

Globalization and Traditionality: A Case Study of the Tharu Tribe of Bahraich

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a process of international integration arising from interchange of world views, ideas, products and other aspects of culture. Advances in transportation and telecommunications infrastructure, including rise of the telegraph and its posterity the Internet, are major factors in globalization, generating further interdependence of economic and cultural activities. Though several 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. In late 19th century and early 20th century, the connectedness of the world's economies and cultures grew very quickly.

The term globalization has been in increasing use since the mid-1980s and especially since the mid-1990s. In 2000, International Monetary Fund identified four basic aspects of globalization: capital and investment movements, trade and transactions, migration and movement of people and the dissemination of knowledge .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, and the natural environment.

Globalization implies the opening of local and nationalistic perspectives to a broader outlook of an interconnected and inter dependent world with free transfer of capital goods and services across national frontiers. However it does not include unhindered movement of labor and as suggested by some economists, many hurt smaller or fragile economics if applied indiscriminately.

Advances in the transportation and telecommunications infrastructure and including the rise of the telegraph and its posterity the Internet, are major factors in globalization, generating further interdependence of economic and cultural activities. Although the term globalization has been common in anthropology and neighboring disciplines only since around 1990, it has spawned an impressive range of books, journal articles and academic conferences. In the mid-1990s, it actually seemed more difficult to find a major sociology or social anthropology conference which did not feature the word prominently in its programmed, than to find one which did. This approach, perhaps underpinned by selected quotations, may offer striking and convincing contrasts between contemporary work and functionalism or structural-functionalism in Britain, and some of the dominant post-Boas schools in the USA, such as culture-and-personality and Geertz hermeneutics

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“Anthropology has become, of necessity, a study of change as well as of stability” This has been one of the major topics of anthropology ever since researchers first noticed that primitive peoples were not as untouched by change as they had initially thought. Although globalization is often mistaken as an exclusively economic phenomenon, it is obvious that “humans on all frontiers are being forced either to shift their ideational systems radically and quickly or to live in a thought-world that no longer fits the way their world is”. Keesing points out that as: “rewards of ‘economic development’ become universal aspirations; people react to this challenge in sharply contrasting ways”. From this perspective, globalization cannot continue to be exclusively defined as an economic development, but it’s social, cultural and political effects must also addressed.

Ulrich Beck’s “What is Globalization?” one of the most comprehensive and accessible sources for addressing issues of theoretical controversy concerning globalization and the contradictory meanings associated with it. Beck divides the theoretical controversy into two major categories, those who point to “one dominant logic of globalization” and those suggesting “a phenomenon with a complex set of causes” The former implies a single cause for globalization, while the latter claims multiple causes for globalization. Beck divides these theories into the following: capitalist world-system, post international politics, world risk society, the thesis of McDonalidization, globalization and a few other derivations of these interpretations. Waller stein is one supporter of the capitalist world-system theory. Instead of seeing societies as individual separate entities, Waller stein sees one world-system in which all things, products and people must accommodate themselves in a single dimension of labor. Capitalism is seen as a “world–system” that “provides the framework for the measurement of social inequalities on a world scale. According to Waller stein the capitalist world economy has three elements. Firstly it’s seen as consisting of a single market governed by profit maximization, secondly nation-state structures hinder free market flow in order to improve their own profits, and lastly surplus labor is exploited among the “heartlands”, “semi peripheries” and “peripheral countries and regions”. As Beck points out, Waller steins theory is mainly monocausal and economic in its interpretations. Globalization is solely seen as an institutionalization of the world market.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present paper is a case study based on research work done on Tharu tribe of district Bahraich .The Tharu tribe is schedule tribe of India which inhabiting the Tarai area of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The present paper is based on anthropological field work methods like participant observation, interview, rapport establishment and sampling .It also used secondary sources that include books and article published in journals.

ABOUT THE TRIBE

Tharus mostly live in the Tarai belt of Uttar Pradesh. The Region covers five districts of Uttar Pradesh namely Lakhimpur Kheri, Balrampur, Bahraich, Shravasti and Maharajganj close to the border of Nepal some of the Tharu villages are in District Uddham Singh Nagar (which was earlier a part the district Nanital of the then Uttar Pradesh and now it is a part of newly formed state of Uttaranchal. The Tharu tribe also resides in the neighboring country Nepal.

