

‘Hindustani Classical Music to Post Globalization Popular Music: An Overview

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Abstract

‘Globalization’ as in operation across the world for last three decades is not a new idea in our country or in the world but it was in operation in one form or the other. In our Holy Scripture we find its mention as ‘Vasudhaiva kutumbakam’. The present paper is based on a qualitative descriptive research which started with an objective to study the impact of globalization on music and musicality. Globalization means interaction and exchange among people of the globe in terms of economy, trade, commerce, culture and education and thereby improving social mobility and political relationships between the countries. Globalization has a remarkable impact on individual, society, nation and on the globe as a whole. Because of more interaction and exchange of trade, economy, culture and education between the nations there is an improvement in economy and social mobility of the countries. Globalization has definitely good impacts but at the same time it has brought a number of unhappy experiences to the world. Economic recession, British rule in India are some of the examples. Globalization has a remarkable impact on music in general and on Hindustani Classical Music in particular. Before the term globalization is popularly used the idea of globalization was there in Indian classical music. In 1930 Pt. Uday Shankar presented his dance in the UK. In late 40s, Ustad Vilayat Khan presented his recital before King George VI. In 50s onward Pt. Ravi Shankar, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Ustad Allah Rakha and the prominent musicians of India started visiting abroad. Festivals are organized and different organizations were established in abroad particularly in the USA, the UK, Canada and other European countries to present Indian classical music. There is collaboration between Indian classical musicians and western musicians to compose world music or popular music for the audience of the world. This kind of music called fusion is getting wide popularity. It is raising a serious concern as Indian classical music which is considered as the cultural heritage of the country, though gaining popularity and economic importance is somehow losing its essence and aesthetic sense. However, it can be said that globalization has a great impact on music, similarly music, too has an impact on globalization.

Keywords: Globalization, Music, Indian, Classical, Exchange, Cultural Heritage, Impact

Introduction

‘Globalization’, a popular term used across the globe for almost last three decades is not a new idea which has been prevailing since the ancient time in one form or the other political, economic, trade or culture. “*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam*” means the global fraternity, found in the Holy Scripture the Mahopanishad (vol.VI.71-73.). Gurudev Rabindranath and Swami Vivekananda are the two ambassadors who steered the idea of globalization in their thoughts and action.

The term globalization is thought to have come into formal operation sometime between 1980’s to mid of 1990’s as a means of the post economic reforms throughout the world. Ordinarily globalization means interaction or exchange among the people of the globe. Globalization started with exchange of an economy and trade followed by culture and education across the world. So globalization implies more interaction between people wherever they live in the world for a common set of humanistic and democratic values for an economic and cultural exchange. World trade is the agent that can bring world political co-operation and social mobility. Information technology is considered to be a key motive force of soft globalization.

Globalization, as perceived, has a wide and diverse impact on individual, society, nation and the globe as a whole with respect to economy, trade, culture and education. It is not that always it brings happiness but it might have adverse experience. It is indeed a fact where globalization has opened a window for economic reforms free trade quality enhancement of education and thereby worked as political co-operation and social mobility. The concept of world economy and world trade has enhanced the standard of life of the people and has an imprint on international impact of culture. But it has an other side too. Though there is hope for more interaction between people wherever they live in the world to develop a mutual system for economy, trade education and culture, the impact of globalization always does not bring a happy ending. In the past our country had to face adversity for more than centuries under British rule as result of trade by East-India Company. Due to the idea of globalization had brought a serious turmoil in the job market and the economy as a result of economic recession at beginning of 21st centuries. The Art and Culture of any society of a country being one of the pillars of heritage do have the diverse impact. Though the global interaction it is enriched in one hand or at the same times it loses part of its essence which may be sometimes its distinctive identity. With the globalization coming into effect the industry and the world of commerce standard patronizing music across the globe for their commercial and as such they are misusing musicians and their art and heritage making profit. This commercialization of music has made the teachers and students of music choose the easy way for achieving quick results. In this way they are making a compromise with the right way of teaching-learning process.

