



Research Paper

## Gandhism and Globalization: An Analysis

Sunil Kumar<sup>1</sup>

Assistant Professor in Economics, Government College, Bahu, Jhajjar

**ABSTRACT:** Gandhism humanizing the economic situation of the villages of India and therefore, it lays the greatest importance on the development of agriculture as well as cottage and village industries. Gandhian Model is to provide a basic standard of life through material as well as cultural upliftment of the Indian masses. After independence, India's development path shows a very little obligation towards these objectives although we have progress a lot in term of GDP and infrastructure. The process of Globalization further departs us from these Gandhian broad objectives. This paper reveals that the process of Globalization is converting the majority of the masses in to the marginalised sections. The story of Globalization can be named the story of exclusion. If, our policy makers have the sensitivity towards the values of our freedom struggle they have to change the process of Globalization. The present time has a great demand of such development which includes the all. Such process of development should have roots in Gandhism itself.

**KEYWORDS:** Gandhism, Swaraj, Soviets, Self-sufficiency, Globalization, Americanization, Inclusiveness, Golden Growth Rates.

Received 02 June, 2022; Revised 13 June, 2022; Accepted 15 June, 2022 © The author(s) 2022.  
Published with open access at [www.questjournals.org](http://www.questjournals.org)

### I. CONCEPT OF GANDHISM

During freedom struggle, people thought to find an alternative path of development not unilaterally but they had different visualizations. Many people in India were willing to 'develop' as much as the British and some others wanted to industrialize as rapidly as the Soviets, there were others who kept alive the concept of small and cottage-scale development to be based in largely self-reliant rural communities. This point of view was most energetically propounded by Mahatma Gandhi who popularized the 'charkha' to symbolize the 'swaraj'. Mahatma Gandhi was not a professional economist and not developed a formal model of economic growth. But he advocated certain with regard to the development of Indian agriculture, industry etc. Acharya S. N. Agarwal brought out the "Gandhian Plan" in 1944 and re-affirmed it in 1948. The basic objective of the Gandhian Model is to provide a basic standard of life through material as well as cultural upliftment of the Indian masses. It firstly aims at humanizing the economic situation of the 5.5 lakh villages of India and therefore, it lays the greatest importance on the development of agriculture as well as cottage and village industries.

The Gandhian Model emphasizes on transformation of agriculture as the most important sector for planning in India. National self-sufficiency in foodstuffs and maximum regional self-sufficiency in food are the prime objectives of agricultural development under Gandhism. This has to be achieved not only by larger and better inputs but also through land reforms and organization of cooperative farms, etc. The primary aim of, Gandhian plan is the attainment of maximum self-sufficiency in village communities.

For this self-sufficiency, expansion of cottage industries remains support pillar agriculture. Spinning and weaving are the first place. It is important here to mention that Gandhi was not against the development of large-scale industries. Actually, the Gandhian Model recognizes the need for and the importance of certain selected basic and key industries in India. The Gandhian Model would like the development of basic industries. The most dynamic scientific aspect of the Gandhian Model is that the basic and key industries will be owned and managed by State- they will be in the public sector. In concrete term the Gandhian model of growth has the following points of planning.

- Employment-oriented planning to replace production –oriented planning.

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor in Economics, Government College, Bahu, Jhajjar (Haryana); [skdgopal@gmail.com](mailto:skdgopal@gmail.com)

- Agriculture should have employment potential.
- Large Vs. Small industries: The Gandhian Model of growth is in against of those large scale industries who are producing consumer goods and is in favour of small scale and cottage industries.
- Equitable distribution: Accumulation of wealth and the concentration of economic power are directly due to concentration of the means of production and centralised production. As per Gandhian Model, decentralised small scale production will cut at the very root of accumulation of wealth.

The Gandhian Model of Growth aims at removal of concentration of income and wealth and growth with stability and it hopes to achieve a minimum level of standard within the shortest possible time. After independence, India's development path shows a very little obligation towards these objectives although we have progress a lot in term of GDP and infrastructure. The process of Globalization further departs us from these Gandhian broad objectives.

