

Accomplishment of Gandhian Globalisation Is A Myth Or Reality

Prof.P.Srinivas Subba Rao

Executive Registrar & Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha
India

Abstract

Globalization can be considered as a significant change in the world which was introduced few decades ago. Most of the people will deem it as a recent emerging issue brought in to execution by developed countries but this thought was way back visioned by Mahatma Gandhi and he opined that the walls of every country should be dismantled for the free execution of technology, knowledge and allocation of resources. As he himself is a product of globalization have strong concerns about globalization. Most of the civilian countries are following his strategies in their own business process. Even though it is a change process to the existing situation his views are concentrated more on help each other to build better mankind. However after such globalised process that outcomes existing right now is totally different it is no where matching what Gandhi thought. In this paper the researcher is going to discuss about whether Gandhian Globalization is myth or reality.

INTRODUCTION

Gandhiji seems to be the one among few people today who would be remaining at the mainstream of political thought for the centuries to come. His ideas and philosophy have been studied quite profusely in India and worldwide and he works as an institution of guidance for the thinkers, statesmen, and policymakers alike. In today's globalized world the ideas of Gandhiji still bear the gloss and have the potential of guiding the people towards the establishment of a more humane and just society. Introduction of machines in industry, agriculture and press with the advancement of technology which had ushered in the era of industrialization far back were the events of global interconnection and interdependence for Gandhiji. He himself was the product of this global phenomenon as he had his education at Britain and early engagements at South Africa. His wide experience abroad and the knowledge of the global happenings prepared him mentally against the pros and cons of the forthcoming events. His ideas over globalization, initially understood in the terms of westernization were not far from the existing direly felt needs of the hour. He opined that globalization was not an evil but to believe that everything western was superior was not the correct stand to take. He did not perceive any threat to our culture due to globalization but he did believe that it would lead to environmental hazards and consumerism - both of which have proved correct.

GANDHIS' ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT GLOBALISATION

An interesting and significant aspect of the freedom movement in India was that along with the struggle against colonial rule, vigorous efforts were made to find an alternative path of development. While several people in India were eager to 'develop' as much as the British and later some others wanted to industrialize as rapidly as the Soviets, there were others who kept alive the concept of small and cottage-scale development to be based in largely self-reliant rural communities

In his opinion "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. One can see the urge to stand on one's own and respect for the idea of self-dependence in these words of Gandhiji.

Gandhi himself identifies globalization as an ancient phenomenon, whereby he claimed that it was not a bigger threat to India as various races starting from the Greeks and Huns to the British had invaded India but ended up being a part of the nation". He believed that the mingling of cultures in India would not be a threat to India's own customs and culture. However, he did identify that the establishment of a

global society would carry certain dangers for the sovereign nations such as colonialism, both cultural and political, industrialization, and commercialization of the economy leading to class antagonism and environmental hazards. Today, we see many of those problems emerge clearly in our lives and hence, Gandhi's relationship with globalization remains extremely important and his ideas valid even today.

This viewpoint was most vigorously articulated by Mahatma Gandhi who popularised the spinning wheel or 'charkha' to symbolize this aspect of self-rule or 'swaraj'. Gandhi's early experiences with the charkha are still significant in the context of the 'large vs small, global vs local' debate.

FACTORS INFLUENCING GANDHI TO THINK ABOUT GLOBALISATION

In a significant book 'Hind Swaraj' or 'Indian Home Rule' he wrote in 1908: "It is difficult to measure the harm that Manchester has done to us. It is due to Manchester that Indian handicraft has all but disappeared. But I make a mistake. How can Manchester be blamed? We wore Manchester cloth and this is why Manchester wove it." So Gandhi argued strongly in favour of going back to the self-reliant production of clothes in villages, a task in which charkha will have the crucial role of spinning the yarn, which will be used further by the handloom weavers to produce entirely hand-made cloth, called khadi or khaddar (hard-spun, hand-woven cloth)."

