



Globalization refers to the increase in exchanges and movements of goods, services, cultural practices and technologies and people across national borders. There are 3 types of globalization; cultural globalization, political globalization and economic globalization. Globalization has been on the increase since the 18th century and is accelerated by price and trade liberalization, technological changes and the emergence of global institutions. It is characterized by continuous developments and changes and currently has 3 prominent features; changes in technology and globalization of production, expansion of international trade and expansion of international cash flows (Mrak, 2000).

However, globalization is very uneven and some countries can even be said to be losers of globalization. Globalization has resulted in an increase in inequality between countries as well as between individuals in a country. Different countries have different abilities to cope with the challenges of globalization. Even some developed countries have found themselves bearing the blunt of globalization as companies outsource labour and move production to cheaper foreign countries. This has led to an increase in anti-globalization sentiments in countries such as the USA, Hungary and the UK. This has resulted in an increase in populist parties in Western democracies. The case of Donald Trump is a good example of the rise of nationalist and populist rhetoric. Nationalist leaders encourage politics of fear; fear that immigrants will take over jobs held by the citizens and fear that immigrants will bring terrorist activities to the host country. Increasing nationalist fervour is one of the biggest issues in the world today. This paper discusses emerging trends in nationalism, the politics of fear, consequent xenophobia in the United States and its implications.

After the global financial crisis, populist movements started springing up all over the world (Van Rensen, 2017). Most of these populist movements are characterized by a rejection of globalization and “us vs. them” rhetoric. Such movements view globalization as win-lose situations where they lose jobs to foreigners instead of recognizing the mutual benefits arising from globalization. This is the case in the US, the UK, Poland, and Hungary and all over Latin America. Donald Trump ran his presidency on a populist rhetoric that promised to “Make America Great Again” by making the country nationalistic and “protecting” its interest. These isolationist policies focus on restricting all forms of immigration and have become part of the mainstream U.S. political discourse. 2016 was a year of unprecedented political and social upheaval across the globe. The global refugee crisis reached its peak as countries became increasingly isolationist. Global media was dominated by images of displaced families and children washed up on foreign shores. Countries even those in the global north have experienced increased violence within their own borders and in many cases; populist leaders have used the resulting fear of violence to pass isolationist and restrictive policies that increase scrutinization and surveillance and limit immigration and promote nationalism (Anderson-Nathe & Gharabaghi, 2017).

Donald Trump's 2016 campaign was characterized by promises to pass isolationist and nationalist policies and promotion of racism, Islamophobia and xenophobia. In 2019, federal hate crimes were the highest they had been for over a decade. When the COVID-19 pandemic started in 2020, the USA had to deal with the spread of the pandemic as well as that of racism and xenophobia. Instead of calling for calm and precautions by citizens, Trump exploited the crisis, making it a weapon to demonize China and referring to the novel coronavirus as the "Chinese virus". Activists claimed that these racist sentiments kick-started the violent attacks on Asian Americans in March 2020. People were getting physically assaulted, even in public and in late March, an Asian man was spat on by an American citizen in a subway station in Brooklyn. Trump even tweeted about his intention to sign an executive order for the temporary suspension of immigration into the country. This move was interpreted as xenophobic by many and was very ironic considering more than half of the frontline workers in New York alone are immigrants. Racism and xenophobia are deeply ingrained in US society.



Most people in the far-right still subscribe to white-supremacist ideology. This ingrained mentality came to life when the coronavirus outbreak began. Many people were blaming China for the pandemic and right-wing media including Fox News constantly ran false accusations against China. Such media houses wouldn't exist if a large number of Americans did not support this extreme ideology. This has led to increased violence against Asian Americans which has continued even in 2021. In February, an elderly Thai immigrant died after being pushed to the ground violently when he was on his morning walk. In Brooklyn, New York, an elderly Chinese woman was set on fire by two people. In San Francisco, two women of Asian descent were stabbed by a man who calmly walked away after the incident which occurred in broad daylight (BBC News, 2021).



Today, hate crimes against Asian Americans are at an all-time high. The nationalist fervour in the country can be largely attributed to the return of white nationalism to mainstream political discourse. Immigrants are an important part of the US society and xenophobic and nationalist policies will only continue to hurt the country's national interests and unity.