Illustration

As globalization was in operation much before the term became popular and took the present form so was music globalized much before 80's. The Indian music particularly Hindustani classical music had its impact and acceptance in abroad in decade back. Apart from the Asian countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka the Western countries particularly Europe and America are the places where the Indian classical music was accepted and getting popularity.

In 1930s legendary classical dance exponent Pandit Uday Shankar and Ram Gopal pioneered Indian Classical dance in Britain. After independence of our country in late 1940s Ustad Vilayat Khan performed before King George VI. In 1950s Indian music was institutionalized in the UK. It shortly followed by Pandit D.T.Joshi's recital in BBC and lecture demonstration in different universities of UK and South Africa. During that period the Asian Music Circle was formed and it presented the icons of the Hindustani Classical Music like Pt. Ravi Shankar, Ustad Vilayat Khan, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and many others to the West in 1960.

Indian traditions and indigenous musical knowledge has the potential to create a cultural autonomy and identity. It can create a greater understanding and appreciation of India, Indian culture and Indian music throughout the world. When we think about music education we can say it is a process through which any child wherever he or she lives in the world is made aware of and can participate in the variety of the music of the world in school education professional institution and private teaching-learning process or guru-shishya parampara.

Indian classical music has become very popular in abroad particularly in the UK and the USA. Two decades from 1950's to 1970's remained a vital period when Hindustani Classical Music was made acceptable and accessible in abroad. It started with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan's extraordinary performance at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. People of the globe started seriously thinking about Indian music. Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Ravishankar and Ustad Allah Rakha moved to the USA in late 1960's and started recitals and as well as teaching music. Ustad Ali Akbar Khan established the Ali Akbar Khan College of music in California in 1965 which is considered as the best Indian music teaching school outside India. Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Ustad Vilayat Khan, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Ustad Imrat Khan, Pandit Nikhil Banerjee and Ustad Allah Rakha are the doyens of Hindustani Classical Music who created a major impact and recognition of Indian classical music in the west during post 60's. Seeing the increasing popularity of Hindustani Classical Music a good number of musicians migrated to the west with music as their profession and livelihood. Hindustani Classical Music got a wide exposure where the best of Hindustani Classical Music was presented in the following festivals by the said musicians- Edinburgh Festival, Common Wealth Arts Festival, BBC Proms, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Centre, Theater de la Ville and many more. Even in North America well organized concert are presented every year organized by universities, colleges and music society and

associations. Some of the leading organizers are as follows- Music Circle (Los Angeles, CA), World Music Institute (New York, NY), Basant Bahar (San Jose, CA), Ragamala (Seattle, WA), Ragamala (Toronto, Canada), Ali Akbar College of Music (San Francisco, CA), Indian Music Society of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN), Kalakendra (Portland, Or), Kalavati (Boston, MA), Indian Classical Music Society (Milwaukee, WI), Sangeeta (St. Louis, MO), Indian Music Society of Houston (Houston, TX), South Asia Program of University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA), Asia Society (New York, NY), Smithsonian (Washington, DC), Sruti (Philadelphia, PA).

A land mark of above all may be the 1985 Festival of India which was a yearlong multifaceted celebration of Indian culture in the USA jointly by the Indian Government and the highest level of the USA Government. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) of India, the ITC-SRA and the University of Pittsburgh played very important role. In this festival, Hindustani Classical Music occupied a prominent place.

From the recent past vocal classical concert in abroad is getting prominence which is an interesting development. Pt. Vijay Kichlu, Pandit Jasraj, Pandita Girija Devi, Ustad Rashid Khan, Pt. Ajay Chakraborty, Pt. Ulhas Kasalkar, Vidushi Dr. Ashwini Bhide Deshpande, Smt. Padma Talwalkar are among the prominent musicians of Hindustani Classical vocal music, who visit abroad regularly and attract the foreign audience. Hindustani Classical Music is not only attracting foreign audience but also attracting foreign students to learn Hindustani Classical Music. They are learning in the institute and universities of their country. A large number of foreign students are coming to India every year to study Hindustani Classical Music in colleges, universities and under Guru-Shishya Parampara.

With the introduction of Information and Communication Technology, globalization has got a momentum. Interaction and communication has become much easier. Music is no exception to this. Internet has become a powerful means interaction in the musical world. Wide uses of internet, you-tube, Skype and other soft medium have made music more accessible to people of the globe. Media played very important role. TV channels including MTV channel played an important role giving a new direction to musical tradition and added strength to the globalization of Indian classical music.

