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Globalization and its impact on the Muslim Society in India: a Sociological Perspective

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Abstract:

Globalization, as a complex and multifaceted process, has reshaped societies across the globe, including India. The Indian subcontinent, with its diverse cultural, religious, and linguistic landscape, has experienced profound transformations in the wake of globalization. Among various communities in India, Muslims represent a significant demographic group whose experiences and responses to globalization merit attention from a sociological perspective. The Muslim community could not be spared from the impact of globalization, which is a universal process of social integration in the world. This paper seeks to examine the impact of globalization on Muslim society in India, focusing on how this phenomenon has influenced cultural identity, economic opportunities, social structures, and religious practices among Indian Muslims. Globalization has had both positive and negative impacts on every aspect of society. As it creates new employment opportunities, cultural exchange, flow of ideas and technologies, economic liberalization, privatization of education, changes in the status of women, etc., it also reinforces localization, radicalization, unemployment, unequal disparities in access to property, identity crises, etc. Therefore, upgrading Muslim communities in all socio-economic and cultural aspects is essential, along with the existence of religious traditions, to face the challenges and survive in the era of globalization.

Keywords: Globalization, Muslim society, Sociological perspective, Cultural dynamics, Economic integration, Identity formation, Socio-political landscape.

Introduction: Muslims in India constitute the second largest socio-religious community having 14% of population strength (Census of India, 2010). Islam promotes homogeneity, equality, and egalitarianism in the construction of social structure in the text but in reality, Muslim society is vertically segmented into different social-economic and cultural groups like Ashraf and Non-Ashraf and horizontally composed lots of large and small 'ethnic' groups based on language and culture across India (Biswas, Z.H. 2015). This community could not be out of the realm of the impact of globalization as a general and universal

process of integration and interconnectedness of society around the globe. Globalization refers to the interconnectedness and integration of economies, cultures, societies, and institutions across the globe. Globalization has brought about numerous benefits such as economic growth, technological innovation, and cultural exchange. It has also led to economic inequalities, as certain groups and regions benefit more from globalization than others. This has contributed to social tensions and disparities within societies, exacerbating issues such as income inequality, unemployment, and social exclusion. This research paper delves into the intricate relationship between globalization and the Muslim society in India, analyzing its multifaceted impacts through a sociological lens. In an era characterized by rapid interconnectedness and cultural exchange, the Muslim community in India finds itself at the intersection of tradition and modernity, grappling with both opportunities and challenges presented by globalization. This study examines the socio-economic, cultural, and political dimensions of globalization's influence on the Muslim society in India. It explores how economic liberalization and transnational flows of capital have shaped employment patterns, income inequality, and access to resources within Muslim communities, shedding light on both the disparities and avenues for economic empowerment. Furthermore, the research investigates the cultural transformations occurring within Muslim society, analyzing shifts in identity, consumption patterns, and cultural expressions. It explores the negotiation between traditional values and globalized norms, as well as the impact of media, technology, and popular culture on shaping Muslim identity and social practices. Moreover, the study delves into the religious implications of globalization, examining changes in religious discourse, practices, and community dynamics. It explores the role of transnational religious networks, digital media, and educational exchanges in reshaping religious identities and interpretations among Indian Muslims. Lastly, the paper scrutinizes the political dimensions of globalization in the Muslim community, analyzing issues of representation, citizenship rights, and political participation. It investigates the impact of globalization on interfaith relations, communal harmony, and the rise of identity politics, highlighting the complex interplay between global forces and local politics. Through its comprehensive analysis, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics between globalization and the Muslim society in India. It underscores the need for nuanced approaches to address the challenges posed by globalization while harnessing its potential for promoting inclusive development and cultural resilience within diverse societies.

