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## Literature and Globalization

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### Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the debate over economic globalization and explores globalization's effects on and implications through contemporary literature. The era of globalization is typically defined as a time in which the sovereignty of nation states has declined and modes of exchange operate with increasing ease and speed across national boundaries, producing configurations of power that exceed the boundaries of the nation-state. This study suggests that globalization's impact on literature is manifold, with both positive and negative associations. This paper compares and contrasts Amartya Sen's view of economic globalization with that of Vandana Shiva.

### Keywords

Globalization; Multi National Company; Special Economic Zone; Environment.

## Introduction

What is Globalization? As we know Globalization means the process by which developments in one region can shape the lifestyles of people in other regions. Globalization has many meanings depending on the context and on the person who is talking about. Though the precise definition of globalization is still unavailable a few definitions are worth viewing, Guy Brainbant: says that the process of globalization not only includes opening up of world trade, development of advanced means of communication, internationalization of financial markets, growing importance of MNCs, population migrations and more generally increased mobility of persons, goods, capital, data and ideas but also infections, diseases and pollution. The term globalization refers to the integration of economies of the world through uninhibited trade and financial flows, as also through mutual exchange of technology and knowledge. Ideally, it also contains free inter-country movement of labor. In context to India, this implies opening up the economy to foreign direct investment by providing facilities to foreign companies to invest in different fields of economic activity in India, removing constraints and obstacles to the entry of MNCs in India, allowing Indian companies to enter into foreign collaborations and also encouraging them to set up joint ventures abroad; carrying out massive import liberalization programs by switching over from quantitative restrictions to tariffs and import duties, therefore globalization has been identified with the policy reforms of 1991 in India. The effects of globalization are subtle and controversial.

In *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas L. Friedman tries to describe the forces that are globalizing the world at the end of the twentieth century and their effects on environment, economics, politics, geopolitics, and culture:

I define globalization this way: it is the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies to a degree never witnessed before –in a way that is enabling individuals,

corporations, and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper, and cheaper than ever before, and in a way that is enabling the world to reach into individuals, corporations, and nation-states farther, faster, deeper than ever before.

In his next book *The World is Flat*, Thomas L. Friedman refers to “the ten forces that flattened the world.” He argues that globalized trade, outsourcing, supply - chaining, and political forces have changed the world permanently, for both better and worse.

### **Pros and Cons of Globalization**

India has adopted new economic policy since 1991. Following are the main effects of globalization in Indian economy:

**Import-Export:** After the liberalization the import and export become more convenient and hence it affects the Indian economy favorably.

**Industrialization:** The numbers of industries have increase after the liberalization. As as a result the growth rate in the country rose after 1991 rapidly.

**Increase in foreign investment:** After liberalization the multinational companies have increased their investment in India. These companies have shown their interest in India in the different sectors. Likewise many Indian companies became multinational companies.

**Advantage to consumer:** After globalization the prices of many goods and services have been reduced. The consumers are getting the goods of excellent quality. More alternatives are available for the consumer to select goods.

**Expansion of service sector:** The expansion of service sector is the most important effect of globalization in India. The service sector has been increased due to globalization.

This is not true that India is only benefited by globalization. The reality is that the globalization has created several problems. The main problems created by globalization are as follows:

**Impact on small producer:** Globalization adversely affects the small scale industries in India. The small industries are not able to compete with the multinational companies. The condition of these industries is very poor due to globalization. This is notable that after agriculture most of the people are engaged in small scale industries in India.

**Uncertainty of employment:** The jobs of labor are not secure due to globalization. The factories owners, to minimize the cost, provide temporary employment. The labor have to work very long hours in the factories.

**Benefit not to all:** The globalization has not been beneficial to all. The weaker and poor section of the society is far away from the advantages of globalization.

**Influence of developed countries:** The globalization is being implemented by the direction of World Trade Organization. But the developed countries influence these types of organization.

**Regional disparities:** The regional disparities have increased due to globalization. Developed countries are benefited more than the developing countries. Similarly within the country the developed regions are benefited more than backward region.

Thus the globalization has affected the Indian economy in both the ways adversely and positively.

### **Vandana Shiva and Amartya Sen**

Vandana Shiva is an environmental activist, physicist and eco feminist. She is one of the leaders in the crusade against environmental problem, deforestation, appropriation of land in the name of industrialization and pollution. During the 1970s she participated in the Chipko Movement. Vandana Shiva has been a relentless campaigner in the fields of agriculture, biodiversity, biotechnology, bio-ethics and genetic engineering. In 1991 she started Navadanya, which has grown into a proactive movement for seed - saving and organic farming. She has also setup the Bija Vidhyapeet or Seed University to spread the message about holistic living. Vandana Shiva won the

Right Livelihood Award in 1993 (the Alternate Nobel Prize). Apart from this she received the Order of the Golden Ark in 1993, The Pride of the Doon in 1996, the Golden Plant Award in 1997 and the Pellgrino Artusi Award in 2000. Vandana's analysis of Indian society, since 1991, depends on the stage when globalization was given a free access in India. People belonging to the underprivileged groups, who are deprived of their rights, should organize against this exploitation according to Vandana. Democracy is dead in the hands of the corporates. It has to be given life. Globalization is accepted with great interest by the consuming class but the same becomes hard for the sacrificing class.

