

Globalization and Muslims

Dr. Razia

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi 110025, India

Email: jeerazia@gmail.com

Abstract

India is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-linguistic country. People belonging to many religious faiths live side by side. Muslims are one of them who constitute the largest minority group in the country. This paper presents aim pact of globalisation on Muslim minorities in India in historic and present perspective. Based on the different secondary data sets, it tries to show that how Muslim community across India has utilised the process of globalisation and achieved educational and social mobility higher than others. Muslims as a Minority group didn't take part in the educational development, especially in the higher educational ground where the other communities has acquired the benefits with the historical interventions that are taken place in the pre globalisation era. The growth process of attaining higher education by the community was slower than any other socio-religious community. It also try to see and understand the double burden and deprivation imposed by the Globalisation on the Indian Muslims because of lack of overall educational development among the community and alienation form the whole process.

The definition of the world globalisation would be depended on who is defining and what is the purpose. When it is used in economic context, it refers to the reduction

and removal of barriers between national borders in order to facilitate the flow of goods, capital, services and labour. Globalisation is not a new phenomenon, it began towards the end of the nineteenth century but it was slow down in between and raised again rapidly during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Globalisation is the process of integration across world-space arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. Advances in transportation and telecommunications infrastructure, including the rise of the telegraph and its posterity the Internet, are major factors in globalization.¹ The term globalization has been increasingly used since the mid-1980s and especially since the mid-1990s. In 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) identified four basic aspects of globalization- trade and transactions, capital and investment movements,

¹Nayef R.F., Al-Rodhan, *Program on the Geopolitical Implications of Globalization and Transnational Security, Definitions of Globalization: A Comprehensive Overview and a Proposed Definition*, 19 June 2006.

Migration and movement of people, and the dissemination of knowledge.²

Further, environmental challenges such as climate change, cross-boundary water, air pollution, and over-fishing of the ocean are linked with globalization. Globalizing processes affect and are affected by business and work organization, economics, socio-cultural resources, Human resources and the natural environment.³

Globalization is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade, investment and aided by information technology. This process has effects on the environment, on culture on political systems, on economic development, prosperity and on human physical well being in societies around the world.⁴

In short, globalization is about the connections between different regions of the world? From the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the environmental and the ways in which they change and increase over time. Globalization began with people travelling. For millennia, human beings have migrated? Settling new

lands, building empires, or searching for work. Most migrations in history have not been global. But from the sixteenth century onward, Europeans travelled the world, conquering the Americas and Oceania before making colonial incursions into Africa and Asia. The first great wave of modern migration was the transatlantic slave trade. Nine to twelve million people were shipped as slaves from Africa to the Americas by the mid-nineteenth century. But this was dwarfed by the extraordinary outpouring of Europe's poor to the New World from the mid-nineteenth century onward. More than thirty million people moved in this way between 1880 and World War I.⁵

Globalization, though not a new phenomenon for the Muslim World, holds added significance in view of the position it is assuming as a framework for the re-ordering of the world. The speed, the spread and the scope of contemporary globalization, in the wake of revolutionary technological advancements, have turned the planet into a village. Relations between communities and nations are being redefined.

The past ten years have seen rapid and dramatic social, economic, political and technological changes on a worldwide scale. Transcending borders and accelerating people's ability to communicate and to trade across continents, this global revolution has been described as the process of globalization.

² International Monetary Fund, "Globalization: Threats or Opportunity", IMF Publications, 12th April, 2000.

³Bridge, Gavin, "Grounding Globalization: The Prospects and Perils of Linking Economic Processes of Globalization to Environmental Outcomes", *Economic Geography*, Vol. 78, No. 3, Jul., 2002.

⁴<http://www.globalization101.org/what-is-globalization/>

⁵ David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton, "Globalization", *Global Governance*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Oct.–Dec. 1999).

