

# Globalization, Its Historical Roots and Tribes : A Critique of Impact of Globalization on Tribal Communities

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## *ABSTRACT*

As Globalization is a vast term, it is now being referred in broader sense. For its proper understanding and knowledge, its various aspects are needed to be properly explained in historical perspectives. The historical interpretation is necessary to explain how globalization affected different people at different places at different time. Undoubtedly the entire globe is in its grip as there is a tough competition among nations for securing more and more profit from it. That is why people experienced its impact on life and activities. But tribal communities much more affected by globalization that created a kind of huge upheaval in their social and economic set up. So the study is mainly an attempt to focus on tracing and analyzing the impact of globalization on tribal communities with its meaning and underlying aspects of globalization. Historically globalization can be defined as the expansion of economic activities, across political boundaries of the nations. It can be said that it is a process of economic integration and economic independence among nations in world economy.

**Keywords :** Globalization, Market, Trade, Global, Local, Tribal Communities.

### **Introduction:**

As various aspects of globalization are not properly explained, it is necessary to discuss it in historical perspective. (Pandey2005:25-38) Undoubtedly its multiple effects have been discussed but its effects on tribal communities are not properly studied so it is to be necessarily explained. Admittedly globalization integrate and connect cultures and communities in new space and make a new world of cooperation and relation. According to Raviprakash Pandey, “ Globalization is a complex process of inclusion and exclusion. In it inclusion of integration of world market, different economical, political and social institutions, multimedia, technology and culture etc. takes place, while exclusion of the sovereignty of the Nation-State and indigenous etc. occurs. The present trajectory of it is associated with liberalization and privatization (LPG). It is taking place along with modernization, nation-building and regionalization through capital, labour, commodity, technology and information. It is accelerated by the revolution of information technology.” (Pandey2005:10-11) It is

multidimensional process with multiple components which recently developed across the world.

### **Methodology :**

The study is mainly based on assessment of published sources available in archives and libraries and educational institutions. These include authored and edited books, research papers published in journals, published proceedings of seminars, newspapers and google sources etc.

### **Hypothesis:**

Over the world, there has been much noise and heated discussion on globalization and its various aspects with its benefits. There has been tough competition also among nations for playing biggest role in implementing it and it is agreed that it is necessary for all round developments of one and all. But it is never discussed that the marginalized stock of each and every nations how far felt changes in their life. It is hoped that the implementation of globalization would benefit tribal communities also. But did tribal communities benefit from it – is a big question in view of the status of tribal people. The

study, therefore, investigates the effects of globalization on tribal communities with its meaning and historical roots of globalization.

### **Review of the Literature**

Many scholars wrote on globalization and its various aspects but in no writings there is proper of discussion of its historical roots and its effects on tribal communities. Undoubtedly the research papers published in journals are significant attempts but they do not properly focus on its neglected aspects i.e. its historical roots and its effects on tribes. In this context, studies on globalization and its various aspects by Mitra (2022), Mantu and Borah(2015), Kumar (2015), Singh (2012), Steger (2012), Moosvi (2011), A Vedanta Presentation(2010), Pal (2009) and Pandey(2005) are definitely nice attempts but they do not proper focus on impact of globalization on tribal communities. Ram Ahuja (2017) and Yogendra Singh (2012) discussed various aspects of globalization but there is no discussion of impact of globalization on tribal communities.

### **Purpose and Motivation**

The study focuses on broad meaning with its various dimensions of globalization. It traces and examines the impact of globalization on tribal communities and its far reaching effects. The study is also motivated by the idea that globalization is a global phenomenon and its roots are as old as history.

### **Meaning and Aspects of Globalization**

The term globalization is derived from the word globalize, which refers to the emergence of an international network of social and economic systems. Economist Theodore Levitt(1983) is widely credited with coining the term in an article entitled “Globalization and Markets”, which appeared in May-June 1983 issue of Harvard Business Review wherein Levitt used Globalization as a synonym for standardization of a brand for international markets. Theodore Levitt noted how companies like Coca-Cola and McDonalds had had created a type of uniformity across regional markets.”(New York Times, 2006/07/06). Sociologists Martin Albrow and Elizabeth King define globalization as “all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society.”Anthony

