

Awareness and Attitude towards Globalization and its Impact on Personal and Social Identity and Social Interactions amongst Indian Youth

Summary

Introduction

Globalization is a long-established worldwide phenomenon of past many centuries. The term globalization denotes the amalgamation of economies of the world through free trade and financial flows, as also through mutual exchange of technology and knowledge. The term globalization is derived from the word 'globalize' which refers to an international network of social and economic systems. Though many scholars place the origins of globalization in modern times, others trace its history long before the European Age of Discovery and voyages to the New World, some even to the third millennium B.C. (Frank, 1998). Large-scale globalization began in the 1820s (Rourke et.al, 2002). In the late 19th century and early 20th century, the connectivity of the world's economies and cultures grew very quickly. The term *globalization* is recent, only establishing its current meaning in the 1970s. (James & Streger, 2014)

In the year 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) identified four basic aspects of globalization related to trade and transactions, capital and investment movements, migration and movement of people and the dissemination of knowledge. Academic literature commonly subdivides globalization into three major areas: economic globalization, cultural globalization, and political globalization (Babones, 2008). Globalization is perceived to produce both positive and negative influences. On the one hand it has the potential to mobilize and empower people, provide a means for self-representation through media, malls and internet and support a global identity through homogenization of culture and employment opportunities. Yet on the other hand it may affect people's identities and cultural values, which sometimes become altered significantly. In this context the identity issues of the individual in relation to globalization becomes important. Thus, although globalization is primarily an economic process of interaction and integration it is also associated with social and cultural aspects.

The crux of globalization is understood in the exclusion of physical boundaries in interpersonal relations, as a result of widespread technological progress. The range of activities that is affected by these changes is so broad that several spheres of human relations are likely to be influenced simultaneously. All theories of globalization are discussed under liberalism, political realism, Marxism, constructivism, postmodernism, feminism, trans-formationalism and eclecticism. Each one of them carries several variations. Liberalism sees the process of globalization as market-led extension of modernization. At the most elementary level, it is a result of 'natural' human desires for economic welfare and political liberty. In the growth of contemporary globalization, besides political and economic forces, there are material and ideational elements. In expanding social relations, people explore their class, their gender, their nationality, their race, their religious faith and other aspects of their being. Constructions of identity provide collective solidarity against oppression.

Identity provides frameworks for community, democracy, citizenship and resistance. It also leads from nationalism to greater pluralism and hybridist.

In the area of knowledge, the way that the people know their world has significant implications for the concrete circumstances of that world. Powerful patterns of social consciousness cause globalization. Knowledge frameworks alone cannot be reduced to forces of production, governance or identity. The varied concepts explain common threads between competing theories, as well as pinpoint the problems that challenge our understanding of globalization.

Different definitions of globalization have emerged emphasizing globalization as both a concept and a process. Some experts focus upon, the economic and commercial aspects, whereas others focus upon social, cultural and psychological dimensions of globalization. The process of globalization is understood in terms of increasing global commerce, free market economies, free flow of people, ideas and resources and the dissemination of knowledge. Advances in transportation and telecommunications, infrastructure, and the rise of the internet, are major factors in globalization, generating further interdependence of economic and cultural activities of the world countries. Globalization is defined by Malcolm Waters (2001, p. 5), as a “social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly.”

By social identity we mean *“that part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”* (Tajfel, 1981). Social identity theory states that identification to a certain group defines individual’s social identity and position in the society (Tajfel, 1978). The theory discusses about the permeability of symbolic and social boundaries and its effect on individual and collective identity (Ellemers, 1993). Erikson’s (1968) theories on identity from a psychoanalytic point of view, also emphasizes the role of the environment, and particularly the social environment, in the development of identity. Group-based social identity refers to the perception of self in terms of group membership. Turner’s theory of self-categorization fits into this model as it advocates depersonalization of self in response to social categorized membership (Turner et. al. 1987). The self is perceived according to its membership, group norms and group distinctiveness.

Globalization may also trigger a negative reaction by the individual against the global flows of objects, commodities, people, and ideas (Keating 2001; Arnett 2002; Castells 2004), This may lead to an entrenchment in the state nation community or even to adhesion to fundamentalist movements (Marty and Appleby 1993; Appadurai 2000; Arnett 2002). In terms of the in-group-out-group model, the presence of an ‘other’ is made more vivid to members of an in-group, thus strengthening even further the constricted parochial boundary between the ‘us’ and ‘them’.

