

In a global level has
been higher

Economics



In recent decades, there have been two developments in the world that form the foundation of this research.

On the one hand, the invention and diffusion of the internet has transformed daily life, particularly in the Global North. Smartphones, e-mails, social media, e-banking and online shopping have rapidly altered how people communicate and inform themselves in the past twenty years. On the other hand, economic growth on a global level has been higher than ever before in the history of the world. Since the 1990s, the vast majority of economies in both the Global North as well as the Global South has doubled in size. The concept of time-space compression by David Harvey can place these broad developments into perspective. In 1989, Harvey argued that the world became smaller as a result of a growing global economy and technological innovations. These were 'processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves', which Harvey referred to as time-space compression (Harvey, 1989: 240). For technological innovations, an example of time-space compression is how people travel nowadays.

Whereas first it would take weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean by steamboat, today the airplane has reduced the time of travel to only a few hours. Also, various information and communication technologies have made it possible to call, fax, mail and Skype anyone who is also connected to the internet.

With regard to the global economy, lower trade barriers and increased international cooperation have made countries more interdependent and productive. The essence is that space has become less of an obstacle for

global flows. Although some argue that this reading of modernity is only applicable to the Global North, economic development and technological innovation are in fact global phenomena.

Some of the highest increases in productivity have been measured in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past years (McMillan et al., 2014). Furthermore, the diffusion of the internet and the adoption of mobile phones arrived later in comparison to the Global North, but in a short period of time the number of Africans, that is now connected to the internet and owns a smartphone, has radically increased. In Kenya, which this research will focus on, has a mobile phone penetration rate of over 90 percent and almost two-thirds of all Kenyans has access to internet (Communications Authority of Kenya, 2017). This has led to the creation of a unique environment where technology can offer solutions to East Africa's development challenges.

In order to learn more about the connection between economic development and technological innovation, the scope of this research will narrow down to internet use and the technology sector of Nairobi.