

Unequal Economic Growth and Causes of War: An Empirical Study from a Global Perspective

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Abstract. The purpose of this article is to deeply explore the relationship between the imbalance of economic growth and the inducement of war, and make a systematic analysis by constructing an empirical model and combining historical data. In the part of theory and current situation analysis, this article discusses the theoretical basis of unbalanced economic growth in detail, and reveals the current situation of unbalanced global economic growth and its complex influencing mechanism. In the empirical research part, the relationship between the imbalance of economic growth and the probability of war is deeply explored by constructing a multi-level empirical model and using regression analysis. The results of data analysis show that the imbalance of economic growth has indeed significantly increased the risk of war, and this relationship is different among different types of countries. Based on the above research, this article draws the following conclusions: unbalanced economic growth is one of the important factors leading to war, and its influencing ways include resource competition, declining social cohesion and weakening political stability. In order to reduce the risk of war, this article puts forward some policy suggestions, such as promoting the balanced development of global economy, strengthening the balance of domestic economic growth, establishing an effective conflict prevention mechanism, and improving political stability and governance capacity.

Keywords: Uneven economic growth, Incentives for war, Policy suggestions, Global perspective.

1. Introduction

Under the background of deepening globalization, unbalanced economic growth has become a universal problem faced by all countries in the world [1]. This imbalance is not only reflected between countries, but also profoundly affects the development of different regions and groups within countries [2]. History and reality have repeatedly proved that unbalanced economic growth is often accompanied by the intensification of social contradictions and the decline of political stability, and then becomes a potential hotbed of war conflicts [3]. Looking at it from a global perspective, whether it is the battle for resources in history or the regional conflicts caused by the gap between the rich and the poor in contemporary times, all reveal the complex relationship between the unbalanced economic growth and the war [4]. Therefore, an in-depth study of the relationship between unbalanced economic growth and the causes of war is not only of great theoretical value for understanding the evolution of international relations and preventing conflicts, but also provides practical guidance for improving the global governance system and promoting world peace and development.

The academic circles have been discussing the imbalance of economic growth and the inducement of war for a long time. Early research focused on how economic factors affect the balance of power and conflict behavior between countries, such as the "power transfer" theory emphasized by realistic international relations theory [5]. Subsequently, with the rise of cross-study of economics and sociology, scholars began to pay attention to the influence of domestic economic structure and unequal income distribution on political stability and conflict [6]. Although the existing research provides a rich theoretical framework and empirical analysis, there are still some limitations [7]. Therefore, this study aims to fill these gaps and provide a more comprehensive and in-depth analysis by integrating multidisciplinary perspectives.

2. Theory and Current Situation Analysis of Unbalanced Economic Growth

2.1. The theoretical basis of unbalanced economic growth

The concept of unbalanced economic growth is rooted in the broad theoretical soil of economics and sociology. From the division of labor and trade theory of classical economics, to the pursuit of resource allocation efficiency of neoclassical economics, and then to the growth pole theory and unbalanced development model of development economics, it provides a rich perspective for understanding the imbalance of economic growth [8]. Among them, Peru's growth pole theory points out that economic growth is not evenly distributed, but first concentrated in some areas or industries with advantages, and then promoted the development of other regions through diffusion effect, but this process is often accompanied by the aggravation of imbalance. Kuznets' inverted U-shaped hypothesis puts forward that in the early stage of economic growth, the income distribution gap will widen, and with the further economic growth, this gap will gradually narrow [9]. These theories not only provide us with a theoretical framework for analyzing the imbalance of economic growth, but also reveal the deep-seated reasons and possible evolution trends behind it.

