



## **GLOBAL HEALTH**

### **THE CONCEPT GLOBALIZATION AS AN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL PROCESS**

#### **UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS AND RELATIONSHIP OF GLOBALISATION: BY MEANS OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND HEALTH INTERACTIONS.**

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Looking at glance globalisation is one of the greatest forces that had transformed and shaped the world we live in today. It has allowed the movement of capital, information, labour, technology, and good across nations to generate global economic ties between these nations (Wu, 2012). When considering the term globalisation, several definitions have been surfaced into the literature each with their own covariation and differential perspectives. A good example comes from Held *et al.*

(2003) whom describes globalisation as ‘a process which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions, expressed in transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and power. As a matter of fact this definition can be beneficial as it acknowledges and points out that globalisation is not a constant element but rather than the acceleration of the process and the impact it may result. A more simplified version comes from George Soros, (2002) as he refers globalisation as the flow of free capitalism followed by superiority of universal financial markets, and of international companies over the national economies.

Variety of local communities relates globalisation by means of modernisation, which has revolutionised the development of globalisation by means of rapid advancement of information and communication technologies (ICT) innovations, cutting edge scientific researches, education, and mobilisation of effective trades to name it few. For example, ICT is one of the powerful forms of modernisation as it intertwines and facilitates the transmissions of global services and goods worldwide, thus increases the both economical ties and speeds up globalisation between nations (Little & Green, 2009). It is equally important to note that some communities recognises globalisation as a potential tool that build bridges between societies through trades and exchange of skills and knowledge in global scale. In contrast others recognise globalization as utilisation of the poor nations by the affluence of the developed nations, and is thus a danger to traditional civilisation as well as the progression of modernisation in other cultures (Little & Green, 2009). Furthermore, globalisation has also been associated with terrorism as exploitation and inconvenient conditions that attracts extremist end side of the nation to perform criminal acts as well as terrorist activities within the global (International Monetary Fund, 2000).

When considering globalisation, there are three essential aspects that will be examined as follows: (a) economic globalisation, (b) political globalisation, and (c) cultural globalisation.

To begin with, it is important to acknowledge that economy plays crucial in both transforming and enhancing the development of globalisation as it strengthens the relationship between nations and markets (Held *et al.*, 2003). Economic globalisation has accelerated rapidly in last two centuries because there has been a increased trend in internationalisation of trades, mobilisation of companies, increase in both exports of agricultural and exports production of good etc (Cesano & Gustafsson, 2000). As a result, international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Trade Organisation (WTO) and World Bank keenly strived for the good of the global economy even though unemployment and poverty were escalating in many regions around the world (Cesano & Gustafsson, 2000). Arguably, it is been noted through out the history whenever economic globalisation takes it is course of action; it will have an impact on the nation as a worldwide scale. Therefore, numerous advocates such as scientists, economists, humanists and politicians have initiated to scrutinise the positive and negative aspects of economic globalisation in various sectors (Cesano & Gustafsson, 2000). For instance, it was reported by the World Bank (2008) that approximately the number of people living on \$1.25 per day or even less than that was reduced by 500 million. However, this staggering declination was only evident in China due to their economic expansion. In contrast poverty predominantly in less developed countries such as sub-Saharan Africans living in deprivation has greatly doubled (Schrecker *et al.*, 2008).

The current emphasis on the worldwide economies integration is to have a liberal global market with no trade barriers, meaning that production is internationalised and capital, goods and services move continuously and instantly between nations (Cesano & Gustafsson, 2000). As a result, economic and financial world institutions such as the WTO as well as the IMF, assure the progression and more barrier-free exchange of goods, services, as well as capital in a global scale. Furthermore, organisations such as the ‘North America Free Trade Association’ (NAFTA), the ‘European Union’ (EU), and the ‘Association of South East Asian Nations’ (ASEAN) labour towards financial

integration contains by the relevant geographical areas (Cesano & Gustafsson, 2000).

