

Globalization and Iranian Human Resources

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Key Words: Iran, International Relations, Globalization, Human resources

Abstract:

Contemporary processes of globalization have several integrating dimensions: technological, cultural, religious, economic, environmental, and political. It can also influence domestic policy issues or impose powerful values and wills on the less powerful and local communities in different parts of the globe. Globalization is not uniformly manifest around the globe. It is strongest in the U.S., Japan, Europe, and East Asia, followed by South America, Eastern Europe, and South Asia. In contrast, we see little in sub-Saharan Africa, the former Soviet Union, and Middle East especially in Iran.

None of these is in itself good or bad. All should be understood as ambiguous, with potential for good and evil, but in the current phase of globalization what is especially more important in Iran is the human resources that should distinguish these faces and identify the potentials to pursue the good. However as the following research shows, the majority of Iranian population does not really understand globalization and its changing dimensions, drivers and interrelationships among them and those who think they know, mostly do not agree with a single global village and growing interdependence of people around the world. This can be a result of their unawareness and/or their perspective on the meaning of life as their genders, ages and professions clearly indicates.

Introduction

Contemporary processes of globalization have several dimensions or faces: technological, cultural, religious, economic and political. None of these is in itself good or bad. All should be understood as ambiguous, with potential for good and evil, but in the current phase of globalization in Iran what are more important is the human resources to distinguish the Janus faces of globalization and identify with a potential to pursue the good. But do we really understand globalization -- the changing dimensions; the drivers; the interrelationships among them. It is only after this knowledge that comes the turn for deciding whether it affects our domestic policy issues such as the environment, culture, labor standards, and food safety or how we shall keep ourselves from the powerful imposes of great power values and multinational corporations wills on the less powerful ones of our local communities.

Iran and the Globe

Globalization is not uniformly manifest around the world. It is strongest in the U.S., Japan, Europe, and East Asia, followed by South America, Eastern Europe, and South Asia. In contrast, we see little in sub-Saharan Africa or the former Soviet Union. Globalization Index provided by A.T. Kearney contains data concerning globalization process in 62 most important countries around the globe. Foreign Policy Magazine had published the index for year 2003 and it included rankings for 13 variables grouped in four baskets: economics, personal contact, technology, and political integration and finally have calculated overall rankings as well as rankings for each variable.

As table 1 show, Ireland leads the overall ranking of (1) for the second year running and again tops the class in both the economic and personal contact categories whereas Iran for the third year in a row ranks as the least global nation (62) in the index. There are a few countries that had no changes during the past 3 years, but so many others had considerable changes either have risen or fallen in their rankings. Though Iran has been glued at the bottom of the table for some years, it seems this situation is not so worse than its counterparts in the region and the world such as Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Furthermore this situation is of higher in some rankings among many of these 62 states indulged in the table and 129 others not mentioned.

Iran having the political ranking of (50) is higher than Taiwan (62), Botswana (61), Uganda (60), Panama (59), Israel (58), Slovenia (57), Croatia (56), Sri Lanka (55), Colombia (55), Singapore (53), Saudi Arabia (52), and Philippines (51). By having the ranking of (59), Iran technologically, is higher than Indonesia (60), Brazil (61), and China (62). From the economical point of view, the position of Iran in the table is better than Pakistan (60), India (61), and Bangladesh (62) too. All these are so while Iran has posses no more than one percent of the world population and land.

Furthermore, the USA, though in the 1st row of technological ranking, is in the 2nd row of political ranking and in 33rd of personal ranking and in last rows of the table, e. i. 50th of economic ranking. Among the permanent members of the UN Security Council, China (51) and Russia (45) are in the 3rd part down the table and three other members; UK (9), USA (11), and France (12) are far from the top of the table. Other members of the G8 like Germany (17), Italy (24) and Japan (45) are farther and many other most populated and vast countries of the South such as Indonesia (58), Brazil (57), India (56), Bangladesh (54), Turkey (53), Pakistan (50), Mexico (49), and Egypt (46) are all in the lower rows down the table. This concludes that Iran has not missed all the chances and opportunities yet to think more and make a better decision in getting a higher position in the race.

