

# An analysis of glocalization and social welfare politics essay



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This term paper is on the topic “ Glocalization and Social Welfare”. In this paper, the focus is what glocal means and how it works in the delivery or upholding social welfare. The term Glocal basically refers to the merging or blending of local and global forces: global in local or local in global: either way it refers to the forces of global and local acting together. By social welfare it is understood that it means something affecting the society, public goods as in something that the society needs or is affected by it. In the context of glocalization; social welfare is understood as how local and global actors or forces come together to uphold social welfare aspects like health, the people, the ecology, women and working class, specifically aiming towards the third world countries. This paper takes into account glocal forces as actors like NGOs and other organizations formed with the initiative of local and global forces to counter the ill effects of globalization on society and uphold social welfare from the local and in the global context.

#### INTRODUCTION:

To understand the concept of Glocalization, an understanding of globalization as a process is to be gained. Since glocalization has basically two positions, both defined by the concept of globalization. The two statuses of ‘ Glocalization’ are: Firstly, glocalization can be seen as a result of and an alternative to globalization, and secondly, it may also be referred to as an opposition to globalization. Since most of the scholars involved in explaining glocalization, has often taken the understanding that it emerged because of the grave problems and the negative impacts or consequences of the globalization process.

Globalization as a process of integration and interconnectedness in terms of economic, social and political forces has led to various outcomes. It has led to greater interaction among states and also led to the increase of non-state actors like transnational corporations and multinational corporations in the economic sector all around the world. And it also brought a decrease in the role of the state and led to the emergence and proliferation of a number of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and non-state actors in the economic, political and social sectors which operated and had implications on the global and the local arena.

Such interaction of the global and local forces is termed as 'glocalization', the interaction of local-level government with the state and the interaction of this state and its representation in the international/global arena is what glocalization captures. Glocalization basically refers to the interaction or a blending of the local forces with the global forces, or vice-versa, impacting and influencing the other sector. Glocalization in terms of the social aspect basically refers to the impact of globalization on social aspects such as culture, and also in terms of social welfare it relates to the forces involved in the matters of rights, education, women and children and also the ecology. Insecurity is what it's based on; earlier insecurity existed only in military terms; of one country going into war with the other; however the concept of security and insecurity now deals with other sectors i. e. the non-traditional security relating to the environment and others. Globalization increasing the interaction among nations and bringing about a homogeneous notion of culture, security and economy has now led to a proliferation in matters of insecurities. It has added more problems to the world today.

Globalization and increasing economic interconnectedness was supposed to be directed towards the entire world contributing to world economy in order for everyone to be well off, however such economic accomplishments have only been diverted mostly towards the developed or the rich countries, thereby it is felt that globalization has increased the level of poverty mostly in the already poor developing or underdeveloped or undeveloped countries, especially the third world countries.

When the arguments of the hyper globalists are taken we see that globalization was intended on creating “one world”, a homogeneous entity. Homogeneous in terms of economy, political and socio cultural aspects, ‘glocalization’ on the other hand has been seen to emphasize heterogeneity; mainly in terms of culture the term associated would be ‘Creolization’- referring to the evoking of cultural fusion and the emergence of new cultures across the globe. Other synonyms for glocalization of culture, and creolization would be ‘mixture’ or ‘hybridization’.

On cultural terms we see ‘glocalization’ to stand contrary to what globalization advocates. One definition of ‘glocalization’ to be noted is; “Glocalization can be defined as an interpretation of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes of different geographic areas, it emphasizes global heterogeneity and tends to reject the idea of the West/Americanization.”

The concept of glocalization is seen to be contrary to ‘Modernization Theory’, which dealt with issues of central concern in the West and the rest of the world to blindly follow the West. Tony Blair, “Globalization as a

process has been termed as an irreversible and an inevitable process”: Bill Clinton, “ Globalization is not a policy choice, it is a fact.” This shows that the west had too much faith in the process of globalization and its impacts.

Therefore, it is here that glocalization provides for a critique and an alternative to the globalization, since globalization now is taken as an important process and many have ignored the problems caused by it, glocalization theorists point out to these problems and therefore formulate their idea of the concept that developed.

Economically, glocalization would mean the local control of the economy and fair distribution locally. Technology and Information to be encouraged to flow when and where they could strengthen the local economies. The problems of globalization, first would be that with its idea of liberalization, increases the integration of markets and also increases interference. Colin Hines mentions that this leads to reduction of democratic controls over economic affairs, international competition leads to increases interference and therefore leads to erosion of social welfare standards and an environmental regulation with regard to international trade is lost. The burden basically falls on the third world developing countries.

