DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT

Any information obtained that is not your own reflection or idea must be correctly cited using an accepted academic citation format. Please follow the rules of academic writing and academic integrity.

RESEARCH PROJECT

The objective of this assignment is to apply your knowledge of international development to analyse a specific developing country, and to practice standard methods used by political scientists to research the subject.

Countries must be in the present time, although a brief historical backgrounder may be used to provide context in the introduction, and must be classified using one of the described criteria as a ‘developing country’ or a country of the ‘Global South’. Proposals for alternative countries must be pre-approved by the professor.

Below, you will see that there are 4 sections with varying numbers of questions and topics. In your work, please address topics from all 4 sections. Follow the instructions for each section as described below. Please note that although you are invited to include maps, illustrations, and images, these will not be included in the final word count for the project.

Grading Criteria [grading will use a rubric to be provided]

• Completely and accurately describes the country by answering the questions in the outline below. All questions within the topic are required.
• Presents evidence (gleaned from at least 5 sources outside the required reading) in the form of statistics, expert opinion and/or factual information to present the information, and
• Uses a correct style of academic formatting and citation

Section One: Economic Development
In this section, you will prepare a descriptive analysis of the state and the degree and type of economic development prevalent in your country. You must include the introduction, but otherwise please choose at least 2 of the following economic development topics to answer – all of the questions within your chosen topics are required, unless otherwise stated.

1. Introduction [required]
   1. How and when was the country founded [former colony, war of independence, civil war, etc.]?
   2. Where is the country located and what are the relations like with other countries [important enemies and friends]?
   3. Describe at least 3 key features that make the country classified as ‘developing’?
Choose two of:

2. **Economic Growth**
   1. What is the country’s current GDP, GDP/capita, and how does it rank compared to other countries?
   2. What percentage of people in the country are living in absolute poverty, as measured by the World Bank?
   3. Describe at least 3 key problems faced by your state in increasing its national income.

3. **Economic Inequality**
   1. What is the Gini Index for the country?
   2. How does the country rank compared to other countries in levels of inequality?
   3. Does the country suffer from relative poverty and inequality?

4. **Economic Openness**
   1. Is the economy classified as open or closed [free movement of capital, labour, and goods]?
   2. What is the country’s level of national debt, measured either by debt to GDP ratio or another measure?
   3. What are the current annual levels of inflation, unemployment, and trade?

**Section Two: Human and Social Development**

In this section, you will prepare a descriptive analysis of the state and the degree and type of human and social development prevalent in the country. **Please choose at least 2 of the following human and social development topics to answer – all of the questions within your chosen topics are required, unless otherwise stated.**

Choose two of:

5. **National Groupings**
   1. What are the racial, linguistic, ethnic and religious groupings in your state?
   2. What are the historical origins of these groupings within your state?
   3. Describe at least 3 key conflicts or problems between groupings.

6. **Education & Culture**
   1. What are the current levels of literacy and educational achievement?
   2. Are these trends improving or declining?
   3. Does the state have a free media and internet?

7. **Health**
   1. What is the average life expectancy in the country?
   2. How much does the state spend on health care, and how accessible is it?
   3. Describe at least 3 key health risks or challenges experienced in the country.

8. **Gender**
   1. What is the overall status of women in the country?
   2. What is the level of occupational segregation between men and women?
   3. Describe at least 3 key issues facing women in the country.
Section Three: Institutions of Governance

In this section, you will prepare a descriptive analysis of the state and the types of institutions of governance in the country. Please choose at least 2 of the following institutions of governance topics to answer – all of the questions within your chosen topics are required, unless otherwise stated.

Choose 2 of:

9. Form of Government
   1. Is the state a democracy or an authoritarian system?
   2. If a democracy, describe 3 key problems confronting your country on the road to democratization. If authoritarian, describe 3 key threats to its leadership stability.
   3. Describe the results of the most recent election in the country [parties, leaders, factions, etc.]

10. National Institutions
    1. Is the country a recipient of bilateral aid? If so, which countries are the biggest donors?
    2. Describe at least 3 key problems or issues that confront the country’s institutions of governance [corruption, lack of independence, lack of expertise, enforcement, organization, etc.]
    3. Describe at least 1 nationally-funded current project in the country.

11. International Institutions
    1. Does the state have a relationship with any international financial institutions [ie. The World Bank, the IMF, or other?]
    2. Is the country a member of any international organizations? [UN, WTO, UNCTAD, UNESCO, ILO, RTAs, etc.?
    3. Describe at least 1 internationally-funded current project in the country.

Section Four: Issues and Areas

In this section, you will prepare a descriptive analysis of the state and the specific issues and areas of concern. You must include the conclusion, but otherwise please choose at least 2 more [in addition to the conclusion] of the following issues or areas topics to answer – all of the questions within your chosen topic are required, unless otherwise stated.

Choose 2 of (Violence, Trade, Private Enterprise, Environment, or Choice):

12. Violence
    1. Describe any conflicts or violence ongoing in the country.
    2. Is the country currently undergoing violent conflict? If so, who are the antagonists?
    3. Discuss at least 2 key causes of the current conflict. What have been the effects of the conflict on the country’s development?

13. Trade
    1. What is the country’s most important trade commodity?
    2. If you can, find a product for sale in Canada that originates in the country and trace its origin.
    3. Describe the history of the product, and analyze any conflicts or questionable practices evident in its production and trade.

14. Private Enterprise
    1. How much foreign investment is there in the country’s economy?
    2. If you can, find a company based in Canada that does business in the country and trace its history.
3. Describe the history of the investment or operation, and analyze any conflicts or questionable practices evident in the company’s activities.

15. Environment
   1. Is the country experiencing levels of environmental degradation or effects of climate change?
   2. What have been the effects of environmental degradation on the country’s development?
   3. If you can, identify a national policy or plan in place to address environmental degradation, and analyze the effectiveness of this policy or plan.

16. Choice

Choose one of the following and describe the current outlook for the country’s development:

   1. Information Technology
   2. Social Welfare
   3. Culture and religious belief
   4. Militarism
   5. Human rights and dignity
   6. Rural development
   7. Urbanization
   8. Peacekeeping or humanitarian action
   9. Scientific development

17. Conclusion [Required]
   1. Based on your analysis, discuss the overall development prospects for the country over the next 10-50 years.
   2. Describe at least 2 ‘bright spots’ and 2 areas that will likely prove especially challenging for the country.