Mahatma Gandhi recognized that given the low per capita land availability in villages, the Indian peasant needed some additional craft work that could be pursued easily by the family without much capital investment. He wrote quite clearly in 1919: "Without a cottage industry the Indian peasant is doomed. He cannot maintain himself from the produce of the land."

Gandhi's concern was not confined to reducing the dependence on foreign mills, he was equally eager to reduce the villagers' dependence on domestic mills in the context of that produce which could be made by villagers themselves.

Gandhi was well aware how hidden state subsidies help the big industry and hinder the cottage industry: "In the open market a more organized industry will always be able to drive out a less organized one, much more so when the former is assisted by bounties and can command unlimited capital and can therefore afford to sell its manufactures at a temporary loss. Such has been the tragic fate of many enterprises in this country."

Therefore he asked for a different type of socio-economic evaluation: "It is to be therefore maintain that, though yard per yard khadi may be dearer than mill-made cloth, in its totality and in terms of the villagers it is the most economic and practical proposition without a rival. Khadi may be interpreted to include other village industries for the purpose of a thorough examination of the proposition."

Much earlier he made it clear that he linked economics closely to moral and ethical principles. In 1924 he wrote: "That economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce."

These views were reflected increasingly in Mahatma Gandhi's perception of the role of a consumer or a buyer. For Gandhi a buyer in need of a product should not enter the market merely to maximize his satisfaction. Instead he should be guided to a large extent by social responsibility. He unhesitatingly exhorted people again and again to buy khadi and support it, ignoring questions such as coarseness or unevenness of the fabric.

Closely linked to this is the concept of 'Swadeshi'. Literally this means 'my country' but Gandhi used the word in a much broader sense. Explaining this concept he wrote in 1916: "Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. In the domain of economics I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbors and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting.

In his views the country should develop internally as self sufficient could able to allocate the resources in an optimum manner by giving and producing qualitative goods so that they can save the domestic market and can compete in the global market. To this achievement trade barriers should be removed for access of business process and generating more number of employment opportunities.

POST GLOBALIZATION SCENARIO IN THE WORLD**IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENT**

After two centuries of industrialization and two decades of economic globalization, poverty alleviation not in sight, people continue to die of hunger. Drastic climate changes, global warming, polar ice caps and glaciers melting, sea level rise, devastating natural disasters causing habitat loss and mass migrations are affecting the world. Prolonged debilitating drought, excessive unseasonal rain and flood owing to highly modified El Nino-La Nina. Massive food shortage and huge fresh water shortage is another impact. Besides direct threat to species and biodiversity, 80% of the global population living in the developing countries paying dearly for the luxury and whims of just 20% of the global population in the industrialized countries as far as GhG missions are concerned. Southern rain forests, the Amazonian rainforest, systematically destroyed for the northern consumers for exotic timber, arable land for the soy crop and pasture land for raising cattle to provide beef for the northern hamburgers. International treaties, including Kyoto, failed to recognize the importance of tropical forests both as carbon sinks and as stabilizers of our weather systems. Many Multinational Corporations moving their operations to developing countries to avoid the strict environmental laws of their own countries. Free trade agreements under the WTO regime restrict the capacity of the national governments to frame and adopt new environmental legislations.

IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

Decades of economic globalization has converted the earth to a single village with free trade. Food could no longer be recognized as a right since the right to food would interfere in free trade of food commodities, declared US Secretary of State at the last world food summit. The world produces more food than ever before, enough, to feed twice the global population, yet, more people than ever suffer from hunger and their numbers are rising. Thus, " free trade" is the cause of global hunger.

Economic globalization has dramatically changed the face of agriculture the world over. Diminishing agricultural holdings - agricultural land converted to SEZ, etc. resulting in farmer uprisings as is seen in Singur, Nandigram in West Bengal, Kalinga Nagar in Orissa, Mann in Maharashtra and elsewhere. Small farmers, direct farmers and small traders are become to bankruptcy, suicides and displacements because of the changed rules of present globalization. Most farm inputs including seeds were managed religiously by the farmers themselves. Farmers used innovative methods for soil fertility and pest control using local biodiversity. Thus they produced enough good food.

