

## **Globalization: A Critique**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper intends to explain and examine the various dimensions/ facets of globalisation, which naturally require to discuss typological traits and trends of each of its variants within the framework of advantages/ merits and disadvantages/ demerits of globalisation. In other words it would be objectively rational and reasonable to review the available literature followed by cost-benefit analysis of globalisation. The overall perspective of this paper is to examine evolutionary trajectory of globalisation and its implications for global civil society, particularly in the context of sovereignty and political economy.

**Keywords:** globalisation, advantages, disadvantages, dimensions, political economy.

### **Introduction:**

Globalisation has emerged as a pathbreaking strategy / process within the framework of liberalism. It has attracted not only the economists but journalists, social scientists, legal luminaries and environmentalists etc. Conceptually speaking there is no unanimity among the scholars about nature and scope of globalisation. Ever since it has emerged in the modern incarnation it has remained a contested concept among the scholars which continues unabated till date. As a process it symbolises the integration of socio-economic and political systems of the world in such a manner that each country/ state would emerge as interdependent partners of the global village. Owing to its multidimensional nature Modelski has summarised/ categorised following four core characteristics of globalisation: 'economic globalisation, world opinion formation, democratisation and political globalisation'. Anthony Giddens, on the other hand tries to locate this process from sociological perspective and says that globalisation connects and integrates distant geographical locations in such a way that any event at any corner of the globe has its impact on the entire global landscape. David Held and others have viewed this phenomenon as a process which involves "widening, deepening and speeding up world wide connectedness". No doubt articulating a universally agreed definition is a difficult task but in a layman's language it can be defined as a process whereby the nation states agreed to accept and adapt to the neoliberal thematic of interconnectedness and inter-relationship in their entire gamut of affairs/ activities. The aim of this paper is to examine and explain globalisation on a wider canvas of its origin, evolution and effects on global civil society.

### **Evolution:**

Globalisation as a socio-economic phenomenon /process may be a new theoretical/ ideational construct but as an activity its roots can be traced since the advent of civilisation in a form which was qualitatively different from the present era. Historically speaking the process of globalisation began with the development of communication and means of transportation/ though in a rudimentary form . This opened the channel of interaction and interconnection between people of different regions of the world . Historical evidence suggests that people kept moving from one part of the world to another in search of trade and better avenues for settlement. According to Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye , the earliest form of globalisation may be termed environmental as changing climatic conditions have kept on pushing people to migrate for millions of years. They have tried to explain this movement/ migration of people by analysing the origin and spread of few diseases. The first recorded evidence of smallpox epidemic , for example, is from Egypt in the year 1320 B.C but its arrival in China is reported in 49 A. D., Europe in A.D 700, the Americas in 1520 and Australia in 1789. Plague or the black death similarly erupted first in the Asia but it moved to Europe with human migration and caused devastation there between 1346-1352. Moreover, the adventurous journey by Europeans to the new world during fifteenth and sixteenth centuries led to transport of native pathogens that caused deaths of around ninety five percent of the native/ indigenous population. On the basis of these objective facts they say that the first form of globalisation may be called ‘biological’.

Ideally it is difficult therefore to claim any specific date and place of origin of globalisation. However, one can safely say that globalisation in its contemporary form has emerged/ evolved in the penultimate decade of the twentieth century . The factors which contributed most to the rise and growth of globalisation may be linked to the advancement in science and technology in general and information technology in particular.

### **Critical Dimensions**

#### **Economic:**

The term economic globalisation refers to that phase of continuous change in the philosophical as well as strategy in liberal paradigm, which ensures rapid and hegemonic progress of capitalism. The Soviet Union’s disintegration led to not only ‘end of ideology’ debate and emergence of unipolar world but also led to pushing the world economic order to suit the capitalist forces without much challenge. As a logical corollary under the garb of mutually beneficial economic world order the resurgent neo- liberal west or the economic north powers decided to make the developing countries follow their newly prescribed policies, which were drafted by John Williamson. These policies were proposed to encourage adoption of deregulatory state policies, which consisted of fiscal discipline, liberalising trade and commerce, broadening the tax base, increasing foreign

direct investment and guaranteeing security of property rights. Thus, these prescribed policies of progress ensured the overall hegemonic system of globalisation favouring the global north.

