

# Global citizens

Business



Definition Global citizens are not legally recognized persons whose existence is best signified as “ associatively.

” Global citizens are not defined more by the legal sanctions than by the “ associational” that are very different from national citizens. This is because there are no international bureaucracies that give protection and sanctions to global citizens and in spite of the fascinating rules and regulations suggested by the international community, global citizens remain to be individuals who work, play and live within the transnational and international status and norms that go beyond the national sovereignty and international boundaries. It is important to note that associational status in this context has a double role. It explains an exceptional characteristic of global citizens at the same time expressing the specific aspects of post-modernity particularly referred to as “ lifestyle politics” (Bennett, 2000). Steenbergen (1994) tries to explain this relationship between lifestyle politics and global citizens to be more like “ sociological” in its constitution. Rather than technically defining a citizen with “ his or her affiliation to the state” (p.

2), global citizens represent a wholistic defining of citizenship where: you choose where you play, work or live and they are therefore not tied to their land of birth. The modern life offers a great number of choices that range from politics to consumer products lying at the root of lifestyle politics (Franck, 1999). Falk (1994) reiterates that global citizens belong to a rudimentary organizational construction of allegiance and arenas. He says that many people are identifying with are no bounded by or focused on the formal relationships that they have to their territorial communities are symbolized by a state. Traditional citizenship is being challenged and

recreated by the significant activism associated with this international social and political evolution (Falk, 1994). Traditional ties between the state and its citizens are loosening and are substituted by the less jointed loyalties that elucidate the lifestyle politics.

Concepts of relationships between the state and citizens that came after the French and the American Revolution, the formation of the contemporary state after the eighteenth century no longer hold water. It is not coincidental, for instance, that the first to get the enfranchisement were the men who served in the French and the American armies (Kaspersen, 1998). The army of citizens today is now being replaced by professional armies in our countries. The central component in the ties between the citizens and the state has been removed in the contemporary society. The public has a decreasing regard for the politicians while turning out in low numbers for the voting exercises.

These loosening ties between the state and its citizens have led to the emergence of global citizens. Categories of Global Citizens and their emergence There are several types of global citizens but their foundation in grassroots activism is a common cord to their emergence. Different types of global citizens may be identified, yet most of these categories are well described by their emergence in spite of their lack of a global body to govern them. Falk (1994) came up with five types of global citizens which are referred to as: Elite global business men Global reformers Trans-national activists Global environmental managers Political regionalists All the categories of global citizens have grassroots activism at their center with the

exception of only the global businessmen. The battle at Seattle is a perfect demonstration of how global citizens came into being.

The activists in Seattle were responsible for their activism “approved” by an organization. This made global citizens qualitatively different from the national category of citizens, where obligations and rights come at the generosity and the behest of the state. Global citizens exercise organizational and communicational tools like the World Wide Web and the Internet to formulate themselves into global citizens. No state or government authorized the development of global citizens. Stephen and Alastair (2000) said that this breakage of citizen rights and obligations dispensed by the state have led to the decline in overall citizens. Observations like the rise in global activism are a possible engine fueling the appearance of global citizens.

The global activists go beyond the international borders skillfully mounting pressure on both the private corporations making viable participants on the emergence of the global community sphere. A significant example of this kind of pressure is the well known anti-sweat campaigns that were made against Nike. Dozens of websites were literally dedicated to exposing the Nike labour practices in production of shoes in the factories located in foreign countries. Global Exchange is a humanitarian organisation that helped to organize the Seattle Battle in 1996 directed against Nike’s labor practices. This became a major issue of the escalating media attention.

The internet has is a central development for the emerging global citizens. The increasing technologies like the mobile phones play an important role in the growth of global citizens. Other tools are cheap and easy air travel and

the wide acceptance and use of credit cards. However, there are other factors leading to the emergence of global citizens and these include increase in lifestyle politics, civic engagement, conglomeration of media systems and communications tool, and homogenization of products have made the world population know more about each other. Moreover, the growing concern for the trans-national problems like global warming, and environmental degradation as well as fight for universal human rights, results in a scenario that is more global than national.

For a long time, the history of civilization has seen the society being internationalized making an average citizen to easily express themselves in the globalized manner. This is evident in the clothes they wear, the sodas they drink, the music they listen to and the vacation destination they suggest and visit. It is increasingly obvious that the identities of the state citizens are tied to the part they play as citizens. For example, the Scammell's "citizen consumers" are identified by their purchases and engage in their society to a level that they are granted the freedom to shop. The Rights and Obligations of Global Citizens The global citizens themselves usually determine the rights and obligations accorded to them.

This is from their activism of growing society favor for "universal rights" that makes the migration of people around the globe to be easily accepted while citizenship is being standardized. Differences might arise on the cultural levels, but in bureaucratic states, favor is placed on equality. Utilitarianism and efficiency lies at the centre of capitalism: obviously a world living under its aegis reproduces such trends. Civic air travel, inter-governmental agreements and postal agreements are one form of standardization that is <https://assignbuster.com/global-citizens/>

continuously moving into the area of global citizenship. The main issue of concern raised is that the global citizens are more closely related to “ global consumer” than to legal global travelers.

