South-South Cooperation and the Challenge of Political and Economic Dominance of the North

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Abstract

This study examines the North-South divide, a classification system used to classify nations based on socio-economic and political characteristics. It reveals disparities in economic resources, population density, and political marginalization in the Global South, spanning Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Oceania. The research uses a qualitative methodology to understand the dynamics within this paradigm. It recommends measures like inclusive global dialogue, reforms in international institutions, and economic collaboration to address historical power imbalances and sustainable development goals.

Introduction

To establish a classification of nations based on their socio-economic and political characteristics, the concept of Global North and Global South, which is also commonly referred to as the North-South divide in a global context, is utilised. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the term "Global South" refers to a wide variety of countries that are located in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia (with the exception of Israel, Japan, and South Korea), and Oceania (with the exception of Australia and New Zealand). (UNCTAD 2022). A significant number of countries that are located in the Global South share characteristics that are common to all of them. These characteristics include limited economic resources, high population density, poor infrastructure, and frequent instances of political or cultural marginalisation. There are two unique categories that reflect a division, and those categories are the Global South

and the Global North. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the countries that make up the Global North are those that are located in Northern America and Europe, Israel, Japan, and South Korea, as well as Australia and New Zealand. In addition to referring to the geographical cardinal directions of north and south, the terms "Global North" and "Global South" are also used to refer to other regions. This is due to the fact that a number of countries that are considered to be constituents of the Global South are, in fact, located in the Northern Hemisphere. (Khalil 2023).

Wealth and opulence are characteristics of the people who live in the North, whilst the people who live in the South are considered to be impoverished. When compared to the economies of the South, which are often weak and defenceless, the economies of the North are generally robust and resilient. While the countries in the North are, for the most part, in charge of their destinies, the economies of the South are extremely susceptible to the influence of external factors and lack the capacity to exercise functional sovereignty. (Mimiko 2012). The countries that make up the South are very different from one another in terms of their size, the natural resources they possess, the structure of their economies, and the amount of economic, social, and technical progress that they have achieved. In addition, they are distinct from one another in terms of their ethnicities, political structures, and the ideologies that they affirm. In recent years, their economic and technological variety has been more pronounced, which has resulted in the South of today being even less homogenous than the South of yore.

Despite this variation, there is a fundamental commonality that exists. What the countries of the South have in common transcends their differences; it provides them with a shared identity and a motivation to collaborate for the purpose of achieving common goals. On top of that, the diversity of their economies presents potential for collaboration that can be to everyone's advantage. (South Commission 1993).

The desire of the countries and peoples of the South to free themselves from poverty and underdevelopment and to provide a better life for their population is the major factor that binds them together. This shared aspiration serves as the basis for their solidarity, which is articulated through organisations such as the Group

of 77, of which all countries of the South, with the exception of China, are members, and the Non-Aligned Movement, which has a huge membership that is expanding from all continents in the South.

Methodology

The qualitative research methodology encompasses a comprehensive perspective in comprehending human behaviour, experiences, and societal phenomena. The primary emphasis lies on subjective comprehension, taking into account the wider context and intricate interplay of various components. (Moses and Korstjens). This study uses a qualitative methodology to analyze the socio-economic and political characteristics of countries in the Global North-South split. It combines academic literature, policy papers, and historical archives to identify trends and similarities. The literature review focuses on scholarly publications, books, and reports to uncover common themes and theoretical frameworks. Secondary sources, such as policy documents and historical records, provide insights into the shared identity and cooperative efforts of these nations. Content analysis on these documents helps discern prevailing policy patterns and ideological stances. The study aims to create a comprehensive and contextually nuanced narrative by integrating various views, surpassing the limitations of quantitative indicators. This method enhances the understanding of the collective goals, challenges, and cooperative efforts of the Global South.

Theoretical Framework

Dependency theory is a socio-economic theory that examines the relationships between industrialised and developing countries. It was first presented by academics like Hans Singer and Raúl Prebisch and further expanded by economists and sociologists like Andre Gunder Frank. (Peet 2003.) It implies that the exploitative ties with the economically dominant Global North have an impact on the economic imbalances and underdevelopment of the Global South. Dependency theory can be used to examine the ways in which economic exchanges between the Global North and South exacerbate inequality. It is possible to determine if particular Global South nations are economically exploited or dependent on the Global North by looking into trade patterns, resource extraction, and investment flows.

According to dependency theory, the Global North performs higher-value operations while the Global South is frequently limited to providing raw materials. In order to apply this to the study, one must look at the division of labour and evaluate how it affects regional economic disparities. According to dependency theory, conventional approaches to development could encourage dependency. The efficacy of programmes and policies in the Global South can be investigated, taking into account whether they strengthen dependency or promote real development. Researchers can learn more about the structural dynamics that shape the Global North-South interaction by including dependency theory into their study. It offers a paradigm for comprehending how the socioeconomic and political features of countries in the Global South may be influenced by economic dependency.

Conceptual Clarification

Global North : The term "Global North" refers to a geopolitical designation that includes economically developed and industrialized regions in the world. These regions are characterized by advanced economies, technological advancements, and higher standards of living. The Global North typically includes countries from Northern America (e.g., the United States and Canada), Europe, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. This classification is often used in discussions related to global economics, politics, and development to distinguish these more affluent and economically stable regions from the less developed "Global South."

Global South The "Global South" refers to a diverse group of countries located in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia (excluding Israel, Japan, and South Korea), and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand). These nations often share characteristics such as limited economic resources, high population density, poor infrastructure, and instances of political or cultural marginalization. The term is used to highlight disparities between these regions and the economically developed and industrialized areas known as the "Global North."

The North-South Divide

The dominant dynamics of international economic relations, , highlight the North's widespread use of international organisations to maintain and bolster its

power over the South. This phenomenon, which has its roots in historical imbalances, is most noticeable in organisations like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), where the interests of developed nations are naturally favoured in the decision-making processes and structural design. (The South Commission 1993).

According to the *Challenge to the South* developing nations are marginalised in these international fora, where a small group of affluent countries has disproportionate power to set agendas and dictate results. Developing countries are forced to play a secondary role as a result of this unbalanced power dynamic, which limits their ability to speak out on and deal with issues that are essential to their socioeconomic growth. The criticism also includes poor countries' underrepresentation in important decision-making processes, which sustains a structural disadvantage and limits their ability to influence the direction of the world economy.

According to Khalil (2013),one prominent issue that comes is the need for reform inside these international institutions. the need to address this innate prejudice. In an effort to address the historical injustices that these institutions have perpetuated, a thorough conversation with the active participation of the South is being called for. The realisation that the way global economic governance is currently set up needs to be adjusted emphasises how urgently reforms must be implemented in order to take into account modern socioeconomic realities.(Phillipe 1998). Moreover, the South needs to strengthen its collective stance inside these international organisations, which calls for a revision of negotiating agendas and techniques. The focus on proactive and strategic engagement aims to upset the status quo, in which the North controls discussions and the creation of policies.(Miltin et al 2023). The research implies that in addition to resolving pressing issues, this recalibration calls for a vigorous and ongoing effort to fortify Southern states' cohesion, shared priorities, and technological know-how.

Conclusion

Conclusively, the idea of the Global North and Global South, which defines the North-South divide, provides a useful framework for dividing countries according

to their political and socioeconomic traits. According to UNCTAD, the term "Global South" refers to a group of varied nations in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Oceania that have a lot in common, including high population density, scarce economic resources, and political marginalisation. Beyond simple differences in location, the Global North and South are markedly different in terms of wealth and economic resiliency. The North is known for its wealth and thriving economies, whereas the South faces economic instability and outside factors that make it difficult for it to exercise functional sovereignty. There is a fundamental link across Southern countries despite their differences in size, wealth, and advancement: the desire to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment. This study is important because it adds to the body of knowledge regarding the North-South gap in academia. The study goes beyond quantitative indicators and places an emphasis on context, historical awareness, and a thorough review of a variety of sources while considering many points of view and authorial voices. The qualitative literature assessment contributes to a more comprehensive and nuanced knowledge of the complex dynamics that characterise the Global South and the shared objectives and difficulties that these countries face.

Essentially, this study emphasises how critical it is to acknowledge the common identity and incentives for cooperation across Global South nations. Solidarity is based on a shared desire to escape poverty and underdevelopment, which is embodied in groups such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77. Going forward, solving common concerns, promoting genuine cooperation, and striving for a more equitable global environment will all require an awareness of and comprehension of the complexity within the Global North-South paradigm.

Recommendations

1. Promoting Inclusive Global Dialogue:

Encourage platforms for inclusive global dialogues that involve representatives from both the Global North and South. These dialogues should prioritize equitable participation and foster mutual understanding, allowing nations to collectively address challenges and share perspectives.

2. Reform in International Institutions:

Advocate for reforms in international institutions such as the IMF and GATT to ensure fair representation and decision-making processes. The goal is to mitigate

the historical power imbalances that have disadvantaged countries in the Global South and enhance their agency in shaping global economic policies.

3. Enhanced Economic Collaboration within the Global South:

Facilitate increased economic collaboration among countries in the Global South. By fostering partnerships, sharing resources, and promoting intra-regional trade, Southern nations can strengthen their collective economic resilience and reduce dependency on external factors.

4. Empowering Developing Nations Economically:

Implement policies that empower developing nations economically, focusing on building robust and diverse economies. This includes investing in infrastructure, technology, and education to enhance economic capabilities and reduce susceptibility to external influences.

5. Capacity Building for Functional Sovereignty:

Provide support and capacity-building initiatives for countries in the Global South to enhance their capacity for functional sovereignty. This includes strengthening institutions, governance structures, and policy frameworks to enable Southern nations to navigate global dynamics more effectively.

6. Fostering Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Align national policies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address common challenges faced by countries in the Global South. Emphasize collaborative efforts to achieve these goals, promoting social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

7. Enhancing Representation in Global Initiatives:

Advocate for increased representation of countries in the Global South in global initiatives and decision-making processes. This can be achieved through diplomatic efforts, coalition-building, and active participation in international forums.

8. Promoting Cultural and Educational Exchange:

Facilitate cultural and educational exchange programs between nations in the Global North and South. This can foster mutual understanding, break down stereotypes, and promote collaboration based on shared values and aspirations.

9. Encouraging Technology Transfer:

Encourage technology transfer initiatives from developed nations to those in the Global South. This can bridge technological gaps, promote innovation, and enhance the capabilities of Southern countries in various sectors.

10. Strengthening Regional Integration:

Support and promote regional integration efforts within the Global South. Strengthening regional alliances can create a collective voice, facilitate resource-sharing, and enhance the negotiating power of Southern nations in the global arena.

These recommendations collectively aim to address the challenges posed by the North-South divide and pave the way for more equitable global collaboration, sustainable development, and shared prosperity

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