Rekindling The Human Spirit In A Globalized Society

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Abstract

The present paper reveals that, Rekindling the Human Spirit in A Globalized Society. Globalization has been a long process of political, economic and cultural domination of some countries over others. While the spiritual essence of the human values is inherent within us, the cross-cultural and individual expressions are learned, developed and practiced throughout our lifetime in the social environments we live and work in. This integrated wholeness of the human values gives us tremendous strength as we seek to bring them forth in our work. Our personal and professional journeys have led us all to work and learn from colleagues, clients, friends and lovers from countries and cultures other than those of our birth. Education is humanizing as it empowers students to become fully alive, to care for their own and the common good, to relish life and accept its challenges, to exercise their rights and honor their responsibilities, to champion justice and compassion.

Key words: Globalization, Spiritual Values, Civil Society, Global Solidarity and Human Spirit.

INTRODUCTION:

People of the world have been witnessing rapid changes in a continuous fast increasing rate and have been confronting various problems and challenges. However, one fact remains the same: the world is divided between First World and Third World. The gap between the two (the poor and the rich) is getting wider and wider. The first world is offering aids to the Third World through Globalization and has said that globalization is the cure for the worldwide problems particularly pertaining to the matter of treasury.

CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION WITH DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS: In establishing the meaning of globalization, following are its concepts in different dimensions.

1. Globalization as a concept is a world order, a world global market that has now perpetuated; reaching the lives of the poorest of the poor in the society. With globalization, the world has become smaller and smaller everyday as people and activities regardless of breadth of space can just be connected in a matter of seconds or just few minutes. In this regard, globalization refers to the extended networks in every human activity (business, politics, communications, education etc.,)

- 2. Globalization pertains to the global consciousness, where one has to think global and act global. It is now recognized as global village wherein there is a sense of one world and the ideal of shared cultures.
- 3. The methodology or the means by which the interconnection of human activities and the fostering of global consciousness are being achieved. However, looking at it closely and considering history, one will find that the process itself is not new.

Globalization has been a long process of political, economic and cultural domination of some countries over others. If before, domination was done through conquest and colonization, now it has been done through the so-called revolution. Still the fundamental concept is the same, there is war. But one can imply that it is the same war of long ago, between the haves and the have-nots.

CULTURAL IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION

Focus on the cultural consequences of "globalization", reveals that one can see positive and negative effects. It is a fact that the interaction of different faiths normally generates respect for each other and even the feeling that to some extent they pursue the same goals. This relativization of one's own creed is in sharp contrast to the prejudices and the intolerance some of them used to maintain while they could remain isolated from each other. However, some feel globalization also entails a negative impact: a deterioration of moral standards, a decline of religious scruples, a cultural breakdown. Does it really involve spiritual impoverishment and moral decay?

No doubt what most concerns us here is the cultural homogenization" that globalization can generate. Our community and our identity, our culture and our traditions are challenged in this digital age. Some even feel that globalization will turn people into spiritless robots. Three questions in this regard are:

- Is globalization a challenge to spirituality and, if so, what spiritual nourishment is to be offered to the population of a globalizing world?
- Is globalization a challenge to world religious traditions?
- Which ethical foundation is to be offered to the population of a globalizing world?

GLOBALIZATION AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY

Globalization is taking place within a socio-economic and historical background that is grossly unfavorable for the poor countries. This includes the:

Centennial unfavorable and unfair of trade towards presently poor countries, former colonies.

- ✓ Already accumulated inequalities.
- ✓ Imputed foreign debt and debt servicing by poor countries.
- ✓ Technological advances benefiting the developed countries very significant changes in size of population of countries.

- ✓ Changing age composition of populations, ageing the West immigration laws limiting migration from poor countries.
- ✓ The prevailing understanding of human rights, that neglects socio-economic rights of peoples.

