

PRESENTATION 1:

Globalization, Human Development and Quality of Life in the Asia-Pacific

Abstract:

The modern world economy and society are globalizing more rapidly than ever seen in the past. Consequently, the impacts of globalization and its various dimensions have been widely debated and examined by academics, politicians, policymakers, the private sector and even by the general public. However, there is no consensus regarding how the benefits of globalization are distributed across and within countries and how globalization does affect human quality of life (QOL). Although there are a number of studies that assess the impact of globalization, most focus on income or economic achievements. Of course, income is an important part of QOL, but health and education are as well; hence, this PhD research attempts to narrow the gap in this area by offering several analyses of the impacts of globalization on QOL in the world in general and in the developing countries of Asia-Pacific in particular.

The research project consists of four parts. The first analysis assesses the level of *mainstreaming of key elements of globalization in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers* (PRSPs) in the low income countries of the Asia-Pacific region. Using content analysis framework, the low income countries are found moderately open (average score of 1.7 on the 0-3 point scale) towards global society. The second analysis evaluates the *effects of globalization on human development, gender development and poverty* in developing countries and compared the effects across the world. Using panel data of 126 developing countries from 1997 to 2005 and applying the GLS random effect model, it is found that globalization not only promotes human and gender development but also reduces human poverty significantly. The third analysis examines the *convergence effect of globalization on human QOL* in Asia. Using panel data of selected 19 countries from 1975 to 2005 over five-year intervals, and applying the dynamic panel data model, it is concluded that overall QOL of most countries in the region is moving closer to that of Japan (the benchmark country) and that globalization has significant impacts on this convergence process.

To complement the above empirical findings, a country case study of Nepal is ongoing.

On the basis of the author's field work in Nepal, and using the labor force survey, as well as trade and investment data, the case study will present the globalization process and current situation, examine the general working conditions and employment situation, and finally analyze the effects of globalization on working conditions. It is expected to be found a salient case which can support the cross country analyses of the previous work.

Jeet Sapkota is a 3rd Year PhD candidate at the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) and Research Fellow of the Global Institute for Asian Regional Integration (GIARI) at Waseda University. Since July 2009, he is serving as an Executive Member of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities Doctoral Student Network (APRU-DSN). Before coming to Japan, he served for the National Planning Commission of the Government of Nepal for 3 years as a Planning Officer. His research interest revolves around globalization and quality of life (QOL) in the Asia-Pacific.