



Research Paper

The impact of Modernisation on Subalterns

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ABSTRACT- Modernization was a global initiative that was launched into our globe practically instantaneously, though at varying speeds in different locations, was launched into our world.

The history of labourers and other marginalised groups, sex, race, developed and undeveloped labour, village labour, non-working and foreign labourers is a tough one to understand and comprehend.

The inspiration for rapid and authoritarian modernization denied the agencies of such groups a role in moulding the countries' social and political life, while demanding rapid understanding and massive sacrifice on behalf of the working masses and the subaltern class.

The paper aims at focusing on defining the term 'Subalterns' and the impact of modernization through its different forms and ways, concerning both the positive and the negative, with reference to various texts from Subaltern Literature like *Karukku* and *Nectar in a Sieve* and talking about tribal groups as the core element of humankind being affected due to the role play of modernisation through its different faces.

KEYWORDS: Subaltern, Modernization, Global, Individualism, Indian, Authoritarian, Migration,

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I. INTRODUCTION:

Since the 1970s, the term "subaltern" has been used to describe the colonised people of the Indian subcontinent from the perspective of the colonised people, not the colonisers from Western Europe. The lower middle class and the subalterns suffered the most after 1991, when free markets were introduced in India as a cover for western-led modernisation. The loss of local jobs due to capitalism and economies of scale were the primary causes of such sorrow.

Additionally, the subaltern is now often called as a symbol of outcast, representing the polar opposite of the participants in a country. The subaltern symbolizes a restriction of access to multiple civil rights and freedom of duties. In an indeterminate zone of feeling and habit, the subaltern exists before or beyond the dominant logic of modern sovereignty. At the time where subalternity begins, citizenship secures inclusion within political and aesthetic representational structures. The study of those who reside on the margins or borders is known as subaltern studies.

Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers and other groups denied access to hegemonic power and one major aspect that the paper connects to is despite the factual statement that Asia is home to 70% of the world's tribal peoples (IFAD, 2000/01), and 8 Crore(double the population of America), Asian indigenous peoples are not given the same recognition as indigenous peoples in North America, Australia, or New Zealand. Having been one of the most affected groups, they have not always been the victim of the dual sides of modernisation, but have come out all the way in certain ways pertaining to some concerns in their favour as well.

II. WHAT IS SUBALTERN STUDIES?

Subaltern Studies was a series of periodical articles published by Oxford University Press in India around 1982. A group of Indian scholars who had received their education in the West wanted to reclaim their culture's heritage. Its principal purpose was to rewrite history for the underclasses, for those whose voices had previously gone unheard. Subaltern historians aspired to break free from elite histories and the Eurocentric bias of present imperial history. The majority of their writings were critical of the "Cambridge School," which appeared to perpetuate the colonial legacy—that is, it was elite-centered. Instead, they focused on those who were marginalised due to caste, gender, ethnicity, language, and culture. They promoted the idea that while political supremacy existed, it was not hegemonic. The main leader was Ranajit Guha, a writer on Indian

peasant uprisings. She uses a number of theoretical facts to research Indian history, including Demolition, Marxism, and Feminism. She was a harsh critic of current Indian histories that narrated the tale of the colony through the eyes of the colonisers and showed the colony through the eyes of the British administrators (Young, 159). Her goal, as well as that of other historians (including Ranajit Guha), was to reclaim their history and give voice to the oppressed. Any other history merely re-enacts imperialist rule without giving voice to the people—those who resisted, those who supported, and those who were victims of colonial encroachment. This history is meant to be a "contribution made by individuals on their own, independent of the élite," according to the Subaltern Studies group (quoted in Young 160). They did this by forming Subaltern Studies, a publication based in Oxford, Delhi, and Australia, with the goal of writing a history that went against the mainstream and restoring history to the oppressed.

III. WHAT IS MODERNIZATION?

Modernization is a general word for a series of substantial societal changes that, once initiated, tend to spread throughout all elements of society in a self-reinforcing cycle, from economics to social life to political institutions. Modernization is associated with a strong sense of change and inventiveness, as well as the idea that human civilizations are evolving. The common characteristics in all of these elements of modernity is the rising entropy, focused information, and sophistication of conducted human tasks. This can be found on three levels: the system of structured entities, the mass of individuals, and the connections between individuals and the network of interconnected entities. This strengthens the interdependence of organised entities while also improving the autonomy of their internal operations. In modern cultures, the division of labour and specialisation has progressed to the point where no single entity can live without the contributions of others.

Some reflections on modernization theory are important which lays out the foundations that eventually form the whole theory. And Globalization, with no doubt, forms a crucial part in the process of modernization.

IV. IMPACT OF MODERNIZATION ON SUBALTERNs:

The goal of modernisation is to change society ahead, diversify its occupational structure, provide people with efficient technology that provides higher productivity, provide them with opportunities for social mobility, and bring them up to par with other developed parts of society. However, not all of the findings are promising. As a result of the execution of series of progression events, some towns have turned into rumble. Modernity has had negative affects on the citizens as wells as on subalterns

Negative effects

- Land loss

Globalisation has made the process of communication between the tribal and non-tribal people easier and convenient than it used to be for ages. As interaction with outsiders grew, more people began to enter and settle in tribal areas. Tribals lost their lands which belonged to their forefathers as a result of the establishment of land owners. Land is the tribals' primary source of income, with agriculture and allied activities accounting for more than 90% of their revenue. As a result, land is a tribal community's only tangible asset, and it is held in high regard.

