

Globalisation and its Effect on Civil Society

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Abstract

Globalization is being seen as a panacea for all ills facing a nation's economy. However, there is not attempt made to gauge, quantify, research or evaluate the exact impact or effect it will make on different organs of a government or society. Civil Society which is supposed to be the hallmark of making demands on the decision-makers is also getting globalized – subject to international interest group pressures and also at times allegedly persuaded/educated by global players.

Keywords: Globalization, Civil Society, Democracy, Competitive, Social System

INTRODUCTION

The institution of democracy rests on three major pillars: government business community and civil society. Globalisation is a new initiative offering tremendous potential and scope for enhancing part of civil society in governance. Globalisation is not a new phenomenon; knowledge about globalisation with all its theories and practices has spread across the boundaries and frontiers of nations from time immemorial. Today, no nation can claim to have a constitutions system, which evolved exclusively from its native ethos without foreign influences. In the end of twentieth and beginning of twenty-first century, country witnessed a period of great change. All buzzwords seem to cluster around the same dimension of present change, i.e., transformation of practice and norms. This transformation is referred throughout the world as globalisation. Globalisation describes an ongoing process by which regional economics, societies and cultures have become integrated through a globe-spanning network of communication and exchange. The term is sometimes used to refer specifically to economic globalisation, as the integration of national economies into the international economy through trade, foreign direct investment, capital flows migration and the spread of technology. However, globalisation is usually recognised as being driven by a combination of economic technological, socio-cultural, political and biological factors. The term can also refer to the transnational circulation of ideas, languages or popular culture. It has shrunk the world through the emerging bonds of new technologies in the context of global. Neighbourhood, “global village” or the “world without borders” (Bhagwan,

2009). Globalisation can be understood and defined mainly two ways. One is the economic; the other is the non-economic, which broadly includes socio-cultural, historical and political dimension of globalisation. Although the economic argument of globalisation appears stronger and widespread than other aspects of cultural globalisation, which is generally done in the existing literature on globalisation. Economic, scientific and cultural relations are a way of helping us get to know each other better. There is a close, though not automatic, link between economic growth and poverty reduction.

GLOBALISATION: MEANING AND FEATURES

Globalisation is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and government of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology. This process has effects on the environment, culture, political systems, economic development and prosperity, and human physical well-being in societies around the world. A defining feature of globalisation is an international industrial and financial business structure. Globalisation is referred to a process of increasing economic integration and growing economic interdependence between countries of the world economy. It is not only associated with the increasing cross-border movement of goods, services, capital, technology, information and people, but also with an organisation of economic activities that cross national boundaries. The proves are driven by the lure of profit and threat of competition in the market. The UN document defines globalisation as increased and intensified flows between countries. These flows are of goods, services, capital, ideas, information and people, which produce national cross-border integration of a number of economic, social and cultural activities. Globalisation is not only economic, but also political, technological and cultural as well; globalisation, in fact, is a complex set of processes, rather than a single one. And they operate, not in a harmonious, but contradictor fashion.

Globalisation is viewed as a phenomenon that generates three types of relations. They are: imperialist-directed exchanges with colonial or dependent nations; interimperialist exchanges between dominant powers; and interdependent exchanges between non-imperialist nations and classes.

Amiya Kumar Bagchi finds about nine distinct features of globalisation, as follows:

- Spread of international trade in goods and services.
- Migration of people between countries or regions.
- Exchange of money and means of payment on increasing scale across countries or regions.
- Flow of capital from one country to another to help produce goods and services.

- Flow of finance (not necessarily linked to the production of goods and services) between different countries.
- Emergence of transnational companies engaged in the activities listed above.
- International trade in technology.
- Spread of print and electronic media.
- Growth in international trade and production of services of all kinds: shipping, insurance banking, finance and health care.