Iranian awareness

To explore the Iranian people knowledge and awareness of this phenomenon, I ran a field study in the early 2003. A questionnaire provided for this matter and some students appointed to collect the data randomly. Under my close supervision, the statistical society of 517 people (from 20 to 60 years old) classified in three categories of 20-30 (217 people), 30-50 (258 people) and 50-60 (42 people). Out of this, 123 people were females and 394 people were mails inhabited in Tehran, Qazvin, Karadj, Isfahan, Tabriz, Shahreza, Bandar Abbas, Broujerd, Najaf Abad and several other cities came to special economic zone of Qeshm Island for pleasure and shopping. These were working in different governmental and nongovernmental sectors.

The outcome, as the table 2 shows, is considerable. The majority (54.7%) of the society had no idea and some had not even heard anything about it. Moreover among 45.3% who knew somehow, 20.1% were in doubt about the matter. This shows that in spite of the rising attention to globalization (either its threats or opportunities) throughout the globe in the past 20 years, some 75% of the population has no clear idea.

This unawareness, though popular among the nation, was more observed among females to an amount of 65%, among the elders to an amount of 78.6% and among the farmers to an amount of 100%. By contrast, the most awareness was existed among males to an amount of 48.5%, among the youth to an amount of 49.8% and among the clergies to an amount of 83.3%.

The most doubtfulness was observed among females to an amount of 30.2%, among the youth to an amount of 24.1% and what drew more attention was that of physicians to an amount of 27.4% and clerks in governmental sectors to an amount of 23.8% whereas the least doubtfulness was among males to an amount of 17.8% and among middle ages to an amount of 16.2% and among the clerks in nongovernmental sectors to an amount of 9.1%. Of course the questionnaire was so articulated that prohibited impose of any idea to the citizens and their understandings and conceptions of the subject, though little and doubtfully, considered enough for the purpose of this study. Therefore it seems to be necessary to translate more academic works from different live languages into Farsi and this can be most important duty and function of the media to inform and improve the public vista.

Regardless of those in doubt and out of those voted to be aware of the subject, 54.3% were generally satisfied and very and 25.6% were unsatisfied and very in this statistical society. This shows that these, regardless of rate and correction of their knowledge of globalization, are in positive trend toward it. The hot supporters for globalization were males to an amount of 54.5%, the youth to an amount of 62% and sportsmen to an amount of 81.8%.

By contrast, regardless of those in doubt, the most discontented were among males too to an amount of 27.8%, among the elders to an amount of 55.6% and among the military personals to an amount of 85.8%. This indicates that in a patriarch society, females had no independent voice in this regards and the most doubtfulness rate of 30.2% belonging to this group proves the fact. In addition, regardless of special cases and different personal motives may exist, it seems that the professional interests may be the most leading and influential factor in decision making and trends of the society and should not be neglected.

It is also concluded that what makes the discontented people to make an opposite stance had been the outcome of globalization e. i. growing interdependence of people throughout the world whereas these, especially the religious Moslem addressees, have no opposition to that Biblical forecast of the Kingdom of God in which the 12th Imam of Shiite will come together with the Jesus Christ and establish the true one theocratic state of the world where the oppressed people around the world will then live in peace and justice.

