



Emergence of New Individualism in Globalised Era

*Suraiya Nazeer

*Ph.D., student in the Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir,

Abstract

The Problems which the social critics identify in the present context are the highly organised capitalistic society, and a highly centralised state crushing the individual under the dead weight of uniformity. Society has become more and more advanced, the output of goods are enormous but the common man is engaging all the time in nothing but the exacting task of trying to, or worrying in order to improve his economic status. The individual finds himself or herself more and more alienated, alienation from state, from who with he/she is working and from himself/herself. The result is the new sense of Individualism. Individualism was first used by Alexis De Tocquille in the early nineteenth century to describe the emerging sense of social isolation in American Society. The new individualism is characterised by the preoccupation of self in terms of manipulation of individual desires or needs and a quest for self realisation and self fulfilment.

In this context the present study aims to assess the impact of Globalisation on the minds of individuals. It is thus significant in analyzing the emergence of New Individualism in which the individual is satisfied by instant gratification, new forms of apprehension, anguish and anxiety.

Key Words: “Capitalistic Society”, “Existentialism”, “Globalisation”, “Individualism,” “Manipulation”, “Human Rights”, “Oppression”, “Self Realisation”.

Significance

We are living in a world which is characterised as a 'compression of time and space'. Individual has changed in this world of Globalisation, new informational technologies and multinational capitalism. In this frame of Globalisation social process is reshaped, reconstruct and reinvent. The Globalised world created a new individual that finds himself or she more and more alienated, alienation from state, from who with he/she is working and from him/her. The present study is going to address the issues that how Globalisation alienated our minds by creating a new individual. What is Globalisation? What are its Challenges? And why there is a need for Welfare state?

Methodology

The study relies on Secondary data including books, research journals, newspapers and opinions generated therein by the relevant experts and officials. The study is also based on the conceptual and theoretical framework regarding different issues and aspects including Globalisation, Individualism, and Collectivism. Historical, analytical, interpretative and descriptive methods have been followed to reach to the conclusion.

Introduction

Neoliberal ideology abstain state from interfering in various aspects of individuals as polity, economy etc. Over the past decade citizens in the world have become discontent against neoliberal policies. In this context social critics identify the problems in our societies are the highly organised capitalistic society, and a highly centralised state crushing the individual under the dead weight of uniformity. Society has become more and more advanced, the output of goods are enormous but the common man is engaging all the time in nothing but the exacting task of trying to, or worrying in order to improve his economic status. The individual finds himself or herself more and more alienated, alienation from state, from who with he/she is working and from himself/herself.ⁱ This Individualism is the inevitable cost of progress and in all great ages of achievements, and snapping the ties of tradition. We can in other words call it they are the result of Globalisation. In words of Herbert Marcus the sole objective of Individual is no longer Happiness but Performance.ⁱⁱ

Individualism

Individualism as ideology was defined by most prominent traditional thinkers in their own way, John Locke, John Stuart Mill and John Dewey, as they criticize existing social, cultural, economic, legal and military conditions of their times. Locke's individualism was a criticism of the absolute rule of aristocratic Land-owners and was an attempt to undermine the conceptual basis for their continued power. John Stuart Mill gave high value to the sanctity of the individual even in

disagreement with the overwhelming majority. Dewey's theory of individualism largely was a criticism of widespread poverty and abuse of political power in America during the Great Depression. Dewey recommended recognition of our interconnectedness and continuity rather than our separateness.ⁱⁱⁱ

Creation of New Individualism

Individualism – “a social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of collective is one of the most influential “global values”. Importantly, individualism has long been fostered in European American cultural contexts. Individualistic systems or environments are believed to have positive influences on individuals. However, such individualistic systems or environments can also have potentially negative effects. In particular, individualistic systems urge people to pursue personal achievement, which creates competition between individuals. These systems can also result in high social mobility, which lead to high social anxiety. In addition, the focused attention on personal achievements can bear a significant cost on interpersonal relationships.^{iv} In these Globalised values the individual finds himself or herself more and more alienated.^v While analysing the behaviour of this generation Simon Sinek found the following traits in them as Lower self-esteem, highly self-absorbed, narcissist, and entitled to Social media addictions, Imbalanced relationships, Job hopping, lack of patience. In one of his interview he quote following words as “Engagement with social media and our cell phones releases a chemical called dopamine, that’s why when you get a text it feels good right, so you know we’ve all had a weird feeling a little bit down and feeling a bit lonely and so you send out 10 texts to 10 friends and hi, hi, hi, hi, because it feels good when you get a response. Simon refers to the challenge of ‘*instant gratification*’ and suggests that the present generation can have whatever they want whenever they want it, but lack of patience.^{vi}

Globalization

The rise of the Globalization^{vii} brought new changes at international level while some countries had been benefiting from this reformation; many others in the North and South have seen their economies weaken as the developing and underdeveloped countries. The world enters into the phase in which liberalism dominate other ideologies, and laissez-fair economy dominate the other economies to which Fransus Fukayama alluded to as End of History.^{viii} Globalisation is simply defined as the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world have effects on peoples and society far away. A globalised society is one in which political, economical ,cultural and social events become more and more interconnected , and also one in which they have more impact.^{ix}