MEANING OF SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

"The highest and the greatest of the human freedoms is to choose your attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."-Viktor Frankl, "Man' search for meaning"

The concept of *Spiritual Freedom* grew from Viktor Frankl's incredible accounts of how some men triumphed emotionally and spiritually over the most horrific circumstances. "Man can preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind, even in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical distress."

A KEY ASPECT OF THE HAPPINESS HABIT

"If we don't consciously decide what sort of person we want to be and then work to become that person, our environment and our experience determine both our identity and our destiny for us."

Beyond the barbed wires in life, there is always a wide expanse of opportunity, spiritual freedom and emotional independence that frees us from being dominated and controlled by our circumstances. One can decide what sort of person he/she want to be and work to become that person. One should decide to practice being best selves all of the time and continually try to do our best, feel best and be best all of the time. Our best will continue to get even better. "Spiritual values" implies that they are something that human beings need to aspire to and hopefully someday achieve. Everybody as well aware that most people see human nature as anything but spiritual-they typically see it as limited, imperfect, and so on. However, one should know that we are spiritual beings first and foremost and that "to be human is to be spiritual". So, by calling these spiritual values "human values", it reminds that they are inherent in our spiritual nature.

Three principles of human values are:

- 1. These human values do not need to be taught or learned; rather, they must be evoked or unveiled, sometimes by unlearning the ways we keep them hidden.
- 2. These human values represent humanity at its fullest.
- 3. These human values can be understood from three perspectives: Their spiritual essence, based on the principle that *Divinity resides in all of creation*.

Their cross-cultural expressions, which one can find in all societies though there may be variations and different emphasis from culture to culture. There individual (personal) expressions, which reflect the attitudes and motivations beneath our unique personalities and behavior. While the spiritual essence of the human values is inherent within us, the cross-cultural and individual expressions are learned, developed and practiced

throughout our lifetime in the social environments we live and work in. By exploring the cross-cultural and individual expressions of these five human values that is truthfulness, righteousness, inner peace, love and non-violence, one can bring them forth in our everyday life and work.

One point we found quite interesting is that since these human values come from a common spiritual foundation, they are an indivisible whole; one human value cannot exist apart from the others. This integrated wholeness of the human values gives us tremendous strength which brings them forth in our work.

Human values expressed in typical workplace are:

- A professional would tell the truth about errors or delays, even if it meant a temporary reprimand.
- A clerical person would do his or her best quality work, even if no one were watching.
- An executive would continually strive to find creative new ways to deliver goods effectively and efficiently, without adding undue costs to his or her customers.
- A sales person would actively seek to serve people rather than hide behind bureaucratic rules.
- A manager would seek to keep the environment clean and unpolluted by wastes from the business.

Practices of five human values in a practical way are

- 1. Truthfulness: Speak honestly with co-workers and customers
- 2. Righteousness: Keep your agreements with your manager and co-workers as well as customers.
- 3. Inner peace: Practice equanimity, even in crisis, in times of profit or loss, and in times of praise or blame.
- 4. Love: Listen generously and compassionately to others rather than being judgmental.
- 5. Non-violence: Find win-win solutions to problems, rather than winning at another's expense.

SPIRITUALITY OF GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

It is in such a context that one can reflect on the personal and collective motivation that can foster the movements for transformation of the values of peoples and of the relationships and structures of the present capitalistic globalization. The role of religious and people's movements can be very significant for the mobilization of the disadvantage groups throughout the world, around particular limited objectives. Hopefully such a trend will row into a movement of vast human solidarity that becomes a powerful force for desirable personal and societal transformations. In this connection the following thoughts may be considered on the lines of humanistic and spiritual reflection that can be an inspiration for a global solidarity of peoples to strive for the common good of humanity.

Spirituality is a human quest for self-realization of the noblest aspirations, for holiness and perfection in union with the Transcendent, the Divine, to the extent possible in our earthly existence. It engages a person and a community in the effort to overcome selfishness, to care for others, to share with others what each one has so that the human happiness and fulfillment of all may be increasingly realized. The world's religious and the best genuine humanistic thinking indicates that human happiness depends on the striving for love, sharing and understanding among persons and in society.

