

George Ritzer:
Rethinking Globalization:
Glocalization/Grobalization and Something/Nothing

- George Ritzer was born in 1940 to a working class Jewish family. His primary interests are on social theory and analyses of consumption and globalization.
- His theoretical works are : Sociology: A Multiple Paradigm science(1975) and Metatheorizing in Sociology(1991).
- Some of his books on globalization are: The McDonaldization of Society(1993), Enchanting a Disenchanted World(1999) and The Globalization of Nothing(2004). His books have been translated into twenty-five languages.
- Ritzer's work in the areas of consumption and globalization is influenced by Karl Marx, Max Weber and critical theory.

Ritzer's views on global society

- Ritzer in his article “Rethinking globalization” introduced four important process of global society in modern era. They are Glocalization/ Grobalization and Something/Nothing in the year 2003.
- Glocalization: According to Ritzer glocalization is the interpretation or combination of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas.
- **Thus Glocalization** is a combination of the words "globalization" and "localization" . It is used to describe a product or service that is developed and distributed globally, but is also fashioned to accommodate the user or consumer in a local market.
- Glocalization focuses on the uniqueness and differences within and between areas of the world.
- In glocalization individuals have room to express themselves in order to adapt, innovate, and maneuver within a glocalized world. Glocalization sees local individuals and groups as important and creative agents.

Glocalization and Grobalization

- . Ritzer (2004) utilized the globalization theorist, Roland Robertson's term, **Glocalization**, the interpenetration of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas, and Ritzer offers his own coined term, **Grobalization**, the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and the like and their desire, indeed need, to impose themselves on various geographic areas (p. 163 - 165.)



What is Glocalization?

- **Globalization** - A process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society. This process is a combination of economic, technological, sociocultural and political forces
- **Localization** – is the process of adapting a product or service to a particular language, culture, and desired local "look-and-feel."
- **Glocalization** – Is a fusion of *globalization* and *localization*. By definition, the term "glocal" refers to the individual, group, division, unit, organization, and community which is willing and is able to "think globally and act locally."

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- **Grobalization focuses on the imperialistic** ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯವಾದ(ಇತರ ಮಾರ್ಗಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರದ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರಭಾವವನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸುವ ಒಂದು ನೀತಿ) ವಿಸ್ತರಣಾವಾದಿ (the effect that a powerful country or group of countries has in changing or influencing the way people live in other, poorer countries) ambitions (ಮಹದಾಶೆ)(ಹಂಬಲ) of nations, corporations (ಕಂಪನಿ) and organizations, and other entities (ಘಟಕ) and their desire to impose themselves on various geographic areas. Their main interest is in seeing their power, influence and profits grow(hence the term grobalization) throughout the world.
- Thus Grobalization' refers to the practice of corporations imposing their products on other cultures or countries. While grobalization is tied generally to the practices of Western nations and corporations, it is the United states government and American Corporations are playing the leading role in this process.

- **Similarities between Gro and glocalization:**
- Both focus on the interest of the individual and the uniqueness of a group or individual.
- Both theories exist to compliment the nations culture with the rest of the world.
- Although certain technology, food, government policies or many other miscellaneous ideas come across a nation, it will adapt to the people of that area.
- **Differences:** Grobalization focuses on a group or organization in order for them to grow economically or in other aspects.
- Glocalization sees the individual as important asset. The individual's unique creative is the driving agent of glocalization

Examples of “Glocalization”

- Arabic (Muslim) Barbie.
- Lay's Chips (of Pepsico, Herman Lay(1932)was a salesman
- Starbucks(American coffee company) in Shanghai, China.
- Starbucks in Kuwait.
- Starbucks in Moscow, Russia.
- Maruthi-suzuki,(Japnese MNC) India
- Tata-hitachi (Japnese MNc)-India
- Ashok-Leyland(UK)-India

Something/Nothing

ವ್ಯಕ್ತ /ಅವ್ಯಕ್ತ -ದೃಶ್ಯ/ ಅದೃಶ್ಯ (ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಕಾಣದ /ಕಾಣುವ)
ಜಾಗತೀಕರಣ

- Ritzer introduces his idea of grobalization as the central dynamic shaping the world today. In this background he analyzes the production and consumption of nothing as well as production and consumption of something that is associated with the counter process of glocalization.
- Both grobalization of nothing and glocalization of something are closely related to each other.
- In other words grobalization (ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಜಾಗತೀಕರಣ) can lead to the production and consumption of something and conversely glocalization (ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಜಾಗತೀಕರಣ) can lead to the production and consumption of something.