The Tharu is well known scheduled tribe of Uttar Pradesh. It was declared as scheduled tribe in U.P. in the year 1967, along with four other tribes. After independence, for the first time in June, 1967 the President of India notified five tribes of U.P. viz Raji, Bhotia, Jaunsari, Tharu and Bhoksa as scheduled tribes four, out of these five tribes namely Raji, Bhotia, Jaunsari and Bhoksa (Buxa) have now become a part of Uttarakhand, though some villages of the Bhoksas are still in district Bijnor of Uttar Pradesh. Hence there were only two scheduled tribes left in Uttar Pradesh namely Tharu and Bhoksa after the division of the state in the year 2000, Recently on January 2003, the government of Indian included ten new tribes in the list of scheduled tribes of Uttar Pradesh by the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes order (Amendment Act, 2002). These were Gond, Kharwar, Sahariya Parahiya, Baiga, Pankha, Agaria, Patari, Chero and Bhuiya.

These were earlier listed as scheduled castes of Uttar Pradesh. Some scholars suggest that Tharus are an aboriginal race who claims royal descent on the female side; they gave explanation for this by presenting a story. Once upon a time, in the remote past, the king of these parts are defeated by the forces of an invader the women of the royal palace rather than falling into the hands of foes fled into jungles (forest) with the seized land chamars belonging to the palace. From these sprang the two indigenous races of Tharus and Bhoksas. The forever is said to have descended from chamars and the latter from the saises this assertion gets further support as it is observed that women among Tharus though some of the Danguria and katharia. Tharu also claim a similar decent.

AREA OF STUDY

The present paper is based on anthropological research conducted on the tharu tribe of district Bahraich of Uttar Pradesh. District Bahraich is situated in North eastern part of Devipatan Division. It is situated between the 28.24 & 27.4 latitude & 81.65 to 81.3 eastern longitudes. District Bahraich has an international border with Nepal on the Northern part. According to some other historians in the middle age this place was the capital of "Bhar" dynasty. Therefore it was called as "Bharraich". Which later come to be known as "Bahraich". Famous Chinese visitors Hwainsang & Feiglupai visited this place. There are many mythological facts about the great historical value of district Bahraich. It was famous as the capital of God Brahma, the maker of universe. It was also know as part of Gondharv forest even today Northeast area of several hundred square kms of the district is covered by the forest.

It is said that Brahma ji developed this forest covered area as the place of worship for Rishis & Sadhus. Therefore this place comes to know as “Brahmaich”. The average annual rainfall of this region is 50 to 60 inches. During the rainy season when the forest undergrowth grows up, the climate is extremely unhealthy. Because of the unhealthy climate Atkinson characterized the habitat of the Tharus as the region of Mar, the land of death. As per 2011 census, 91.86% population of Bahraich districts lives in rural areas of villages. The total Bahraich district population living in rural areas is 3203687 of which males and females are 1695122 and 1508565 respectively. In rural areas of Bahraich district, sex ratio is 690 females per 1000 males.

GLOBALIZATION AND TRADITIONALITY

The Tharu community is famous tribe of India and Nepal. Though the Tharus are indigenous people of the Himalayan Tarai area yet maximum population of this community lives on both sides of Indo-Nepal border. Tharus were already living in the Terai before Indo-Europeans arrived and due to friendly relations between India and Nepal, the Indo-Nepal border is often open for people of both countries; so Indian and Nepali Tharus are active in their socio-cultural relationship.

Tharus of Bahraich live in very interior and they are marginalized and neo globalization is clearly seen on their economic, education, social and cultural aspect when whole world is affected by globalization then how this area can be left. It was seen that now Tharus want to work outside their village. They often go to Bardiya district of Nepal and also migrated to Delhi, Chandigarh etc cities for work. Due to continuous contact with other culture several changes are seen on their traditional life style. The Tharus who were come under the protected area of Katarniyaghat wild life sanctuary they had left their traditional hunting patterns. Now they have been following rules and regulation of forest department. As there are no restriction in Indo-Nepal border so they sold their product in market of Tarai of Nepal. With the influence of other culture contacts they are using internet and mobile phones. Now Farmers come to know about good quality of seed, features and techniques these also increase by Government scheme also aware them about technology connecting them to main stream these all due to Globalization impact.