In this context what Hines suggests is ‘ localization’, that is the seen as an alternative to the problems created by globalization, by localization, Hines means which reverses the trend of globalization by favoring the local. Why the critique of globalization emerged, was because with the principles of integration and interconnectedness globalization was to provide an overall development, that is development of countries all over the world, a global process of development was to foster growth in the economic, political and

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social sector of the entire nation states. However this was not so, instead it has been pointed out that there was a global rise in inequality, declining social and environmental conditions and a loss of power by the sovereign state, local governments and citizens and the major beneficiaries of these processes were the Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and the multinational corporations (MNCs), there was a sharp increase in underdevelopment and underpayment. In the 1960s the income of the richest fifth of the world's population were 30 times greater than that of the poorest fifth, and in 1991 it was over sixty times and the 1998 report by United Nations, it was seventy-eight times high. In the 1990s the International Labor Organization reported that one third of the world's population were underemployed. The 1990 report by the International Labor Organization mentioned that one-third of the world's population were underemployed. 1

Globalization therefore was seen to have negative impacts on nation states, the gap between the rich and the poor were widening. Globalization stands for ' delocalizaiton' i. e. displacement of activities which were local and turning it into a world-wide activities. Globalization stood for the lifting of social activities out of the local knowledge and placing them in networks in which they are conditioned by and condition world-wide events. The process of globalization stands for homogenization, where the processes around the world become one and the same for all the countries. Global actors or institutions like the TNCs engage themselves in different countries, however they do not totally bring about homogenization, certain companies do get involved and adapt to local conditions to maximize local demand for products and service and to minimize their chance of being discriminated

against by trade and investment. This is known as 'Glocalization', defined as a "company's attempt to become accepted as a local citizen in a different trade bloc and little control is given to the area of strategic concern." On economic matters, due to globalization the delocalization gaps between the rich and the poor countries are widening.

#### GLOCALIZATION AS A PROCESS:

Glocalization involves the blending of the global and local forces. Its evolution was based on a Japanese term *Dochakuka* which meant the adoption of farming technique to one's local condition. In the business world the term actually mean global localization, according to Wordspy, glocalization referred to the "creation of the products or services intended for the global market, but customized to serve the local cultures", in social sciences the term used or a synonym for glocalization is 'indigenization'. 2

Ronald Robertson has been an important figure in the study of globalization. For him, globalization was not a recent phenomenon, it has existed as a part of the modernization theory, with its emphasis on convergence and homogenization (basically westernization), and he mentioned globalization as the "interpenetration of the universalization of the particularization and the particularization of universalism." Globalization and glocalization was to be thought of as interdependent processes, Robertson argued that local and global instead of constituting analytical opposites locality 'can be regarded, with certain reservations, as an aspect of globalization'. 3

Hines, Colin. 2000. "Localization: A Global Manifesto", London: Earthscan.

Khondker, Habibul. H. " Glocalization as Globalization: Evolution of a Sociological Concept", Bangladesh e-journal of Sociology, Vol. 1, No. 2. July 2004.

Eade, John. " Living the global City: Globalization as a local process", Routledge Publ.

Robertson mentions glocalization to be an accurate term to describe the global/local relationship. There exists the globalization of the locality and the localization of what is global. As such the processes are that of macro localization and micro globalization. Habib in his work " Glocalization as Globalization: Evolution of a Sociological Concept", cites examples of such micro globalization and macro localization. For the former he cites the example of social movements like the feminist and the ecological movements which start in small local spaces and then gets expanded to a larger area, also a global arena.

Contrary to this view of globalization and glocalization being interdependent processes is the view of the likes of Midgley, who view globalization to be harmful for local economies, as they undermine the role of the sovereign states and uphold the roles of corporations and also create unemployment and poverty in various parts of the world. They believe that globalization leads to a lack of accountability in the new emerging era and as increased economic forces and complex international relations make it difficult to identify the source of the problem, as such so assigning of little responsibility to nation state or companies for any harm that maybe inflicted upon society



as a whole and therefore scholars prefer glocalization to enhance the social welfare of citizens.

In the era of globalization the role of the state in the social arena is decreased and therefore glocalization here presents a potential to create new social actors and structures that are essentially “ local in spirit and global in character” capable of responding to local social problems brought on by neglect of welfare state in a format backed by global insight and power. Philip Hong and In Han Song suggested development of a globalized social policy assisted by and international organization that together can establish and advocate a common set of solutions to increase global pressures and create opportunities for investing more in such things as education, employment and vital public services. Through this top-down approach of global forces acting at local levels, authors argue that glocalization of social work might offer a means for advancing local welfare and contribute the strength needed to combat increasing complex global social problems more pronounced into the future.