Land alienation has resulted in a slew of related issues among tribals, including increased poverty, fewer job opportunities, tribal migration, and tribal exploitation; exploitation of tribal women; causing tension between tribals and non-tribals; fostering extremism and naxalism in tribal areas; forcing law and order issues to tribal regions, either in the direct or indirect manner whatsoever; and increasing the incidence of beggary and prostitution. Tribal land was also acquired by the state government for industrial, irrigation, electricity, mining, and other purposes. As a result, the tribals' land rights have been taken away from them. Land encroachment is caused by two factors: (a) tribals' economic hardship and (b) land encroachment.

- Tribals' simplicity and honesty.

- Ignorance of the Forest Act, illiteracy, and poverty

- Another reason for land alienation is the lack of financial facilities in tribal regions. Displacement

In the case of Industrialisation, the introduction of major industries, the construction of dams, and the initiation of development plans in tribal zones have forced the indigenous population to relocate. A huge proportion of tribal families have been removed from their homelands. They were supposed to be granted compensation in the form of money and replacement land, but not everyone got one. With their land being taken over for development and them without the skills, tool, aptness for skilled or semi-skilled work, they had no alternative but to enter the city as unskilled labourers, working as domestic servants, rickshaw pullers, vendors, hawkers, and other low-wage positions.' They might enter the industrial sector at the lowest level, and their chances of

progressing were slim because they lacked the technical skills required for industrial positions. They eventually became proletarianized.

Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* is one such instance that woe on the aftermath of industrialization in the lives of subalterns. It talks about the inevitable changes that takes place in the lives of a family due to the rise of industrialization in the village. Rukmani and her husband Nathan are forced off their land by this organisation, which also snatches Rukmani's sons and kills her husband. The tannery symbolises several essential elements in the book by being the culprit, such as how the neighbourhood is changing and those who can't adapt will flounder, as Rukmani and Nathan do. The tannery also depicts India's economic predicament. The more enterprises there are, the faster India's economic structure will evolve, giving the country more political power yet reducing crop life. Finally, the tannery illustrates how farm life in India is gradually fading away, and those who are unable to find alternative occupations will also fade away.

We learn about the detrimental force of tannery when Rukmani cries-

"Somehow I had always felt the tannery..... undoing. I had known it since..... frowned on them. One of them.....touch had scathed. (NIS: 63)

- **Cultural and Identity Loss**

To the world of culture and tradition, tribal society is a mystery. In the broader context of Indian society, tribal communities are an important social category. Tribal people have been the torch bearers of the indigenous cultural roots and heritage. Their culture reflects this baffling diversity in race, language, habitat, and economy. Despite its important function in integrating society and increasing people's sense of ownership over their culture, intangible heritage is under threat of extinction. The rapid trend of globalization, homogenization, and the pervasive influence of western culture pose a threat.

In the context of recent changes in tribal societies' social structures and cultural patterns, mainstreaming entails the construction of a new identity.

Positive Effects

- **Education**

Modernization enabled us to perceive and strive for a better life, home, and way of life, and it was closely linked to education. Better and higher education is commonly regarded to provide the foundation for attaining one's aspirations by getting a better job and hence a greater salary. Prior to the arrival of the British, the primary purpose of education was to develop character and teach religious scriptures. Only three of the four varnas had the right to read sacred scriptures, while the shudras were denied access to education. When English became the primary language of instruction, the bulk of the population, including the poor, were shut out of school.

To bring about light into the importance of education, one such instance can be taken from Bama's *Karukku* which emphasized on the whole new perspective that reader gains from this novel.

Bama encourages her fellow Dalits, especially Dalit women, to trust their inner strength, which has grown stronger as a result of long-term subversion, thereby using education as a tool to disagree with the fact that they have to be ruled by the oppressing majority and not simply saying yes to what they are asked to. To illustrate, we can find the epitome of value given to education when Bama mentions:

"Because we are born into the Paraya jati, we are never given..... if we study and make progress,..... indignities."(Karukku 17-18).

Nonetheless, mentioning the earlier practices, the tribal community was marginalised and lived in isolated sections of the country, but the government is working to integrate the tribal people into the mainstream population as part of the modernization process. Reservation in education for students from Scheduled Tribes is guaranteed under Article 15 of India's Constitution. The government is taking several initiatives to improve the tribal society's economic conditions, which have been plagued by poverty for a long time.

- **Impact on Agrarian Community**

About a population of 66% of Indian Tribal community relies on agriculture as their major source of livelihood. The introduction of modern farming procedures, the expansion of irrigation infrastructure, and the revolutionary improvement in agricultural operations through the use of chemical fertiliser have radically altered agricultural practises and increased tribal farmers' wealth.

V. CONCLUSION:

In terms of effects, results, repercussions, and outcomes, modernisation is a two-edged sword. The main reaction of modernisation can be measured by the impact it produces directly on the lives of people who belongs to the lower middle class and tribal communities.

Modernisation stands as the foundation for the rapid wealth building as well as dissolution of outcasted and helpless people. We can conclude that what mostly signifies it's impacts is the execution and steps taken by authoritative and legal bodies to uplift and elevate their people.

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