**Globalization and Customs and Border Protection**

The world, they say is getting smaller. People travel more and see more of the world. People migrate to work, to discover, and to learn in other countries, are exposed to different cultures and ways of living and thinking. Around us we see this phenomenon quite easily in the number of international restaurants that have opened even in the smaller towns and villages - Mexican restaurants, Thai restaurants, Japanese, Indian, Russian, and Chinese - indeed, there is so much more to sample in terms of palates and cuisine alone. And we do not have to travel far, we can all find representations of these palates without leaving the country, indeed, leaving the state. The American nation is increasingly multicultural, a sure sign that globalization is impacting the American nation.

What indeed is globalization? Globalization, simply put is the process of international integration, when people, cultures and nations interact more frequently, become more interdependent and exchange products, ideas and views so that the situation and the politics in one impacts the rest in both big and small measures. Via this interaction, ideas are transmitted, practices adapted and shared. Resources both national and cultural are increasingly exchanged including technologies that advance social change and promote trends. For Al-Rodhan & Stoudman (2006), globalization is not just a single concept. They explain that - "Globalization involves economic integration; the transfer of policies across borders; the transmission of knowledge; cultural stability; the reproduction, relations, and discourses of power; it is a global process, a concept, a revolution, and an establishment of the global market free from socio-political control." As a concept it is constantly evolving, and is interpreted according to the concept of international and global relations from culture to culture. For instance, globalization was formerly equated to Americanization - the spread of ideas and capitalist practices from the United States and Europe around the world. Such a practice was viewed with suspicion by former USSR and China. But over the years, as integration and increased cultural and trade exchanges driven by Information Technology and the Internet phenomenon took over - globalization has ceased to become Americanization as America itself became subject to the influence of the rest of the world. This meaning is much more suited to the interpretation of Larsson (2001) where he defined that globalization,

“...is the process of world shrinkage, of distances getting shorter, things moving closer. It pertains to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact, to mutual benefit, with somebody on the other side of the world.”

The impact therefore of globalization is vast as we live in a fast-paced world. In every aspect of our life we are impacted by globalization although we don’t really see it in the minutiae. But with mass production of goods mostly done abroad (in factories in China, for example), globalization is a concept that the government has to contend with. Agencies like the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) who, as a federal law enforcement agency must deal with the enforcement of American laws including the regulation of international trade, collection of import duties and practice of American regulations (including customs, immigration and trade), have to contend with globalization as a social trend impacting the manner by which duty must be practiced. This means that agencies are regularly on the review of their policies and practices to account for globalization's impact to make strategies and policies effective to function.

**About the CBP**

The US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is one of the most complex components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) being the largest element whose primary mission after 2001 is to keep America safe from the threat of terrorism. This however, is only among the many of its myriad of responsibly as the CBP (2012) also, "has a responsibility for securing and facilitating trade and travel while enforcing hundreds of U.S. regulations, including immigration and drug laws." the main functions of the CBP can be divided into 3 main headings: trade, travel and border security, the latter being the most complex of all. Trade wise - the task is to secure that all the goods going in and out of America are legitimate, are not posing any dangers and threats to the US and have paid all appropriate fees and duties.

Travel wise - the task is to ensure that the US continues its ability to let the flow of people into and out of America efficient while ensuring that individuals or elements, in particular terrorist, do not get access to or find their way into American territory. Border and Security-wise, the task is nebulous and far reaching as this fall under the title of 'securing the homeland'. All American borders (air, land & sea), and across American territories, the task of the CBP is to ensure that the borders are secure, that within American towns and cities there are no possibilities of threats against the homeland. This means being able to patrol all borders and watch over all towns, cities and states, being on alert 24-7 and keeping on training for the latest technologies and approaches to enable the watch over America effective. The key word, according to CBP (2012) is 'vigilance'. Much of the motivation and function of this Federal agency can be surmised in its Mission Statement (CBP, 2012):

"We are the guardians of our nation's borders, we are America's frontline. We safeguard the American homeland at and beyond our borders. We protect the American public against terrorists and instruments of terror. We steadfastly enforce the laws of the United States while fostering our Nation's economic security through lawful international trade and travel. We serve the American public with vigilance, integrity and professionalism."

As a massive organization, it has a multicultural workforce. It follows a bureaucratic structure where power emanates from the top to the bottom. This power also is the source of the law enforcement powers and responsibilities of the CBP's 43,600 officers whose rank structure is similar to that of the FBI. In most cases involving the CBP, it usually has the higher clearance due to the nature of the concern of the agency. Because of this, the CBP is subject to the impact of any social trend and of course, globalization.

**CBP Leadership & Ethics**

Ethical leadership is expected in any organization, especially in a law enforcement agency such as the CBP. Ethical leadership is all about responsible leading so that those in a position of leadership promote the common good. Leaders are in a position to impact those subordinate to them in their job performance, in the manner by which they behave to complete tasks, to relate to others, or to behave in particular way. Ethical leadership then is provided by ethical leaders, those who (Mind Tools, 2012) –

"…do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons. They put their ethics before the bottom line – and as a result, they have dedicated teams that would do almost anything for them."

