



IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON TRIBAL WOMEN IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is free movement of people, services, labour and goods, across national boundaries. The globalization has many aspects sometimes affect tribal communities positively sometimes negatively. The tribal people are affected with the emergence of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) since the New Economic policy enacted in 1991. Tribal women, their livelihood is adversely affected by the process of globalization, their crisis has increased. The ways of life of tribal women are changing by globalization. Globalization has put everything for the sale- forest, land, natural resources all are for market. The tribal women earn their livelihood with making handicrafts, working in cottage industry, collecting woods, and forest products for making food. All these activities are in danger. The status of the tribal women usually depends on the economic roles they play. More than the men, the women walked long distances to fetch wood and fodder. Besides they also collected fruits, roots and tubers, lac, gums leaves for self consumption and sale. The tribal women in India have no role to play in social and political sphere, globalization is making this situation more worsen. This paper tries to discuss the problems and challenges facing tribal women due to process of globalization. The paper is based on secondary data and ethnographic method.

Key word: Importance of Globalization, Tribal women employment, Livelihood, Economic Growth etc.

INTRODUCTION

Tribes comprise of around 8.6 percent of the total population of our country. Tribal's or Adivasis, as they are known as a symbol of self- assertion. The total tribal population in India is 104.28 Millions. In it, rural tribal population is 93.82 Millions, while the urban tribal population is 10.46 Millions. The tribal population has increased from 1951 to 2011, by 85.1 Millions. The



increase of tribal population to the total population is only 3.31 percent from 1951 to 2011. The tribal population is concentrated mostly in the central part of India and North-East region of India. The condition of tribal women is much better in North-East region to central part of India. The sex ratio of tribal population is 990 women per 1000 men, at national level while general sex ratio is 943, it shows comparatively better conditions of tribal women to our 'that so called' civilized society.

The tribal way of life is depends upon the forests from birth to death. It is ironical that the poorest people in our country is living in those areas, which are very rich in natural resources. History tells that, tribal people have always pushed to corners owing to economic interests of various dominant groups. In this new globalization age, this process is being more effective than before. Tribal women which are 51.78 millions in total 104.62 million of total tribal population are more adversely affected by the process of globalization.

MEANING OF TRIBE

The term 'tribe' denotes a group of people living in primitive conditions. Article 366(25) of India constitution refers scheduled Tribes as those communities who are scheduled in Article 342 of the constitution. This article says that those communities, have been declared by the president will be considered to be scheduled tribes and can benefited by government policies and schemes. The essential characteristics for a community to be identified as scheduled tribes are-

Geographical isolation, distinctive culture, indications of primitive traits, shyness of contact with community at large and also backwardness. This criteria is not spelt out in the constitution but has become well established. It subsumes the definition contained in 1931 census, the reports of first Backward classes commission 1955, the Advisory committee (Kalelkar, on Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee) 1965 and Chandra committee, 1969.

.....(Annual Report 2013-14, Ministry of Tribal Affairs)

WHAT IS GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is free movement of goods services, capital, ideas and information technology across national boundaries. All those processes by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single society are globalization. Globalization can be thus defined as the intensification of



worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. (Anthony Giddens). Some people say that globalization leads to structural change in a Economy, society, alters consumer preferences, lifestyles and demands of people. While some sociologists say that the process of globalization is a strong weapon for equalizing per capita income between nations, others say that the developing societies are exposed to threats of further aggravation and marginalization in the process. Globalization is a double edged sword. It is a controversial process that assaults national sovereignty, erodes local culture and tradition and threatens economic and social stability'. (Robert S. Samuelson) There can be raised several questions against it!

EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON TRIBAL SOCIETIES

The effects of globalization on tribal people are more than any other factor because these communities have no voice and are therefore swept aside easily by the invisible hand of the market and its proponents. Actually Globalization is a multi-pronged attack on the foundation of tribal existence and livelihood and their way of life. Some of the crucial effects on tribal people are as follows –

- ✓ Land is very important component for tribal people. It occupies their source of livelihood. But the process of globalization trend has alienated tribal's from their mainstay. The states affected by alienation of land are Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The globalization has over bounded the tribal people with various debts due to inadequate livelihood resources. The lack of education, purchasing power and lack of resources for engaging in profitable activities has led to indebtedness for tribal communities.
- ✓ The tribal people are based on forests for their survival. Although they live in isolation in forest areas, they have harmonious relationship with forests and species. But the development of wild life sanctuaries and eco-park devastate their habitat and displacing their living.
- ✓ Displacement of tribal people from their land is an important issue in post-liberalization era. The displacement has taken place on account of various development projects like irrigation, dams, under-ground coal mines, mineral based industries in various parts of the country.