Globalization has brought about a changing trend in world music and so in the Indian classical music. This has given rise to a global awareness towards diverse music or musical diversity. Musical diversity means empowering the artist in their respective musical cultures and engage them in international exchange through performance and other people-to-people and artist-to-artist interaction. It should provide access to all types of musical expression in all societies. And it should give every person the kind of music he wants to be acquainted with. This musical diversity in the globalized music society has paved the way of collaboration between two or more

musical cultures. Fusion is one such outcome of this globalized musical collaboration. Music being an effective means of communication brought two musicians of two different musical cultures together in one platform and mutually exchanges their music to give birth to world music, sometime call Fusion. Experimentation of this collaboration led to much popular music form. McLaughlin's guitar and Shankar's violin is a successful fusion in East-West musical encounter. Ustad Zakir Hussain's 'Shakti' is another example. Pandit Ravi Shankar's collaboration with Yehudi Menuhin and with other musicians and composers created a history. Notable musicians like Pandit Hari Prashad Chaurasia, L. Shankar, L Subramaniam, U Srinivas and Vishwa Mohan Bhat followed the idea of collaboration and achieved notable success.

The global interaction, exchange and collaboration undoubtedly attracted the audience from across the world and have become popular among them. This way fusion of any kind is neither Indian nor Western but is with an identity which may be termed as popular music. Considering the commercial aspect of music, quantity of audience is a factor. But for Indian Classical Music the quality of the audience is more important than quantity of listeners. It is a fact that Hindustani Classical Music has limited listeners. A major portion of young generation does not give time for listening to this kind of music because of its intricacies and time span. Their attention is on a kind of music which is entertaining to them. Because of the wide spread of information technology they have a ready access to world music and they listen to them. It does not mean that they do not listen or like Indian music. They listen to it and like it the way it is presented as world music. Popular music is nothing but a collaboration, experimentation and improvisation of Indian classical music to make it popular among the audience of the globe. In some of the popular music it is seen that the bandish and the raga is from traditional music but it is presented in western beat. For example:

The famous traditional thumri in raga Desh in Teen taal 'Nadiya bairi bhayi' is originally sung by famous thumri singer Hira Devi Mishra recorded in 1970s.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5VkaIyHrNI> (Hira Devi Mishra)

1. The same thumri now presented in popular form by Jeff Beck in guitar in western beat in the name of Nadiya.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drAv2FoYji8> (Jeff Beck)

And another two musicians' performances in the same name Nadiya are very popular among young listeners.