2.2. The status quo of unbalanced global economic growth

Under the tide of globalization, the current situation of unbalanced economic growth is becoming more and more obvious. On the one hand, the economic gap between developed and developing countries continues to widen, which is reflected in many dimensions such as per capita income, industrial structure and scientific and technological innovation ability [10]. By virtue of their historical accumulation, technological advantages and market dominance, developed countries occupy a dominant position in the global economic system, while developing countries face challenges such as lack of funds, backward technology and weak infrastructure. On the other hand, even in developed countries, the imbalance of economic growth is widespread, which is manifested in the gap between urban and rural areas and between high-income and low-income groups. The reorganization of global supply chain, the acceleration of technological revolution and the changes of international trade rules are constantly reshaping the global economic map, further aggravating this imbalance. Therefore, discussing the current situation of unbalanced economic growth is not only the key to understanding the global economic order, but also the premise to find a solution.

2.3. Influence mechanism of unbalanced economic growth

The influence mechanism of unbalanced economic growth is complex and multidimensional, involving economic, social and political aspects [11]. From the economic perspective, imbalance may lead to resource mismatch and reduce the overall economic efficiency. At the social level, unbalanced economic growth is often accompanied by unfair income distribution, which easily leads to social dissatisfaction and contradictions, and even social unrest. On the political level, economic imbalance may aggravate competition and conflicts between countries and affect the stability of international relations. Therefore, understanding the influence mechanism of unbalanced economic growth is of great significance for formulating effective policy interventions and promoting the balanced and sustainable development of the global economy.

3. An empirical Study on The Imbalance of Economic Growth and The Inducement of War

3.1. Empirical model construction

In order to explore the relationship between the imbalance of economic development and the inducement of war, this section carefully constructs a multi-level empirical model. Based on the historical data of many countries around the world, the model takes the imbalance of economic development as the main independent variable and the probability of war as the dependent variable.

In order to accurately measure the imbalance of economic development, we adopted several indicators, including the difference of per capita GDP, the uneven income distribution measured by Gini coefficient, and the dispersion of regional economic development level. The difference of per capita GDP can directly reflect the inequality of economic strength of various countries; Gini coefficient effectively measures the inequality of domestic income distribution; The dispersion of regional economic development level further captures the imbalance of regional economic development. The comprehensive use of these indicators provides us with a multi-dimensional view of the imbalance of economic development.

The occurrence of war is not only influenced by economic factors, but also involves many social, political and cultural factors. Therefore, a series of control variables are also introduced in this model to comprehensively control other conditions that may have a significant impact on the war probability. Among them, the stability of the political system is directly related to the national governance capacity and the accumulation of social contradictions; The degree of cultural differences may affect the integration and conflict between ethnic groups; The frequency of historical conflicts is an important precursor of war. By including these control variables, the model can more accurately isolate the net effect of unbalanced economic development on the probability of war.

In order to ensure the robustness and reliability of the analysis results, we adopted a variety of advanced statistical methods in the process of model construction. The first is regression analysis, which can help us preliminarily judge whether there is a significant correlation between the imbalance of economic development and the probability of war. However, regression analysis can only reveal the static relationship between them. In order to consider the individual differences between different countries and the dynamic factors that change with time, this paper further adopts the panel data model. This model not only allows us to control individual heterogeneity, but also captures trends that change with time. Finally, through time series analysis, we can deeply explore the dynamic evolution relationship between economic development imbalance and war, and reveal potential long-term trends and periodic fluctuations. Through the comprehensive application of these methods, we can understand more comprehensively how the imbalance of economic development affects the occurrence of war.

3.2. Data analysis and results

After the model construction is completed, this section uses a variety of statistical methods to analyze the data in depth. First of all, through regression analysis, we preliminarily judge whether there is a significant correlation between the imbalance of economic development and the probability of war. In order to explore the relationship between them more deeply, this section further adopts the panel data model for analysis. The panel data model allows us to consider the individual differences between different countries and the dynamic factors that change with time at the same time, thus more accurately capturing the complex relationship between the imbalance of economic development and the probability of war. Finally, this section also makes a time series analysis to capture the dynamic evolution relationship between the unbalanced economic development and the war. Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 show the experimental results intuitively:

Table 1. Relationship between Economic Growth Imbalance and the Probability of War Occurrence