As mentioned earlier, the global citizens lack a world body to govern them and this puts the responsibility upon the global citizens to formulate their own obligations and rights. The obligations and rights as they were at the creation of nation-states like the obligation to participate in times of war and the right to vote, are at the brink of being expanded. Therefore, new ideas that grant global citizens particular human right which came into the picture in the twentieth century are becoming universal across governments, nations and states. This has been driven by many factors such as the Holocaust, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the aftermath of the Second World War and the ever growing sentiments towards legalizing marginalized people. Coupled with this is the growing awareness of the impact of human activity on the environment, and there is the feeling of extension of the citizen’s rights to include the right to self-determination and the right to dignity. If state citizens are not accorded these new rights, then global citizens seem to easily access them.

The importance of these universal human rights to global citizens cannot be overestimated within the scope of public opinion. A question may arise like “ What are the obligations and rights of those people trapped in conflicts or enslaved in ethnic cleansing? Equally outstanding are the marginalized tribes recently discovered by scientist living in depths of dense forests. Heater (1999) tried to equate the rights of these people to the emergence of global citizens as a normal association, showing a model of national citizens that <https://assignbuster.com/global-citizens/>

are more to one another and global citizens who are more inclusive and flexible. This will then affect the relationship existing between the national citizens and global citizens. These effects, however, appear to be mutually beneficial.

Like social change, the changing scales of modern citizens appear to be felt in both minute and large spheres. Global citizens are placed in a larger social context with the nation-states acting as core engines of citizenship. Culture is also a very powerful burst in driving the existence of global citizens. For example, the formation of "European citizens" can be regarded as a type of governmental conglomeration pressured by the forces of globalization, just remotely resounding to the corporate conglomeration. Corporate conglomeration has been regarded as both the cause and recipient of global economic expansions.

Global citizens are also direct descendants of global standardization, which is noted in the increasing homogeneity of airports (Iyer, 2000). Global Citizens: Relationship to Pax Americana The 20th and the 21st century were eras dominated by the US. Americans dominated the IMF, WTO, the World Bank and other global institutions that created the approach of imperialism to the lesser nations. If environmental, political, social and economic forces pushed the emergence of global citizens, then the ramifications of the aftermath of the cold world war and realpolitik must be considered in this camp.

Therefore, the emergence of global citizens can be viewed as a response against the American domination. Corporately, conglomeration results in bigger and bigger companies which merge to efficiently compete with other mega companies.

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Therefore the formation of the “ United States of Europe” is in a way similar to corporate conglomeration, reacting to the dominating power of the United States of America. Other regional alliances are emerging like the United Arab Emirates and other are yet to emerge. Within such regional alliances, greater acceptance of citizens of another nation emerges. These regional alliances may offer the technical backbone required to make global citizens to be more than just people who like lifestyle and have personal politics. This might also change the outlook on national citizen: making global citizens to favor their status over those who are not referred to as global citizens. However, two tracks of citizens might emerge: global and nations, with the former being very prestigious.

Coupled to the wide gap between the rich and the poor, the literate and the illiterate, there will also be a gap between those just living all their lives in one land and those who are free to travel to many countries. The dark side of this is not hard to determine. Clark (1996) argued that the global citizens tend to be more exclusive than inclusive. They are also flexible with multiple loyalties separating them from the national citizens because they respond to wealth, power and prestige. Global citizens are so favored that various nations fight to attract them to their lands, which is quite similar to the modern fight for corporate sites.

Unity and Diversity of Global Citizens Global citizens provide a diverse society who tends to maintain close ties to their cultural communities and participate efficiently in their national culture. Unity without diversity leads to cultural repressions and hegemonies. On the other hand, diversity without unity results in the fracturing of nation-states and Balkanization. To avoid the

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occurrence of either of these situations, a balance must be maintained among the global citizens. Unity and diversity must coexist in a mutual balance in a multicultural nation-state.

To attain this balance between unity and diversity is a continuing process and it is ideal that it can never be fully attained. It is important that both state-citizens and global citizens within the nation-states and beyond the international borders take part in international goals aimed at attaining unity and diversity. Both groups of citizens should also take part in the action to reach these goals. The sharing of power and resources by marginalized people, state-citizens and global citizens is important for the perpetuation and construction of a moral, participatory and a just nation-state society that is culturally diverse. Conclusion To shape what seems to be a shapeless idea-global citizens, pose dangers, most of which are usually speculations. Time spent at the airport in the airline frequent flier lounges helps to easily identify global citizens and their number is growing at an alarming rate.

All the discussions on global citizens for instance take into account the changing political environments in the globalized world. The global citizens are favored and treated in a more special in many countries than the state-citizens in airport lounges, hotels, corporate sites and tourism destination making the state citizens jealous. In such a case, enmity can arise putting the lives of the global citizens in danger. The role played by global citizens in the changing political environment is misty. The fact remains that the number of global citizens continues to grow and their effects are continuously being felt on the global political stage.

This is an indication that these individuals need to be observed and studied in earnest. Efforts to try and find out that global citizens are is a minute step I understanding their presence, rights, obligations and influence on the rest of the people.