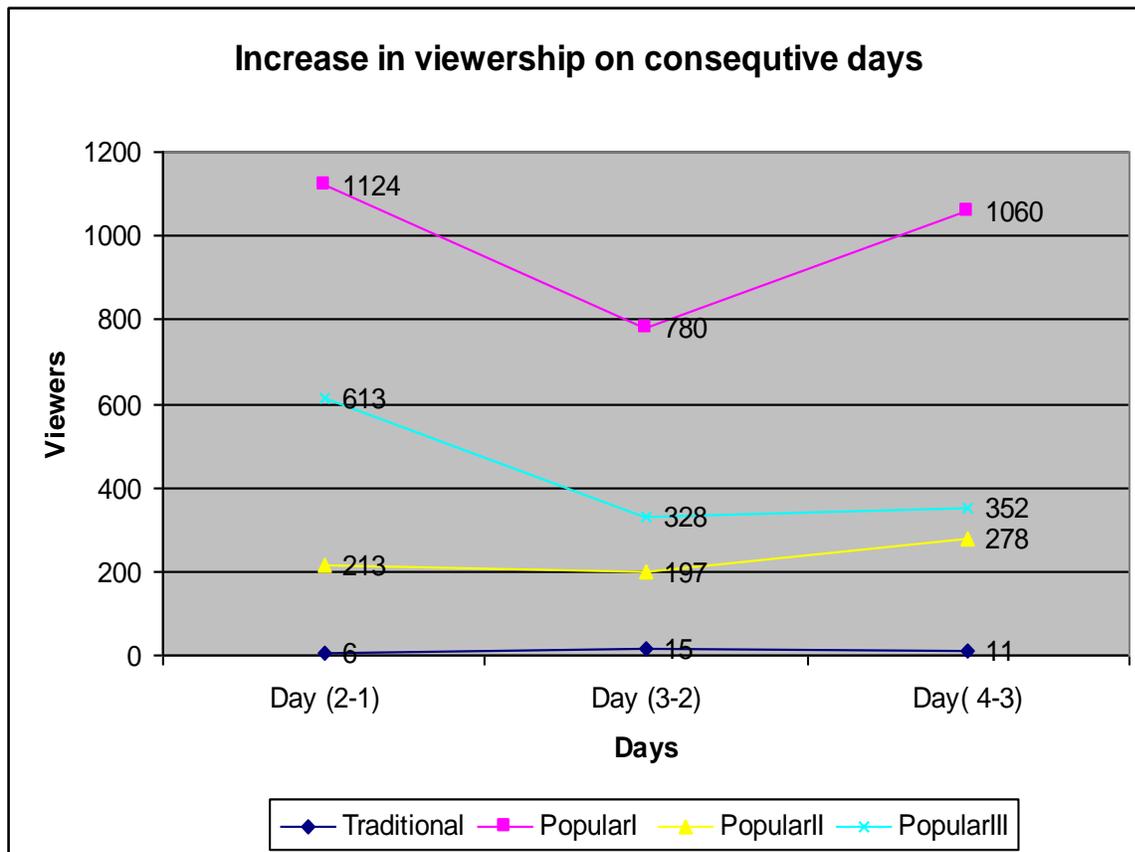
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBjxLv9Dfhk> (Nitin Sawhney)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJtEmifaclQ> (Shankar Tucker ft Jaunita John)

The comparison of popularity in terms of listener/viewer of you tube as on 12, 13, 14 and 15 March 2014 (uploaded almost for the same period, about four years) is given below:

	Hira Devi Mishra traditional Indian mode	Jeff Beck, guitar popular mode	Nitin Sawhney, vocal Popuar mode	Shankar Tucker ft Jaunita John Popular mode
Viewer12.3.2014	7,369	10,05,677	2,48,137	4,98,489
Viewer13.3.2014	7,375	10,06,801	2,48,350	4,99,102
Viewer14.3.2014	7,390	10,07,581	2,48,547	4,99,430
Viewer15.3.2014	7,401	10,08,641	2,48,825	4,99,782

The above table shows the popularity and interest shown by listeners. When the bandish is presented in traditional Indian mode the number of viewers in about four years is in thousand and the increase in a day is in tens, whereas the viewers of popular mode of the same bandish is in ten thousand and increase in a day is in thousand in one case and in hundreds in the others.



The traditional bandish ‘Neer bharana kaise jaun sakhiri aba’ of raga Tilak Kamod has become popular in the song name of Tilak Kamod as presented in the youtube. The original bandish is presented in Teen Taal, but the popular form is presented in western beat in 2-2 beats. So is in Khamaj and many other ragas. When in this way the Indian Classical music is presented in popular form, it is being accepted and getting popularity. But the listeners do not listen nor have patience to listen the discussed music when presented in the original form in classical mode. If we claim Indian Classical Music is one of the important pillars of Indian cultural heritage, then through this influence the Indian classical music is losing its fervor. The important aspect of Indian Classical Music is its essence of aesthetic. When it is presented in popular form, somewhere it is losing the essence of aesthetic. Only hope is that the listeners of popular form of music are listening to music because of its presentation in globalized form.

Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that globalization has brought Hindustani Classical Music to the forefront of the world. It has added to economy and used as a means of improvement of political relationship between the countries. Indian classical music has become very popular to the audience of the world and thereby there is social mobility in the musical fraternity of our country. But so far musicality is concerned the globalized new trend of Hindustani Classical Music is losing its essence to some extent if considered as a heritage. On the whole and through the discussion it can be said that as globalization has a remarkable impact on Hindustani Classical Music, Hindustani Classical Music has a reasonable impact on globalization.

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