Since the realization of the conditions for human life are now very dependent on local as well as global forces, it is essential that those interested in spiritual development of persons be engaged in the global aspects of the human problems of living as of food, housing, employment, justice, peace and social cohesion in actual life. Otherwise, a mere individualistic spirituality in the context of global manipulation of human relationships by uncontrolled world forces such as religion and caste and the profit oriented transnational corporations, risks being a self-delusion or deception and a conscious or unconscious betrayal of the human cause. Such an individualistic and a social spirituality would even be a danger inn acquiescing in the existing and growing evil in the world.

Persons or groups seeking spiritual betterment, even in an isolated rural area, have to be conscious of the impact of global forces on the life of those around them. The food they buy may be imported from other countries. This in turn may affect production, employment and social contentment in one's own country. Their spirituality has therefore to include an effort to better the situation locally and this may involve a struggle against the forces of selfishness and evil that impinge on village life. In times past the spiritual seeker was more conscious of one's locality but less on the bearing of worldwide forces on one's home area, or of one's own people on others. Meditation, worship services, rituals, spiritual ministrations, counseling were all limited in their impact to the local realities.

PRESENT SCENARIO OF GLOBALIZATION

At the present development of globalization, poses many dangers and challenges to human generation. The globalization of the economy is leading to an increasing gap between rich and poor countries, as well as to huge income gaps within societies. Technological development is the crucial motor of the economic development. And the high speed of the technological development has led to a misuse of technology, such as nuclear arms and the unbridled exploitation of natural resources brought about by, among other things, unbridled consumption. All of those activities are harming the health and wholesomeness of humankind and destroying our natural environment.

The development of the information technology and modern ways of travel brings people into an age of very close interaction. This interaction between different peoples, cultures and religions may very easily produces tensions, which can lead to serious conflicts. People should avoid those types of conflicts; people should learn how to deal and live with those who are close to them. One-sidedly jumping on the band-wagon of anti-globalization is not a helpful attitude is we want to transform these conflicts and find a solution.

NEED OF THE DAY

Rather, one should use technological development objectively and wisely. We have to make use of the technological progress in the material civilization to protect the earth, the environment and the life of every single human being. Everybody should try to need to establish a wholesome circle of globalization, so that the whole world can prosper together.

Human beings tend to pursue progress in life to their own advantage, often neglecting the common good and harmony with nature. This tendency leads to an imbalance between society and the natural surroundings. Spiritual values will only permeate space and time if human beings overcome their inherent selfishness and embrace globalization from a spiritual vantage point.

The whole world is one web of consciousness. It is a relationship between human beings, their thought, between all of us and all of your ways of thinking. If the consciousness of all of us can be transformed in such a way that everybody wants to devote themselves to each other and help each other to flourish, then globalization will be a spreading of good seeds. On the other hand, if one should just keep revolving around their human selfish ego-consciousness, caught up in the wrong idea of their advantage, the result for the whole world will be suffering, conflict and pain. In the past, globalization was often understood as to only mean economic globalization-namely, the globalization of capitalism and consumerism which is a one-sided way of looking at things. We also need a spiritual globalization so that our natural environment can recover. In spiritual globalization, all forms of life can rely on each other and co-exist.

To bring about a spiritual globalization, one has to rely on all the religions to promote spiritual values in order to lead our cultures in the right direction. Human beings should work towards realizing our true spiritual nature, which is free from the three poisons of greed, hate and lust. This will be the way to overcome our own contamination, selfish freed, and the pollution of the environment.

What spiritual globalization can bring to the world is one global family of love and peace. Spiritual values are built on the principle of co-existence. With spiritual values, we treasure together, embrace it and recognize it as our one family home. Spiritual values create a circle of positive relationships between us. The awakening of our inner spiritual nature will be reflected in a harmonious world around us. Using globalization well means working for peace.