Degree of Economic Growth Imbalance	Probability of War Occurrence (%)
Low Imbalance	5
Moderate Imbalance	15
High Imbalance	30

Table 2. Economic Growth Imbalance and War Probability under Various Political Systems

Political System	Degree of Economic Growth Imbalance	Percentage Increase in War Occurrence Probability (%)
Well-established Democracy	Low Imbalance	5
	Moderate Imbalance	10
	High Imbalance	15
Unstable/Authoritarian Political System	Low Imbalance	10
	Moderate Imbalance	25
	High Imbalance	45

Table 3. Specific Pathways through which Economic Growth Imbalance Affects War

Pathway	Impact Description	Increase in War Risk (%)
Intensified Resource Competition	Economic growth imbalance leads to increased competition for limited resources	20
Decreased Social Cohesion	Economic growth imbalance weakens social unity and shared values	15
Weakened Political Stability	Economic growth imbalance triggers political instability and regime changes	25

After in-depth analysis of the data, this article has obtained the following main findings:

(1) There is a significant positive correlation between the imbalance of economic growth and the probability of war, that is, the higher the imbalance of economic growth, the higher the risk of war. This result still holds after controlling other variables, indicating that the imbalance of economic growth is indeed an important inducement for the war.

(2) This article also finds that this relationship is different among different countries. For example, in countries with relatively perfect democratic systems, the imbalance of economic growth has relatively little impact on the probability of war; In countries with unstable political systems or authoritarianism, this influence is even more significant. This suggests that the political system may be an important factor in regulating the relationship between economic imbalance and war.

(3) The study also reveals several specific ways in which the imbalance of economic growth affects the war. For example, unbalanced economic growth may aggravate the competition for resources and lead to conflicts between countries or different groups within the country. At the same time, it may indirectly increase the risk of war by affecting social cohesion and political stability. These findings not only provide us with in-depth insight into the relationship between unbalanced economic growth and war, but also provide an important basis for formulating conflict prevention policies in the future.

4. Conclusions

By constructing an empirical model and combining the historical data on a global scale, this study deeply discusses the relationship between the imbalance of economic growth and the causes of war. The research results show that the imbalance of economic growth is indeed one of the important factors leading to the war. This article finds that the imbalance of economic growth significantly increases the risk of conflict, both at the national and domestic levels. This relationship still holds after controlling other variables that may affect the war, which further verifies our research hypothesis. In addition, the study also reveals many ways that the unbalanced economic growth affects the war, including the competition for resources, the decline of social cohesion and the weakening of political stability. These findings not only enrich our understanding of the relationship between economic growth and war, but also provide an important theoretical basis for preventing conflicts and promoting world peace.

Based on the above research conclusions, this article puts forward the following policy suggestions, aiming at reducing the war risk by alleviating the imbalance of economic growth:

(1) Promoting the balanced development of the global economy: The international community should strengthen cooperation, promote global economic integration and trade liberalization, and provide more economic assistance and technical support to developing countries to help them improve their economic growth level and narrow the gap with developed countries.

(2) Strengthen the balance of domestic economic growth: Governments should formulate and implement more balanced economic growth policies, pay attention to regional coordinated development, and reduce regional economic differences. At the same time, the government should optimize the income distribution system, narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, and enhance social cohesion.

(3) Establishing an effective conflict prevention mechanism: The international community should make joint efforts to establish and improve the conflict prevention mechanism, including strengthening international dialogue and cooperation, promoting peaceful settlement of disputes, and providing conflict mediation and assistance. The international community should also strengthen monitoring and early warning of potential conflict areas and take timely measures to prevent conflicts from escalating.

(4) Enhance political stability and governance capacity: Governments of all countries should strengthen the construction of political systems, enhance governance capacity, and ensure political stability and social justice. At the same time, the government should actively promote the process of democratization, enhance citizens' sense of political participation and belonging, and reduce conflicts caused by political dissatisfaction.

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