Political globalisation is one of the basic elements that changed and reframed the constitution of concurrent political life as it involves both in the interconnection and development of territorially in relation to political communities (Held *et al.*, 2003). As a consequence, this has resulted in stronger international relationships between countries, which means continuously flow of goods, production factors, technology, ideas and cultural exchanges can be observed (Löfgren & Sarangi, 2009). But then yet we observe some extreme restriction in some part of the world due to conflicts or tension. For example, Australia and some African countries have maintained very restrict border control up till now. In addition, India and Pakistan have retained an extreme restriction across their borders as a direct result of nuclear tension. On contrary, a good example of how significant the state is involved in the development of economic and remains detached from neoliberal rules is seen by the success of government managed capitalism in China. Similar trend can be observed in Russia, Malaysia and Singapore, where the state plays an important role in the overall growth and development investments across the nation (Löfgren & Sarangi, 2009). Such restricted will only isolate and hinder the development of that country and in turn it may lead to financial instability or even financial crisis. However, the states authority to restrict transaction has declined greatly with the increase of multinational companies and non-governmental institution and private companies, which in turn has led to the decline of state to take independent decisions. Nevertheless, the state has the powerful forces to perform crucial task such as law and regulation and protect the country against foreign aggression (Löfgren & Sarangi, 2009; Verma, 2011). Lack of hindrance between nations will not only boost financial stability but also will significantly enhance the exchange of skilled workers, commercialisation of science via pharmaceutical market, better health and also other technological innovations (Verma, 2011).

Other than economic and politics events, globalisation has also been influenced by cultural means. It was in the late 1960 when cultural globalisation was revolutionised and such transformations were vividly apparent. Some of the transformation surfaced in that era includes: anti-Vietnam protests, the sexual revolution, and movements for the emancipation of women and so

((Verma, 2011; Martens *et al.*, 2010). Another example of how cultural globalisation changed the society is observed through ICT and media, which have certainly changed the way we think and perceive about the world and other cultures. In addition, the increase of ICT has definitely made long distance communication more convenient, easily accessible and affordable. Moreover, such break through has not only encouraged the diversification but also democratisation of knowledge and competence of how we as a society view matters on both locally as well as globally (Martens *et al.*, 2010; Badger, 2013). However, cultural pessimists believe that cultural globalisation has a negative impact on the younger generation as it has lead to the diminishing of traditional cultural values. For instance, Hollywood in the United States of America has created their global cultural blueprint that has greatly influenced over the younger generation in both positive and negative aspects. Further more the rise of global media network such as CNN, BBCWorld, Skynews and Al- Jazeera had made possible for us to be aware of what is happening beyond the horizons. Such innovation is the main reasons why there is arise in international traditional cultural exchanges through mobility of migration tourism and student exchange ((Verma, 2011; Martens *et al.*, 2010).

In spite of the rise of technological revolution, scientific research, and abundance of clinical medical care, the health injustices remains unresolved. As consequences, populations around the world are left to face rise in morbidity and mortality from long-standing diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis coupled with the global epidemics due to HIV/AIDS, SARS and avian flu. In addition to this, there has been an increase in the number of non-communicable diseases such as cancer, chronic diseases and trauma etc (London & Schneider, 2012). These health effects are unevenly dispersed and thus are a mirror affect of the brutality that global health injustices have on less developed countries. For example, it was reported that in 2005, the life expectancy amongst men in Belgium was 76 years, whereas in Angola it was 39 years. Such variation was linked to the gap between health expenditure of the two countries. It was found that Belgium's health expenditure per capita was significantly higher than that of Angola by a factor of more than 80-fold (US\$ 3133 in Belgium versus \$38 in Angola) (World Health Organisation, 2007). The negative aspects that globalisation has on health can occur via different routes. Firstly, it was suggested that globalisation restrains the economic development

required to facilitate the developing countries in order to provide for the bases of their health care (London & Schneider, 2012). Secondly, globalisation has led to the formation of private health care investments that resulted in lowering public expenses on social services, put health worker out of work, and among others. According to the Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) decreasing health inequities is an “ethical imperative”, and efforts should be made in order to address this issue via globalisation with regards of international of economics, flow of good, services and capital between borders (Schrecker *et al*, 2008).

Schrecker *et al* (2008) have examined the health impacts of globalization by using a model to demonstrate health inequalities. Their model emphasis on how social determinants can generate various exposure and susceptibility that gradually influence on individual’s health. They have suggested that “Central mechanisms found in the society can create spread of strength, wealth and risks”, and such mechanisms that work within the environment were generated by globalisation and not necessarily driven by it. They further proposed that both susceptibility and exposure to different determinants could lead to material deprivation, which was observed by more than 800 million people that were severely malnourished globally, 1 billion slum dwellers, and those that were deprived from access to basic health care services. Nevertheless, the association of these factors and their relationship between globalisation and health remains controversial (Schrecker *et al*, 2008). This raises the question if globalisation leads to health inequities or is it a combination of determinants coupled with socioeconomic that actually causes health inequalities?

Without a doubt globalisation has significantly increased the global market and enhanced the development of cultural and political interactions between nations. However, it has also resulted inequalities of financial market in less developed countries where poverty has escalated. Nevertheless, the positive aspects of globalisation out weights the negative aspects of it in such a manner where nations can free exchange traditional values and knowledge as well as trade goods and technology without any restriction.

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