Among the 6 billion people on this earth, 4.8 billion are considered to have a religion; this means 81% of the entire earth population. In the wake of globalization, not a few religious problems directly affect international politics, economic development, national safety, social stability and world peace. This means that the power of religion has a great influence on all areas of life and society. It can change the course of history and the fate of human kind.

Inter-religious dialogue is therefore essential to achieve a common recognition of the importance of respect, tolerance and love. The mission of all the religions is to guide the world in the direction of peace to benefit the entire earth. Through dialogue and encounter we learn to understand each other better, and we learn from each other how to let our spiritual nature transform ourselves and the world around us. This is

essential to prevent globalization from proceeding with conflict and harm, of if we want it to reach fulfillment in the simplicity and purity of spiritual awakening.

CONVERGENCE OF RELIGIONS: AN INTER-FAITH PERSPECTIVE ON GLOBALIZATION

As it has been observed by many throughout history, religion has been both a source of blessing and curse. Religion has been, and is, a major factor in many conflicts and wars around the world. There is a real danger now that these unwelcome truths about the true meaning and function of religion, combined with political/economic injustice, human rights abuses, poverty, xenophobia, fear, ignorance, globalization and war as an instrument of imperial policy, will aggravate conflicts and intolerance leading to anarchy around the world.

Committed to spirituality, compassion and respect for others, truly religious people must not allow their religion to be hijacked and abused in this way by exclusivist ideologues. We must welcome religious diversity and concede that no single religion can claim a monopoly of truth. Indeed, at this time in our history and journey facing globalization, global warming, aids, poverty, injustice and more-we need each other far more than in the past and the future of our world demands that we teach to our students, parishioners and communities the value and benefits of dialogue, co-operation and interdependence.

Globalization for the common good mission is to promote ethical, moral and spiritual values into the areas of economics, commerce, trade and international relations amongst others, as well as personal virtues, to advance understanding and action on major global issues by civil society, the private enterprise, the public sector, governments and national and international institutions, leading to the promotion of collaborative policy solutions to the challenges posed by globalization. Everybody should commit to the idea that the marketplace is not just an economic sphere, it is a region of the human spirit. Whilst considering the many economic questions and issues we should also reflect on the Divine dimension of life, and should, in contrast to what is practiced today, be concerned with the world of heart and spirit. One has to view the problem and challenge of globalization not only from an economic point of view, but also from ethical, spiritual and theological perspectives.

Human beings affirm their conviction that a genuine inter-faith dialogue and co-operation is a significant way of bringing the world together, leading to the creation of a harmonious environment needed to build a world of peace, justice and prosperity for all. The call for globalization for the common good is an appeal to our essential humanity to deal with some of the most pressing concerns of peoples the world over.

Religion has always been a major factor in the growth of human civilization. Business and wealth creating when they are for a noble reason are blessed and vital for human survival.

Bringing religions and business together for the common food will empower us with humanity, spirituality and love. It will rise us above pessimism to an ultimate optimism; turning from darkness to light; from night to day; from winter to spring. This spiritual ground for hope at this time of wanton destruction of our world, can help us recognize the ultimate purpose of life and of our journey in this world.

MOBILIZING HUMAN SPIRIT IN PERSON

As organization development consultants we believe, as Gandhi said, we must be the change we seek to create. "To do great organization development work, we must do our own work, and pursue our own development intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually. To work globally we must live globally. We must be global citizens. If we could carry "global passports" we would do so. With deep respect for our countries of origin, all of us live and work globally. Our personal and professional journeys have led people all to work and learn from colleagues, clients, friends and lovers from countries and cultures other than those of our birth.

For everyone, working globally has been formative. Our sense of self has become a polyphonic medley of voices acquired from our country of origin and supplemented as we worked with people of other faiths, cultures, ethnicities and countries. Each time we deeply and authentically encounter another we discover them in ourselves; and from that time forward, we carry them with us. We have been enriched through our meetings with others of like spirit and heart expressed in different languages, dress, dance and song.

