, to the mutual advantage of all (McLean 1989, quoted in Rust and Jacob 2005).

In such a marketplace, defined and controlled by globalisation and market forces, ‘government is constrained to narrowly defined functions, such as supervision, licensing, etc., which protect individual interests and enable them to make free choices’ (Rust and Jacob 2005). In short, private initiative, choice and enterprise were, and continue to be, sources of efficiency and productivity. At the heart of this discourse, according to Rust and Jacob (2005), was the call for parental choice among public and private schools, subjecting the schools to market forces, allowing schools to flourish if they satisfy consumer demands, while those which fail to conform to consumer demands will be impoverished and left behind. The most radical of various proposals to reform schooling under the imperatives of accountability, efficiency and cost-effectiveness were education vouchers:
The voucher was proposed by conservative economist, Milton Freedman (1962) when he suggested that money follow children rather than go directly to the local education agency. That is, parents should be allowed to use government resources to purchase educational services at a state-approved educational institution of their choice. Educational vouchers became a major education policy issue in a number of countries in Europe, including England, the Netherlands, and Sweden (Rust and Jacob 2005).

**Cultural, Political and Economic Globalisation Discourses**

*Globalisation as a World System*

Some scholars, in order to explain the processes of the world economy, have used mainly economic dimensions of globalisation and accompanying market forces. When globalisation commonly refers to the development of social and economic relations across the world, it designates an economic dimension. If one of the key aspects of globalisation is the emergence of a *world system*, coined by Immanuel Wallerstein in 1974, the world forming of a single social order, then the construct acquires yet another new dimension—a concept map of a world system, divided into stratified zones, based on unequal economic relations between the core, peripheral and semi-peripheral countries (Wallerstein 1979). Wallerstein assumed that capitalism was at the heart of the world system and attempted to explain the rise of Western Europe to world supremacy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This, somewhat deterministic concept of the dominance of capitalism, was inspired earlier by Karl Marx.

*Globalisation as a Global Capital Model*

Sklair (1999) used his global capitalism model (Sklair 1999, pp. 156–158) to critique globalisation process (see also Sklair 2001, 2002; McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005). Some globalisation researchers, engaged in globalisation analysis, tend to accept a linear and one-dimensional model of globalisation, where the whole world comprises a single economic system operated by a single division of labour (see their theorization of this division of labour) (Wallerstein 1979, 1989). On the other hand, analysis of the contemporary process of globalisation, demonstrates that some scholars accept the view that the contemporary world-economy differs qualitatively (and add, quantitatively, if one is to include the size and pace of global electronic finance market), from previous eras:

Consider the neoliberal agenda that has so dominated comparative education inquiry the last few years. Is this a new and fundamentally different way of legitimating capitalist relations in the world? Or is it, as Wallerstein (1983) intimates, the same basic cluster of ideologies that has legitimated the position of hegemony many times since the sixteenth century?
A transnational economic hegemony is fundamentally different from previous national hegemonies, be they economic, political, social or technological. Increasingly, new international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, World Trade Organization, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and others have been very active in regulating, at times salvaging nations from economic disasters that could result in a global depression. The changes in the world economy, which some critics have labelled as ‘post-Fordism’ and ‘disorganized capitalism’ (Lash and Urry 1987) have contributed to ‘the deregulation and globalization of markets, trade and labour’ (Featherstone 1990, p. 7). It pointed to the process of accelerated and compressed globalisation, with the globalisation of capital. The process was also governed by ‘the globalization of capital flows, with 24-hour stock market trading’ (Featherstone 1990, p. 7), which deregulated local markets and necessitated the relevant politico-economic transformation.

