

Social Network, Globalization and its' impact on the Process of Adaptation of Poor Migrant Women in Bangladesh

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Abstract

With globalization, climate change, migration and economic development in the 21st century, frequents disasters may cause in devastating effects on the livelihood of poor women living vulnerable areas of Bangladesh. However, in this era of economic globalization, the poor people are facing more challenges and risks including food scarcity, unemployment, economic problem, facing hardship in maintaining household needs, water crisis and deteriorating social bonds due to increasing numbers of disasters in the last over decades. The article provides an insight about how the poor and vulnerable women are struggling to adjust with these unintended conditions through the process of migration from rural to rural and rural to urban. The concept of adaptation and migration also come forward in this study to focus on how women are taking different process and actions in a system to better cope with, manage or adjust to unanticipated situations, stress and hazardous risks following social network in urban areas of Bangladesh. The study depicts that after migration social network comes as a main course of getting any opportunity like jobs to maintain their family needs. Though, because of involvement in the process of social network and globalization the poor migrant women in urban areas are depriving from suitable job opportunities, education, limited access to modern health facilities and sanitation, right to food and water etc. they are using their resilience capacities to adapt with these urban societies through developing new social network. The poor women are also facing much worse discriminations in both their public and private sectors to enjoy their full rights in society. Thus, the key attempt of the study is to underline the impacts of social network and globalization on the poor migrated women at the time of adjustment with the new locality and to focus the process of occupational adaptation of poor migrant women and the changing nature of social ties and network in urban life.

Key concepts: Migration, climate change, social networks, adaptation, occupational adaptation, globalization, social ties

1 Introduction

The meaning of globalization varies based on understanding of world views. In general, it is used as an international integration process connecting local development process i. e. economy,

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culture, products etc. to global domain (Carr and Chen, 2001). In this globalized world, social network has become an instrument in this process which is used to interact with each other. For instance, the migrant people in Bangladesh try to develop a network through community participation and develop relationship with them who are living in that certain area. Social network also establish a dyadic ties between the community people and make a path way to cope with a new situation. Longitudinal studies (Nasreen, 2008; Azad, 2013) notify that in this globalized world, though Bangladesh has presented herself as a low middle income country in 2015, the community people particularly in rural people are facing more critical challenges due to increasing frequent disasters (human and natural) and climate change. Economic problem and job opportunities, on the other hand, have also become crucial problems in urban areas for those people who migrated from rural areas where the vulnerable people especially women and elderly are continuously fighting to ensure their life sustaining needs. Thus, the poor people are trying to adopt with vulnerable situation induced by climate change and disaster through migration in Bangladesh. These are the poor people after migration in slum of urban areas developing a social network to get good jobs and to develop a strong relationship with others, though the process of migration in Bangladesh takes several forms like rural to rural, urban to urban, rural to urban and urban to rural. Studies also noted that jobs in urban areas don't ensure minimum standard of life, as, the poor migrant women also feel deprived in every sphere. For example, they are deprived from education and health, food sharing and they have no right to decision and to property. In the context of changing nature of environment, disasters and climate change, this paper has been intended to examine the impact of social network and globalization on the process of adaptation among the poor migrant women dwelling in urban areas of Dhaka City. It has also given a concentration to explore the changes of life pattern and social ties of the poor migrant women in urban areas of Bangladesh.

2 Social Network, Globalization and Migration

2.1 Defining and redefining of Globalization and Social Network: views on interrelationship

In the present era it is very difficult to explain the nature of social changes and social structure due to ongoing process of globalization. As, all individuals, groups and nations are taking different attempts to be economically independent in global era. Globalization has introduced these new opportunities through developing income facilities for those people who are more

prone to vulnerable and at risks due to climatic variations. Globalization also pertains an increasing interrelation with global process as well as with local development process which someone can interact and make an interrelationship with other as per their mutual needs. Thus, the concept of globalization can be defined in terms of social relations making a domain of network with others. For examples, the prominent sociologist Giddens (2006) defines globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa”. The growing body of literatures also identifies it as a central driving force behind the rapid social, political and economic changes that are reshaping not only world societies also local urban based societies (Giddens, 1990; Scholte, 1993; Held et. al. 1999). According to these proponents, in contemporary world government and societies across the world are having to adjust to a global world (Held et. al. 1999) while in local areas the poor people are migrating to urban areas from disaster prone areas to sustain their life through involving in the process of globalization. The poor people are reengineering and reshaping their life styles that are different from their earlier life pattern used in rural areas.

Longitudinal studies, however, make a clear proponent about an interrelationship between social network and globalization which indicates that social interactions and personal relationship makes strong social ties that support the connected people to meet up their needs in case of urgency. This is a practice of expanding the number of social contacts by making connections through individuals (Rouse, 2006). Not only that, social networking is also the act of interacting and networking with others. Indeed, it can be regarded as a tool that builds a set of relationship with individuals in the connected domains (Kadushin, 2004). In the process of globalization social network can be viewed as social relation by considering objects and ties. Thus, in globalization discourse objects are treated as individuals and ties are the relation between individuals within groups and/or out of groups of society.

The understanding components on social network note that when an object involves in social network, s/he tries to adapt with new situations and rethinks new life. Adaptation, in this case, come a crucial parameter of those persons who have no knowledge, skills and capacity to cope with new conditions. In general, it is seen as a process of taking advantage of the

consequences of events which are enhanced, developed or implemented (Levina & Tirpak, 2006) while Smit and Wandel (2006) note that adaptation is the adjustment in ecological and socio-economic systems in response to expected or unexpected events and their effects. In this study, the concept of adaptation is used from sociological standpoint of view which focuses on the nature of individual and institutional behavior within social systems.

2.2 Problems with adaptation, globalization and migration

The concept of adaptation from sociological point is explained here as the adjustment of individuals and institutional behavior in order to reduce social vulnerabilities like jobs, income insecurity, food insecurity etc. in any conditions. However, individual and institutional behaviors are more important to adjust with new economic structure in global society. For example, when poor women are migrating to urban areas, a crucial question of adaptation comes forward. In the context of human dimensions adaptation is understood as a process, action or outcome in a system (household, community, group, sector, region, country) in order for the system to better cope with, manage or adjust to some changing condition, stress, hazard, risk or opportunity (Smit and Wandel, 2006). Over the span of adaptation process women have to face critical problems and globalization has impacted upon them. In Bangladesh the poor and vulnerable women and girls are now working in garments industry to support their family. But, globalization doesn't ensure their standard life. In 2011 around 1134 workers died due to building collapse of Rana Plaza and most of workers were women and girls. Thus, globalization has added new dimension to their life. The poor women are seen as commodity for earning their livelihood and they are exploited by providing low wage. Besides, the migrated women face problem of keeping their past social network and bondage as well as to make a new social ties with new society. Women in Bangladesh are also experiencing with many social problems like unemployment, trafficking, famines, poverty, housing etc. while taking different measures to adjust with new situation in urban life (Ryan, 2007).

Women migration is not a new phenomenon in Bangladesh. Women are changing their residence and moving whole round of social activities from one place to another (Weeks, 287). Since 1971 the poor women in Bangladesh have been experiencing with migration and a long

military exploitation based on caste, creed, color and gender discrimination due to being a member of the society (Barkat and Maksud, 2001). The poor women are migrating due to different factors including lack of job availability in rural areas, unemployment, poverty, frequent natural disasters i.e., cyclone, cold wave, flood, draught, salinity intrusion, river erosion etc, and others socio-cultural factors such as dowry, early marriage, social and class conflicts, lack of access to better education and health services, social discriminations, and political unrest etc. (Haider, 2010) which these factors are contributing to increasing the vulnerability of women and at risk. Especially, in disaster prone areas the poor women and elderly are more at risk due to natural disasters and to socio-cultural factors. Azad et. al. (2013) notes that flood as a natural disaster produces women's vulnerability which is seen as social, economic, physical, structural, agricultural and psychological. Thus, both disasters and socio-cultural factors put women at such types of risks which undermine the resilience and coping capacity of women in disaster prone areas of Bangladesh and women are bound to migrate to elsewhere out of village. It is evident from different studies (Smit and Wandel, 2006) that in the process of global change women are also working as key agents and taking actions or initiatives to adjust or cope with these unintended problems through migration. Barkat and Masud (2001) also explain that the migrated women in urban areas come into contact with the new process of globalization which has different impacts on women's life spheres and issues of life as well as on livelihood of women.

3 Methodology

The study was aimed to understand how the poor women lead their livelihood and how they interact with the people of society in the age of globalization. In this context, the study have focused the process of adaptation of the poor migrant women with globalization and social networking and to explore the nature of interlink between globalization and social network as globalization, social network, migration and the process of adaptation are simultaneously interrelated to each other. A survey was conducted to get an overview about social network and the impact of globalization on the process of adaptation of the poor migrant women in Dhaka city. Quantitative method is mainly used for describing the general features of the researches to establish the basic goals of the study. A semi-structured interview questionnaire was carried out to collect the data and to measure some variables relating to socio-economic condition and the

changing nature of social ties of poor migrant women. A total of 70 poor women were interviewed in Dhaka city following purposive sampling. The study covered five sub-districts (upazilas) namely Mugdha, Lalbagh, Kotwali, Shyampur and Mirpur and a field survey was undertaken in 2013 to assess the adaptation mechanisms of poor migrant women with new social network.

The aim of the study is to explore the impact of social network and globalization on the process of adaptation among the poor migrant women dwelling in Dhaka City. The research addressed the following research questions: (i) What is the changing nature of social ties of poor migrant women? (ii) What is the impact of globalization on life pattern of poor migrant women? (iii) What types of occupational adaptation processes are taken by the migrated women in urban areas of Bangladesh? (iv) What is the trend of social network of the poor migrant women in the process of adaptation in social network?

4 Conceptual framework and data analysis

Social network is viewed as social relations by regarding objects and ties. This goes an interrelationship between globalization and social network which plays an important role among the poor migrant women for adaptation with the new surroundings. The study developed a conceptual framework based on different variables which were used to understand the adaptation process of women in urban areas of Bangladesh. All independent variables were used to understand the impacts of globalization on life pattern, behaviors and culture. The main dependent variable of the study – adaptation – was viewed as the process and ability of the poor migrated women to cope or adjust with unexpected situations in urban social structure, with the efforts to recover from the family problems.

To achieve the objectives of the study the semi-structured interview questionnaire was employed to measure the variables relating to socio-economic condition and to the changing nature of social ties of poor migrant women due to having the capability of semi-structured interview to produce valuable data. The method of data analysis was more systematic, disciplined and described (punch, 1998: 200). The collected data through sample survey had been analyzed in terms of frequency distribution and graphical representations following descriptive and

analytical mode to understand the overall impacts of globalization on migrated women. The following conceptual framework, moreover, has analyzed the noteworthy variables and indicators of the research.