Table 1: Country rankings in progress toward globalization

Overall Ranking	Country	International Trade	Foreign Direct Investment	Portfolio Investment	International Transfer Payments and Receipts	Economic Ranking	International Travel and Tourism	International Telephone Traffic	Income Payments and Receipts	Personal Ranking	Embassies in Country	Membership in International Organizations	Participation in U.N. Security council Missions	Political Ranking	Internet Users	Internet Hosts	Secure Internet Servers	Technological Ranking
1	Ireland	3	3	1	7	1	3	1	1	1	38	15	4	22	24	16	9	17
2	Switzerland	18	8	4	8	5	2	2	2	2	23	8	7	49	11	10	5	7
3	Sweden	21	1	4	22	2	14	9	8	9	14	3	1	5	3	8	7	5
4	Singapore	1	6	36	41	4	5	3	5	3	37	29	11	53	2	13	10	6
5	Netherlands	8	2	2	19	3	13	6	6	6	16	5	11	28	16	3	15	10
6	Denmark	20	8	6	11	7	16	5	10	5	28	5	3	12	7	6	13	9
7	Canada	24	10	20	49	17	21	4	20	7	9	3	3	6	9	7	4	3
8	Austria	12	29	7	24	16	4	7	11	4	10	4	3	7	17	14	11	13
9	United Kingdom	43	18	10	28	10	19	9	4	10	3	2	5	4	10	15	8	11
10	Finland	30	11	8	33	11	9	13	12	16	36	4	5	17	8	2	6	2
11	United States	60	35	23	55	50	31	16	34	33	1	5	5	2	4	1	1	1
12	France	46	7	9	26	12	12	14	15	17	2	1	3	1	21	26	20	21
13	Norway	26	47	3	37	24	20	11	19	18	34	8	5	19	1	11	12	4
14	Portugal	29	16	11	9	15	10	16	13	12	27	9	9	34	14	18	22	19
15	Czech Republic	6	13	37	38	9	1	21	17	11	21	15	7	25	28	20	19	25
16	New Zealand	31	22	22	40	28	26	8	22	14	40	21	10	46	19	5	2	8
17	Germany	33	31	12	34	22	22	12	14	22	3	7	9	99	13	17	14	14
18	Malaysia	2	25	33	27	8	8	20	16	24	32	19	6	32	22	36	36	23
19	Israel	28	32	36	6	32	24	10	19	8	27	31	13	58	23	19	17	20
20	Spain	39	14	13	21	18	18	17	23	23	12	9	9	21	26	24	21	24

21	Australia	51	28	19	48	33	29	21	28	38	20	17	10	39	12	4	3	3
22	Croatia	15	15	28	10	21	17	14	33	13	41	28	12	56	35	35	24	34
23	Hungary	7	19	30	44	19	6	22	30	26	48	11	8	29	27	21	28	27
24	Italy	47	40	21	30	36	23	18	25	27	6	4	5	8	20	29	23	22
25	Slovenia	10	36	37	29	30	11	16	37	21	44	29	11	57	18	22	16	18
26	Greece	45	48	16	15	41	15	15	41	15	28	12	8	30	29	23	30	28
27	Slovak Republic	4	17	27	25	13	39	24	45	34	42	22	8	45	30	25	27	29
28	Korea, Rep	40	23	50	24	40	42	39	28	32	33	15	19	50	5	31	33	15
29	Morocco	32	12	54	2	23	42	29	48	25	19	24	13	49	52	53	52	51
30	Panama	5	21	17	39	6	37	24	3	40	41	28	13	59	43	37	26	36
31	Chile	38	5	29	45	14	38	28	21	47	29	18	10	41	25	33	32	26
32	Poland	50	26	40	43	43	7	25	51	29	25	10	4	16	32	27	29	30
33	Botswana	19	54	34	3	31	25	25	7	19	46	30	13	61	50	45	48	48
34	Taiwan	16	33	14	36	29	28	19	42	30	45	32	13	62	57	9	25	17
35	Japan	62	52	25	58	56	44	28	26	52	7	15	11	26	6	12	18	12
36	Uganda	49	23	54	1	49	58	33	58	20	43	29	13	60	60	59	57	57
37	Nigeria	13	30	54	23	25	58	33	18	46	17	13	4	15	61	60	58	58
38	South Africa	41	9	18	52	20	36	28	29	50	13	20	12	40	34	34	31	33
39	Tunisia	14	44	51	17	34	27	26	35	31	31	18	11	43	40	58	51	42
40	Romania	27	37	52	18	42	30	27	53	35	24	19	9	37	39	39	40	40
41	Senegal	34	34	45	12	39	54	29	46	36	35	17	6	31	54	62	58	52
42	Ukraine	11	46	32	20	35	34	30	55	43	30	22	5	27	53	42	45	49
43	Kenya	37	59	53	5	57	53	33	56	32	27	21	5	23	49	51	58	50

