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Cultural Perspectives of Globalization

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Abstract

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the socio-cultural dimensions of the globalization process, its historical origins, and its impact on modern societies. At the same time, it investigates globalization not merely as an economic and political phenomenon, but as a complex process directly affecting cultural diversity and national identity. Drawing on the theoretical views of leading scholars and researchers, the article highlights intercultural dialogue, cultural imperialism, and the risks of homogenization. Furthermore, it presents a comparative analysis of the positive opportunities and negative consequences of globalization for developing countries.

Key words: cultural globalization, cultural diversity, cultural imperialism, migration

Introduction

Globalization is the most widely discussed topic in the world in recent years. Although its concept is new, its content and logic trace back to previous centuries. In terms of content, globalization is not a purely modern phenomenon. Capitalism, which brought about the emergence of the world market, forms the foundation of today's globalization phenomenon [1]. For this reason, analyzing or reflecting on globalization separately from capitalism would be incorrect. The term globalization, known as “mondialisation” in French, “globalización” in Spain and Latin America, and “Globalisierung” in German, is one of the main words used today to explain the changes taking place in our world [2].

Globalization, in its first and simplest sense, means the expansion of the borders of people, goods, labor, and capital, or their multiplication on a global scale. Although the definition of globalization varies according to its content and application in different contexts, its use in the social sciences began in the 1960s, and debates on globalization intensified significantly in academic circles starting from the 1980s. Turkish researchers Talas and Kaya define globalization as the “dominance of North-Western values” and claim that it causes countries to face socio-cultural problems [3].

Kongar considers globalization an "inevitable" phenomenon and emphasizes that it consists of three dimensions: political, economic, and cultural. According to him, the political dimension is defined as the single-polar world order that emerged with the political hegemony established by the US in the world and the dissolution of the Soviets; from the perspective of the economic dimension, he emphasizes the power of international capital, argues that people's daily lives are "identical", and posits that close relationships are formed between economic competition and production efficiency [4].

Materials and Methods

Additionally, Kongar puts forward two ideas regarding the cultural dimension of globalization. First, he emphasizes that globalization under conditions of micro-nationalism allows even the smallest cultural difference to be heard across the world through media, and that these differences should be viewed as concepts to be protected within the context of rights and freedoms. Second, he argues that the contribution of international capital leads consumers to exhibit similar behaviors, resulting in the formation of a one-dimensional cultural identity. Bayar defines the economic aspect of globalization as the increase in world trade after World War II, the acceleration of global capital movements, their depth and diversity, and the globalization of production. Defining political globalization as "changes in political power, power structures, and forms of governance", he emphasizes the existence of numerous non-state actors. He characterizes cultural globalization as a two-way interaction in the context of separation and differentiation, where global and local cultures reach each other. In simpler terms, in addition to the above, the process of globalization expresses the increasing interdependence of all countries in the world across science, art, law, politics, culture, economics, religion, and other fields, forcing the adoption of common values, approaches, and perspectives.

Globalization is a process of communication and interaction among people that has a universal form. It is the global structure of people in terms of socio-cultural, moral, legal, economic, military, and other aspects. Today, through the globalization process, cultures encounter, transfer to, and interconnect with one another. In this process, especially in an era where people may become isolated from one another, question everything, national borders disappear, and communication technologies develop, the impact of globalization on conditions of cohabitation is of critical importance.

Results and Discussion

Rey expresses political globalization as the expansion of international organizations and international social movements, economic globalization as developments in the ability of transnational corporations to trade goods and money and other issues, and cultural globalization as the formation of transnational identities and the similarity of human and social phenomena and behaviors [5]. In giving an example to define the cultural dimension of globalization, Berger notes that cultural elements that emerged in line with the economic and political power of the US exert a very broad influence throughout the world, that global

culture is American, and refers to the "cultural Chernobyl" comparison made by a French state official [6].

When analyzing studies on globalization, although a large majority of researchers emphasize that globalization exerts a severe impact primarily on economic spheres, in reality, culture suffers no less impact than the economy in this process. New technologies have created a unique system capable of transforming daily life, lifestyles, practices, and experiences across the globe, as well as creating new modes of cultural production [7].

