

# Knowledge Organiser – A Level World Sociology:

## The impact of globalisation

### Globalisation

Globalisation can be divided into three categories: political, economic, and cultural.

As a general term that applies to all three categories, globalisation is a 'complex web of interconnectedness', which means our lives are influenced by events and decisions made far away from us. Geographical distance and territorial boundaries are less significant than they used to be.

### Advantages of globalisation

- Easier movement of people and goods.
- Provides cheaper goods.
- Provides large amounts of employment for developing countries.
- Increased co-operation between countries.
- Tackles poverty.
- Improves education.
- Technology has improved.

### Disadvantages of globalisation

- Environmental damage.
- Creates a risk of wiping out some cultures altogether.
- Traditional aspects, e.g. family life, community and so on, are being replaced.
- Makes the poor poorer and the rich richer.
- Money made in transnational corporations (TNCs) leaves the poorer nations.

### Globalisation – theoretical perspectives

Hyperglobalists believe that globalisation is a positive phenomenon, benefiting everyone as it creates jobs, allows the flow of goods and money, allows the mix of culture, etc. Modernisation theorists would agree with the hyperglobalist view because they believe that developing countries need TNCs and exposure to Western culture to modernise. For hyperglobalists, globalisation has enabled the creation of new opportunities for people to participate in the free exchange of ideas and information, free from state control. Modernisation theorists would agree with this exposure to Western culture as it enables developing countries to modernise.

Pessimistic globalists believe that globalisation impacts on the world's poorest in terms of economy. Dependency theorists would agree with this, they believe that the McDonaldisation of work has meant the jobs that TNCs bring to the developing world are small and unskilled. This means that the workforce does not need to be trained and no mass education is needed, therefore it is much cheaper. Pessimistic globalists see the concentration of the power to spread ideas into the hands of a few global corporations or dominant groups who can swamp minority cultures. Dependency theorists would agree with this; they believe that a cultural imperialism is taking place.

### Cultural globalisation – negatives

There are many reasons to think that globalisation might undermine cultural diversity:

- TNCs promote a certain kind of consumerist culture, in which standard commodities, promoted by global marketing campaigns exploiting basic material desires, create similar lifestyles – 'Coca-Colonisation'.
- Backed by the power of certain states, Western ideals are falsely established as universal, overriding local traditions – 'cultural imperialism'.
- Modern institutions have an inherently rationalising thrust, making all human practices more efficient, controllable, and predictable, as exemplified by the spread of fast food – 'McDonaldisation'.
- The United States exerts hegemonic influence in promoting its values and habits through popular culture and the news media – 'Americanisation'.

### Cultural globalisation – positives

There are good reasons to think that globalisation will foster diversity:

- Interaction across boundaries leads to mixing of cultures in particular places and practice – pluralisation.
- Global norms or practices are interpreted differently according to local tradition; the universal must take particular forms – glocalisation.