**Globalisation as a Cultural Transformation**

Giddens (1990) and other social theorists (see Robertson 1992; Paulston 2000) argued that globalisation was one of the outcomes of modernity, which was characterised by the nexus of new structural political, economic, cultural, and technological developments. Globalisation represented a new mode in the transfer of capital, labour production, consumption, information and technology, resulting in significant qualitative change. Some critical theorists (McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005) referred to globalisation as a new form of imperialism. This new cultural and economic imperialism was represented by a standardisation of commodities—the same designer labels appearing in shops around the world, a global recomposition of the capital-labour relations, or the subordination of social reproduction to the reproduction of capital, the globalisation of liquid capital, the deregulation of the labour market, the outsourcing of production to cheap labour markets, and the intensified competition among transnational corporations. Wallerstein (1998) suggested that globalisation is the ultimate expression of the ideology of consumerism, driven by market expansion and profit maximisation. Using a critical theory discourse, we could argue that the teleological purpose of the global economy is to maintain, expand and protect wealth, power, and privilege. Finally, globalisation, as a new dimension of political economy and culture, has depended on a fusion of capitalism and advanced technologies, leading to “technodeterminism” (Zajda 2008a, b, c, d, e), and “techno-capital” (see also Langman and Morris 2007).
Globalisation and Its Politico-Economic Impact on Societies

The above comparative education research shows that the term ‘globalisation’ is a complex construct and a euphemism concealing contested meanings, ranging from Wallerstein’s (1974, 1980, 1989) ambitious ‘world-systems’ model, Giddens’ (1990) notion of ‘time-space distantiation’ highlighting the ‘disembeddedness’ of social relations—their effective removal from the immediacies of local contexts, and Castells’ (1989) approaches, to globalisation by way of networking, proposing that the power of flows of capital, technology, and information, constitutes the fundamental morphology of an emerging ‘network society’, to a neo-liberal and bourgeois hegemony, which legitimates an ‘exploitative system’. Leftist intellectuals are themselves perpetuating ‘bourgeois hegemony’ by using ‘globalisation’ instead of ‘imperialism’, or ‘structural adjustment’ instead of ‘monopolisation of wealth’, while searching for ‘bourgeois prestige, recognition, institutional affiliation, and certification’. Provocatively ‘cocktail left’, who tend to ignore ‘the ideological distortions’ and inappropriate theoretical frameworks that are taught at prestigious colleges’, and who, as they vent their ‘inconsequential radical views’ climb the academic ladder (The Chronicle of Higher Education, p. 3, from http://chronicle.com/chronicle).

From the macro-social perspective it can be argued that in the domains of language, policy, education and national identity, nation-states are likely to lose their power and capacity to affect their future directions, as the struggle for knowledge domination, production, and dissemination becomes a new form of cultural domination, and a knowledge-driven social stratification. Globalisation weakens the idea of the nation-state. The global economy, argues Waters (1995), makes it more difficult for the nations affected to carry out social policy ‘which is governed by national interests’:

The acceleration in globalization since the mid-1970s has nevertheless caused a loss of effectiveness of national policies in the sphere of welfare (Waters 1995, p. 19).

Furthermore, the evolving and constantly changing notions of national identity, language, border politics and citizenship, which are relevant to education policy need to be critiqued within the local-regional-national arena, which is also contested by globalisation. Current education policy research reflects a rapidly changing world, where citizens and consumers are experiencing a growing sense of uncertainty and alienation.

The above research reflects both growing alienation and a Durkheimian sense of anomie in the world “invaded” by forces of globalisation, cultural imperialism, and global hegemonies that dictate the new economic, political and social regimes of
truth. These newly constructed imperatives in educational policy could well operate as global master narratives, playing a hegemonic role within the framework of economic, political and cultural hybrids of globalisation.

The transition from the nation-state and the ‘national’ economy to a ‘liberal competition state’ under the sign of ubiquitous globalism questions the relationship ‘between the nation-state, democracy and national solidarity’ (italics mine). The dominant ideologies of economic and political order (and the ‘political correctness’ in a given culture) in developed and developing nations are likely to shape the nature and direction of comparative education research. Perceptions of economic determinism, ethnic and racial domination and political systems (which are controlled by dominant economies, hence the inherent stratification of the world into developing and developed nations) are the key factors in education and social change. Thus there exists the need to politicize comparative education discourse, by incorporating not only culturalist and aesthetic and but also economic and political dimensions. This is necessary for policy analysts and policy makers within political and educational administrative hierarchies, who prioritize and decide the level of funding for education and research.