Literature Review: Scholars have extensively studied the effects of globalization on diverse societies worldwide. In the context of India, researchers have explored its implications for various social groups, including Muslims. Ahmad (2009) argues that globalization has led to the emergence of new forms of cultural expression and identity negotiation among Indian Muslims, challenging traditional notions of community boundaries and solidarity. Similarly, Khan (2015) highlights the economic opportunities and challenges faced by Muslim entrepreneurs in India's globalized economy, emphasizing the role of social networks and institutional barriers in shaping their experiences. Scholarly

literature on globalization and its impact on Muslim society in India provides valuable insights into various facets of this phenomenon. Studies have highlighted the political implications of globalization, including its influence on state policies, minority rights, and political representation for Muslims in India (Kumar, 2012; Jaffrelot, 2007). Moreover, scholars have examined the religious dimensions of globalization, such as the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, transnational religious networks, and the negotiation of religious identity in the context of globalized media and communication (Engineer, 2009; Varshney, 2002). Furthermore, research has delved into the social and cultural ramifications of globalization for Indian Muslims, shedding light on issues of cultural hybridity, social mobility, and community cohesion (Batabyal, 2016; Hasan, 2018). These studies underscore the need for a comprehensive analysis that integrates various perspectives to understand the multifaceted impact of globalization on Muslim society in India. Studies have highlighted the role of globalization in shaping employment patterns and economic opportunities for Indian Muslims, as well as its influence on religious identity formation, political mobilization, and gender dynamics within Muslim communities (Kabeer, 2004; Kundu & Saraswati, 2006; Siddiqui, 2013).

Methodology and objectives: This research paper attempts to study and explore the impact of globalization on Muslim society in India. The researcher goes through a long observation of secondary sources to get more insight and knowledge about globalization and its impact on Muslim society in India. Due to the paucity of research on the relationship between globalization and Muslim society, the present study objected to finding out globalization's impact on various aspects of Muslim society. Additionally, an analysis of existing literature on globalization and its effects on Indian Muslims will complement the empirical findings.

Political Impact: Globalization has significant political implications for Muslim society in India, influencing state policies, political representation, and minority rights. The process of economic liberalization and integration into the global economy has reshaped the political landscape, with implications for minority communities, including Muslims. Economic reforms have led to debates over issues such as affirmative action, religious minority rights, and representation in government institutions (Kumar, 2012). While globalization has enabled the emergence of transnational political networks and alliances, it has also posed challenges to the political agency and representation of Indian Muslims within the national framework (Kundu & Saraswati, 2006). The proliferation of digital media and communication technologies has enabled the mobilization of global Islamic networks, influencing political discourses and activism among Indian Muslims (Jaffrelot, 2007). However, globalization has also engendered tensions and conflicts within Muslim communities, as differing interpretations of religious identity and political ideologies intersect with global influences (Engineer, 2009). Statistical data on political representation and electoral participation highlight disparities in Muslim representation in elected bodies and government institutions. Despite constituting a significant proportion of the population, Muslims are often underrepresented in political leadership positions, leading to concerns over minority rights and political marginalization (Sachar Committee Report, 2006).

Religious Impact: Globalization has complex implications for religious identity formation among Indian Muslims. On one hand, increased connectivity and exposure to global discourses have led to diverse interpretations and expressions of Islam, fostering dialogue and exchange within Muslim communities (Sikand, 2004). Globalized media and communication have facilitated the dissemination of religious knowledge, diverse religious discourses, ideologies, practices, and information, shaping the religious worldview of Indian Muslims (Engineer, 2009, Varshney, 2002). The proliferation of satellite television, social media, and online platforms has expanded access to religious knowledge and information, leading to debates over orthodoxy, modernity, and cultural authenticity (Hasan, 2018). Furthermore, globalization has facilitated the transnational circulation of Islamic ideas and movements, influencing religious practices and affiliations among Indian Muslims. The emergence of global Islamic networks, charities, and educational institutions has provided avenues for religious education, social welfare, and cultural exchange (Batabyal, 2016). Globalization has also sparked debates over cultural authenticity, religious orthodoxy, and the preservation of indigenous traditions among Indian Muslims. The spread of Western consumerism and secular values has raised concerns about the erosion of traditional Islamic practices and values (Sikand, 2004). Additionally, globalization has exposed Indian Muslims to transnational religious movements and ideologies, leading to tensions over religious authority and identity (Varshney, 2002). However, globalization has also contributed to the spread of religious extremism and sectarianism, posing challenges to religious pluralism and social cohesion in India (Engineer, 2009). **Social Impact:** Globalization has profound social implications for Muslim society in India, reshaping patterns of social interaction, mobility, and identity formation. Economic liberalization and urbanization have transformed social structures and lifestyles, impacting the socio-economic status of Indian Muslims (Kumar, 2012). While globalization has created new economic opportunities for some segments of the Muslim population, it has also exacerbated socio-economic disparities and marginalization in urban areas (Jaffrelot, 2007). Moreover, globalization has fostered cultural exchange and hybridity, leading to the reconfiguration of social identities and practices among Indian Muslims. The influx of global media, consumer goods, and cultural products has influenced patterns of consumption, leisure, and socialization, blurring traditional boundaries between local and global cultures (Varshney, 2002). However, globalization has also engendered anxieties over cultural authenticity and religious purity, as Indian Muslims negotiate between global influences and local traditions (Batabyal, 2016).