44	Sri Lanka	22	51	41	4	44	50	30	43	28	41	25	12	55	56	50	49	53
45	Russian Federation	40	49	50	56	51	33	30	36	54	4	12	2	3	44	38	41	43
46	Egypt	52	56	35	16	58	46	30	54	41	8	10	6	10	55	57	53	53
47	Thailand	9	41	39	48	27	43	30	27	53	31	21	10	42	36	43	43	38
48	Argentina	61	45	26	60	53	41	29	32	57	22	16	13	13	42	32	39	32
49	Mexico	42	24	42	46	37	32	23	49	44	22	16	13	48	42	32	39	39
50	Pakistan	55	57	50	13	60	59	31	47	37	24	15	5	18	59	54	56	56
51	China	48	27	43	57	45	56	32	52	62	5	22	5	11	46	55	55	45
52	Philippines	17	39	44	53	26	49	28	9	56	31	23	12	51	47	48	47	46
53	Turkey	36	41	31	61	38	40	28	31	58	25	13	9	35	41	40	38	41
54	Bangladesh	56	58	54	14	62	57	32	60	39	39	16	4	24	62	61	59	59
55	Colombia	54	42	45	31	48	52	28	38	45	35	18	13	54	45	41	44	44
56	India	58	55	49	35	61	58	32	57	49	11	14	5	14	57	52	54	54
57	Brazil	59	20	48	59	47	51	30	39	61	15	16	11	38	38	30	35	35
58	Indonesia	25	53	46	50	46	55	32	24	60	24	20	8	36	48	49	50	47
59	Peru	57	43	47	42	55	47	30	44	51	33	18	12	47	31	47	42	31
60	Venezuela	53	38	42	54	52	48	28	40	55	26	18	12	44	37	44	37	37
61	Saudi Arabia	35	61	38	61	54	45	22	44	48	18	26	13	52	51	46	46	50
62	Iran	44	60	54	51	59	49	31	59	59	14	27	13	50	58	56	58	55

Source: The 2003 A.T. Kearney/FOREIGN POLICY Magazine Globalization Index cited in <http://www.atkearney.com/>

Table 2: Proponents and Opponents to the Globalization in Iran according to gender, age, and profession

Gender	Age	Profession	Total	Yes	%	No	%	Very satisfied	%	Satisfied	%	Unsatisfied	%	Very unsatisfied	%	Doubtful	%
Total			517	234	45.3	283	54.7	64	27.4	63	26.9	37	15.8	23	9.83	47	20.1
Females			123	43	35	80	65	10	23.3	13	30.2	4	9.3	3	6.98	13	30.2
Males			394	191	48.5	203	51.5	54	28.3	50	26.2	33	17.3	20	10.5	34	17.8
	20-30		217	108	49.8	109	50.2	44	40.7	23	21.3	9	8.33	6	5.56	26	24.1
	30-50		258	117	45.3	141	54.7	18	15.4	38	32.5	25	21.4	15	12.8	19	16.2
	50-60		42	9	21.4	33	78.6	2	22.2	0	0	3	33.3	2	22.2	2	22.2
		Academic	17	14	82.4	3	17.6	0	0	7	50	6	42.9	0	0	1	7.14
		Bank chief	7	3	42.9	4	57.1	1	33.3	0	0	0	0	2	66.7	0	0
		Clergy	6	5	83.3	1	16.7	0	0	3	60	1	20	1	20	0	0
		Driver	24	2	8.33	22	91.7	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	50
		Educational trainer	23	9	39.1	14	60.9	6	66.7	1	11.1	1	11.1	0	0	1	11.1
		Farmer	9	0	0	9	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Governmental clerk	84	42	50	42	50	7	16.7	15	35.7	7	16.7	3	7.14	10	23.8
		Housewife	18	4	22.2	14	77.8	0	0	2	50	0	0	0	0	2	50
		Lawyer	4	3	75	1	25	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0	0	0
		Military	23	7	30.4	16	69.6	0	0	0	0	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3
		Nongovernmental clerk	38	22	57.9	16	42.1	12	54.5	4	18.2	1	4.55	3	13.6	2	9.09
		Nurse	9	1	11.1	8	88.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100
		Physician	27	22	81.5	5	18.5	7	31.8	7	31.8	1	4.55	1	4.55	6	27.3
		Plain worker	24	3	12.5	21	87.5	0	0	0	0	1	33.3	0	0	2	66.7
		Shopkeeper	80	29	36.3	51	63.8	5	17.2	7	24.1	5	17.2	2	6.9	9	31

		Sportsman	20	11	55	9	45	9	81.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	18.2
		Student	14	10	71.4	4	28.6	3	30	4	40	1	10	0	0	2	20
		Teacher	63	40	63.5	23	36.5	9	22.5	11	27.5	10	25	6	15	5	12.5