Giddens in his famous work “The Consequence of Modernity” defines globalization as “the intensification of world wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”(Giddens1990:64) Generally globalization refers to growing economic integration of international level based significantly on activities of multinational corporations. These activities involve financial exchanges evolving production strategies ,marketing rights and responsibilities across boundaries of nation–states and of course, accelerating growth by deploying new information technology. As globalization means different things to different people, there is no accepted definition of globalization. (Pandey2005:2,10-11) Ram Ahuja described the term as the process by which business or other organizations develop international influence or start operating on an international scale. (Ahuja2017:333) According to Thomas Friedman, “Globalization is the integration of markets, finance and technologies in a way that is shirking the world from a size medium to a size small and enabling each of us to reach around the world farther, faster and cheaper than ever before. Like all previous international systems ,it is directly or indirectly shaping the domestic politics , economic policies and foreign relations of virtually every country.” (Fridman(1999:110)Jonathan Xavier Inda and Renato Rosaldo observed, “ Globalization is a complex process by which the world is becoming a highly interconnected world through economic, political and cultural contacts. It refers to the intensification of global interconnectedness, suggesting a world full of movement and mixture ,contact and linkages and persistent cultural interaction and exchange.” (Inda and Rosaldo2002:2) It can be defined by suggesting that globalization has following five major dimensions: ,economic, social, cultural, environmental and political. The economic aspects of globalization refer to global economy, financial markets, international trade, multinational corporations, foreign currency exchanges, development of information technology whereas processes for incorporation of the peoples of the world into a single world society and intensifications of worldwide social relations are within

the social ambit of globalization. Rise of mass tourism, increased migration, spread of an ideology of consumerism, mass media of communication etc. are within its cultural dimensions while environmental challenges such as climate change, cross boundary water and air pollution, and over fishing of the ocean etc. have also been linked with globalization. In its political dimension, globalization means the rise of international agencies, UNO, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation etc.

### Historical Roots

In view of its various dimensions, it is, therefore, apparent that globalization has taken its final shape and nature over the centuries. A noted scholar Friedman (1999) divided the history of globalization into three periods—(A) 1492-1800, (B) 1800-2000 and (C). 2000-present. Most of the scholars argued that globalization as a phenomenon began with the earliest human migratory routes, or with Genghis Khan's invasions, or travel across the Silk road. Admittedly conquering empires throughout history resulted in the sharing of ideas, mixing of cultures and people, and trade and trade relations across those conquered lands. Andre Gunder (1998) pointed out that a form of globalization has been in existence since the rise of trade links between Sumer and the Indus Valley Civilization in the third millennium B.C. Historically trade developed among Greece, Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, Rome and other countries in regard to their need for trade that led to the development of various trade routes. (Ahuja 2005:334) From the 7<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, spices made their way across Europe, Asia and North-east Africa. Primarily, the goods traded during this time were spices, like cloves, nutmeg and mace which originated in the Maluku islands of Indonesia. The Hellenistic Age and the Islamic Golden Age were important early stages of globalization. The Jewish and Muslim traders and explorers established a sustained economy across the old World resulting a globalization of crops, trade, knowledge and technology. In fact, territorial expansion in all five continents was a critical component in establishing globalization. The development of agriculture gave impetus to

globalization by converting the vast majority of world's population into a settled life styled. It is to be noted that a single global world economy with a world wide division of labour and multilateral trade from 1500 onward, even before 1500, trade network reached almost all regions of Eurasia and sub-Saharan Africa, Columbus discovery of America (1492) and Vasco da Gama reaching to Calicut (India) in (1498) etc. indicate the early stages of globalization (quoted in Ahuja 2005:334) The contemporary process of globalization likely occurred around middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as increased capital and labour mobility occupied with decreased transport costs led to a smaller world. A noted social scientist Ram Ahuja stated that the industrial revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was one of the major periods of globalization, for there was a significant increase in the quality and quantity of products and it led to the higher exports and better trade relations. It was colonialism, imperialism, independence of India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, establishment of UNO, WTO, IMF, that further contributed to the development of trade and trade relations among nations. (Ahuja 2005:334) In this background it is rightly observed globalization is a historical process that began with the first movement of people out of Africa into other parts of the world. Travelling, short or long distances, migrants, merchants and others have delivered their ideas, customs and products to new lands. Undoubtedly it finally originated in its present dimensions in Modern Age, but in fact it is a phenomenon with a long history and its historical roots are deeply rooted in from ancient period. In fact historically globalization is not a new phenomenon because it is as old as history. Its various kinds of dimensions gradually emerged since ancient times and developed in its final shape what it is now-a-days in its broad meaning with its all aspects. It is significant to note that over the years, the human beings have invented technologies i.e. agriculture and animal husbandry and they also domesticated plants and animals. In course of time, these technologies travelled all over the world and thereby united them for agricultural and commercial relations. It is, therefore, observed that globalization has been facilitated by advances in technology as these

have reduced the costs of trade and trade negotiation rounds, originally under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. It resulted in the series of agreements that removed restrictions on free trade. Thus globalization has been in any of its dimension there through different phases of world history. The end of Cold War politics and disintegration of Soviet Union in fact paved the way for emergence of new World order and its chief underlined feature was globalization.