The dramatic consequences of globalisation on the world’s economy are such that they change the meanings of our taken-for-granted assumptions about education and society in the post-industrial age. The very idea of national economies is becoming obsolete, as demonstrated by economic collapses during the 1990s (and possible future collapses elsewhere) in Argentina, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Russia, to name a few. The ‘economic meltdown’ in Japan had triggered-off major economic crises in other countries. Australia had been also affected by it. Equally nebulous and meaningless are the notions of ‘national corporations, national capital, national products and national technology’. Using similar arguments we could say that the idea of ‘national education’ is equally fallacious. This is particularly so in the age of increasing economic, cultural, and information technology interdependence. National governments are ‘unable to control international capital, which crosses the borders with great speed’.

Is Globalisation Global?

Globalisation, as some authors argue, is not ‘really global’ for there exists a divergence between rich (developed) and poor (developing) nations. The less developed nations or the euphemism for poor countries of the ‘Third World’, the term was originally coined by the French demographer Alfred Sauvy, are not, usually affected by the process of globalisation. It is equally difficult to talk of ‘global culture’ as a single and universal mode of living. Sociologists use the term ‘culture’ as a collective noun for ‘the symbolic and learned aspects of human society, including language, customs and convention’ or to refer to ‘the total repertoire of human action’. If, then, by ‘culture’ we mean ‘a collective mode of life’ or a ‘repertoire of beliefs, styles, values and symbols’, then, we can only speak of cultures, ‘never just culture,
for the collective mode of everyday life assumes many and diverse modes and repertoires’. Despite inter-cultural differences and cultural diversity in the world, which would seem to work against globalism, the concept of a ‘global culture’ has been used in the media, education and advertising.

Globalisation and Implications for Education: Global Pedagogies

Global Pedagogies

One of the forerunners of schooling for tomorrow was Ivan Illich (1971) and in his book *Deschooling Society* he advocated a number of radical policy proposals for changing schools and pedagogy. Illich argued that schools had to be transformed, and in particular he was a visionary in foreseeing the use decentralized schooling and the use of information technology in educational settings in the future. He came to believe that information technology had a potential to create decentralized ‘learning webs’, which would generate quality learning for all:

> A good educational system should have three purposes: it should provide all who want to learn with access to available resources at any time in their lives; empower all who want to share what they know to find those who want to learn it from them; and, finally, furnish all who want to present an issue to the public with the opportunity to make their challenge known (Illich 1971).

The Moral Function of Global Pedagogy

At the same time, since the 1990s, a number of scholars and policy analysts began to stress the moral function of global pedagogy. For instance, Jacques Delors (1996) in his report to UNESCO of international Commission on education for the Twenty-first Century, *Learning: the Treasure Within*, believed that education had an important role to play in promoting tolerance and peace globally:

> In confronting the many challenges that the future holds in store, humankind sees in education an indispensable asset in its attempt to attain the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice (Delors 1996, p. 13).

A similar concern with a moral dimension in education was shared by Bindé (2000) who suggested that a new paradigm shift in education should be aiming to ‘humanize globalization’ (see Bindé 2000). Bindé (2000) reminded us that one of education’s future major challenges will be ‘to use the new information and communication technologies to disseminate knowledge and skills’.
The Schooling for Tomorrow Project

One of the important works in the area of global pedagogies is The Schooling for Tomorrow project (SfT), which is a major CERI project in developing futures thinking in education. Schooling for Tomorrow (SfT) was launched in November 1997 at an international conference in Hiroshima. It is an international project located in OECD’s Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). Schooling for Tomorrow offers six scenarios of schooling for the future, constructed through the OECD/CERI programme on “Schooling for Tomorrow”. The goal is to improve our understanding of how schooling might develop in the years to come and assess the potential role of education policy and pedagogy to help shape these imagined futures for schooling. Two of the scenarios cover the continued unfolding of existing models (The “status quo extrapolated”), the next two describe the substantial strengthening of schools with new dynamism, recognition and purpose (described as “Re-schooling”), while the two final scenarios depict future worlds that witness a significant decline in the position of schools (“De-schooling”). The report suggested that there is an urgent need to develop different ways of integrating futures thinking with global pedagogies more fully in education policy and practice. Global pedagogies are more likely to promote critical thinking and reflection on the major changes, such as economic, social, political, and technological, taking place in education and society (see also OECD’s 2009 A Decade of Schooling for Tomorrow).