The emergence of a cosmopolitan model of social identity can be accounted for by the view that the diffusion of capitalism and of western lifestyle engenders a convergence to a similar form of identity for people living in different parts of the world. Globalization causes a process of homogenization of culture, production, and values (Tomlinson 2003). Others opine that globalization causes individuals to experience a sense of attachment to the whole humankind (Hannerz 1992; Held et al. 1999). Several 'global' social movements around a variety of causes, such as human rights or the environment, and the growing importance of global humanitarian relief operations are all instances of the diffusion of a 'cosmopolitan' individual (Cheah and Robbins 1998; Vertovec and Cohen 2002; Brown and Held 2010; McFarland 2011).

About 87 per cent of young women and men living in developing countries face challenges brought about by limited and unequal access to resources, healthcare, education, training, and employment as well as economic, social and political opportunities¹. In many parts of the world, youth face poverty, hunger, barriers to education, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, violence, and limited opportunities for growth and employment prospects. Youth are often excluded from decision-making processes and generally looks at untraditional avenues for civic engagement (UNDP, Youth Strategy, 2014-17).

India has the relative advantage at present over other countries in terms of distribution of youth population. As per India's Census, the total youth population (15-34 years) is 422 million in 2011. According to national youth policy in India, age group between 13 to 35 years is considered as youth and as per census 2001 41.05% of Indian population is youth. Another positive aspect is that the percentage share of currently married female in the age group 15-19 has come down drastically from 69.57 in 1961 to 19.47 in 2011 showing a welcome shift in the level of married women in younger age groups. Mean age at effective marriage for females in India has come up to 22.3 in 2014 as compared to 19.4 in 1995 (Youth Report, 2017). Therefore, it is pertinent to explore the awareness of Indian youth regarding globalization and its impact on their personal social identity and social interactions.

Methodology

Rationale of the Study:

India today stands at the crossroads of transition between traditional and modern. A significant question is that does the present global environment encourage a mix of traditional and global views in India? How do Indian youth perceive their identity under the present global context? Currently, India has the largest youth population in the world. Youth population of India between 15-24 years represents 19 percent (222 million) of the total population of the country (Census 2011). Youth is generally the time of life between childhood and adulthood (maturity). It is the stage of constructing the self-concept and identity issues developed during adolescence. The self-concept of youth is influenced by several variables such as peers, lifestyle, gender and culture. It is this time of a person's life which they make choices which will affect their future. Young urban

Indians having better access to education, modern amenities, information, and economic opportunities are prepared to join the global forces. Taking these facts into consideration, this huge and diversified population base which may reaps benefits of globalization or be buckled by disadvantages of globalization.

The primary objective of the study is to outline the extent of awareness attitude of various aspects of globalization among Indian youth, the youth towards globalization and how it affects their personal and social identity and social interactions.

- To understand the perception of youth about personal and social identity in the context of globalization.
- To explore preferences for styles of social interactions among youth.

Research Design:

The entire study was basically based on primary data. The study was conducted amongst youth of age 18-25 years residing in Bhopal, the capital city (17 lakhs) of Madhya Pradesh with 81 percent urban population where students have access to a large number of professional courses in and a small district Panna with a population of 10.2 lakhs comprising of population which mostly resides in rural areas (88 percent, Census 2011), with limited access to professional education facilities. Ex-post-facto research design was used for the present study. The background characteristics of youth, their levels of awareness and attitude are the independent variables and social identity, social interactions and consumer behavior are the dependent variables.

Sampling frame/ sampling method/ sample size:

A total of 459 under graduate and post graduate students in the age group 18-25 years were given a self-administered questionnaire with different subsections to explore students' awareness and attitude towards globalization and its association with personal and social identity. Three government colleges from Panna and two from Bhopal were selected for the purpose of the study. In all 250 questionnaires of male and female students in Panna and 194 in Bhopal were considered for final analysis. Overall 11 questionnaires in panna and 4 in Bhopal were not due to incomplete filling up of the questionnaire.