Cultural Impact: Culturally, globalization has introduced new dynamics of cultural production, consumption, and representation within Muslim society in India. The globalization of popular culture, including music, fashion, and entertainment, has permeated everyday life, shaping cultural norms and practices among Indian Muslims (Hasan, 2018). Moreover, globalization has facilitated cultural exchange and dialogue, fostering connections between Indian Muslims and global Muslim communities worldwide. However, globalization has also sparked debates over cultural imperialism, Westernization,

and the preservation of indigenous cultures among Indian Muslims. The spread of Western consumerism and lifestyle choices has raised concerns about the erosion of traditional values and cultural heritage (Engineer, 2009). Indian Muslims are navigating complex processes of cultural adaptation and resistance, as they negotiate between global cosmopolitanism and local cultural identities (Varshney, 2002). However, there is a need for a comprehensive analysis that integrates diverse perspectives and empirical data to understand the nuanced effects of globalization on different dimensions of Muslim life in India. Globalization of cultural aspects has brought cultural homogenization, cultural imperialism, religious fundamentalism, and commodification of cultural elements worldwide.

Employment: Globalization has had a significant impact on employment patterns and economic opportunities for Indian Muslims. While globalization has contributed to the growth of certain sectors, such as information technology, finance, and services, it has also exacerbated socio-economic disparities and structural inequalities within Muslim communities (Kabeer, 2004; Kundu & Saraswati, 2006). Access to international trade, investment, and employment opportunities has enabled Indian Muslim entrepreneurs, professionals, and workers to participate in the global economy, contributing to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction (Ahmad, 2009; Kundu & Saraswati, 2006). Technological advancements like digitalization, e-commerce, and information technology have enabled Indian Muslim startups and enterprises to access global markets, enhance productivity, and foster entrepreneurship (Ali, 2019). Indian Muslims who are living abroad, providing vital financial support to their families and communities in India. Remittances from overseas, Indian Muslims contribute to household income, poverty alleviation, and local development projects, enhancing economic resilience and livelihoods in India (Siddiqui, 2016). Microfinance institutions and Islamic banking products cater to the specific needs and preferences of Indian Muslim borrowers, promoting economic empowerment and entrepreneurship (Kabeer, 2004). Statistical data from various sources highlight disparities in employment rates, income levels, and access to formal education among Indian Muslims compared to other religious groups. According to the Sachar Committee Report (2006), Muslims in India lag behind other communities in terms of educational attainment and representation in the formal workforce. Furthermore, studies have documented instances of discrimination and marginalization faced by Indian Muslims in the job market, perpetuating cycles of poverty and exclusion (Siddiqui, 2013). However, dependence on global markets and industries exposes Indian Muslim businesses, workers, and households to risks such as job loss, income insecurity, and financial instability (Ahmad, 2009). Globalization has reinforced cultural marginalization and stereotypes of Indian Muslims in economic markets, affecting their access to employment, entrepreneurship, and consumer markets. Discriminatory practices, biased perceptions, and market prejudices can limit economic opportunities and inhibit the full participation of Indian Muslims in the formal economy (Engineer, 2009).