Glocalization and social welfare can be assessed through the analysis of civil society organizations and the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). Glocalization for social welfare through NGOs etc. means pressing for certain rights, protecting the local globally/from global to local/going local. Local government officials have been the most useful when they have supported local problem solvers. What Hines suggested was ‘ localization’ which mean de-globalization i. e. the reversal of the process of globalization, turning back everything under local control and local management, which now seems quite possible since globalization has been an age old phenomenon and has <https://assignbuster.com/an-analysis-of-glocalization-and-social-welfare-politics-essay/>

brought about innumerable changes which cannot be reversed, as it is difficult to reverse or its removal or reversal is undesirable since globalization has not only had negative effects but positive ones too. As such its reversal would not really be feasible. So 'glocalization' serves as a suitable policy process, since it does not demand for a reversal of the globalized process but emphasizes the combined functioning of both the local and the global forces, neither complete globalization nor complete localization, it serves as a neutral policy, gaining from both aspects.

It is said that glocalization provides for a blend of local and global forces and in the name of such a blend an example that can be cited is that of the United Nations (UN). The UN being an international/global organization comprised of member countries from all over the world provides policies for social welfare sectors like that of health, education, environment, rights, the question of women and children and culture. The impact of UN policies are great, it looks into matters which have effect on local levels as well, citing example of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), formulated in terms of eradicating poverty, promoting proper health and education, ecological protection and others have been adopted by member nations and these MDGs have also been taken up on state level.

According to Scholte, "glocalization involves the formulations of certain rules and regulatory institutions for better governance of local agendas with respect to global matters." It is argued that the global governance institutions lack the kinds of formal accountability that national and local governments can provide. World bodies like Commonwealth, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) and the World Bank, they all <https://assignbuster.com/an-analysis-of-glocalization-and-social-welfare-politics-essay/>

lack popularly elected executive and therefore this hampers accountability. Insufficient accountability compromises most problems like poverty, inequality, environmental defense, disease and violence are not effectively addressed or eradicated. Therefore through civil society organizations help could be provided, however the sceptics argued such civil society organizations run by elites would further increase the problem of accountability.

Contemporary society operates through global frames alongside social spaces. Along with local NGOs there also exists inter-regional associations like the European Union, Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), ASEAN ( Association of South East Asian Nations), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) which has been termed as the most developed interregional arrangement. Along with this there exists trans-localism, with groups like UCLG- United Cities and Local Governments, ICLEI, local governments for sustainability.

Therefore global governance involves international institutes, inter-regional institutes and trans-local institutes, and good governance in this respect means that these institutes as actors are answerable for its action to the beneficiary for whom they are acting. Glocalization brings out the best in dealing with the local problems with tis reference to global issues though civil society. Such CSOs as human collectivity, people relate to one another on the basis of openness, tolerance, respect, trust and non-violence.

Secondly, also a political space where citizens congregate to deliberate upon actual and prospective circumstances of their collective life. The qualities of civil society initiatives like peace movements, human rights advocates, advanced dignity of disabled persons, indigenous populations, outcasts, <https://assignbuster.com/an-analysis-of-glocalization-and-social-welfare-politics-essay/>

people of color, sexual minorities and women, citizen campaigns for animal rights and ecological integrity.

Certain NGO staff members have represented several small island states in multilateral negotiations on climate change- in china and parts of Africa the relationship between civic groups and the state has sometimes been so close that the associations in question have been dubbed as GONGOs-Government organized NGOs. Some environmental organizations have held observer status in the body that oversees implementation of 1987 Montreal Protocol on substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the Codex Alimentarius Commission- a Rome based supra-state agency on world food standards and the International Organization have consulted global companies in the process of setting norms. Each country, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child- has always received an alternative report from civic groups. By 1990, most major UN organs had established a special division for liaison with NGOs. Marrakesh Agreement establishing WTO provided for ' appropriate arrangements for consultation and cooperation with NGOS.' Suggestions for proposals regarding a ' People's Assembly' or chamber of companies to be created in the UN alongside General Assembly of States have been made.

NGO forums exercised notable influence on declarations and programs of action at various UN sponsored global issue conferences of 1990s. New politics emerged when several civic groups channel important part of their efforts to shape official policy though supra-state agencies as through governments. This has been apparent in environmental regeneration, autonomy of indigenous people, position of women, opportunities for the <https://assignbuster.com/an-analysis-of-glocalization-and-social-welfare-politics-essay/>

disabled and world peace. E. g. Movement for the survival of the Ogoni people (MOSOP) created in 1990. MOSOP used support of trans-border environmental, religious, human rights organizations. In other words, it is possible in contemporary politics for grassroots groups to advance their causes through coalitions with NGOs, global governance agencies and even global companies.