### **Political:**

It implies convincing and encouraging the political systems of the world in general and developing societies in particular to adopt the new mantras of democracy which postulates good governance by adopting free access to upcoming technological developments in the realm of governance. However, the basic aim of this openness was to adopt and implement the neo liberal principles of democratic precepts which led to transformation of political communities into global communities of global/ transnational citizenship with a narrative of empowering them to have their say on global issues like climate change ,terrorism , nuclear non- proliferation etc. Assisted by the new tools and technologies like social media these political communities have become easy prey for capitalism as they can not only be influenced personally but can act as a politically charged non state actors of civil society and influence their respective governments for initiating programs and policies that promotes neo liberal agendas of power politics.

### **Cultural:**

The technological revolution has not only aided and escalated the spread of globalisation in concentration of political and economic power among promoters of Neo Liberal states/ countries but it has also emerged as a tool to dismantle the geographical boundaries of socio- cultural norms and values. The ever growing platforms of social media and their influence on the mindset of people at large throughout the world has eroded the purity of cultural identities. Such a change has suitably transformed them into a catchment arena of culture of consumerism. In other words, media hegemony/ imperialism has become the new norm of globalisation, which acts as a catalyst to serve the purposes of capitalism. The changing cultural ethos due to globalisation is referred as the idea of “hybridisation” by Jan Nederveen Pieterse. Explaining the above term he says that it has acted as a mixing tool and technique of cultural elements, which has led to erosion of nationalism as it believes in transcending geographical boundaries and subverting cultural purity and authenticity. Further, he says that globalisation has promoted homogenisation of diverse cultures through Mcdonaldisation which reflects worldwide spread of tentacles of capitalism. Hopper and janssen beautifully describe this phenomenon as a process which is based upon domination of certain languages like English throughout the length and breadth of the globe. Additionally, spread of popular culture and its influence through music, movies, fashion and sports are significant manifestations of cultural globalisation.

### **Technological:**

It has been the most critical component of converting neo liberal ideas of free market economies through innovative technologies particularly digital and ICT technologies. It has emerged as the most powerful and effective tool of interconnection and collaborative dissemination of innovative technologies like ICT and communication systems etc, which are critical requirements for effective and efficient implementation of capitalist systems within the ideological framework of neo liberalism. In fact, diffusion of innovation is the procedural path for spreading latest technologies, ideas and practices which the powerful economies intend to deploy in order to achieve their objectives of reaping greater benefits. This is achieved through promoting collaboration at the level of industrial complex as well as the universities through pooling of their resources, economic as well as intellectual capital.

### **Conclusion:**

It can be succinctly concluded that globalisation has been a evolutionary process of history which began with movement of people across the globe not only for trade and commerce but also for exchange of ideas, knowledge and technological know how. In its contemporary incarnation it is represented by the ideological support of neo liberal ideology which provides legitimacy to internationalisation through trans border penetration of ideas, technology, services and economic activities with minimum or no state regulatory constraints. The most important catalyst for the world wide reach of this byproduct of capitalism is the remarkable development in the information technology which helped to make deep inroads into the length and breadth of the entire world impacting nation-state boundaries porous and permeable which in turn facilitated uninterrupted flow of Human Resources, goods and services, capital, ideas, culture and technology etc. It has qualitatively changed the political economy of the world by enabling the entry of the world into a phase of cosmopolitanism which promotes multicultural loyalties at the cost of exclusive sovereign zone of influence by any nation states. The ideational construct of cooperative interconnection for progress and prosperity for the entire world has actually been a camouflaged attempt by the proponents of globalization, which has led to widening of North-South divide.

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