

The significance of globalization to issues of development that been raised so fa...



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Globalization broadly refers to the expansion of global linkages, the organisation of social life on a global scale, and the growth of a global consciousness, and therefore to the consolidation of world society. Such an ecumenical definition captures much of what the term commonly means, but its meaning is disputed. It includes several large processes; definitions differ in what they emphasise. Globalization is historically complex. The meaning of the term is itself a topic in global discussion; it may refer to “real” processes, to ideas that justify them, or to a way of thinking about them.

There are four key concepts of globalization, Stretched social relations, Rationalisation, Intensification and Interpenetration. Stretched social relations are the existence of cultural, economic and political networks of connection across the world. Regionalisation is the Increased interconnection between states that border on each other. Intensification is the increased density of interaction across the globe which implies that the impacts of events are felt more strongly than before.

Interpenetration is the extent to which apparently distant cultures and societies come face to face with each other at local level, creating increased diversity. There are three main approaches to globalization, globalist, traditionalist and transformationalist. Globalists believe that globalization is uncontrollable by humans and cannot be resisted. Social processes have been affected greatly by globalization and now operate at a global scale. Global interdependence makes national boundaries less important.

Local and national differences become less important, and produce a more uniform global culture and economy. Within globalists there are optimists

and pessimists. Positive globalists see globalization as ultimately leading to us all being world citizens through communication and therefore understanding each other's cultures and nations. Pessimistic globalists see the world as becoming more uniform and therefore losing individual cultures. They see the major economic powers, such as the US, Western Europe and Japan as being able to resist change and inflict their own agenda on the world.

The globalist position on the economy is that there has been a recent growth in international trade and investment and that national economies have turned into a global economy determined by world market forces. Globalists see economic globalization as a positive development that will help consumers by increasing the scale and efficiency of markets for goods and capital. This opinion is supported by economic neo-liberals but condemned by neo-Marxists. Transformationalists agree with traditionalists that globalists have exaggerated their case. They argue that nation states do remain military, economically and politically powerful.

However they do also believe that globalization has its effects. According to this view globalization is complex, varied and unpredictable. They believe that nation-states should retain a key role. Transformationalists see the present period as a step in a long evolutionary process in which local and national economies merge into more mixed, interdependent societies. They argue that interdependence is sweeping the international economic system; this places added constraints on national economic decision-making.

Traditionalists believe that globalization isn't real.

Traditionalists argue that in spite of increases in global flows of trade and money around the world, these are not that different to what occurred previously. The exchange of goods and cultures goes back to early times. They believe that what globalists call globalization is a continuation and development of earlier world trading links. Traditionalists see the majority of economic and social activity as being regional rather than global, for example the European Union is an example of increased regionalization. Traditionalists say that the international economy has not progressed to a global economy as claimed by the globalists.

Separate national economies still remain an important category. Economic globalization is associated with markets and production becoming increasingly interdependent and integrated because of the growth of trade and the flows of capital and technology. Trade is associated with interdependency and capital flows are associated with integration. It is also said, by traditionalists, to be a process, which has been going on for sometime. The development of Newly industrializing economies (NIEs) such as Mexico, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Malaysia, have had a significant impact on employment in the North.

Unemployment and a fall in incomes for the less skilled in the North could be a direct result of the drift of manufacturing jobs to the south. A drop in living standards of Northern workers could be the result of the loss of competitiveness of the Northern Economies in manufacturing and the move of production to the Southern NIEs. Another explanation of the collapse of unskilled employment in the North is attributable to advanced technological developments there, rather than international trade and migration.

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Environmental degradation can be brought about by pollution and over exploitation of resources.

Globalization brings wider industrialization and therefore more widespread pollution and more use of environmental resources. For some time the transformation of the environment was considered a necessary change, for example construction of irrigation systems and flood control dykes. Negative views of the change started when industrial production began and the threat of air and water pollution became apparent. As less developed countries industrialise the fear is that pollution will increase drastically. Rapid industrialisation in the Soviet Union and China resulted in little concern for the environment.

Technology in development has both been seen as a solution and a problem, technology as the solution to development was seen as the view during the golden age when various infrastructure projects were developed in the third world. On the other hand many people saw technology as the problem, in the 1970's there were plenty of people questioning the association of technology with progress. During the 1980's a new view developed. Technology was explained as a social process. This view is that technology both reflects and influences the society that produces it.

Technology is an important influence in shaping society, but it is just one influence. Another important part of globalization is Industrialization. Industrialisation and development are not necessarily dependent on each other. There has been an effort to improve living standards by other ways, such as improved agricultural production and technology. The way

globalisation affects industrialization is viewed very differently by major development organisations, the UN's view is that global competition does not automatically bring faster growth and developments, the World Bank says that there is a positive link between freeing markets and trade and the eradication of poverty in the long term. Culture is a crucial component of globalization because it is through culture that common understandings are developed. Culture flows between countries is increasing fast possibly due to the ownership rates of televisions with cable and satellite increasing.

Globalizers focus on structures and argue that with the growth of global culture comes the demise of national cultures. Traditionalists say that claims for globalization are excessive and that culture remains deeply national.

From this view, cultural imperialism is seen as overstating external structural forces and undervaluing local and human agency and overstating change.

Explain how consideration of Power is relevant to debates on globalization.

Globalization is associated with unequal economic and power relations, the effects of globalization are geographically uneven. It is suggested that we are moving towards a global world with no borders. A few world cities will become the nodes of global power; the financial decision-making will be made in these cities.

Decisions made in these cities of power can have dramatic effects for the rest of the world. Contemporary globalization raises the question about how societies are governed and how they should be governed. Globalists argue that in a globalized world, national governments are increasingly powerless and irrelevant. Traditionalists maintain that the capacity of national

governments to regulate the lives of their citizens and to manage global
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affairs has never been so extensive. Transformationalists argue against both views saying that national governments are having to adapt their roles and functions.

As a result, a significant reconfiguration in the power, jurisdiction and authority is underway. National governments are not so much losing power but having to change to where power and sovereignty is shared among many other public and private agencies. Globalists and transformationalists argue that power is no longer exercised on a national scale but has acquired a global dimension. As a consequence, the business of government and politics is becoming internationalised and globalized.