## **II. CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION AND ITS IMPACTS**

By now thousands of papers and hundreds of books have been written on the topic. One can be sure that there are many definitions trying to explain globalization. Many see it as a primary economic phenomenon, involving the increasing interaction, or integration, of national economic systems through the growth in international trade, investment and capital flows. However, others integrate globalization with a rapid increase in cross-border social, cultural and technological exchange. The sociologist, Giddens, defines "Globalization as a decoupling of space and time, emphasising that with instantaneous communications, knowledge and culture can be shared around the world simultaneously". A Dutch academic Ruud Lubbers defines it as a process in which geographic distance becomes a factor of diminishing importance in the establishment and maintenance of cross-border economic, political and socio-cultural relations. Left critics of globalization define the word quite differently, presenting it as worldwide drive towards a globalised economic system dominated by supranational corporate trade and banking institutions that are not accountable to democratic processes or national governments. Yet another view suggests that Globalization is an undeniable capitalist process. The believers and especially practitioners in Gandhian thought and philosophy by and large have taken anti-Globalization stand. In their understanding, Globalization is bad and anti-Gandhian. Globalization means onslaught of foreign capital and technology destroying the inland systems of production, exploitation of workers in the poor countries and most importantly, cultural invasion and market expansion. Most of them think that it is really happening and will ultimately undermine the autonomy and authority of nation states. Multination National Companies (MNCs) are specially targeted for attack and it is postulated that the MNCs will ultimately undermine the authority of nation-state. The debate in literature on the cultural invasion and market expansion has brought that the main player that is definitely gaining is America. In fact, the perceived threat is that of 'Americanization'.

Globalization is taken by many as an instrument for damaging cultural diversity for triumph of a uni-polar culture to serve the needs of transnational corporations. As we can see that Coca-Cola, American movies and American junk food are popularised everywhere. English is the language of Globalization; by 2050 half the world will be more or less proficient. What are the implication for languages as repositories of culture and identity? American culture, which is dominated by monetary relationships and commercial values are replacing traditional social relationships and family values.

The economic reform or globalization in India has been accompanied on the one hand by a significant deterioration of income inequality and on the other by a fall in the rate at which improvements of wellbeing for the poorest are realised. Whether it is poverty incidence, malnutrition and hunger, reasonably stable and remunerative employment or a host of other indices of deprivation, the pace of progress has slowed after liberalisation and Globalization. This association between Globalization and inadequate advance on the human development front has challenged the legitimacy of the liberalisation process and it is very against to the Gandhian objectives.

The real problem is that neoliberal reform and Globalization has no legitimacy in the perception of the majority of Indians. Globalization has served as a mechanism for a drastic, engineered redistribution of income and wealth in favour of the rich. Hence, majority of the people in India are no longer persuaded that it can make much of a difference to their lives even after three decades of reform experience, the. Despite this, the push for reform persists because a vocal section of the middle class that has benefited from liberalisation has joined the elite's clamour in its support, because parliamentary politics is more and more influenced by money power, and because the peoples' movements including such political parties that oppose such Globalization are yet to gather adequate voter support. Globalization failed in addressing deprivation and allocating additional resources and improving delivery to accelerate progress on the human development front also. What is disconcerting is that it was in periods when GDP growth had accelerated relative to the first three decades after Independence, as in the 1990s, and even boomed, as during 2003-04 to 2007-08, that success in overcoming deprivation has flagged. One obvious reason for this is that the government was not able to appropriate the resources required to compensate for the inequalising effects of growth despite rising profit shares in organised industry and services