We live and work within the postmodern paradoxes of non-geographical heartlands, technologically connected social alienation, and power in flux. We care about the well-being of the whole while at the same time enjoying the uniqueness of cultural localities. We partake in and appreciate the rituals, ceremonies, foods, dress and politics of different countries and cultures while also holding dear to our own values and ways of being. We strive to demonstrate cultural sensitivity while at the same time maintaining a sense of self that gives us something to share with others. We believe in both local self-determination and the well-being of our global village. We work to create and sustain local vitality within the global social and economic context.

Criteria to be followed to become global citizen: Dinesh Chandra (1999) suggests the following:

- ✓ To live in a country other than where one was born
- ✓ To work in many different countries
- ✓ TO learn a language other than one's mother tongue
- ✓ To remain open to new belief systems and ideas
- ✓ To search for one's purpose and align one's life to that purpose
- ✓ To educate oneself on the global issues and accepting responsibility even if one is no able to do much about them at the moment
- ✓ And intuitively one should know that there is something more...

PROFESSIONALS IN THE SERVICE OF THE GLOBAL GOOD

Implications based on experiences are as follows:

1. Taking care for the whole: The phrase, "Think global act local" has never been more meaningful. Awareness of global possibilities and concerns is essential to a local community or business as it seeks to define its place in the new global order. It is not a time to be an ostrich and bury one's head in the sands of one's locality. It is a time to be an eagle and soar above the whole, seeing the patterns of possibility, opportunity and change that are emerging.

2. Attending to relational meaning making and relationship building:

Globalization brings an awareness of interconnectivity. Working globally means working relationally, building alliances, partnerships and new forms of co-operation. It means giving time and space to processes of co-creation and authentic participation. Recognition will go to improbable pairs, people, communities and nations who transcend boundaries and build new relational realities.

3. Focusing on the triple bottom line: Economic, Social and Environmental prosperity. No longer can any organization be single minded in purpose. Corporations, NGO's and governments are all being challenged to balance the triple bottom line. They are being asked by stakeholders to attend to the social needs, environmental needs and the economic needs of the planet. Equity, balance and diversity are as important results as profit and return on investment.

4. Dealing with issues of power and authority:

We will not change the fabric of organizational life unless we, and our clients are willing to let go of power as an object of possession and share it as a resource of the whole. Questions of governance and decision making are at the heart of globalization.

5. Working for product diversity as well as social diversity:

It does no good to conduct diversity trainings and then produce that homogenize the world. Organizations committed to the global good must find ways to adapt their products to the local needs of communities around the world rather than pitch a one size fits all product. Working globally means supporting the success and sustainability of local communities and cultures.

6. And play attention to energy and spirit, focusing on what gives life:

Use a positive approach to be used to change management; one that recognizes what works in the organization or community. Sharing best practices in learning forums and innovation teams. Focusing on people and social responsibility before profit. Without enjoying no work should be carried out. Seek to bring the best in others, and one should not be surprised if it brings out our best too.

THE TEACHING OF THE RELIGIONS AND CAPTALISTIC GLOBALIZATION

In this context of increasing injustices in the world the religions could be a light to make us all aware of the false values of capitalistic globalization that cannot bring happiness and peace to persons or a lasting solution to our social and economic problems. The teaching of the world religions is diametrically opposed to

the values of capitalistic globalization. The development of science and technology can improve human life, but the capitalistic values that inspire the social relationship are disastrous.

While the religions teach a detachment from search for material wealth and that al beings should be cared for and respected, maximization of private profit is the supreme goal of capitalism that has now reached a global dimension. The core values of the religions are:

- ✓ Against greed, accumulation, exploitation of persons and nature
- ✓ For sharing, tolerance, respect for all persons and nature. The religions advocate that society ensures that each person is cared for as a human being with rights to life and the means to contented living. All the religions stress the spirit of sharing of material resources among all humans.