Traditionally exogamy does not exist and one can marry within one's own village but in a different hamlet. Cousin marriage both cross and parallel marriage with non-Tharus were prohibited, but due to globalization exogamous marriage is also started and thus. Now Tharus prefer nuclear family than joint family. Traditional Joint family system is slowing down. Breaking of joint families system is taking place but still joint family exists. They went to Punjab, Chandigarh, and Haryana for work and there they marry with girls/boys, and they are also marrying with girls /boys of Nepal District Bardiya district of Mid Nepal region. This also led to breaking of joint family. Thus, we can say globalization change their marriage pattern as they now prefer Exogamy marriage and nuclear family system. The Exogamy marriage system result of the impact of globalization.

The youth of Tharus wants to study English and there were no such type of facility in village but an NGO name Katerniaghat wild life sanction constructed English medium school in this area where Tharu's children studied with other village's children together. Tharus who are big land lord or migrated to good place they sent their children to Nepal for study or to district Bahraich Higher study. Kallamal a villager of Vishnapur speak in English though he has not studied much. But with influence with other culture contact. Japan International corporation agency (jica) run a program for the welfare of tharu villages with the name of "Environment Development Program".

Due to Globalization, that leads to Modernization their trend of mode of production consumption and distribution is now changing. Now they are using modern entertainment equipment like, T.V, D.V.D player, C.D. Player, computer, motor-cycle, by-cycle etc. These all bring change in their life style. They know the concept of surplus saving. There traditional subsistence economy is now moving to formal economy though they are very poor and living under below poverty line. Thus only those whom are landlords or have good source of income save their money sold their product directly to the market. Traditionally they did not produce anything for market purpose they have barter system but due to globalization now they are growing cash crop for business purpose and this business is slowly improving their livelihood.

Some Youth of the Tharus is now using internet and direct links to other people. This is why because some of them are graduates of collages. Few of them goes to Nepal and Nepali Tharu are more aware of using internet. A tharu girl of the village who went to Nepal know using of internet and start computer center and teach youth to use computer and internet.



Showing an example of Tradionality and globalization among the Tharu girls

CONCLUSION

The Tharus of Bahraich are very reserved and shy in nature so they are backward. It has been found in the study that they are really very poor in global connectivity due to their traditional habits. Tharus of Bahraich are still struggling for their basic needs in this era of globalization. Educated Indian Tharus are also backward and poor in use of global communication facilities like internet. More than 85% of Tharu students are not able to use computer and internet till now, though they know very well that use of modern technologies of communication is helpful in development of any society. Hence they are away from these facilities which are available in the college and market at very low price.

There is need for more awareness about global communication and connectivity among the Tharu tribe of Bahraich for their development. The Tharu youth of Bahraich, who have access to higher education, are not so aware about globalization. There is no dearth of facilities which are available free of cost at college or at very low price in the market for communication but educated Tharu youths seem to have little interest in it. Tharu youths of Bahraich have little awareness about studying in good Indian institutes, though they have special facility of reservation for admission in these types of institutions. Lack of awareness about development and globalization is the reason of their backwardness in global communication.

Due to poor English some Tharus of Bahraich feel shyness and hesitation to keep global contacts by internet or directly. Maximum educated Tharus of Bahraich are not able to use computer and internet till now. This is the era of globalization so the communication is must for development of every community. That's why Tharus of Bahraich need to be connected with global communication stream. Tharu youth of Bahraich are very important wing of their community. Though they are playing very creative role in their community, but they are not connected with mainstream of development.

Some youths of Tharus are trying to get higher education and advanced technology but they are very few in number. They are neither advanced nor are intricately linked with their traditional culture. They should have access to modern education, communication, technology and new life style but also take care of traditional culture, because this is necessary to keep their own identity.

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