Like the rest of the world, Muslim societies, from different countries have been deeply affected by globalization. The lives of their peoples have been changed as have their thought patterns and sense of creative expression. Some have welcomed these changes, while others worry about the nature of the transformations taking place and the capacity of those effected to respond appropriately.⁶

Age of globalization was launched in India by 1990. The impact of the current globalization on the Muslim world has been varied, with positive and negative outcomes for different nations. Whereas Malaysia, for instance, has benefited enormously from one particular aspect of globalization, namely, trade, the interwoven international financial networks proved disastrous to the Indonesian economy during the 1997–1998 Asian financial crises. The globalization of communication technologies, for its part, is exerting tremendous impact across the Muslim world, particularly on youth.⁷

Under the influence of the globalization processes, the cultural, ideological, and social-economic features of the Muslim World have been strengthened and the shaping of a new transnational political conscience of Muslims is underway.

⁶“Globalization and Muslim Societies”, retrieved from,
<http://www.loc.gov/locvideo/mslm/globalmuslim.html>

⁷http://islamwest.org/publications_islam_and_the_West/Who_Speaks_For_Islam/Who-Speaks-For-Islam_05.html

Thanks to the quality pan-Arab mass-media that have appeared recently, which utilize the experience and achievements of Western journalism, a new cultural-informational, ideological and even theological (convergence of madhhabs) space has been created. Their influence is not limited by the Arab countries. These mass-media are watched by people all around the Islamic world, for the Arabic language still remains the language of international communication of all Muslims and Islamic elite in particular.

Some of the first to utilize the advantages of globalization were banks and companies that conduct their activities in accordance with the norms of Shari’ah law. The Islamic banking system has joined world’s financial structures without fear of the prohibition of the interest fee by Islam. As of 1997, Islamic finance growth rate grows by 15 percent a year, which significantly exceeds the world GNP growth rate (1998 – 2 percent, 1999 – 2.5 percent) even with inflation rate considered. Another fact telling of the influence of globalization upon the world’s Muslim community is that an increasing amount of literature, both strictly religious and related to other topics, is published in English — the language of Internet and globalization.⁸

Although globalization has given many Muslim populations access to greater knowledge and increased communication.

⁸“Is globalization good for Muslims”, retrieved from,
<http://www.onislam.net/english/politics/transnational/457662-globalization-good-for-muslim-world.html>

Foreign aid has also benefited the less fortunate in areas of health and society. but for some, globalization can mean raising the ghosts of the past, for the underdeveloped nations, colonialism is all too fresh in their memories with no unified structure or leader the Muslim community grapples with coinciding its traditional faith with modernity and progress. muslim face concerns about health, education and the cultural ramifications of globalization in addition to those economic and developmental issues.

Challenges faced by Muslims

Globally, Muslims are part of diverse cultures, socio-economic classes and ethnicities. They comprise the second most populous religious demographic in the world. Globalisation has intensely positive and negative connotations in the Muslim world. Globalization has given many Muslim populations access to greater knowledge and increased communication.⁹

Muslim world in the new trend of global flows are significantly facing various Challenges. On the one hand, they, many people, many politicians, religious leadership and especially those are called as fundamentalism; tend to preserve Islamic traditions as an essential and stable lifestyle. According to a poll about global attitude toward globalization, the picture that emerges from the pattern of responses to the full set of survey questions among

⁹"What the Muslim World thinks about Globalization", 31 July 2008, retrieved from, <http://www.globalization101.org/what-the-muslim-world-thinks-about-globalization-2/>

Muslims' countries is that they are relatively averse to change, instead favouring the maintenance of existing economic and social arrangements especially if the forces of change are regarded as emanating from foreign or non-traditional sources. Moreover some studies have suggested that there is a negative correlation between Muslims thought and economic prosperity.¹⁰ Muslim were faced other different challenges during era of globalization. muslim faced new culture, new educational system, new economic system and western political as well as moral philosophy. Now the challenges were not only cultural and political but also that of science and technological inventions.¹¹

In this globalized era, no- Islamic cultural elements are gradually being adapted and adopted by Muslims, resulting in a mixture of western and Islamic culture. Hence, the features of Islamic culture are being compromised with the western one, which further creates identity crisis among Muslims. Globalisation has led to the rapid transformation of cultures around the world. Through the print and electronic media, Westernised cultural artefacts are being transmitted across cultures. In fact, global culture industries are greatly influenced by western values and traits,

¹⁰Khalil Gholami, "Intercultural challenges in the space of Globalization: How Muslims react to Global flows", University of Helsinki, Dec., 2005.