The green revolution practices and industrial agriculture replaced internal inputs including seeds by purchased inputs, thus raising the production cost. Agriculture thus changed from biodiversity and animal dependence to chemical and machine dependence. These two exotic concepts between them eliminated the vast agro biodiversity, and the principle of mixed cropping. In Orissa, as in many parts of south – East Asia, the principal crop is Kharif (rain) paddy. Once there were, more than 5 thousand varieties, suitable for varied eco- climatic conditions giving farmers enough options to select the varieties for every crop, for taste and need. Farmers in Orissa now grow just one paddy variety during kharif (rain) and two/three, during rabi (winter summer), all green revolution varieties, dwarf and chemical soaking on ever diminishing agricultural land and rural population. The main cause of this is that millers purchase these varieties paying much higher costs over the natives. Yet, there are farmers who for different ostensible reasons save and cultivate dozens of native paddy varieties in their fields, but they are diminishing. Navdanya Orissa Biodiversity Farm near Balasore has saved nearly 600 of the Native / nativised paddy varieties and there is a Central Seed Bank from which desired seeds are provided to farmers for cultivation. Orissa has its own and unique vegetable varieties in Radish, Brinjal, Tomato, Sweet gourd , Bottle gourd, Ash gourd, Bitter gourd, Cow pea, Sour okra, Taro and Yam. Their weak point is that they are highly seasonal. The green revolution varieties have pushed most of their cultivations to the back seat but some of them are still there, although not known when the last vestige will also vanish.

PRESENT GLOBALISATION SENARIO

The present movement towards globalization has to be viewed in this context. It is not that people are being encouraged to become global – it is just that tariffs and other barriers to trade are being dismantled so that accumulation of wealth can take place without these impediments. This is evident from the fact that while free movement of goods is being made possible across all international borders, the same facility is NOT being made available for free movement of people. In other words, if an MNC wants to set up a manufacturing facility in any part of the world, it is regarded as desirable that no customs, immigration or tariff barriers should be placed in its way; whereas if a mechanic or carpenter in a poor country wants to shift to another country in search of better prospects, all kinds of passport, visa and immigration quota restrictions are placed on his path.

Therefore, what we now call 'globalization' amounts to 'freedom to exploit the resources and peoples of any part of the globe', whereas what Gandhi had in mind was 'a one-ness with all human beings, in fact all creatures, in any part of the globe'. This attitude, he insisted, is the essence of Indian civilization, which is all-embracing in character. Gandhi's globalization amounted to "**think globally, act locally**", whereas modern globalization amounts to "**act globally, think locally**".

Yes, in spite of the meaning of the term 'globalization', its advent is not really making us global in thought. This is because the basic motivation behind it is profit – which prevents us from thinking of the others first. Such a process breeds selfishness, and can therefore never make us truly global. When Coca Cola or Kentucky's Chicken want the freedom to open branches in China or Russia, their primary motivation is not love for the Russian or Chinese people, but the profits they will derive from such a venture. As soon as this profit motivation is not there, all talk of globalization will vanish into thin air.

Gandhi's Globalization Vs Reality: What is needed today is a REAL stride towards globalization – wherein people recognize that the borders and boundaries that we have drawn, and the compartments into which have enclosed ourselves, are stifling our real growth, and need to be discarded. In this age when internet and mobile phones are linking all parts of the world, it is high time we gave up these narrow and ill-defined affinities, and start to look at the world as 'vasudaiva kutumbkam'.

CONCLUSION

Gandhian philosophy is always touches the human development rather than the material concepts. In his clear vision globalization is an open opportunity the people in the world to elevate themselves in all areas because this concept not only dealt with the business operations worldwide. But in reality the results discussed above clearly emphasizing that the developed countries using it as a method to exploit the resources in other countries whereas in the developing countries still the fruits were not found.

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