

# Comments on Anson et al.'s paper

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Leticia Veruete-McKay

Senior economist, Royal Mail Group

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# My views on Anson et al.'s paper

1. The paper is an interesting application of network theory and explores properties of how countries (entities) are (or not) connected based on big datasets of 6 networks: trade; postal, migration, international flights, IP (internet protocol), digital communication (social e-mails, mobile phones).
2. Its main contribution is to offer insights of the degree of interconnectivity of around 200 countries based on rich information taken collectively together of the above 6 networks.
3. They compute a *global degree* measure for a country, which takes into account connectivity across all networks.
4. The authors explored the hypothesis that whether or not the global degree measure correlates with 14 different socio-economic indicators (well being measures),
5. Found that this global degree measure correlates more closely with some indicators than a single network.

# Some thoughts and questions

- In particular, found a negative correlation between rate of poverty and global degree measure. My questions are? Because a country is poor is less well connected or is that because it is less connected that it is poor? This analysis appears not to answer this question. Therefore, the framework cannot identify causality. Can they extend their analysis to include this causality?
- Using only the correlation, the authors cannot explain any associations, for instance why countries with high inequality tend to have less incoming and outgoing flight connections? There is no explanation. But intuition says that higher inequality countries are often poorer.
- The paper is very technical, if wants to influence development economists need to explain more simply.
- To my knowledge these socio-economic indicators are routinely measured by the UN and other bodies. But Talking to development economists, For example Somalia is challenging? How their authors analysis will go to provide proxies for their socio-economic indicators for this country?