Challenges of Globalisation

On Economy: The decade of 1980s was characterised as a lost decade for development as majority of the population of developed and underdeveloped world were unable to satisfy their basic needs. World economy did not lead to significant improvements for vulnerable and disadvantageous social groups.^x Because the economy itself was in an ailing state as if we went back into the decade of 1960-79, the median per capita growth in developing countries was 2.5 percent while in 1980-1999, the median per capita growth of developing countries was 0.0 percent. The reason for these may be that development consensus in this decade shifted away from state planning towards markets or away from import substitution towards outward orientation. The World Bank began "adjustment lending" which was lending conditional on implementing the new consensus on economic policies. The IMF expanded its portfolio of conditional lending at about the same time. The World Bank and IMF made 958 adjustment loans to developing countries over 1980-98. Speaking about this state of affairs, Paul Krugman in 1995^{xi} noted that "the real economic performance of countries that had recently adopted Washington consensus policies was distinctly disappointing."^{xii} Growth projections throughout this period repeatedly forecast a return to the halcyon days of the 60s and 70s.^{xiii} The number of homeless and jobless people was added to the statistics of several countries.^{xiv} The same is the condition today as Globalised economy has created rich-poor gap.

On Gender: Women have also become the victim of this individualism, as a breed of women attractive and qualified is having plastic surgeries- 'boob job', 'bump job' etc. The Plastic Generation are unfaltering belief that, 'The body can be shaped and remoulded over and over again, regardless of the price.'^{xv} UN notes that basic education for all who live in the developing countries would cost somewhere in the region of \$ 6 billion a year. However, the US alone already spends a staggering \$ 8 billion annually on cosmetics.^{xvi}

Terrorism: The world is entering into a new phase, and intellectuals have not been hesitant to proliferate visions of what it will be 'End of History',^{xvii} the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great division among the man kind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural identities as was formulated earlier by great philosopher Huntington in his theory 'Clash of Civilization'^{xviii} Which seems to be relevant after 9/11^{xix}. Also in 1793, as R.R Palmar put it, the wars of the kings were over, and the wars of people begin. The word jihad has appeared widely in the Western news media following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.^{xx} The structural changes in the jihad ideology occurred after 9/11 has altered the way the world combats terrorism and its way forward. The ideologies operating in the name of *Jihad*^{xxi} as *Mujahidin*,^{xxii} *Taliban*, *Al-Quada*^{xxiii} owe their origin to western organisation and economic support. In the contemporary context

the term is used as a tool by the Westerners for their own benefit for creating the ideological war in the name of religion and justifies their intervention on its basis.^{xxiv} By issuing a Fatwa of promoting the Jihad ideology in Islam as the duty to kill non-believers some of the Muslim theologians are creating this mess, as the Fatwa given by Osama Bin Ladin in 1998.

“All these crimes and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on God, his Messenger, and Muslims.... [T]he jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries....As for the fighting to repulse [an enemy], it is aimed at defending sanctity and religion, and it is a duty....On that basis, and in compliance with God’s order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims: The ruling to kill the Americans and their Allies—civilian and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.”^{xxv} These problems are clustering around Globe. These issues if not addressed, will continue to generate new anti-social activities, thereby can creating imbalance in the system.^{xxvi}

Necessity for Welfare

Although welfare state is challenged by the Globalization of the world economy and by the fact that ageing populations demand more redistribution. To promote political and social sustainability in this context, the “destructive” forces of market competition have to be met by “constructive” social policies. In Europe, the Scandinavian countries are the best performers in combining inequality reductions with high employment rates and excellent growth records. A framework for reform inspired by this starts from the notion that in order to be successful in meeting new needs with restricted resources we must improve incentives, human resources, social services and employment opportunities. The ageing of our societies means we also need to rethink our policies in other ways. So, those problems may be addressed once and for all.^{xxvii}

Conclusion

We are living in a world which is characterised as a ‘compression of time and space’. Globalisation is the most prominent phenomenon. In this frame of Globalisation social process is reshaped, reconstruct and reinvent. But the process becomes successful in creating a new Individual. The individual finds him or her more and more alienated, alienation from state, from who with he/she is working and from him/her, that one who puts more and more emphasis on efficiency, predictability, calculability. The individual is alienated to much extent that all the challenges which are brought by it are unaware. There is a strong need for welfare state instead of liberal model. In order to be successful in meeting new needs with restricted resources we must improve incentives, human resources, social services and employment opportunities through state intervention.