Amartya Kumar Sen is the first Indian economist who won the most coveted Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998. His contribution to welfare economics and theory of social choice is well known. Sen's insights as an economist are different. In the collection of essays *The Argumentative Indian*, Sen attempts to understand Indian history and identity by focusing on the tradition of public debate. Sen was awarded Bharata Ratna in 1999 and Companion of Honour from the UK in 2000.

Vandana Shiva, in an interview given to Ramin Jahanbegloo, puts forward certain points important in present day India. It is an attack on globalization. The signing of GATT has given the liberty to multinational corporates to open up markets in our country. There was a commitment to the larger public good even by those who were working in their own vested interest. Green Revolution is an example for this. The effects of this Revolution did not reach the common man. Modernization in a very brutal form is taking the leftovers of western society's evolution as India's tomorrow.

Cities have turned into huge carbon footprints with their overcrowded population. The land of farmers is taken away by corporates. Nehruvian and Gandhian models of modernization happened side by side. Vandana Shiva prefers the latter ideal. Human values and even freedom was destroyed by

globalization. Earlier, competitiveness in terms of strangling others was considered anti-social behaviour and those indulging in it were social outcastes. But these outcastes are now on the top of the social and political ladder. Even the awards given by the government and the industries are for those who have violated the law the most. Everywhere we see the exploitation of the weaker sections. The corporates prosper and the rulers support their growth. They get more than enough wealth and the poor is pushed down into more and more poor conditions.

Vandana Shiva, inspired by Gandhiji's ideals started the Navadanya movement. This movement aimed at saving seeds and promoting organic farming. The farmers should be self-sufficient and not depend on multinationals for seeds. The rights of people displaced by SEZs are also addressed in Shiva's activism. Shiva raises the concept of 'earth democracy' as a necessity in this context. It is democracy of mobility. The Indian philosophy of 'Vasudev Kudumbakam' is more conducive to living democracy. Through this ideal we can preserve our ecological treasures. We accept the right of the telawala to work in the wake of chain supermarkets.

We work with three key concepts. (One) Swadeshi -- which means the capacity to do your own thing -- produce your own food, produce your own goods. (Two) Swaraj -- to govern yourself. And we fight on three fronts -- water, food, and seed. JalSwaraj -- JalSwaraj is water independence -- water freedom and water sovereignty. Anna Swaraj is food freedom, food sovereignty. And Bija Swaraj is seed freedom and seed sovereignty. (In regard to these fronts) Swa means self -- that which rises from the self and is very, very much a deep notion of freedom. I believe that these concepts, which are deep, deep, deep in Indian civilization, Gandhi resurrected them to fight for freedom. They are very important for today's world.

Corporates should not get a chance to dictate where and how people should live. Through living democracy we need to fight for freedom and democracy. Vandana's analysis of Indian society since 1991 depends on the stage when globalization was given a free access in India. People belonging to the underprivileged groups, who are deprived of their rights, should organize against this exploitation according to Vandana. Democracy is dead in the hands of the corporates. It has to be given life. Globalization is accepted with great interest by the consuming class but the same becomes hard for the sacrificing class.

Amartya Sen in his essay talks about the requirement of justice that it should not only be done, but must also be 'seen to be done', must be kept in mind while discussing the pros and cons of globalization. He argues that economic globalization is an excellent overall goal and is making positive contributions in the contemporary world. At the same time there is difficulty in making the poor see its positive results. So what are the reasons that make it difficult for everyone to see that globalization is undoubtedly good?

There are many right minded people who cannot accept globalization as a great boon for the deprived people of the world. This makes us understand that there is something wrong with the system as it is practiced today since many people in less prosperous countries find it difficult to see this system in their interest.

While talking of justice within a country, the philosopher John Rawls spoke of the need for public reasoning and a public framework of thought to meet the challenge of non-meeting of minds. This could be applied to the issue of globalization also while assessing the ends and also ways and means of appropriate globalization. The goal of globalization is concerned with not just commodity relations but also with the relations of minds.