and in incomes of the rich. Agricultural sector that is the backbone of the economy according to Gandhian Model is facing distress in during the Globalization. It is grave concern that, according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), between 1995 and 2010, there were a total of 2,56,913 suicides of Indian farmers. A substantial number of these are related to the impact of the agrarian crisis caused by liberalisation. The total number of farmers' suicides has ranged between about 16,000 and 17,000 yearly between 1998 and 2010. This exhibits the real picture of India's much proclaimed growth story. A totally unbalanced pattern of growth has meant that while workforce dependent on agriculture still remains as high as 52 per cent, the agriculture's share in GDP has declined to just 15 per cent. Growth in the services and industrial sectors is not so adequate to absorb surplus workforce from agriculture. It is a matter of deep concern that Indian state has failed to ensure adequate employment opportunities for the masses in rural and urban areas with the adoption of current policies derived by the Globalization. It also shows that the much proclaimed growth story of the Indian economy is a jobless and jobloss growth. According to the National Sample Survey data for 2009-10, an annual rate in employment, which was around 2.7 per cent during 2000-2005 sharply decrease to only 0.8 per cent during 2005-2010. Growth in non-agricultural employment fell from 4.65 per cent per year to 2.53 per cent, even at a time when annual GDP growth was above 8 per cent, during the latter period. The unemployment rate for the youth in the 15 to 29 years age group remains at very high levels. It was 10.9 per cent for rural young males and for rural young females it was 12 per cent. The figures in urban areas is equally disturbing, at 10.5 per cent for young men and as high as 18.9 per cent for young women. In both the rural and urban areas, unemployment rate among the educated (secondary and above) persons of 15 years old and above was higher than those whose education level was lower than secondary school. Even though large numbers of unemployed do not register themselves at the Government employment exchanges, the number of job seekers registered with the 966 employment exchanges across the country stood at a staggering 3.81 crore at the end of 2009, out of which 2.9 crore were educated jobseekers and 90 lakh uneducated jobseekers. Only 4.7 lakh placements were made through employment exchanges as against the registration of over 62 lakh job seekers in 2011,

Globalization has led to an 'Unequal Competition' - a competition between 'giant MNC's and small Indian enterprises'. The small scale sector is a fundamental component of overall industrial sector of the country. The small scale sector is dominant role in Indian industry concerned with production, exports and employment.

During Globalization the government introduced something called the Special Economic Zones or SEZ's. These were areas where the foreign firms could come in and establish their production facilities. Special Economic Zones are tax heavens for foreign firms to encourage more production. They were given tax breaks, incentives, subsidies and a lot more in SEZs. As a result, thousands of foreign firms concentrated to these SEZ's to set up their production. Not only were they attracted here by these concessions given by the state but were also targeting the massive market of 1 billion people. Indian producers are not so competitive to these new firms having larger production capabilities. Hence, they have to shut their production down. Large factories produced goods on a much larger scale and made the prices much cheaper and as a result, small scale industries started shutting down because they could not face the competition by the large producers. Above analysis reveals that globalization has ultimately led to the demise of the small scale industries sector in India. Different studies on pre and post globalization periods reveal that the "globalization" had a negative impact on the growth of small scale sector measured in terms of number of units, production, employment and exports. Policy-makers and planners have to think over successive fall in the rate of growth of number of units and employment generation in post liberalisation period. The globalization is almost a complete failure on growth front of Indian Small Scale Sector.

The period of Globalization has witnessed the further widening of inequalities in income and wealth distribution, increased regional and social disparities. Neo-liberal regime in India has been characterised by prosperity for the upper classes and greater exploitation and deprivation of the majority of working class. The main beneficiaries of the neo-liberal reforms and the process of Globalization have been the big bourgeoisie. The wealth and assets of the Indian big business houses have sky rocketed over the past two decades. When, the number of dollar billionaires increased from 13 in 2003 to 55 in March 2011 in the Forbes list; at the same time 77 per cent of the Indian population spending less than Rs. 20 per day.

### **III. INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

The above explanation of Globalization makes it clear that all this process is converting the majority of the masses in to the marginalised sections. The story of Globalization can be named the story of exclusion. While, the country likes India need the process of inclusion. Today, the word "inclusive" has become most relevant in our country. So, why is there a need for Inclusion now? Let's assume, for the time being, that high growth is unambiguously beneficial for the economy and that the stimuli for high growth continue to operate. The question that then needs to be asked is the following: in a diverse country such as India, what does this high rate of growth mean for the different sections of the population? As the cake gets bigger, is it the case that the