Comparative Education Policy Issues in Education for Tomorrow

At its 57th session in December 2002, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the years from 2005 to 2014 the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The need to act, with reference to education for sustainable development (EfS), was the result of a growing international concern about the social, economic and environmental challenges facing the world and the need for ‘improved quality of life, ecological protection, social justice and economic equity’ (http://www.environment.gov.au/education/publications/caring.html).

In October 2009, Angel Gurría, (OECD Secretary-General) in ‘Education for the future—Promoting changes in policies and practices: the way forward’ described some of the changes and priorities in education for tomorrow. Some of them are:

…We need to form people for a more inclusive world: people who can appreciate and build on different values, beliefs, cultures. Inter-personal competencies to produce inclusive solutions will be of growing importance. Second, the conventional approach in school is often to break problems down into manageable bits and pieces and then teach students how to solve each one of these bits and pieces individually. But in modern economies, we create value by synthesising different fields of knowledge, making connections between ideas that previously seemed unrelated… Third, if we log on to the Internet today, we can find every-
thing we are looking for. But the more content we can search and access, the more important it is to teach our students to sort and filter information. The search for relevance is very critical in the presence of abundance of information...The 21st century schools therefore need to help young individuals to constantly adapt and grow, to develop their capacity and motivation, to expand their horizons and transfer and apply knowledge in novel settings (Gurría, 2009).

New Paradigm Shift in Pedagogy

Already in *Towards Schooling for the Twenty-First Century*, Per Dalin and Val D. Rust (1996) argued that there had to be a new paradigm shift in learning and teaching for the twenty-first century. The authors discussed major transformations globally, including political, economic, ecological, epistemological, technological and moral ‘revolutions’ (Dalin and Rust 1996, p. 32). They stressed that in a conflict-ridden world, the ‘school must play a basic role in peace education’ (Dalin and Rust 1996, p. 64). One could argue that the new and evolving paradigm shift in pedagogy is dictated by forces of globalisation, politico-economic change, ‘knowledge society’, and ITCs, to name a few (Zajda and Gibbs 2009a, b; Zajda 2020c). As argued recently, the term ‘globalisation’ is a complex cultural and social theory construct and, at times, a convenient euphemism concealing contested meanings and dominant perspectives and ideologies, ranging from Wallerstein’s (1979, 1998) ambitious ‘world-systems’ model, Giddens’ (1990, 2000) notion of time-space distantiation’ (highlighting the ‘disembeddedness’ of social relations and their effective removal from the immediacies of local contexts), and Castells’ (1989) approaches, to globalisation by way of networking, where the power of flows of capital, technology, and information, constitutes the fundamental paradigm of an emerging ‘network society’, to a view of globalisation as a neo-liberal and bourgeois hegemony, which legitimates an ‘exploitative system’(see Apple 2004; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Carnoy 1977, 1984, 1999; Geo-JaJa and Mangum 2002; McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005; Zajda 2008a, b, c, d, e, 2020c).

