



IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

India's attempt to tackle the problems of income inequalities and poverty alleviation has been going on since independence under the centralized planning system which evidently failed. In the post globalization era, considering the size and diversity of the country, shrinking role of government would ultimately be a failure to achieve the set objective of socio-economic parity, equality in society. The Globalization has various dimensions which sometimes affect tribal communities positively and sometimes negatively. Since the emergence of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG), the areas inhabited by tribal population have been subject to various protests due to involuntary displacement. Due to neoliberal economy, the arena of development has turned into unipolar. In the name of upgradation of lifestyle of poor indigenous tribal people, the market forces have created wealth for their interests at the cost of livelihood and security of these tribes in the areas.

"If you are totally illiterate and living on one dollar a day, the benefits of Globalization never comes to you", these are the words of Mr Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of United States of America which are still applicable in today's modern, 21st century world where the economy and multi-national supply and logistic chains which do not abide by the political boundaries have created a unique 'economic model' wherein the evidence of economic integration could be found; the results of which directly reflected in new economic era that flourished out of the need of Global Business Integration Mechanism Policy i.e. The Globalization..

KEYWORDS : LPG, Neoliberalism, Tribal, Tribal Communities and Development.

INTRODUCTION:

This is the age of globalization. Whether one likes it or not, the process had set in way back in the early 1990s, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe.

WHAT IS GLOBALIZATION? Globalization refers to the integration of national economies leading to the nation of a borderless global economy. It can be visualized as an interwoven net of factories, fields and forests; banks, governments, labouring and farming populations, cities and transport spread all over the surface of earth.

TWIN ROLE OF NATIONAL ECONOMY: A nation tries to organize its economy on a national scale in order to perform a two-sided task. The development of a strong economy to raise the standards of living of peoples and to increase national power in the international arena. If we look at European history, the birth of 'National Economy' is closely linked with the use of international trade to enhance national power. Internal trade is frequently interpreted as the continuation of war by other means. The creation of a strong national economy involves the breakdown of local and regional economic patterns and other replacement by modern national and international economic patterns.

GLOBALIZATION VS. MODERNIZATION: This process is also called modernization. Modernization has a connotation of scientific and technological developments; but, it is integrally linked with the modification of the economy itself. The production of goods has to be organized in a modern way. Original producers and the link between them and the raw materials is disrupted, the sources of finance change. Gone were the days when tribals used to collect raw materials like Rita, Sikai and used to sell them for their livelihood. They also used these materials for head bath. But today they collect the same but find few or no buyers. Because they themselves are not using them. Instead they are using shampoos, soaps and talcum powders for personal beauty and skin care. Then again, old raw materials are used processed for new products. For example, trees from forests are made available (hitherto felled by the tribes for firewood) now to the paper industry at extremely low costs. People who made things from bamboo from forests had to pay high costs for the same.

ROADS THAT CHANGED THE LIVES: Thanks to the heavy investment made by the World Bank to modernize the roadways, as part of hastening the process of globalization, the face of villages in

remote tribal areas have undergone a radical change.

Earlier, the remote village Gangapur of Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh had no access to modification. But the village is opening up a whole new world for its people and those in nine surrounding hamlets, thanks to laying the roads. Earlier, it used to be a day's travel by bullock cart to reach the town of Pembri; 40 km. away. (The Hindu: 10.06.06). It took double the time during the rains. But all that changed with a 12 km. road connecting Gangapur to the main road on the nearest town of Kadam.

Despite fertile lands and abundant ground water, Gangapur and the surrounding hamlets remained poor; the villagers followed primitive methods of cultivation. Traders and middlemen became fat with the yield while the farmers starved.

Education and health care facilities were almost non-existent, officials stayed away from these remote villagers.

TRANSFORMATION OF TRIBAL LIFE AND ECONOMY: Thanks to globalization a perceptible change is clearly visible in the tribal life and Economy of Andhra Pradesh as is evident from the above micro-study of Gangapur village of Adilabad district.

The new generation of the tribals - many of them - has given up their traditional occupation and look to sell their labour to the new producers. Artisans too face the same problem. And economy is created and the old economy is destroyed. Along with the old economy, the society and culture are also transformed. They are changed not because of the availability of new products but because the new economy requires the institutionalization of a different set of motives, skills, activities, social relations which are closely linked with the larger socio-economic patterns of national/international kind. (Avinash Jha: Background To Globalisation: 2001 pp13-14).

The process affects sections of people in different ways; It depends on who has the power to negotiate the pace and kind of change. For example, Brahmins in the state found it easier to make use of modern educational facilities since traditionally they possessed intellectual skills of a formal kind. The modern economy demands such skills. Artisans belonging to lower castes and tribes have different kinds of knowledge and skills which have become outdated to the modern economy. Hence they have no choice but to become labourers, unskilled or semi-skilled workers.

GAINS AND LOSSES OF GLOBALIZATION:

Globalization affects tribals differently. Urban and educated tribals may benefit from the increased opportunities for work that come with the influx of foreign companies and investments. These employment avenues are complemented by greater opportunities to receive education and skills training of a higher quality. The new technologies that define this era, in particular the computer and Internet may be accessible to this group of tribals. Conversely, poor, uneducated, credit-constrained, informal and agricultural sector tribals will benefit in a much less direct manner. Tribals in general benefit from long-term economic growth brought about by correcting price distortions in factor and product markets. The proponents of globalization argue that the process may entail some short-term difficulties in terms of reduced income and consumption; unemployment might also increase. But eventually the reform process would lead to greater gains all around. But we cannot close our eyes to serious undercut in domestic production of goods and services and risks to the health status particularly of the poor, tribals, women and children. The gains of globalization have so far accrued to those who already have education and skill advantage, easier market access and possession of assets for use as collateral to access credit. For the tribals, globalization is associated with rising prices, loss of job security, lack of health care and tribal development programmes. Globalization may also weaken the Constitutional protections, in terms of education and job reservations, given to tribals.

AN OVERVIEW: Globalization is hastening the process of destruction of local production and local markets. Gone were the days of Shikai, Rita, Pulse powders (Sunni Pindi), neem twigs and Kumkum. Today they are replaced by shampoos, tiklis, tooth brush and tooth paste of hundred and one brands which have swept into remote villages. Mineral water and Knockout beers are available in plenty compared to potable water in Andhra Pradesh. While drinking water is a scarce commodity liquor is freely available in remote villages like Gangapur of Adilabad district. Even women are visiting bars to sip 5000 Beer!

Globalization also brought into the picture the transnational corporations. They jockey with one another and against local interests. Coconut water is replaced by cola and thums up. Carrying mineral water bottles has become not merely a necessity but also a status symbol. Now villagers use mouth phrases of modernization i.e. pollution, environment, ecology, water contamination though in an incoherent way. Thus, the impact of globalization is very significant on the tribal life and their economy.

CONCLUSION:

Tribals are part of the Indian society, at the same time they are different. Age old exploitation and repression of the tribals, have cut them off from the main stream of socio-economic development of the country as a whole. The tribal population is identified as the aboriginal inhabitants of our country. They are most vulnerable section of our society living in natural and unpolluted surrounding far away from civilization with their traditional values, customs and beliefs. The gains of globalization have so far accrued to those who already have education and skill advantage, easier market access and possession of assets for use as collateral to access credit. For the tribals, globalization is associated with rising prices, loss of job security, lack of health care and tribal development programmes. Globalization may also weaken the constitutional protections, in terms of education and job reservations given to tribals.

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