- ✓ As far as neo-liberal development has advanced the tribal people has been engulfed into poverty. Globalization based on individualistic nature. It promoted consumerism, selfishness among the tribal people. Globalization is for profit at any cost. Globalization is natural resource intensive. The nexus between state and market has infuriated the tribal people against unilateral development model of India. The lack of employment opportunity and recession from various industries has worsen the situation in cycle of poverty.

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON TRIBAL WOMEN

The impact of globalization on tribal women is very strong as it has changed her status and role and her socio-economic conditions.

The tribal people in the past were usually forest dwellers and their livelihood depended upon the food gathering economy. Women walked long distances to fetch wood and fodder. Besides, they also collected fruits, roots and tubers, lac, gums, and leaves for self consumption and sale. As there has been large scale deforestation, women have to slog harder to retain the gathering economy. The tribal areas of Betul in Madhya Pradesh, collection and marketing of firewood is generally the domain of tribal women. They sell it a Sahpur and whatever income they have spend it on fulfilling the basic need as rice, pulse, edible oil, soap etc. Globalization is devastating her gathering economy.

Jhum cultivation or shifting cultivation was a common practice in tribal areas. Jhum cultivation as a women's enterprise since it is they who almost entirely managed the show. It is the women who preserved the seeds at home and took the decision about the crops to be cultivated every season. Jhum cultivation is badly affected due to globalization and government legislation.

Apart from the hill areas, tribal people have also in present days opted for settled cultivation in the place of the forest based economy. They also prefer to raise cash crops and exotic high breed crops. In the process the women are getting displaced from their work. In the West Bengal, the Santhal women in groups migrate down to the southern districts for weeding and transplanting after completing the cultivation work in their own dry areas.



In central India, there have come many big and small dams and many development projects as well, industries have established. The forests being depleted and very little poor quality land to cultivate on, the tribes are compelled to serve, in industries sector. Tribal men and women are both exploited by the contractors and middlemen. The women suffers all the more as they get sexually abused. Besides they are paid much less as compared to the men.

The tribal women in North-East India, were famous for their weaving skills. Almost every tribal girl used to learn weaving at home. They usually used to weave in their leisure time and for self consumption. Each textile used to portray a certain history of the respective tribes. But now with commercialization of the products, in the process of globalization the women have lost control over the designs as the market has come to be the decisive factor.

Tribal women as such enjoy very little control over immovable property. They hardly ever inherit land especially in patrilineal societies. The tribal women generally inherit the ornaments from the mother. The customary laws do not permit them to own land. The kitchen garden is controlled by the wife. The pigs, goats and chicken too are owned by her. The sale proceeds of the domesticated animals are retained by the housewife and she makes purchases of her own liking when visiting her parental home. Vegetables and horticulture products are usually sold by them in the market. In the neo-liberalization era, their profits are coming down.

Women among some of the tribes of the North-East are very proficient in doing business. It is mainly the Khasi women who run shops in the markets of Shillong and Nangpoh in Meghalaya. Many women in Mizoram too manage big shops and large business. The women work force in the Mizoram is concentrated more in primary sector and many of them turning to become agricultural laboures. Many women run small family business called micro industries, which require very little initial capital and often involve the marketing of food articles and domestic system. But the low capital labour ratios confine women to low productivity undertakings. The globalization is making the conditions worsen.

The tribal women in India have not very important role to play in the social and political sphere. The tribal women were no place in the village councils. It is only now, due to mandatory



provisions of the state, that some women are getting elected in the Panchayats. But even in such cases, usually the women are dictated by husbands or relatives. The process of globalization have not put any role to change the socio-political status of tribal women in any ways. All together we can say that the processes of globalization have not play much role for the betterment of the status and role of tribal women. In many cases it has made her condition worsen.

CONCLUSION:

The gains of globalization have so far accrued to those who have education and skill advantages, easier market access and possession of assets for used as collateral to access credit. For tribal women, globalization is associated with rising prices, loss of jobs, and lack of health care and tribal development programmes. Globalization may also weaken the constitutional protections, in terms of education and job reservations given to tribal people. We know that in private sector, there is no any reservation to tribal people. Hence the government should make special programs that are required to address the problems of tribal women, particularly in the context of globalization.

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