Meaning of nothing and something

- According to Ritzer nothing is a social form that is generally Centrally conceived, controlled, and comparatively devoid (lack, ಇಲ್ಲದ ರಹಿತ) of distinctive substantive (important, ಮುಖ್ಯ ಪ್ರಧಾನ) content.
- Something is a social form (ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ, ರಚನೆ) that is generally indigenously (locally, ಸ್ಥಳೀಯವಾಗಿ) conceived, (developed, ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಗೊಳಿಸಿದ) controlled, and comparatively rich (ಅಮೂಲ್ಯವಾದ, ಸಮೃದ್ಧಿಯಾಗಿರುವ) in distinctive substantive content.
- Both something and nothing are related to each other and never exist independently of each other. They are like two sides of a same coin.
- To interpret nothing and something of life, Ritzer used Marc Auge's concept of nonplaces and nonspaces. According to Auge(1995) non-places are “the real measure of our time”.

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- Ritzer said in same way that nothing is, many ways, is the true measure of our time. The present work extends the idea of *nonplaces to nonthings, nonpeople and nonservices* and do not make sense without their opposites : *places, things, people and services*.
- They need to be seen as the poles of four subtypes that are understood under heading of the something/nothing continuum.(See figure 1)

Figure 1

The four major subtypes of something/nothing(with examples)

Something

Place	(Community bank)
Thing	(Personal Loan)
Person	(Personal Banker)
Service	(individualized assistance)

Nothing

Nonplace	(Credit Card company)
Nothing	(Credit Card Loan)
Nonperson	(Telemarketer)
Nonservice	(Automated, dial-up aid)

- If we understand the definition of **nothing**, it can be argued that a credit is nothing. Because it is **centrally** conceived and controlled by the credit card company. Almost all the cards are same in its functions. In this background we can say that its telephone centre , is nonplace, the highly programmed and scripted individuals who answer the phones are nonpeople, and its automated functions can be nonservices.
- But those entities that are found at the **something** are **locally** conceived and controlled, they are rich in substance(human interaction, relations, emotionally attached). Thus to apply loan, we go to bank where local bankers and personal clients is a thing; a place is the community bank to which people can go and deal with bank employees in person and obtain from them individualized services.

The Globalization of Something and the Globalization of Nothing

- It is also important to note that some types of something have been globalized to a greater extent. For example handmade crafts, local made clothes, channapatna toys, Dharwad Pedha, Gokak Kardantu, MTR products etc are available in most of the countries. But these products are not available in abundance and they are costlier than host countries. Since their prices are high, demand is also low. Therefore less is spent on their marketing. Thus one can say that globalization of something(compared to nothing) occurs to lesser degree.
- But Globalization of nothing is more visible and vibrant throughout the world. Throughout the world there is more demand for nothing than something. Nothing is less expensive than something and large numbers of people likely to want various forms of nothing. Production of nothing is also more and less expensive . For instance a skilled potter may produce only a few dozen pieces of pottery and artist may paint one or two in a week or in a month.(somethings). But nothing are produced in loads and tonnes and therefore available through out the world eg. Pepsi, coca-cola, rolex watches etc.

The Glocalization of Nothing and the glocalization of something

- Just like globalization, Ritzer wrote on **glocalization of nothing**. Global industries and MNC's establish their business in local areas. Glocalization of nothing easily found in field of tourism. Global tourists meets the local manufacturer and retailer in the production and sale of glocal goods and services. Local people may serve traditional food or produce crafts to attract the global tourists. Global tourism leads to glocalization of nothing.
- Similarly through **glocalization of something**, local or indigenous items may be sold. Most of the handicrafts of India in villages have made international news in recent times.

The increase in Nothing and the decline in Something

- Today the trend in social world, especially in the realm of consumption, towards the direction of nothing. There is historical movement from something to nothing. Centrally conceived and controlled process is increasing in recent times. Therefore there has been increase in nothing and relative decline in something.
- Even then many forms of something have not experienced a decline in any absolute sense. In fact, in many cases, forms of something have increased, but like the speed of nothing. For example fast food restaurants has increased since the founding of McDonald's chain in 1955. Further there has been increase in ethnic restaurants.
- But some forms of something have suffered complete declines and may disappear soon. For instance local grocery shops, coffee houses, cloth shops. But in their places fast food restaurants, super-markets, shopping malls have appeared. Older forms have disappeared and new forms have emerged.