Culture, with its criteria of change and differentiation, is described as one of the areas where globalization manifests itself most. It is an undeniable fact that in the shadow of communication networks, distances between peoples hold little significance. The growing need for means of transport and communication in society, alongside the rapid development of scientific and technological progress, has expanded the opportunities for individuals and societies to reach out and communicate with one another, allowing a cultural motif originating from the most remote location to find its place in the furthest geography [8]. As a result, it enables numerous diversities to communicate with each other on local, national, and international levels, creating mutual awareness. It draws attention to the fact that globalization is a product of culture, the mutual interconnectedness in globalization impacting culture, shaping its new cultural elements, and enriching it, as well as the close relationships between the concepts of culture and globalization [9].

Mahiroglu explains cultural globalization historically in two periods. He emphasizes that the first stage of globalization in a cultural sense was based on the post-industrialization colonial activities of Western states. After industrialization, targeting undeveloped countries with the goal of governing the world politically and economically, Western states introduced their cultures through numerous actors, primarily missionaries, in the geographies they reached [10]; this was explained through a strategy of creating cultural dependency, specifically "teaching their languages and creating people who think like them". Cultural globalization, which began with colonial policy, continued in another form towards the end of the 20th century. As for the second period, he notes that from the end of the 20th century, the providers of cultural globalization were no longer missionary activities or missionaries, but transitioned to communication and transport vehicles [11]; through these means, individuals and societies escaped the boundaries of space and time to reach one another, turning the world, in McLuhan's words, into a "global village". James Rosenau argues that the movement of cultures is tied to human migration, emphasizing that since their earliest movements across the Earth, humans have carried their cultures to other geographies, meaning that the global spread of cultures-in other words, cultural globalization-has a long history [12]. Rosenau points to the spread of major world religions across continents and societies as a clear example of cultural movements. Drawing on Rosenau's ideas, historical cultural movements and expansions include processes such as the Hellenization of the Middle East and the Mediterranean by the Greeks, Turkicization of Central Asia, North Africa, Europe, and the Middle East by the Ottomans, and Russification

of Eastern and Central Europe as well as parts of Eurasia by the Soviets [13].

The movement of cultures voluntarily or involuntarily triggers cultural exchanges. Based on this logic, Robertson emphasizes that the culture of all societies is the product of their varying degrees of interaction with other societies within the global system [14]. The process of cultural change occurring through cultural movement undermines the national cultural identity of place and nation; furthermore, as the daily connections between distinct and distant geographies continually grow, cultural influences begin to blend. Thus, as interactions between people living in different places increase over time, the sense of belonging to a specific culture may diminish [15].

Cultural changes occur due to several factors, such as new demands or decisions by individuals joining a society, cultural contacts with different groups, accidental events, or the emergence of a common goal within societies. Uzkul lists five causes of cultural change: 1) Demographic factor; 2) Social dynamism factor; 3) Colonial movements; 4) Increase in knowledge factor; 5) Understanding factor. In explaining these reasons, he notes under the demographic factor that the migration and constant movement of societies from one place to another for various reasons cause them to fall under the influence of new cultures they encounter, and this impact can be positive or negative. As a positive example, he cites the Turks spreading their nomadic culture while also benefiting from other cultures, whereas as negative examples, he points to the invasions by the Mongols and certain Western societies. By social dynamism, he refers to mobility, tourism, and migration increasing in parallel with technological progress. Alongside colonial movements, he highlights cultural colonialism, emphasizing that during cultural exchange, some civilizations instill their culture into the other side and damage the other culture. Touching upon the increase in knowledge-especially the integration of societies since the 17th century and the growth of knowledge continuing to this day-he states that this resulted in an increase in literate and educated people, thereby enhancing cultural level and diversity. Finally, through the understanding factor, he focuses on the desire and effort of cultures to comprehend the subjective structures of other cultures.

The culture creating cultural globalization is Western culture. To be more precise, it is the establishment of Western values' dominance across the globe. There are many distinct cultures on Earth. On the other hand, the extent to which the consumption of Western lifestyle, culture, and values poses a threat to local and national cultural structures remains a topic for separate research. Arguments are frequently raised regarding the risk of losing cultural diversity as a result of globalization processes. In fact, while international capital and resources move global ideas on one hand, on the other hand-taking into account the cultures of individual countries-globalization is a process that protects cultural diversity and defends this idea rather than creating a single global culture.

This can be evaluated as a paradoxical approach to the cultural consequences of globalization. Globalization supports cultures' pursuit of rights through democratic struggle

and allows different cultures to present themselves. According to a survey conducted in 2017 by Eurobarometer in Turkey and 11 other countries, 53 percent of participants stated that globalization poses a threat to their identity, with this figure observed to exceed 50 percent in countries such as India, China, and the US.