### **Globalization and Tribal Communities**

As the tribal communities are the most marginalized people, they are profoundly affected by various dimensions of globalization because it has seriously challenged their culture, tradition, and also threatens their pristine economic and social stability as well as their political set up and ethnic identity. Displacement, Land Alienation, Problems of Indebtedness, Privatization, etc. are some important areas where impact of globalization on tribal people is apparent. It is estimated that owing to construction of over 1500 major irrigation development projects since independence, more than sixteen million people were displaced from their villages, of which about forty percent belong to tribal population. Land is deeply linked with tribal culture but the globalization trend has alienated them from their mainstay. The problems of indebtedness have created very critical situation for tribal communities while the global economy has overburdened them with various kinds of debts. It is observed that the lack of education, purchasing power and lack of resources for engaging in gainful activity has led to indebtedness for tribal communities. It is found that tribal institutions, cultures and traditions are adversely affected by modern economy and free market policy adopted under the dimensions of globalization. It is not possible for tribal communities to compete with those people who are technically advanced and more skilled and trained. The tribal communities have been fighting for not only for their land, forest, culture etc. but also for keeping in contact their societal solidarity and tribal identity. The tribal communities have been strongly fighting against outsiders and never allowed them to settle in their habitat. But in the wake of industrial development and

socio-cultural progress of tribal regions, the tribal forests are being cleared causing not only ecological imbalance but also threatened ethnic identity of tribal communities. Most of tribal communities, therefore, complain that their livelihood is under attack because in the name of national development they are being deprived of their land, forests, and water resources to which their culture is closely linked. Minaketan Bag has pointed out that “ In the name of development the national and international elites through the institution of state and market have appropriated natural resources like land, minerals, forest and water. This impoverishment of nature is deprivation of communities who dependent on natural base resources for their livelihood. This alienation can not be calculated in term of the loss of material livelihood alone. In wider (term) it is the loss of cultural autonomy, knowledge and power. In this process of development the people have been pushed off from the land and forest based economy by the state and the market. As a result they have been deprived of everything besides their labour power.” (Bag 2016:249) A noted economist Nageshwar Sharma discussing the problem of displacement in Jharkhand rightly pointed out that in the name of development on western modal led to the displacement of most of tribal communities in the state and also discussed the negative effects of Land Acquisition Act 1894 (Amended in 1984) especially on tribal communities who lost their land and forests, the main sustenance of their livelihood. (Sharma 2017:1-17) Construction of dams and official infrastructure, mining projects, setting up of wildlife sanctuaries etc. and the new industrial policy paved the way for the alienation of tribal lands. It is to be noted that tribal communities have been nature-worshippers and most of their gods and goddesses, they believe, live in forest and on trees and hills and mountains. There are many places and articles of worship in forest. But under the wake of globalization, tribal communities feel that their religious feelings are intentionally challenged. Privatization of various kinds of enterprises has adversely affected the tribal communities and disturbed the regional balance in terms of industrialization.



Thus globalization has witnessed a new and aggressive attack on tribal livelihood, religion and identity. This has also adversely affected tribal textile designs, herbal medicines, indigenous products and their autonomy. Steel Plants, development schemes and hydropower projects, forest based and ancillary industries are located in ecologically fragile region of tribal people. This has not only extracted natural resources of tribal regions but surprisingly tribal employment in industries set up in tribal belt is not satisfactory. Forced living with outsiders, low paid, insecurity etc. are other effects. Recently it is assessed that about forty percent of tribal communities of central India supplement their income by participating in distorted and exploitative capital sector. Their natural resources, forest lands, livelihood opportunities, right to primary education and health etc. are being threatened under new economic policies on tribal communities and implementation of Fifth Schedule by Central and State governments. Prostitution has also taken place in tribal society mainly for earning much more money for financial solidarity, an offshoot of globalization. Earlier marriage with non-tribal communities was a tabu as it was declared against the tenets and greatness of tribal culture. But this ban is being disappeared as tribal communities have started to have marriage with non-tribal communities. As a result of this kind of change, non-tribal population is being increased in tribal regions. Rajagopalan Radhakrishnan (2004) has rightly pointed out that globality and globalization are the Dravidian Manifesto of survival of the fittest, the strong nations will survive naturally whereas weak nations will lose. This is also true for most of tribal communities who are poor and illiterate.

### Conclusion :

Undoubtedly, in view of its historical roots, globalization is not a new phenomenon but its present form and nature developed in modern times and now being used in broader term that led to the emergence of an international network of multidimensional systems. It can be observed that globalization is a stepping into the one world for multiple exchanges among nations where the tribal communities are not happy and safe.

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