Once, the Secretary- General of the United Nations prepared a report on globalization and interdependence to bring about greater understanding of the

issue. In it questions that deal with transparency of assessments and understanding the benefits were mentioned. The achievements of globalization are accepted in many parts of the world. The global economy has brought prosperity to quite a few different areas in the world. A few centuries ago prosperity was in the hands of only a few ones. But now this has changed to a better state. The reasons for this change are economic interrelations and development of modern technology. It is not good to degrade globalization. Instead we have to arrange for making the benefits of globalization more fairly distributed.

There is a belief that in the globalized stage, the poor get poorer. But this is entirely wrong. The causes of poverty lie in the nature of domestic economic and social policies. Only with appropriate domestic policies can global economic relations flourish. Through the expansion of basic education, health care, land reform and facilities for credit global economic relations can flourish. The enthusiasts for globalization often say that the poor are getting less poor and not poorer. Even if the poor were to get just a little richer, this doesn't suggest that the poor get a fair share of the benefits of globalization. The only solution for this problem is to distribute the gains fairly.

### **Effects of Globalization**

According to Vandana Shiva economic globalization is anti-Gandhian while Amartya Sen discusses the various dimensions of globalization and how we should attempt to manage this phenomenon that is a firm reality.

Amartya Sen in the essay gives us an idea of globalization which is different from the views of Vandana Shiva. Both their essays have very few similarities but many contrasts. The fact is that globalization has influenced all spheres of life to a great extent. The effects of globalization are always controversial. For Vandana Shiva it is a process which is anti-Gandhian. It always stands for the corporates and supplies their necessities. It affects the common man's lives negatively. But Amartya Sen is of the opinion that



globalization has created many chances. But its effects are controlled by those in power. Sometimes they do not use it for the benefit of the people as a whole and instead use it for the privileged few.

According to Amartya Sen economic globalization is not at all defective. It is very good goal that the present world can reach out to. It can make impressive and positive contribution. The poorest may not be able to understand its positive effects. According to Vandana Shiva, the dreams of our forefathers have not been fulfilled. The rights of the poor are destroyed in the name of competitiveness. The powerful corporates have taken over all the benefits. Most of the poor are being turned out of their own lands by the Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

There is something wrong with the system of globalization as it is seen today. This is understood by the fact that Amartya Sen says that many right-minded people believe that globalization has not done anything in the way of welfare for the poor. Sen argues that globalization has brought prosperity to many in the world. Poverty and short life spans which existed a few centuries ago have changed for the better today. Prosperity which was in the pockets of some has gone to the common man. These changes are due to the development of modern science.

Vandana Shiva agrees that there has been success in the fields of industry and agriculture with the Green Revolution. However the results of globalization did not reach the common people. India in the name of modernization is adapting the remains of western society's evolution. Globalization has divided India into two classes – a consuming class and a sacrificing class.

Amartya Sen is of the opinion that poverty cannot be solved by denying the poor the benefits of modern technology. Instead of denying the benefits we can distribute the advantages of globalization among the common man. It can flourish with appropriate domestic policies through the expansion of basic

education, health care, land reform and facilities for credit. These are good subjects for public discussion and should come in place of blind criticisms.

It is not good to degrade globalization. Instead we have to arrange for making the benefits of globalization more fairly distributed. There is a belief that in the globalized stage, the poor get poorer. But this is entirely wrong. The causes of poverty lie in the nature of domestic economic and social policies. Only with appropriate domestic policies can global economic relations flourish. Through the expansion of basic education, health care, land reform and facilities for credit global economic relations can flourish. The enthusiasts for globalization often say that the poor are getting less poor and not poorer. Even if the poor were to get just a little richer, this doesn't suggest that the poor get a fair share of the benefits of globalization. The only solution for this problem is to distribute the gains fairly.

### **Conclusion**

Globalisation is the new buzzword that has come to dominate the world since the nineties of the last century with the end of the cold war and the break-up of the former Soviet Union and the global trend towards the rolling ball. Also Globalisation has brought in new opportunities to developing countries. But globalisation has also thrown up new challenges like growing inequality across and within nations, volatility in financial market and environmental deteriorations. Another negative aspect of globalisation is that a great majority of developing countries remain removed from the process. Till the nineties the process of globalisation of the Indian economy was constrained by the barriers to trade and investment liberalisation of trade, investment and financial flows initiated in the nineties has progressively lowered the barriers to competition and hastened the pace of globalisation

Environmental degradation is an issue which has been debated ferociously in various international meetings, and it has to be accepted that globalization is one of the most important factors that has aggravated the

situation. The amount of raw materials needed to run industries and factories is taking a toll on the natural reserves of planet earth, and pollution has severely impacted the quality of air that we need so very much for our survival.

As mentioned in the beginning of the article, like everything else globalization has its own share of kudos and brickbats. We have reached a stage since our evolution that discarding the concept of globalization may not be possible at all, therefore, the strategy should be to find solutions to the threats it poses to us so that we can work towards a better, fulfilling future.

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