We have suggested that globalisation, with its political, social, cultura, and economic systems, and the competitive market forces have generated a massive growth in the knowledge industries and information communication technologies (ICTs) that are having profound and differential effects on educational institutions and nations in general (OECD 2001; Zajda 2020a). One of the effects of forces of globalisation is that educational organisations, having modelled its goals and strategies on the entrepreneurial business model, are compelled to embrace the corporate ethos of the efficiency, accountability and profit-driven managerialism. Hence, the politics of education reforms in the twenty-first century reflect this new emerging paradigm of standards-driven and outcomes-defined policy change (Zajda 2009b, 2014a, b, 2020a).
Globalisation and the competitive market forces have generated a massive growth in the knowledge industries that are having profound effects on society and educational institutions. In the global culture the university, as other educational institutions, is now expected to invest its capital in the knowledge market. It increasingly acts as an entrepreneurial institution (see *Globalisation and the Changing Role of the University*). Such a managerial and entrepreneurial re-orientation would have been seen in the past as antithetical to the traditional ethos of the university of providing knowledge for its own sake (see also Sabour 2005; Zajda 2015). Delanty (2001) noted that “with business schools and techno science on the rise, entrepreneurial values are enjoying a new legitimacy … the critical voice of the university is more likely to be stifled than strengthened as a result of globalisation.” (Delanty 2001, p. 115). It can be said that globalisation may have an adverse impact on the higher education sector, and education in general. One of the effects of globalisation is that the university is compelled to embrace the corporate ethos of the efficiency and profit-driven managerialism. As such, the new entrepreneurial university in the global culture succumbs to the economic gains offered by the neoliberal ideology (Zajda 2020a).

Education in the global economy is likely to produce a great deal of discontent and conflict. We are reminded of the much-quoted words ‘All history is the history of class struggle’ (Marx and Engels 1848). Globalisation too, with its evolving and growing in complexity social stratification of nations, technology and education systems has a potential to affect social conflict. When discussing the complex and often taken-for granted symbiotic relationship between consumer production and consumption in the global economy, it is worth considering extending Marx’s famous theory of the fetishism of the commodity, to include the ‘production fetishism’, or an illusion created by ‘transnational production loci, which masked translocal capital’ (quoted in During 1999, p. 229), and the fetishism of the consumer, or the transformation of the consumer’s social identity through commodity flows, or global consumerism, made possible by global advertising. Appadurai (1990a, b) suggested, that through advertising in the media and commodities, the consumer has been transformed ‘into a sign’, both in Baudrillard’s sense of a simulacrum, and in the sense of ‘a mask for the real seat of agency, which is not the consumer but the producer and the many forces that constitute production’ (Appadurai 1990a, b, p. 308). In a postmodern sense, a post-industrial global culture can be considered as a new hybrid of global cultural imperialism (see also McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005).

There is a trend in educational systems around the world of shifting the emphasis from the progressive child-centred curriculum to ‘economy-centred’ vocational training. This was discovered in a comparative study of education in China, Japan, the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Russia and the Scandinavian countries. Although these nations are vastly different in terms of politics, history and culture, and dominant ideologies, they are united in their pursuit for international competition in the global market. Hence, curriculum reforms and school policies increasingly address the totalising imperatives of the global economy discourse-competition, productivity, and quality.
Evaluation

Globalisation, marketisation and quality/efficiency driven reforms around the world since the 1980s have resulted in significant structural and qualitative changes in education and policy, including an increasing focus on the “lifelong learning for all”, or a “cradle-to-grave” vision of learning and the “knowledge economy” in the global culture. Governments, in their quest for excellence, quality and accountability in education, increasingly turn to international and comparative education data analysis. All agree that the major goal of education is to enhance the individual’s social and economic prospects. This can only be achieved by providing quality education for all. Students’ academic achievement is now regularly monitored and measured within the ‘internationally agreed framework’ of the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). This was done in response to the growing demand for international comparisons of educational outcomes (OECD 2001, Education Policy Analysis, p. 8). To measure levels of academic performance in the global culture, the OECD, in co-operation with UNESCO, is using World Education Indicators (WEI) programme, covering a broad range of comparative indicators, which report on the resource invested in education and their returns to individuals (OECD 2019a, b, Education at a Glance—OECD Indicators, p. 6).

