

## **Globalization is not always a blessing. Is this true?**

Globalization has been portrayed, most commonly, especially by economists and politicians in the first world countries to be a phenomenon that is for the good of the development of the world. Globalization has great labels attached to it, and often good ones, such as developing third world countries, closing the gap amongst countries and much more. But on closer scrutiny, we find that perhaps the evaluation on the effects of globalization by these experts have merely gone skin-deep. In fact, globalization has become one of the greatest paradoxes of our time. And we begin to see that though globalization has brought about many changes, some possibly for the better, we must come to terms with the fact that globalization has not always been a blessing.

Perhaps one of the greatest benefits that globalization has brought about would be the sharing of information between people all over the world, especially through its brainchild, the Internet. The birth of the Internet has created new dimensions of technology previously unimaginable, allowing us to connect with people all across the world and cause us to be no longer bound by geographical distances. Information can also be found easily on the Internet at the snap of a finger. Wikipedia, a large and growing free online encyclopedia, where information is contributed and edited by the public, is just one example of how information is shared amongst citizens of the world. Thus we can see that globalization has indeed brought about much convenience for us by reducing the physical distance amongst peoples for faster and more effective communication and sharing of information.

However, on the other hand, globalization has also brought about its share of curses. With the quick and effective sharing of information, as well as the availability of information, many have been quick to exploit the Internet. Thus we begin to see not only a new dimension of technology, but also a new dimension of crime. With the sharing of information also comes the diminishing of one's privacy, and this is exactly what identity thefts capitalize on. In one of the greatest identity thefts ever, we see how Abraham Abdallah of the United States stole over \$328 million dollars from some of the richest people through the use of the Internet. And he is merely one out of 700 other identity thieves that ever get caught. And this has not only raised concerns about the security of the Internet, but has also caused the banking industry a hefty \$60 billion dollars in 2003. Hence we can see the extent of damage that globalization has brought upon us amidst its blessings.

Furthermore, globalization has also caused a greater rift between the first world and third world countries in terms of wealth. Even though globalization has created jobs for many people in the third world countries where MNCs set up their factories, these jobs are mainly manual work and the workers are shockingly underpaid. For example, for every Nike t-shirt bought, only one third of a cent goes to the worker that made it. Thus we can see the exploitation of workers in third world countries by MNCs and that in fact, MNCs are so driven by the profit motive that creating jobs and stimulating the economy of the third world countries' economies is merely a facade to hide their hideous deeds. Eventually, the wealth goes back to the first world countries and minimal amounts of the profit goes back to the

third world countries to build their infrastructure, thus causing the gap of wealth to widen even further between first and third world countries.

In addition, we also see that the over reliance on MNCs in third world countries poses a couple of problems. Firstly, when MNCs become the major driving force of that particular country's economy, and a relocation of operations occurs, the host country often faces sudden massive unemployment, as well as a crash in their economy due to the huge economic dependence on a particular MNC, as shown in Nigeria and Rwanda between 1970s and 1980s. Secondly, the over reliance on MNCs also robs political parties of their power as they have to put the interests of the MNCs first. This is dangerous as MNCs are mainly profit driven and would stoop at anything to make their operations cost effective. This in turn brings about harm to the people, as they have no say in any situation; and the environment, since MNCs do not have to be accountable for their operations. Thus we see that globalization has also brought much suffering and grievances to weaker third world countries and has created for the world a whole new dimension of anarchy, where the line between politics and economics has become barely visible.

Lastly, we see that globalization has made the world smaller and has improved communication standards. This in turn has also promoted greater understanding of people of different nationalities, religions and cultures. Thus countries are able to understand each other better and thus give rise to greater cooperation, politically, economically, socially and even militarily. This is shown through the various organizations such as ASEAN, NATO and the EU. Globalization has also caused the growth of cross cultures in countries, often creating a new and unique culture of that country, a good example being Singapore. This has also facilitated the movement and integration of foreign talents or immigrants in a country as citizens are more open to accepting people beyond their national borders. Hence, globalization has been a blessing to us.

However, we see that though globalization has brought countries and peoples closer together, that a common trend is slowly surfacing. And that is the use of a common language, English. The common use of this language as well as the fact that it is seen as the ticket to riches as most of the first world countries use it as their main language of communication, has caused many other non-English speaking countries to follow suit. And these has caused many languages to slowly become extinct as they no longer serve a purpose and are gradually but slowly forgotten. In fact, France is so determined to prevent the loss of its language and culture that it has continued to use French as its main language for communication. Thus this shows us that in fact, globalization has many curses that are attached to it, as subtle as they may seem.

Thus in conclusion, we see that though globalization has brought about many changes, mostly for the better, and it is true that we have benefited from it in one way or another, we cannot look at the only pros, as great as they may be, and casually pass the verdict that globalization is always a blessing. In fact, I have shown that globalization has brought its fair share of problems and is therefore not always a blessing.