Globalisation has been in existence since the rise of trade links between Sumer and the Indus Valley Civilisation in the third millennium B.C. Others have perceived an early form of globalisation in the trade links between the Roman Empire, the Parthian Empire and the Han Dynasty. The increasing articulation of commercial links between these powers inspired the development of the Silk Road, which started in western China, reached the boundaries of the Parthian empire and continued onwards towards Rome. The Islamic Golden Age was also an important early stage of globalisation, when Muslim traders and explorers established a sustained economy across the Old World, resulting in a globalisation of crops, trade, knowledge and technology. The so-called Pax Mongolica of the twelfth century had several other notable globalising effects. It witnessed the creation of the first international postal service, as well as the rapid transmission of epidemic diseases such as bubonic plague across the newly unified regions of Central Asia. The Age of Discovery brought a broad change in globalisation, being the first period in which Eurasia and Africa began to engage in substantial cultural, material and biologic exchange with the New World. In the seventeenth century, globalisation also became a private business phenomenon when chartered companies like British East India Company, which is often described as the first multinational corporation, was established, as well as the Dutch East India Company and the Portuguese East India Company. The nineteenth century witnessed the advent of globalisation in something approaching its modern form. Industrialisation allowed the cheap production of household items using economies of scale, while rapid population growth created sustained demand for commodities and manufactures. Globalisation in this period was decisively shaped by nineteenth century imperialism. After the Opium Wars and the completion of the British conquest of India, the vast populations of these regions became ready consumers of European exports. Globalisation in the middle decades of the twentieth century was largely driven by the global expansion of multinational corporations based in the United States and the worldwide export of Western culture. In late 2000s, much of the industrialised world entered into a deep recession (Bhagwan, 2009).

The scopes of this article is not to trace the origin and historical development of civil society, but to briefly discuss the concept of the term as it is understood today, analyse the civil society movement in India in context of globalisation and the millennium development goals and targets now propagated by the United Nations, the challenges before the civil society and the various constraints it is facing in promoting, protecting and advancing good Governance in India and the world. Civil society is composed of the totality of voluntary civil and social organisations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society as opposed to the forced backed, structures of a state (regardless of that State's political system) and commercial institutions of the market. United Nations Development Program (UNDP) explains that "civil society refers to non-profit organisations and institutions, distinct from the state, the market and the family". Civil society organisations include community groups, academics and research institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), cultural groups, professional associations and religious groups (www.undp.org/legalempowerment).

The London School of Economics (Centre for Civil Societies) defines: Civil Society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power, civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movement, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups. (Bhagwan, 2009) Civil society is necessary for all-round development of the society, namely, its civil, political, social, cultural and economic development. Civil society, strictly, is a separate entity from the state, works in an autonomous way. It has its own life and may not be confused with¹ family or a clan or a locality (Stiefel, 2001).

Nielson (1995) says "A viable civil society, a kind of third force between the state and the economy, on the one hand, and the private sphere, on the other, seems to require some effective sense of community and of there actually being a community to which people are committed. The concerns of the citizens and the voice of the people are reflected through the medium of civil society. The concept of civil society is dosery related to the concept of good governance; in the present world, good governance is not a static concept but is a dynamic process that encompasses the needs of the society on all fronts, such as their economic, social and cultural lives along with the economic and political rights. The concept of good governance depends upon a strong civil society participation in public affairs. It is a mechanism by which various democratic institutions that are part of the governance process, but working beyond the control

of the government, help the citizens and various groups of civil society further their interests, demand their legal rights, meet their various duties obligations and also mediate their differences. The concept of good governance evaluates the action of the government in open policy making, professionalism and accountability of bureaucracy, observations of the rule of law, transparent administration bereft of arbitrary policy making. All this is possible because of a vibrant civil society; a society in which all factions of population have due representation and is not dominated by the elite or the powerful sections of the civil society. (Shills, 1997) The United Nations Development Programme lays down nine characteristics of good governance, such as participation, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, rule of law and strategic vision. The process of good governance must ensure that political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights are protected and priorities should be based on consensus in society in which the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable are cared for.

In the Indian context, as has been referred above, we have an emerging vibrant civil society in all spheres of life. With the 73rd and 74th amendment of the Constitution, a strong civil society has been formed at the village, block, civil subdivision and right up to the district level. The Panchayati Raj institutions (including urban local bodies) both in rural and urban sector have played a very important role in human rights movement in educating the people, making them aware about their rights and spreading the political consciousness. These grass root democracies have now emerged as potential vote banks and the political process is not in a position to ignore their concerns. They have developed the collective strength to demand their rights. The UNDP has rightly advocated the concept of sustainable development (United Nations Development Programme, (1997) and emphasised to eliminate poverty, creating jobs, sustaining livelihoods, protecting and regenerating the environment and promoting the advancement of women. It also emphasised further on strengthening the institutional structure so that the civil society has the opportunity to effectively participate in decision-making process and thereby ensuring good governance (United Nations Development Programme, (1997).