ⁱ S.P. Varma, *Modern Political Theory*, Vikas Publishing House: India,2007,pp.299-300

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ Philip Schuyler Bishop , Three Theories of Individualism, A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of the Arts Department of Philosophy College of Arts and Sciences, University of South Florida,2007

^{iv} Yuji Ogihara,and Yukiko Uchida, Does individualism bring happiness? Negative effects of individualism on interpersonal relationships and happiness, *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 5, 2014

^v S.P. Varma, *Modern Political Theory*, Vikas Publishing House: India,2007,pp.299-300

^{vi} Maurice DeCastro, Simon Sinek on Millennials in the Workplace: Truth, History or Opportunity?,2017, available at www.business2community.com/.../simon-sinek-millennials-workplace-truth-history-o...,accessed on 5th November,2017

^{vii} Globalization has at least two common meanings: the increased integration of various places into the world economy, and the effects of vastly improved transportation and communication systems on multidirectional cultural flows. Many anthropologists emphasize globalization as cultural flows, leaving as shadowy or invisible the economic and political processes and institutions that both shape and are shaped by those flows. M. Edelman, M. and A. Haugerud, (Ed), *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization from Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neo liberalism*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005,p.3

^{viii} In his theory, ‘End of History’ Fransus Fukayama said there is remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of the liberal democracy as a system of government and as a world form of government. The liberal ideology conquered rival ideologies like hereditary Monarchy, Fascism and most recently Communism. The Fukayama argued that Liberal Democracy may constitute the “end point of mankind’s ideological evolution,” and the “final form of government” and as such constitute “end of history.”A. Blunden, *The End of History and the Last Man*. Penguin, 2005, p.99.

^{ix} John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, *The Globalisation of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, New York,2011.p.8

^x K. Ahojapatel, *Development has a Women’s Face: Insight from within the UN*. New Delhi: S.B. Nangia, A. P.H. Publishing Corporation, 2001, p. 143.

^{xi} W. Easterly, and N. Loayza, *Has Latin America’s Post-Reform Growth been Disappointing?*.World Bank: Peter, Montiel Williams College, 1996, p 1.

^{xii} P. Collier, Dollar, and Stern, *Fifty Years of Development*. available at: www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/.../WDSP/IB/.../28739.txt,2000, (accessed on 17-1-2016).

^{xiii} W. Easterly, The Lost Decades: Developing Countries’ Stagnation in Spite of Policy Reform 1980-1998. *Journal of Economic Growth*, Nether Land, Volume 6, p.135

^{xiv} Ibid, p.143.

^{xv} A. Elliott and C Lemert, *The New Individualism*, Rutledge :UK,2006

^{xvi} Ibid

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^{xviii} ‘Clash of civilizations’ theory was put forward by Huntington's 1993 in Foreign Affairs article entitled ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’ In this theory he argued that post-Cold War conflict would not be ideological or economic, but cultural. Identifying, “seven or eight major civilizations,” he suggested that, “[t]he most important conflicts of the future will occur along the fault lines separating these civilizations from one another.”

Michael Dunn, The ‘Clash of Civilizations’ and the ‘War on Terror’ , *49th Parallel*, Vol.20, 2007,p.1

^{xix} In the sp., 2001 US was hit by plane to the world Trade Centre and Pentagon in Washington and other passenger’s plane into the ground in Pennsylvania, Stephen Tanner, *The Wars of the Bushes*, Manas Publication: India, 2006, p.157

^{xx} Mahmood Mamdani, “Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism”, *American Anthropologist* , Vol. 104, No. 3, 2002

^{xxi} Jihad in the Arabic means struggle. In the Islamic literature it means to be a better Muslim, to make a society clearly align with the teachings of Koran. Whereas some extremists elements among the Muslims have given the word another interpretation of the word which constitutes attack on the Infidels and Radical methods for morality and spiritually for self defence. John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, *The Globalisation of World Politics*, Oxford University Press:US,2011,p.568

^{xxii} Mujahedeen’s had been interpreted in the Islamic World by various Islamic scholars. Most of the radical Muslims interpret them in the way that they are the people who fought infidels or the un-Islamic forces, where as in Afghan context these who fought Soviets. Amalendu Mishra, *Hot Spots in Global Politics* ,p.183

^{xxiii} Al Quada originated out of Afghan imbroglio. The organisation is the result of confrontation between USSR and US. Maloy Krishna, *Fulcrum Of Evil ISI-CIA-Al Quada Nexus*, Manas Publication: India, 2006, p.308

^{xxiv} Mahmood Mamdani, “Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism”, *American Anthropologist* , Vol. 104, No. 3, 2002

^{xxv} Osama bin Laden et al., in “Declaration of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders,” 23 February 1998. Guset User, *The Concept and Practice of Jihad in Islam*, 2015, available at <https://fliphtml5.com/mamz/ilyd/basic>, accessed on 5-9-2017

^{xxvi} Terrell E. Arnold, “On The Relevance Of The United Nations”, 2003, accessed on 3-4-2016, available at www.rense.com/general35/rel.html.

^{xxvii} Joakim Palme, *Sustainable Social Policies in an Era of Globalisation: Lessons from the Swedish Case*, available at <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our.../32-pages-1-16.doc>, accessed on 4th November, 2017