proportionate share of the different social groups (e.g. castes, religious groups, states, regions, men and women) remains the same, so that every group gets a larger piece than earlier, but each group's share of the cake remains unchanged? Or, if the initial distribution of the cake was highly unequal, such that some groups were getting a share far in excess of their share in the population, thus leading to hostility, resentment and alienation among those groups whose share was much less than their share in the population, can and would the government intervene in a productive and pro-active manner, to make the distribution of the bigger cake more equitable? If the answer to the former question is 'yes', then we simply have a high growth scenario (bigger cake, distribution unchanged); if the answer to the latter question is 'yes', we have inclusive growth (bigger cake, with a distribution which is socially more equitable). The very answer we find in the thought of Gandhi Ji. Dream of Gandhi Ji was to make India an "inclusive economy" where there is food, clothes and greater living conditions for all its citizens, that was his dream and remained a dream still. So, with the change of the process of exclusion, in which rich got richer and richer, poor remained poor and shifted to poorest and where the difference between the rich and the poor has increased to a greater extent, the focus should be on the resolving the issues related to indifferent growth story. We should prepare the proper plan to check where the black pits that Globalization has created.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

In short, the leading ideology of Indian freedom struggle or the Gandhian ideology presented the ideas concerned with overall development of majority of the people. These same ideas attracted the lakhs of the people including farmers, agricultural labourers, industrial workers, students and women to join the struggles against British colonial rule. So, every policy decision of independent India should reflect the light of hopes for these very segments of the population. It is indeed that after independent many policy decisions of our economy made successful to drive out the people from the clutch of poverty. These decisions include the process of land reform in some states and the process of state industrialisation. But with the passing of time, our ruling class made its mind to give preference to benefits of the private capital and at the same time the benefits of the masses lagged behind. This tendency has strengthened itself after the process of Globalization in 1991. In the very same decades of Globalization growth rates of the economy get its golden wings. The same period of "Golden Growth Rates" reflected its favours for big corporate and multinational companies blatantly. In the period of Globalization the share of profits has risen while the share of wages has declined sharply. The new process of industrialisation is not providing the jobs but it has gotten a character of job loss. This increased inequalities of all types. A large segment of population particularly women and children are infected with the malnutrition. There is cruel ignorance of rural India and agricultural during the Globalization. Indebtedness forced the farmers to commit suicide. If, our policy makers have the sensitivity towards the values of our freedom struggle they have to change the process of Globalization. The present time has a great demand of such development which includes the all. This process of inclusion should not be sloganeering but it should be on ground. This should be reflected from our villages and agrarian societies. This should also be reflected from the lives of all downtrodden including the tribes, Dalits and women. Only the betterment of life of these majority sections can drive the process of inclusion. The very same process can shape the character of Indian economy in a Gandhian perspective. We can achieve our national objectives just like "Food, health and shelter for all" in a better way with the adoption of the Gandhian perspective.

#### REFERENCES

- [1]. Brahmananda P.R. 1971. "A Theoretical Note on the Economic Foundations of a Gandhi-Type Society", in Raval M.N. et.al (editors) *Gandhiji's Economics Thought and its Relevance at Present South Gujarat University, Surat*.
- [2]. Little I. M. D. (Editors) 1998. *India's Economic Reforms and Development; Essays for Manmohan Singh*, Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- [3]. Diwan Romesh and Lutz Mark (Editors), 1985. *Essays in Gandhian Economics* Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi.
- [4]. Government of India, 2000, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Volume 15*, 4th revised Edition. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Gol, New Delhi.
- [5]. Guillen Mauro F, 2001, "Is Globalization Civilising Destructive or Feeble? A Critique of Five Key Debates in the Social Science Literature", in *Annual Review of Sociology Volume 27*, 2001. Wharton School and Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
- [6]. Lakdawala D.T. 1971. "Gandhiji and Growth Economic", in Raval M.N. et.al. (editors) *Gandhiji's Economic Thought and Its Relevance at Present South Gujarat University, Surat*.
- [7]. Parel Anthony J. 1997 (Editor). *Gandhi: Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* Foundation Books, New Delhi for Cambridge University Press, UK.
- [8]. Raval M.N. 1971 "Contentment and Containment of Wants" – A suggested Interpretation., in Raval M.N. et.al (editors) *Gandhiji's Economic Thought and Its Relevance at Present South Gujarat University, Surat*.
- [9]. Sethi J.D. 1978 *Gandhiji Today*. Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.