To identify new areas of promise and draw up a comprehensive prospective plan for further economic interaction, impart a fresh momentum to the comprehensive cooperation in the process, we have much further to go to realise our full potential and, for this, we must first and foremost bridge the information gap. While government capable of coping with its major problems — problems of water provision, sanitation, transportation or maintenance of health — can work to address these infrastructural problems, it is for community to optimise their utilisation as there is no reason of doubt that we will achieve extraordinary target. Civil society has become important channel for delivery of social services and implementation of development initiatives and often represents the most effective alternative for delivering social services to low-income

communities. Civil society has important role in improving the working of the local self-government department along with the local bodies for achieving the goal of providing better civic amenities to citizens and setting the stage for the massive development. Government's decentralisation programmes, which transfer power to the local level (Panchayati Raj System), will also be helpful in local government–civil society partnerships for service delivery. Civil societies are involved in delivering a wide range of basic services in such areas as village water systems, reconstruction efforts, operating schools, housing, sanitation development, transportation and communication. With improvement and more widespread communication facilities, the people can more fully interact with people in other parts of the country. The opportunity for people to communicate or interact in a digital environment while being physically located elsewhere has given many people new opportunities in life. So is there something intrinsically digital about our present hypermodern culture. They share the basic objective and work in the same direction based on the objective of providing services to common people. It should be understood that civil society involvement in service provision is not intended to undermine the role of government, but rather to complement and improve government action and share their experiences in solving development problem as there would be a crisis in the coming decades in energy, drinking water and environmental protection. Citizens of the developing nations have many challenges before them and to ensure success you take care of the basic needs of the people and accelerate the pace of the nation's growth process. Civil society plays a critical role in independently reviewing the successes and shortfalls in the implementation of programmes for the people and has the ability to channelise the people. It plays the role of broadening governance by increasing the involvement of people and NGO's in decision making by enhancing their capacity to participate effectively in the decision-making processes. It is claimed that high performance would accrue due to the adoption of the above innovative solution and the continuity would be achieved through and by providing reinforcement. With the launching of massive and upgradation programmes by the centre and state governments, to develop and adopt new and innovative techniques for economical suffering, touching all aspects of our lives individually and socially, would be removed. But unfortunately these inventions and techniques have not been put in proper and effective use to caution the local population, so as to mitigate the devastating effects. However, good governance can mitigate the effect on our society. Hence, the expectations of people have risen high and are being considered as a measure of good governance. It is a daunting task for an ordinary person to take stock of the strength of the system and a key measure in the effectiveness would be the integration of civil society initiatives with the system, which will ensure stability and transparency in all policies. The government will have to work hard to restore the lost faith of the civil society on those in power in the wake of the unmindful reform programme initiated in the country. These programmes are to be monitored at the highest level, it would be ensured that proper standard was maintained

by the field agencies with proper supervision at the ground level. This will be an effort to reach out to these weaker sections of the society and ensure basic civic amenities to them in the areas where they are living (Singh, 2008).

Civil society creates more opportunities to expand individuals and their personality and helps them just have to be themselves. We are living in different age, our aspirations are different and our needs are different. People are not as vulnerable as we think, nor as foolish. Ineffective citizenry that fails to be entitled are helped in constructive attempt to find solution, and empower ordinary the right to information as a powerful weapon. It helps build a qualitatively new relationship and mutual desire in developing wider and closer cooperation and understanding in regional and national affairs with a view to deepening coordination on regional and national issues. Civil society and globalisation have helped ordinary people widen their perspective and providing fresh insight on issues concerning their lives. The trend increasingly is towards better communication and healthy interaction. Civil society is the organisation through which people put forth their concerns, develop and harness their own approaches to pursue policy change. The ways through which civil society interacts with the people and influences governance are also diversified, ranging from advocacy and public protest with different private agencies and organisations. People nowadays show their capacity of organisation and mobilisation with full use of the information technologies to express themselves through civil society. It is universally acclaimed that development cannot be sustainable and long lasting unless civil societies' and people's participation is made central to the development process. There is a growing opinion that civil society is all important for strengthening democracy by providing analysis of governance with a systematic understanding of public, private and mixed arrangements and making politicians accountable to their people and nation.

The social, economic, ethnic, religious and political problems are hindrance to the development. These are also the main reasons for the dissatisfaction of the people with their leadership. Civil society and globalisation have instilled a new national and regional identities, and quality of life ranks higher among the priorities and suggest what could be the various solutions that government eventually can accept or present to people as possible alternatives with flexibility. Government should work to strengthen the non-profit organisations, with an emphasis on assisting civil society and empowering people to move towards a more explicit social change through participation in democratic decision-making and social movements. New partnership between the civil society and the governments will make for more informed decision making with more transparency, in turn leading to accountability and responsibility and without this, the vision to have a decentralised setup will not take off. Our commitment to ensure proper roads, power, drinking water, telephones, educational facilities and healthcare to everyone of India's six lakhs villages will bring hope to people who were victims of indifference. Every

effort is made to work for the common objective and we need to work hard on the front. Globalisation evolve a suitable mechanism to integrate it with the operational activities and will provide specific techniques aimed addressing concerns encompassing strategic tactical and operational issues, which are cocooned within the boundaries of the social evils like corruption, hunger and fear from society. It is not the masses but only some intellectuals and politicians who get embroiled in corruption. If we see change both in tone and behaviour then a new situation will develop (Kaur, 2006).

GLOBALISATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Issues arising out of globalisation have radically changed the nature and scope of public administration. The discipline in the changed environment has to respond to the challenges of the new economic order, which appear to have significantly influenced public administration. In the context of globalisation, national economics tend to become more and more open and subject to supra-national economic influences. As economies lose their discrete, self-contained character and become enmeshed in global networks and processes, they become less amenable to national control and management. In short, the ideology as well as practice of globalisation privileges voluntarism and the market as the underpinnings of the new economic order (Kaur, 2006).

Under the changed circumstances, the discipline of public administration has gone through a few models. The *market model* of governance has been holding central position since the late 1980s of the twentieth century. Drawing upon the basic thrust of this model, several new models were constructed to articulate emerging trends in governance (Charkrabarty, 2007). For example, the *participatory model* that concentrates on the participation of the lower echelons of workers. In this model, even the clients and citizens are expected to participate directly to displace the traditional hierarchic bureaucratic structure of administration. Similarly, the idea of *flexible government* goes against the conventional model of permanent employment. Public organisations with much less full-time employment and an increasing level of part-time and temporary workers have steadily come into existence at many places, depending upon the nature of labour market. With the introduction of liberal economies in the greater part of the world, competitiveness has emerged as the key propeller of change in the administrative world. The old rule-bound, rigid, slow, conservative and unresponsive bureaucratic systems are more and more viewed as archaic. The winds, or rather storms, of change are affecting not only the structures, processes and functions, but also the behavioural or attitudinal patterns of the governmental system throughout the world.

Some of the Strikingly Visible Trends of Globalisation and its Effects on Civil Society are mentioned below:

- The arrival of a post-industrial, knowledge-based global economy has undermined old realities throughout the world and has created enormous opportunities for governments at all levels to respond positively and meaningfully to these realities.
- Governments have to be “re-invented” making them more entrepreneurial and assuming that they should “run like a business”.
- In order to “re-invent” governments, old, obsolete and inappropriate ideas and initiatives have to be discarded. Newer ideas are to be absorbed and willingness is to be shown to do more with less.
- A need is strongly felt to shape “catalytic government” that would inspire, guide and help communities, the private sector and the mass to run their own affairs independently.
- Governments ought to become “competitive” in nature. There should be more and more competitions between the government and the private sector and also between the government agencies themselves. Only thus the delivery system may be improved significantly.
- Rule-bound public organisations should be replaced by a mission-driven government whose employees will find themselves to be free to pursue the organisational mission.
- Through rigorous performance-orientation mechanisms, increasing emphasis should be laid on result orientation.
- Public organisations must be conscious of the quality of their outcome.
- Continuous innovations and reforms in governments should be evolved to modernise the public sector.
- Governments need to become more and more consumer friendly. Needs of the customers should be considered to be of utmost importance.
- Governments should explore newer avenues of revenue generation for developing profit centres and curbing wastage.
- Governments should be more proactive and anticipatory rather than only reactive and curative.
- Emphasis should be placed on participation and teamwork and promoting decentralised government replacing a rigid hierarchical government.
- Governments and the public sector should become market oriented and they must seek to strike a balance between markets and the community (D. Osborne and T. Gaebler 1992).

CONCLUSION

Examining all the above-mentioned features of administration as a result of globalisation, it is almost clear that under the changed circumstances of liberalisation and globalisation, the traditional concept of public administration revolving round a sheltered bureaucracy is no longer viable. For example, in the “public choice” perspective, the question is why the bureaucratic form of organisation should enjoy the monopoly over providing public goods and services. It is alleged that bureaucratic failures affect the society adversely both immediately and in the long run. It is not necessary that governments should always assume the role of a direct provider of goods and services. Instead, they can operate indirectly as enablers allowing non-government agencies to operate directly in a wider social perspective. Contracting out on the part of the public sector and introducing “privatisation” in many forms are the present hallmarks of what is commonly known as “the New Right” philosophy of governance.

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