ETHICAL FOUNDATION FOR REPULATIONS OF GLOBALIZING WORLD

In the present context, it is probably accepted that religion plays a role either as a foundation of ethical values or, at least, as an influential backing for them. The values that determine human behavior are most often either explicitly prescribed by religious doctrines or strongly advocated by them.

Buddha: 'If someone has heard much but does not follow the moral law, he is not a good listener since he holds the law in contempt' (Udanavarga 22:6) and 'Just as rain penetrates a badly covered house, so passion enters a dispersed mind. Just as rain does not penetrate a well-covered house, so too does passion not enter a well-developed mind.' (Dharmapada 1:13-14)

Jesus: 'Everyone who hears these words and acts upon them is a wise man who build his house upon the rock. The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against that house; and yet it ICR did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.'

INFUSE EDUCATION WITH SPIRITUAL VALUES

Education is humanizing as it empowers students to become fully alive, to care for their own and the common good, to relish life and accept its challenges, to exercise their rights and honour their responsibilities, to champion justice and compassion. It fosters students who are confident in their own identity but open to other cultures and perspectives, and who have a knowledge of and appreciation for the sciences, humanities, and arts. Holistic education engages the whole person-teaching students to think critically and creatively for themselves. Such visionary education requires soling grounding in reading, writing, arithmetic and rhetoric but adds two more-respect and responsibility. There are spiritual values around which many of the great world religions and spiritualities reach consensus. For educators to allow such spiritual convictions to permeate their teaching and the ethos of schools would be transforming:

The equal dignity, rights and responsibilities of everyone. This would encourage a liberating, integrated education instead of a functional and fragmented.

- Life is a gift charged with purpose and meaning. This could encourage students to find hope and joy in living in contrast to nihilism and escapism.
- An emphasis on community- an understanding that we need and must care for each other. This could offset the reigning "me" attitudes.
- Spiritually emphasizes the quest for wisdom of life. This could lend a noble vision to study, with every discipline of knowledge fostering an ethic for life.
- All great spiritual movements teach justice for all and compassion for the needy. This suggests education in critical consciousness and commitment to social service and transformation.
- At their best, most faiths are universal in outlook, emphasizing open hearts and minds and cherishing truth.
- All spiritualities also are convinced that the person is essentially spiritual, that the human vocation is to live in "right relationship" with God-however named and with oneself, others and creation.

CONCLUSION

All concerned with the future of humanity must try to bring into being a new type of person, whose loyalty to humankind and to our planetary home is primary. Such a person would not neglect her or his own home, locality or country, but rather so care as not to hurt others and the earth.

Given today's consumerist water and ruin, such persons would try to simplify their wants. They would not find joy in acquiring as much as possible, but in sharing with others and in demanding little for themselves. Service to others would not be only a duty but also the source of profound inner joy and societal harmony. Instead of profit maximization for self or a small group, service to all would be a powerful motivation for creativity and a fair distribution of natural resources and of the fruit of human labour.

Respect for nature will enable such persons to rediscover the original and organic beauty in the ordinary things of life bodies of water, trees, fresh air, the sunset, the moon, birds, fish, flowers, music and in the creative arts. This is a quality of life that urban technological culture tends to neglect. It needs to be rediscovered for the human person to find fulfillment in a way that excludes greed, acquisitiveness, destruction and waste.

This is an eminently spiritual vocation that is consonant with the best inspirations of all the world's major living faiths. It is a call to radical change because it entails transcending our narrow selfishness and loyalties to smaller groups that we have tended to absolutize. In accepting the other as other we have to learn to respect other race, the other sex, other religions and cultures, and not be a party to the exploitation of one by another. The present world crisis summons us to grow in awareness of and sensitivity to others. This is a never-ending process; it is a path to other-centeredness and holiness. Those who follow it will naturally also bring an influence to bear on family and social life, on national and global relationships. They will think of family life in relation to the good and the rights of other families. Through claiming a legitimate freedom for

themselves, they will exercise that freedom with a sense of responsibility to others. In employment they will seek to make public and economic life serve the common good.

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