Two private sector policy makers have been influential in influencing many programs at low levels, these are namely: Ford Foundation and World Economic Forum. Ford Foundation established in 1936 to fund social programs in Michigan. Its funds and grants were to go to NGOs and were to be free from the scrutiny of the state governments. 1960s, Ford Foundation played a major role in educating development economists, promoting Green Revolution in agriculture, sponsoring population control programs and linking environment and development policies.

World Economic Forum, was launched in 1971 was instrumental in launching the Uruguay Round of World Trade negotiations and helped “forge links between local and global capital in China, India, Latin America and Russia and post-apartheid South Africa. World Economic Forum also addressed inter-state conflicts with conciliation attempts in affairs as the Arab-Israeli and Greco-Turkish disputes.

Non-official initiatives in environmental regulation are the Ford, Packard and Rockefeller foundation supported major conservation programs. In 1980, World Conservation Union (IUCN) and WWF collaborated with UNEP to launch a World Conservation Strategy that developed guidelines for states. World

Resources Institute (WRI) formulated the Tropical Forestry Action Plan in 1980 jointly with the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and UNDP. International Council of Science Union plays an advisory role to the World Meteorological Organization and UNEP in setting up and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 1988. The Secretariat for the Convention on International Trade in endangered species of wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has worked in close cooperation with the IUCN and the WWF. IUCN, WRI and UNEP jointly organized the Bio-Diversity Conservation Strategy Program.

NGOS and emancipatory new social movements provide a progressive way forward to more effective and just regulation. Lena Dominelli mentions that initiatives have to be taken to engage in mutual exchanges between local and global players. Locality specific versions of social work was directed to be a resistance to the homogenizing trends embedded in social relations driven by profit motives and the desire of entrepreneurs to appropriate other people's labor, material resources, geographic spaces and intellectual property.

Human, social and environmental degradation is increasing and despite government rhetoric about equal opportunity, elimination of poverty particularly among children within the UK, and on a global scale of twenty-eight billion people expressed and agreed at World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 and Millennium Development Goals pronounced at the UN. The roles of associations like the IASSW International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council on Social Work (ICSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), promoting cross border solidarity in matters of this kind.

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The benefits of globalization have been contested by 'anti-globalization movements' which demanded economic growth should sustain human beings and the environment in which they live rather than gathering profits for the few. International organizations include such as the Red-Cross OXFAM, and the Save the Children are NGOs that practice on issues like poverty, disasters and health matters, mostly associated with aid and relief. The American New Deal under Franklin D. Roosevelt was nearest the USA could come to guaranteeing provision for families with dependent children and for older people. The concerns with extreme levels of deprivation and threat of social disorder and devastation by second world war especially Europe were picked by Roosevelt and other at United Nations and led to an agreement around Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). UDHR covered civil, political and social rights including the right to welfare.

In addition to the organizations of the UN system and the Washington-based financial institutions, such as the international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like the Human Rights Watch and CARE, such transnational corporations as Shell and Citibank, and global media like the BBC and CNN exerted a growing influence on state policies, and also brought to a large extent the proliferation in the number of NGOs. The involvements of such actors are basically a part of the good governance agenda. They help especially in the Third World and Eastern Europe to bring about changes, certain scholars have been critical of the World Bank intervention in these countries, and mentioned that instead of good governance, what World Bank policies have led to is bad governance. As such, UN commentary on good governance has led to certain ideas namely, the universal protection of

Human Rights; non-discriminatory laws; efficient, impartial and rapid judicial processes; transparent public agencies; accountability for decisions by public officials; devolution of resources and decision making to local levels from the capital and meaningful participation by citizens in debating public policies and choices. 4

A report from UNDP's Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States emphasized the prerequisites for equity, legitimacy and efficiency: " A legitimately strong government can be described as one that commands sufficient confidence in its legitimacy to allow for a strong civil society, and for a network of non-governmental institutions and regulations that ensure the development of a well-functioning economic system, the strengthening of democratic procedures and a widespread participation by people in public life."