Tools for data collection:

Globalization awareness scale, globalization attitude scale, identity questionnaire, group identity scale, social interaction scale and social interaction scales were used for the data collection.

Results & Discussion

Globalization is transforming trade, finance, employment, migration, technology, communications, the environment, social systems, and ways of living, cultures, and patterns of governance. The growth of technology and globalization mutually reinforce each other. Much of the process of globalisation is historically not unprecedented, but the technology, the setting, the absence of a single dominant center, and certain features

such as the replacement of trade of raw materials for manufactured products by largely intra-sectoral trade, are new. International interdependence is growing, and to some extent and partially, so is international integration. Globalization exerts unavoidable impact on the attitude and identity of an individual. In the present study the efforts were directed to see how globalization exerts its impact on the development of the identities of individuals, particularly young adults.

Needless to say that participant's awareness towards globalization has deep connection with their demographic characteristics. As the participants from the age range of 22-26 years of age reported higher awareness towards globalization on economic as well as general domains as compared to their younger counterparts. It is generally misconceptualized as a mere mode to establish connectedness disregarding physical boundaries. As the elder young adults have expressed more awareness for the globalization indicating that increasing rationality may open several avenues not only to establish connectedness but also to exploit the available resource for the personal as well as social benefits.

Contrary to general observation, female participants expressed more awareness towards globalization on the both domains i.e. economic as well as general domains. This trend indicates a paradigm shift. It seems that globalization has been proved as boon to the towards the women empowerment. In this era of globalization, they have easy access of every bits of information without hegemony of any traditional barriers encountered since ages. The findings with regard to globalization awareness and educational attainment exhibited similar trends in the form where post-graduate participants were proved as more aware as compared to their undergraduate participants. This reflection implies that global environment provides the array of information, however, it is up to rationality and interest to utilize or exploit the available information in the best possible manner.

We all understand that there is a little complication to understand the nature of families and environment within it exerts deep impact on the individual's awareness about the surroundings as well as acquaintance towards globalization. Enumerated herewith, the results have clearly indicated that participants with the joint families exhibited more awareness as compared to their nuclear family counterparts. In line with the expectation, students belonging to urban regions scored higher as compared to students of rural areas in economic as well as non-economic domains. All the students have been classified into four categories. The results clearly indicated that both groups i.e. economic as well as general domains expressed higher level of awareness with the globalization confirms many speculations that higher income individual availed more benefits from the globalization at large.

Economic domain of the globalization awareness measure has been classified into low, moderate and high. The classified three levels of awareness economic domains were assessed with regard to age, gender, level

of education, type of family, residence and family income. It is generally believed that age is an important factor in the determination of intelligence and awareness of the masses. Justifying this traditional hypothesis, participants with the age range of 22-26 years scored higher on low and high on the economic domain of the globalization scale. However, the traditional could not be justified for the moderate level domain where younger participants scored higher as compared to their older counterparts. In the case of un-economic domain of the globalization domain, a little difference was seen in the findings. Here, the participants with the age range of 18-22 years scored higher to their senior counterparts. Similar to the trends of economic domain, the senior participants with the age range of 22-26 years scored higher as compared to the younger participants on the non-economic domain of the globalization scale.

As the males and females shoulder different roles in the society since ages, hence, they are likely to differ with regard to the economic domains and non-economic domains of the globalization awareness scale. The result indicates that male participants scored higher on low and moderate levels of economic domains of the globalization awareness scale. However, the score of the female participants scored higher as compared to their male counterparts on the economic domains the globalization awareness scale. The results of the economic domain were found to be slightly differing as on the economic domains. Here, female participants scored higher score for the low and high domains of the globalization awareness scale. Similar to the results of the economic domains, participants scored higher on the high non-economic as compared to their female counterparts.

Awareness towards globalization seems deeply associated with the levels of education of the individual. The results described here have shown that post graduate students have scored higher on the low and higher domains of the globalization awareness scale. However, undergraduate students scored higher on moderate level of globalization awareness as compared to their senior counterparts breaking all the conventional postulation. Here, the female participants, scored higher as compared to their male participants signaling to the masses that personal space of the female are likely to widen more in the future ahead. It seems that nuclear families may have more acquaintance as possess gadgets which facilitates to establish more connection with the globalised world. The findings of this study indicates that people living in nuclear families scored higher on the low and moderate domains while participants from the nuclear families scored lower on the higher economic domain as compared to the participants of joint families. The same results were repeated for the non economic domain of the globalization awareness scale.