It is useful to refer to the report published by UNESCO in 2009, as it explains the impact of globalization on cultural diversity in many respects. The report highlights that globalization and economic activity, together with developing technology, have transformed cultures, and that the mobility of people and capital impacts culture and cultural diversity both positively and negatively.

Additionally, multinational companies have diversified their commercial activities at the regional level due to the need for cheap production and labor. This has led societies in the region to face cultural erosion and interact with other cultures. Globalization causes labor migration for many people, not only from a labor perspective, but also due to direct or indirect environmental factors, political and social conflicts, and job losses. From this perspective, migration is the greatest vehicle for globalization's impact on cultural diversity. Cultural dialogue between migrants and host communities, their mutual struggle to defend their identity, and their striving to create a new identity reveal another layer of complexity in this issue.

Relying on the same report, it is worth highlighting the impact of globalization on indigenous peoples. Due to economic activities driven by globalization, the socio-economic life, as well as the underground and surface resources of indigenous populations, are being destroyed. In a cultural sense, the rights of indigenous peoples are disregarded by the political system within the context of human rights; they lose their languages, are forced to migrate, and become minorities within other cultures, while the culture of indigenous peoples is preserved merely as a subject of cultural tourism. The abduction of indigenous women by human traffickers and their forced labor in prostitution or domestic work is another issue that must be considered within the context of the gender dimension of cultural diversity. As is evident from the above situations, ensuring, recognizing, protecting, and developing cultural diversity is possible through the democratic struggle emerging within the process of globalization. It can be said that globalization contains elements that both support cultural diversity in one aspect and hinder it in another. Furthermore, evaluating the concept of cultural diversity solely in the context of the interconnection between culture and globalization is insufficient.

Although Tomlinson’s theories of cultural imperialism, such as “Americanization”, “Westernization”, and “cultural homogenization”, are viewed by some merely as a collection of his speeches and an outdated theory, in reality, within the framework of our research, we assess them as still unrefuted, serious, and relevant.

The impact of cultural imperialism on cultural diversity or difference also manifests through the protectionist policies implemented by nation-states in their cultural policies. Nation-

states may define their national cultural identity within their borders as "in need of protection" against threatening cultural imperialism and transform it into a dominant culture, which can pose a threat to the lifestyles of those who differ ethnically and culturally. Globalization has created conditions for the refinement and rapid spread of values such as social stratification, cultural diversity, freedom of belief, freedom of expression, and freedom of conscience across the globe; the circulation of capital, knowledge, and labor has weakened regional borders, creating both the need and opportunity for people from different countries around the world to communicate more with one another.

Today, cultural interactions are accelerating as a result of globalization. This process has been further accelerated by migration phenomena and the influence of cultural flows through mass media. Alongside the economic and political aspects of globalization, its cultural dimension-whose impact we perhaps feel the most-primarily concerns daily life, population lifestyles, and the need to explain this impact constitutes one of the important aspects of research. Looking at globalization from a cultural perspective, culture plays a crucial role in transforming the world into a single space, as well as in the economic, social, political, and cultural relations of peoples, and in relations among international organizations, groups, and individuals. As is known, the main problem of global cultural interactions is the tension between cultural homogeneity and cultural diversity. During the process of globalization, two cultural processes occur simultaneously. In the first case, a specific culture involves conquering global space, while in the second case, the development of communication opportunities creates processes where cultures meet, coexist, adopt certain elements from one another, and enrich each other.

Arjun Appadurai considers that these processes occur across five scapes. These are: Ethnoscapes, the realm of interaction in the world we live in; Technoscapes, the sphere that enables technological flows to meet at various levels and forms by rapidly crossing borders; Finanscapes, the sphere where international capital flows and market operations take place; Mediascapes, which enable rapid and easy transmission of cultural connections through mass media; and finally, Ideoscapes, the domain based on ideas and ideologies rooted in the Enlightenment.

These five domains, where globalization and cultural diversity are viewed in interconnection, have brought about significant changes in local and national cultures. Culture is naturally a part of life and can be defined as the sum of human experiences. While this characteristic of culture meant that in the past, relationships occurring within a specific territory belonged only to that territory, under the influence of globalization processes, lived experiences within regions have transcended geographical borders and formed strong interconnections between regions. Now, the lived experiences of others easily enter the lives of others. Dominant lived experiences arriving from near and far have begun to significantly impact regional lifestyles worldwide. Researchers present the relationship between globalization and culture through three distinct and partially opposing perspectives:

According to the first perspective on the relationship between globalization and culture, globalization is a process that leads to the convergence and homogenization of culture worldwide. At the same time, globalization is viewed as the spread of Westernization to all parts of the world-in other words, the spread of American cultural hegemony across the globe.

The second perspective, which is close to the first, provides insight into local cultures. It expresses the resistance of local cultures against the dominance of global dominant culture. On the other hand, when considered on a global scale, apart from the idea of cultural "Westernization" or "Americanization", this perspective has also faced much criticism because the idea of cultural clashes and conflicts does not align with reality.

The third perspective emphasizes increasing cultural diversity. Accordingly, the intensification of transnational cultural movement means an increase in the frequency and connectivity between independent cultures, regardless of whether they are geographically close or distant. Thus, globalization emerges as the combination, interconnection, and reprocessing of certain elements of different cultures within various social circles. Cultural globalization can be examined by dividing global factors into distinct dimensions, such as dynamic changes in rules and practices, values, and their impact on the symbolic forms of different cultures. Among critics of cultural globalization, the view is widespread that Western culture continually attempts to dominate local cultures as a process of cultural imperialism. Various modifications and revisions continue to be made to the original meaning of cultural imperialism. Furthermore, research and debates on cultural imperialism are increasing for many reasons. For instance, the rapid growth, global accessibility, and speed of the internet and information and communication technologies exert an extraordinary expansion and strong impact on cultural domains exported by the West. This, in turn, causes changes in international relations and global politics.

Evidently, globalization has existed throughout history, and its widespread consequences are becoming more apparent today. Globalization, as a broad concept, exerts a multifaceted impact on states in a transnational context. Although many states have made efforts to adapt more to globalization for the sake of development, concerns regarding globalization are growing on an international scale. As a result of globalization, it is inevitable that developed countries exert various economic, political, and cultural influences on developing countries. Furthermore, the lack of prior experience in living in an era of globalization naturally gives rise to some hesitation alongside cautious approaches in the policies of states in this direction. Taking into account the criteria of globalization, its advantages and disadvantages can be noted. In the context of developing countries, the following advantages of globalization can be listed:

- Supporting the economic growth of developing countries;
- Increasing the flow of information between geographically distant regions through technology transfers, especially in the 21st century;

- Ensuring cultural exchange worldwide and encouraging cultural diversity;
- Creating additional jobs and employment opportunities by investing in developing countries.

There are also negative impacts and concerning trends of globalization for developing or underdeveloped countries. The negative effects of globalization on developing countries include the following:

Concerns among most developing countries that increasing globalization may lead to a loss of control over economic and political decisions;

Threats to the customs, languages, and cultures of these countries;

The dominance of Western culture and its political and economic influence worldwide turning into a form of "Westernization" that weakens the structure of their traditional societies.

In recent years, with the acceleration of the globalization process, changes that worry the entire world have begun to give rise to cultural differences even within different regions of a single state. Parallel to the phenomenon of globalization, international and interregional disparities are intensifying. From this perspective, Özkan states that globalization encompasses two types of culture. The first of these is the spread of a specific culture throughout the world and the integration of other distinct cultures into this dominant culture. The most important characteristic of this culture, also referred to as universal mass culture, is its homogeneity. In universal mass culture, Earth becomes a single place where a common, universal human culture exists. The second is a culture that emerges from the interaction of previously separated cultures.

Conclusion

In addition, two important issues stand out in the cultural aspect of globalization: the dominance of ordinary consumer culture worldwide, and the presence of micro-nationalism and micro-religiosity. World-famous brands such as Pepsi Cola, Coca-Cola, Adidas, McDonald's, and Nike actually create the dominance of ordinary consumer culture in our daily lives. There is the existence of another autonomous structure that differs from the larger society in which an individual lives according to race, nationality, denomination, religion, dialect, language, and even geography, independent of the political entity in which the majority of every society resides. In fact, this stems from an individual's need to have a sense of identity within society. When examining the perspectives explaining the cultural consequences of the globalization process, we see that two opposing views have emerged. The first understands global culture as a positive development supporting international cooperation and peace, while the second interprets global culture as a risky formation that moves peoples away from their national identities. Therefore, the answer to whether

cultural globalization is a positive or negative development may vary depending on societies and their geographical location.

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