Giving the state a role to play in the domestic arena may lead to capacity building; in such a way there may be more effective partnerships and institutions internationally and at home, emphasized by the World Development Report 1997. UNDP has since the early 1990s shifted from traditional public sector management to addressing sensitive issues of governance as the human rights etc. And thus emphasized on capacity building; with this emphasis on capacity building for civil

Weiss, Thomas. G. " Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and Actual Challenges", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 21. No. 5. (Oct. 2000). pp. 795-814.



society and the private sector has meant that the UN system has a comparative advantage in many of the developing countries. Good governance entails the working of state and civil society actors closely together, Mahbub ul Haq has given the concept of good governance as to be directed towards the notion of human development and thereby leading to 'Humane Governance'.

This humane governance has also been emphasized by J. A. Scholte in his book "Globalization: a critical introduction", he has mentioned the various issues as insecurities, basically as a result of globalization. Such insecurities are not that of traditional security in terms of the military security and defense but this includes that of Ecological integrity, Health, Poverty, Employment, Working conditions and identity and local knowledge. We can make out from these various insecurities that Scholte talked in aspect of social welfare. The emphasis is on the negative impacts of contemporary globalization on human security.

#### ECOLOGY INTERGRITY:

The global environmental issues have become a very critical source of insecurity, global capitalism or global races for capital and development have been particularly harmful for the ecology. Such race have particularly been harmful for the countries of the South, since most ministries have abandoned the environmental projects and policies in an effort to achieve the fiscal targets connected with globally sponsored structural adjustment programmes. Environmental issues are a very good example of how local and global forces interact with each other or affect each other. Various

movements at the local level for environmental protection have been raised against the global forces which push countries towards the process of development which are harmful to the ecology of the country. To cite an example would be the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) in India. A fight a dam Sardar Sarovar Dam to be built on the river Narmada in Central India, this NBA consisted mostly of peasants and tribals, led by people like Baba Amte and also later activists like Medha Patkar were successful in fighting against the project which was to be funded by the World Bank. They were successful in stopping the Bank from funding the project and thereby got the project banned. This NBA was able to succeed in their efforts since they were able to well-establish links with environmental groups overseas. The Japanese environmentalists persuaded their government not to advance money for the Narmada Valley Project and also US groups were sympathetic to the cause and were also able to persuade their government to do the same. Support from environmentalist from both these countries also helped to persuade the World Bank to give up on the project. 5

Environmental issues in industrialized countries had to do with the “ quality of life”, whereas in Africa, Asia and Latin America it mostly was based on survival, the rights to live and work in a healthy environment, the responsibility to protect habitats, livelihoods and systems of life support from contamination, depletion (extraction), and destruction, and also the determination to restore or rehabilitate what has already been harmed. These are the issues that the countries of the South face in terms of ecology, and more sensitive to this issue have been women, ecofeminism as can be referred to. There are inter-linkages in the experience of grassroots

environmental movements worldwide namely: the struggle to save old growth forests in Europe, women's initiatives to secure

Rangarajan, Mahesh. "Environmental Issues in India", Chap. 22. Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.

safe food supplies in the industrial core of Poland, community efforts in Spain to fight toxic waste dumping, women's movements to retain access to land and forest resources in Kenya, and women's participation in the struggles of the rubber tappers' union to protect their forest homes and work places in the Brazilian Amazon. 6

Women carry a disproportionate share of responsibilities for resource procurement and environmental maintenance however they have very limited rights to determine the future of resource availability and environmental quality. Women have been at the forefront of emerging grassroots groups, social movements and local political organizations engaged in environmental, socio economic and political struggles. These phenomena are not localized; it is taking place around the world. Sound environmental policies and practice are required in order to achieve 'sustainable development'. In this respect there are certain assumptions that are given: firstly that the involvement of women in collective action around the world, there are critical linkages between global environmental and economic processes and the recent surge in women's participation in public for a, particularly in relation to ecological and economic concern. This surge in women's activism is a response to actual changes in local environmental conditions as well as to discursive shifts toward "sustainable development"

in national and international political circles. Secondly, relates to women are beginning to define their identities and the meaning of gender through expressions of human agency and collective action emphasizing struggles, resistance and cooperation, and also have now included women's knowledge, experience and interests as a worldwide phenomenon, and that the process and results in any one place reflect historical, social and geographical specificity.

There are various victories claimed by women's participation in environmental protection at local levels; namely the widespread planting of trees by the Women's Green Belt movement of Kenya, the protection of the Himalayan forests from timber concessionaries by the Chipko Movement in India, in North America grassroots movements led by women have prevented the disposal of toxic wastes. International level organizations that bridge the gap between local and the global have been Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet, WEDO- Women, Environment and Development Organization; WEDNET- Women, Environment and Development Network; and Worldwide Network for women all bring concerns of these locally based movements to national and international policy fora. Global Governance of ecological matters has made notable advances, even though the UN Charter of 1945 did not mention environment, but UN-