

The foundations of global value chains and environmental sustainability in Mexico

Main advancements

Theoretical discussion and literature review

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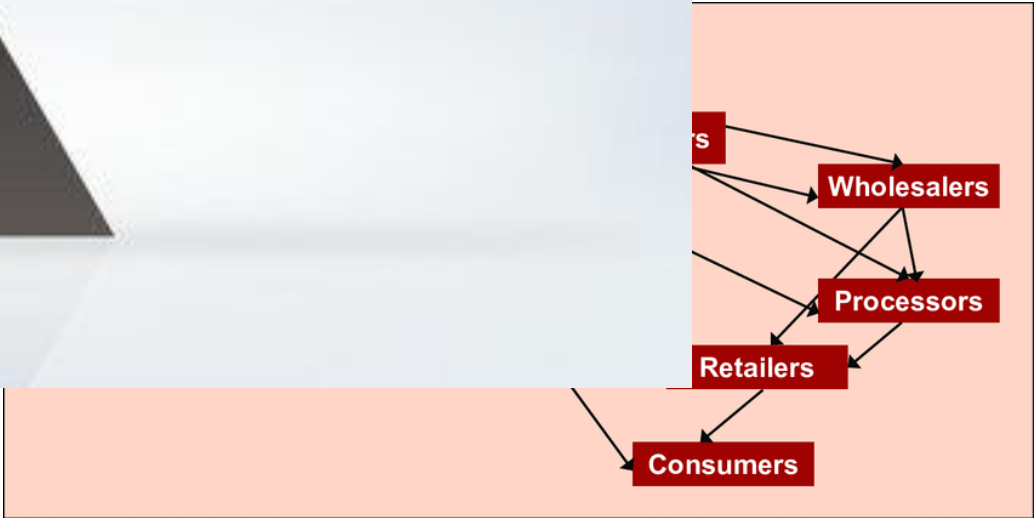




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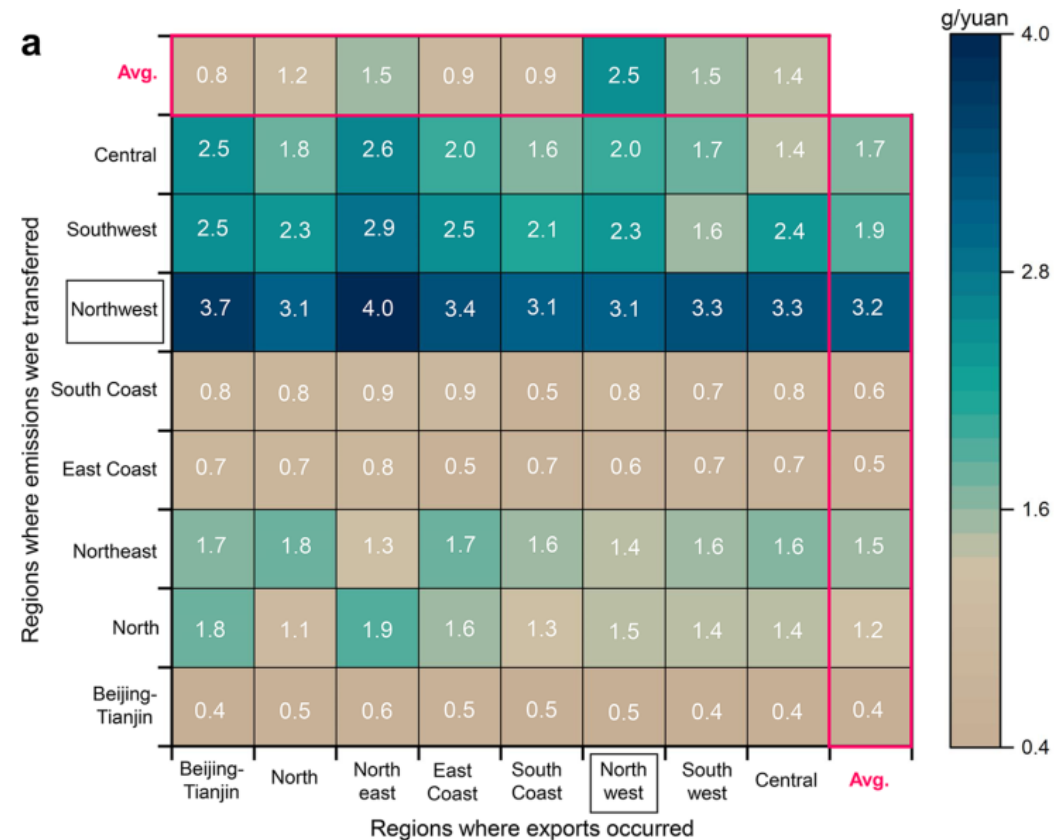
What are the **economic** and **environmental** implications associated to the participation of **countries and economic actors** into **global value chains**?



- After exploring the literature, I identified two main theories that addressed this question by highlighting the role of power and inequalities: **unequal ecological exchange (UEE)** and **environmental upgrading (EU)**.
- UEE studies affirm that richer, technologically advanced or military developed countries are more likely to gain access to critical resources to foster their economic development, leading to a net transfer of resources from poorer to richer regions.
- EU literature states that the capacity of firms to adopt stronger environmental practices and outcomes depends on the asymmetric power relationships between the actors across the value chain.
- Given the similarities of these two approaches, I decided to carry out a systematic literature review to find out what are their main concepts and questions.

Characteristic / Stream of literature		UEE	EU
Keywords and search string		(unequal AND ecological AND exchange) AND (global) AND (value AND chain) OR (commodity AND chain) OR (supply AND chain)	(environmental AND upgrading) AND (global) AND (value AND chain) OR (commodity AND chain) OR (supply AND chain)
Search results	Google Scholar	87,500 (195)	463,000 (198)
	Scopus	1,316 (200)	113 (113)
	ScienceDirect	33,659 (200)	33,706 (200)
Total # selected papers		595	511
# papers after elimination of duplicates		579	459
Inclusion criteria		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledging the use of UEE theory or mentioning it 2. Are mostly empirical works 3. Works After 2010 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledging the use of EU theory or mentioning it 2. Are mostly empirical works 3. Works After 2010
1 st round of selected papers		55	40
Exclusion criteria		○ Not carrying out a macro-level study	○ Not carrying out a micro-level study
2 nd and final round of selected papers		≈ 30	≈ 30

- A central concept identified was the **regional economic and environmental (in)justice index**, which assess the disproportion between natural resource use (input) or pollution (output) and value added generated.



Zhang et al. (2018). *Unequal Exchange of Air Pollution and Economic Benefits Embodied in China's Exports*. *Environ. Sci. Technol.* 2018, 52, 3888-3898.

Questions for the audience

1. How was for you the process of selection and justification of your theoretical background(s)?
2. What is your advice about doing a comparative literature review that analyzes two similar yet different theoretical approaches?

Thank you for your attention!!