An organization has its own way of doing things - its culture. The values of the organization are drawn from this culture but also from its core code of ethics expected to be taken as standard by all its members. Leaders are aware of the organizational culture, the task of the organization and its goals as well as its code of ethics so that they establish through their actions values and behaviour that enforces the idea of ethical practice, of contributing to the common good. They become the example to their subordinates who emulate them and this contributes to the way their subordinates behave in their roles. This in turn contributes to their public image as in so doing, the company as a collective of people, behave in an ethical, more socially responsible way. In the CBP, our leaders set themselves against high standards not only because they want to, but because they are expected to. The professional ethical code of the CBP is something that all employees have access to, taught about and constantly made aware of as standards of practice. Being well-versed in the ethical code allows for the ability to reflect and relate on strategies necessary for performing one's function.

One of the key issues globalization brings to the practice of ethical leadership in the CBP has to do with the multicultural nature of CBP being a microcosm of the larger society. The US confronts many issues in relation to multiculturalism. As such, cultural competence is essential. Vaughn (2007) expressed that if one increases cultural competence (knowledge of the myriad of religious, cultural and ethnic practices current in the US society), it allows for the ability to understand, communicate and effectively interact with a myriad of cultures. He (Vaughn, 2007) writes –

"Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, particularly in the context of human resources, non-profit organizations, and government agencies whose employees work with people from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds."

Thus, CBP leaders to ethically practice their roles must also be culturally competent. Culture creates barriers for understanding and communicating ideas, purposes and goals. This does not mean imbibing new cultural practices - this only means coming to know of them as well as taking on a relativist viewpoint. Globalization requires the ability to move away from ethnocentric viewpoints so as to do away with culture-based standards that can easily lead to conflict and misunderstanding. Lastly, in terms of belief systems, it requires the move from ultra-religious to secular whereby religious beliefs are private affairs, separate from professional function.

**Opportunities**

The CBP's task is to enforce American law, protect its borders - among others. Globalization means increased trade, increased communication and interaction with members of other nations at an international level. On the ground this means busy border crossing and airports. The problem is, the United States is attractive to other people who illegally migrate for economic reasons to the United States so that illegal immigration in cities like Los Angeles and Houston become part of the cities' myriad of social ills. A globalized perspective on trans-border management can help the United States, through CBP bridge relations with Canada, with Mexico and border crossing points so as to find solutions to the problem. A globalized position can be all about relativism so that the issues of each member can be understood before judgment. The problem with a multicultural society is the presence of many different beliefs. But globalization can standardize the notion of difference, so that variety becomes a given notion. In this way, plurality of belief systems becomes common knowledge, helping in eradicating discrimination. If therefore all CBP agents are made culturally competent, or subjected to cultural training to account for a globalized, multicultural workplace - then the CBP will find it much more efficient to deal with multicultural and inter-cultural conflict as it pertains to their function as a federal law enforcement agency.

**Application Challenges (Sample)**

Imagine a Customs and Border Protection Officer coming across information in a set of important documents during one of the raids in a human trafficking gang. This information set is very essential because of the knowledge it provides - say contacts from 3rd world countries, contacts in his home country, their names and so on. The only difference is that they cannot understand them immediately because it is written in a different language. And then when it was translated, it did not make any sense context-wise. This means that the documents can only be understood from the cultural perspective of the people that made it, by one who understood their language. The challenge is resolving such issue and cultural competence is essential to decode the language and understand the meaning. If the CBP, in its attempt to be multicultural and create a culturally competent organization, trains designated officers for this purpose, then the CBP will have people who can provide solid knowledge essential to achieving specific goals without loss of context, where the message intended is conveyed. Globalization drives organizations like the CBP to construct a culturally competent team, one that can provide the skills and essential response that would make sense not only to people from a foreign culture but one that can be understood and auctioned upon in an American bureaucracy.

**Policymaking**

Most policies in the United States right now, especially in dealing with immigration and border protection are subject to review. This is because globalization's impact is felt across the world. American culture reaches many in China who otherwise wouldn’t have heard about the United States. At the same time, elements of Chinese culture are now familiar to many, even those that live in the most far-removed towns and villages. Problems abound, like this one reported by the International Monetary fund (2013),

"Economic and financial globalization and the expansion of world trade have brought substantial benefits to countries around the world. But the current financial crisis has put globalization on hold, with capital flows reversing and global trade shrinking."

By reviewing current policies - if they are compatible to, or relevant to resolving certain modern issues, especially if they take account of the impact of globalization, the CBP and the United States government can construct policies that can actually work to resolve issues brought on by the trend. As a social trend, it is something that will not 'die down' as trade and business are an essential element to modern life. Thus, the United States Congress must review current laws and must be deemed to present strategies and approaches that take account of globalization and its impact in national security.

**Resources:**

1. Al-Rhodan, N. & Stoudmann (2006). Definitions of Globalization: A Comprehensive Overview and a Proposed Definition. Geneva Center for Security Policy.
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5. Roethlisberger, F.J., & Dickson, J.W. (1943). Management and the Worker. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
6. MIndtools.02 (2012). Ethical Leadership Doing the Right Thing. URL: <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_58.htm>