Educational Impact: It is generally believed that Muslims received education from Madrasha system of education in India. However, due to globalization and modernization's impact on education sectors, its trends have changed in their access to secular and scientific education. International collaborations and exchange programs have also facilitated Muslim students to study abroad, participate in cultural exchange programs, and engage with global academic communities. These initiatives promote cross-cultural understanding, academic excellence, and professional development among Indian Muslim youth (Ahmad, 2017). Diversification of curriculum could also be observed in incorporating perspectives from diverse cultures, religions, and worldviews. This inclusivity promotes tolerance, multiculturalism, and appreciation for diversity including Indian Muslims, fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational environment (Ali, 2019). Aligarh Muslims University, for example, where diversity and harmony in socio-religious and cultural aspects could be brightly observable in India. Despite this positivity of globalization, Indian Muslims have experienced socio-economic disparities in education. Structural inequalities, economic marginalization, and social discrimination hinder access to quality education, particularly among disadvantaged Muslim communities, perpetuating cycles of poverty and exclusion (Kundu & Saraswati, 2006). Cultural marginalization and identity crisis emerge when secular, western, and modern educational frameworks, language, and values undermine the cultural identity and heritage of Muslim students, leading to a sense of alienation and identity crisis (Engineer, 2009). It also creates educational inequality based on language barriers between the dominance of the English language and marginalized regional languages (Kumar, 2012). Though privatization of education is positively viewed and promoted by the government of India and private agencies, it creates barriers to access for economically disadvantaged Muslim students in the market of commercialization of education (Kundu & Saraswati, 2006).

Women's Issue: Globalization has intersected with gender dynamics within Muslim communities, shaping women's experiences and opportunities in various spheres of life. While globalization has expanded educational and employment opportunities for some Muslim women, particularly in urban areas, it has also reinforced patriarchal norms and inequalities within Muslim families and communities (Siddiqui, 2013). Statistical data on women's education, workforce participation, and socio-economic indicators highlight disparities between Muslim women and their counterparts from other religious communities. Despite progress in certain areas, such as literacy rates and access to primary education, Muslim women continue to face barriers to economic empowerment, political participation, and social mobility (Kundu & Saraswati, 2006).

Findings and Discussion: The findings of this study suggest that globalization has both positive and negative ramifications for Muslim society in India. On one hand, increased connectivity and access to global markets have expanded economic opportunities for some segments of the Muslim population, particularly in sectors such as information technology, finance, and trade. However, these opportunities are often accompanied by structural inequalities, discrimination, and marginalization, limiting the socio-economic mobility of

many Indian Muslims. Moreover, globalization has facilitated the circulation of cultural ideas, practices, and symbols, leading to a dynamic process of cultural hybridism and reconfiguration among Indian Muslims. While some embrace this cultural diversity as enriching their identity, others perceive it as a threat to their traditional values and religious beliefs. Additionally, the proliferation of media and communication technologies has influenced the dissemination of religious discourses and practices, shaping the ways in which Islam is practiced and interpreted in contemporary Indian society. Furthermore, globalization has engendered new forms of social and political activism among Indian Muslims, as they navigate transnational networks and alliances to address issues of socio-economic marginalization, religious discrimination, and political representation. The emergence of global Islamic movements and organizations has provided avenues for mobilization and advocacy, challenging dominant narratives of Muslim identity and citizenship in India.

Conclusion: In conclusion, globalization has far-reaching implications for Muslim society in India across political, religious, social, educational, economic, status of women, and cultural dimensions. This paper has provided a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted impact of globalization on Indian Muslims, highlighting the complex interactions between global forces and local contexts. By examining the political, religious, social, and cultural dimensions of globalization, this research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Muslim communities in contemporary India. Moving forward, further research is needed to explore the long-term implications of globalization on identity formation, community cohesion, and socio-economic development among Indian Muslims.

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