Clearly, these new phenomena of globalisation have in different ways affected current developments in education and policy around the word. First, globalisation of policy, trade and finance has some profound implications for education and reform implementation. On the one hand, the periodic economic crises (e.g. the 1980s), coupled with the prioritised policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (e.g. SAPs) have seriously affected some developing nations and transitional economies in delivering basic education for all. The poor are unable to feed their children, let alone send them to school. This is particularly evident in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia, Central Asian Republics (former member states of the USSR), South East Asia, and elsewhere, where children, for instance (and girls in particular, as in the case of Afghanistan Tajikistan and rural India, to name a few) are forced to stay at home, helping and working for their parents, and thus are unable to attend school. Second, the policies of the Organisation for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD), UNESCO, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) operate as powerful forces, which, as supranational organisation, shape and influence education and policy around the world. Third, it can be argued that in the domains of language, policy, education and national identity, nation-states are likely to lose their power and capacity to affect their future directions, as the struggle for knowledge domination, production, and dissemination becomes a new form of a knowledge and technology-driven social stratification. I would like to stress that one of central and unresolved problems in the process of globalisation within a postmodernist context is the unresolved tension, and ambivalence ‘between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization’ (Appadurai 1990a, b, p. 295, italics...
mine), or the on-going dialectic between globalism and localism, between faith and reason, between tradition and modernity, and between totalitarianism and democracy.

Apart from the multi-faceted nature of globalisation that invites contesting and competing ideological interpretations, numerous paradigms and theoretical models have been also used, ranging from modernity to postmodernity, to explain the phenomenon of globalisation. When, for instance, a writer or a seminar speaker uses the word ‘globalisation’ in a pedagogical and educational policy context, one wonders what assumptions, be they economic, political, social and ideological, have been taken for granted, and at their face value—uncritically, as a given, and in this case, as a globocratic (like technocratic) phenomenon. The politics of globalisation, particularly the hydra of ideologies, which are inscribed in the discourse of globalisation need to be analysed critically, in order to avoid superficial and one-dimensional interpretation of the term.

If we define the global system (e.g. the global economy, the global markets, the global media etc.) as referring to economic, political and social connections which crosscut borders between countries and have a significant impact on ‘the fate of those living within each of them’, then we are focusing on culturally and economically interdependent ‘global village’. The term ‘culture’ already includes all other dimensions and artefacts. The globalisation process is characterized-by the acceptance of ‘unified global time’, the increase in the number of international corporations and institutions, the ever-increasing global forms of communication, the development of global competitions, and, above all, the acceptance of global notions of citizenship, equality, human rights, and justice (see also Featherstone 1990, p. 6).

The above critique of globalisation, policy and comparative education research suggests new economic and political dimensions of cultural imperialism (see Zajda 2020a). Such hegemonic shifts in ideology and policy are likely to have significant economic and cultural implications for national education systems, reforms and policy implementations (see Zajda 2020c). For instance, in view of GATS constraints, and the continuing domination of multinational educational corporations and organisations in a global marketplace, the “basis of a national policy for knowledge production may be eroded in a free-market context of a knowledge-driven economy” (Robertson 1992, p. 494). This erosion in education policy and reforms, signified the corresponding weakening of the traditional role of the university, as noted already by Nisbet (1971), being the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake (intrinsic):

…the heart of the academic dogma is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. Knowledge and the processes of coming to know are good in themselves, and the university, above all institutions, is—or used to be—devoted to them. To investigate, to find out, to organise and contemplate knowledge, these are what the university is about …. (Nisbet 1971, p. vi).
Conclusion

The above analysis of social change and education policy reforms in comparative education research demonstrates a complex nexus between globalisation, ideology and education reforms—where, on the one hand, democratisation and progressive pedagogy is equated with equality, inclusion, equity, tolerance and human rights, while on the other hand, globalisation is perceived (by some critics at least) to be a totalising force that is widening the socio-economic status (SES) gap, and cultural and economic capital between the rich and the poor, and bringing increasing levels of power, domination and control by corporate bodies and powerful organisations. Hence, we need to continue to explore critically the new challenges confronting education and policy reforms in the provision of authentic democracy, social justice, and cross-cultural values that genuinely promote a transformative pedagogy (Dalin and Rust 1996; Zajda 2018). We need to focus on the crucial issues at the centre of current and on-going education reforms, including overcoming educational inequalities globally, if genuine culture of learning, and transformation, characterised by wisdom, compassion, and intercultural understanding, is to become a reality, rather than rhetoric.