¹¹Engineer, Asgar Ali, *Islam, Globalization and challenges*, 19 April, 2008.

many of which are alien to Islam. By far the most visible manifestation of the emerging global culture is in the vehicle of popular culture, which penetrates broad masses of people all over the world.

Positive aspects of globalization on Muslims

Foreign Direct Investment has helped to reduce poverty by creating jobs and improving incomes.

The expansion of trade and foreign investment has accelerated social mobility and strengthened the middle class.

New communications and information technology have helped disseminate knowledge in many fields of study and disciplines.

Communications is cheaper and easier. Cost of phone calls as well as travel has fallen. This makes it easier to understand one another. Communities although heterogeneous can be more means of understanding each other.

Globalization makes it possible for humanity to have concern for each other when calamities- natural or man-made affect others.

Issues such as human rights and public accountability are brought to the front and the rights of women are highlighted and the problems many women face are addressed.

All of these are contributing to religious teaching.

Negative aspects of globalization on Muslims

Environmental degradation due to unrestrained logging activities of transnational corporations whose individual aim is to multiply profits.

Although poverty has been reduced to a certain extent, new economic disparities have been created. There are stark regional disparities in poverty.

Basic necessities in life are set aside in favour of profits. Many countries in the south have been occupied with facilitating foreign investment in industries that are beneficial to foreign markets and neglect the most fundamental needs of the people.

Globalization aids the removal of national controls over cross-border financial flows. Dramatic outflows of capital from one country to another have caused destruction in some currencies, particularly in southeast Asia.

Advances in technology aggravated by the outflow of capital to low cost production sites in the south has caused growing unemployment in the north, which is an affront to human dignity.

Globalization has popularized the consumer culture; Consumerism has given birth to materialism where people are more interested in what they have rather than the essential aspects of humanity.

Formal education systems are emphasizing technical and managerial skills responding to market demands and leaving aside traditional academic subjects. This means that education is nothing more than

acquiring specific skills and techniques and less emphasis on moral education.¹²

It is clear from the above description of Impact of Globalization on the country's Muslims with each class has had a profound. At the present time the concept of globalization is emerging by which no country, class, group and community can escaped. So it can say that Globalization provides a very unique opportunity to Islam and the Muslim. The Muslims can seize these opportunities only if, on the one hand, they seriously strive to overcome their weaknesses and drawbacks, and on the other, they open up a meaningful civilization dialogue with the rest of the world, particularly with the West.

Conclusion

In conclusion thereof globalization brought a great change in the economic, political, and cultural system of our present society. The process of globalization, which includes economic, politic, technological advancement, etc, plays a great role in developing a country. Malaysia, as an aggregate of the global community is experiencing this phenomenon of highly sophisticated technology ranging, printing to telegraphic, telephonic and cinematography, which covers almost every aspect of human efforts from sport, education, and business to entertainment. The challenges of globalization are

presented in a way of how it affects the development of morality amongst Muslim. We can conclude that the challenges that are posed are very indirect and sometimes the bad elements be traced to the domination of globalization process. However, the challenge is obvious in the aspect of entertainment and technological advancement. Some of the characteristics of the youth that may be considered as factors that the youth to be involve in immorality and misconduct have also been mentioned that may lead to Muslims to be backward communities and unsuccessful. To sum up, it can be said that the effects of globalization may influence the young generation in term of their lifestyle, character and level of intellectua. Globalization is one of the most debated issues in the intellectual milieu of globalisation, its consequences on Islamic cultural identity. The pervasive impact of cultural globalization is one of the key dimensions that muslims around the world need to be concerned about cultural globalization has brought detrimental consequences to the muslims in particular and to the diverse culture around the world in general.

¹²"What the Muslim World thinks about

Globalization", 31 July 2008, retrieved

from, <http://www.globalization101.org/what-the-muslim-world-thinks-about-globalization-2/>