Traditionally, the awareness to the globalization was believed to be limited to the city regions. In contrast to the general notion, people residing in the rural areas scored higher as compared to their urban counterpart on the low and moderate domains of the globalization awareness scale. While complying with all the speculations, the participants belonging to urban areas scored higher on economic domain of the globalization scale. For the non-economic domains, the similar trends were repeated with the assessment was

carried on for the rural and urban people. The legend seems to be true that globalization is the property of the richer. The discussed here has approved the same when the participants with the high income group expressed more awareness towards the globalization. At large, this trend was repeated for the non-economic dimension as well.

Chi-square analysis is applied by categorizing all four dimension of globalization attitude scales scale into low, moderate and high. The Chi-square analysis indicated that the significant difference was found between the group of the participants with the age category of 18-21 and 22-26. It can be attributed as with the passage of time, people take action with adequate analysis and zero in before taking the final decisions. Such impulse controls results into many rational or adequate decisions of their daily lives. Undoubtedly, the places of the belongingness of an individual play a prominent role in the formation of attitude of a person towards globalization. The observed significant difference between the two locations of living can significantly be seen due to the level exposure of information available to them. Though, the access of information technology has reached to the common masses, however, adequate distinction of rich and poor information is still subject the surroundings.

Here, participants possessing three categories of attitude towards globalization were compared based on their demographic characteristics. In addition to technology, socio-cultural is another dimension of the measure assessing the people's attitude towards globalization. The obtained finding clearly indicated that participants with the age range of 18-21 years differed significantly with their senior counterparts with the age range of 22-26 years. Participants qualified with differed levels of education, participants with different settings of living and their belongings to different income group exhibited significant difference. At the next, free flow is the fourth dimension of the measure meant to assess the participant's attitude towards globalization. Unlike the previous trend, none of the demographic characteristics differed significantly. This is the reflection that demographic characteristics are influenced in commensurate to the level of awareness with the globalization.

Identity and attitude are traditionally viewed as belonging to two contradictory schools of thought where identity is viewed as a social construct while attitude is viewed as solely cognitive. Few researchers have tried to challenge this argument and these two notions are usually studied in isolation of one another. In contrast to general notion, they are deeply associated to each other. The results indicate that participants with varying levels of the identity differed with respect to gender and level of education. The second dimension of the identity scale is social identity. Like previously, participants were categorized into low, moderate and high social identities. The collective identity which is the third dimension of the identity scale also indicated that gender difference was the only demographic variable reflected significant difference. Group identity is separately taken to assess its association with globalization. Here, it is intended estimate how the participant with varying levels of group identity differs with regard to different demographic variables. The findings related

to social demographic characteristics are directed in the line where many social scientists argued that differences in norms is closely tied to social identities which helps explaining differences in economic outcomes due to demographic characteristics.

Similar to identity towards globalization, it is generally observed that globalization awareness exerts some influence on the social identity of the participants. The results indicate that the first domain i.e. non-economic domain of globalization awareness measure differed significantly with collective domain of the identity scale. Further, the results also indicated that different levels of the economic domain of globalization attitude differed significantly with personal domain, collective domain and group identity measure of the identity scale. The results obtained via chi-square indicated that technology which one dimension of the globalization attitude scale all the dimensions exhibited significant difference with reference to all the four dimensions of the identity scale. Similar to technology dimension of the globalization attitude scale, socio-cultural dimension too differed significantly with reference to all the dimension of the identity scale.

Conclusion

In psychology, attitude is a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person. Attitudes are complex and are an acquired state through experiences. It is an individual's predisposed state of mind regarding a value. It is precipitated through a responsive expression towards a person, place, thing, or event which in turn influences the individual's thought and action. It is does not only influences people but also influenced by several factors. Exposure to the globalization is one among many factors which influences attitude. In turn, several other consequences in the form of individual group and social identities are observed in the different facets. Keeping these characteristics into mind, prominent psychologist Gordon Allport described attitude as "the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology.