Exploring Economic Domination with GDP Concentration

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Abstract: Common perception is that the world economy is dominated by the U.S. and China. Yet this view is subjective and not operational in the scientific sense. This paper proposes using the Herfindahl-Hirschman index applied to real GDP, to quantify the analogous measure of GDP concentration. Results show that GDP concentration is modest, and substantially less than that of industries which draw regulatory attention. Suggestion is made that the problem is not that few economies are large, but rather that many are quite small, and that unlike industries there is no economic mechanism to roughly equalize their aggregate size.

Keywords: GDP, international, concentration, Herfindahl-Hirschman index