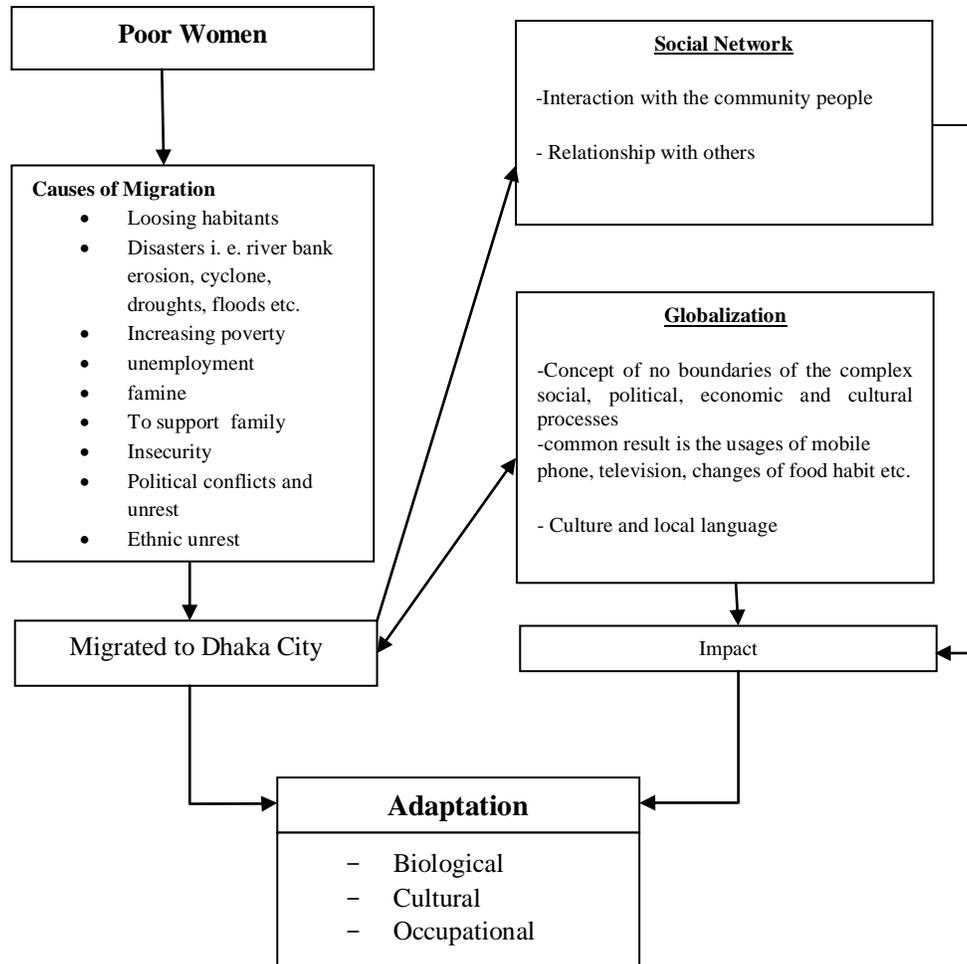


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for determinants of impact of globalization and adaptation

5 Results and Discussion

People from different backgrounds participated in the survey to address the impacts of globalization and social network in urban areas of Bangladesh. The survey results were tabulated and analyzed to delineate the process of occupational adaptation of poor migrant women and to understand the trends of social network of the poor migrant women in the process of adaptation.

5.1 Background and Socio-economic information of the respondents

This forgoing research study is conducted only on the poor migrant women who were purposively selected from different parts of Dhaka city. Over 60 per cent of these migrated are new comer to the capital city of Bangladesh who have been living for the last five years. Additionally, these migrated women are young enough from the age limit of 18-27 years who cut the highest proportion of nearly 39 per cent and nearly 23 per cent of the respondents are in the age bracket 28 – 27 while 20 per cent are in 38 to 47 years and the age of the rest of the respondents are over 47 years out of the total respondents. About 86 per cent of these migrated women of this study are Muslim while over 14 per cent are from Hinduism. Education is an important determinant of the study. It is found that more than 41 per cent attained primary education and 10 percent and 4.3 per cent of the respondents have secondary and higher secondary education respectively while significant number of the respondents (44.3%) have no education. Generally, a big number of the migrated women are married of about 88.6 percent and in some extent this is because of being companion of their husband. That's why, in this modern epoch these migrated women are pre-dominating the nuclear family almost in 88.6 percentages. Indeed, migrations occur due to push and pull factors and sometimes these two factors insist people with the same pace to be migrated. But in the context of poor women, the pace of push factors is much more than pull where poverty determines the highest percentage of about 82.9 percent, due to river bank erosion, on the other hand, approximately 46 per cent migrated in Dhaka city while around 70 percent of the respondents noted that due unavailability of jobs after cyclone AILA and Sidr migrated to Dhaka city to meet up their life sustaining needs whereas only 20 per cent of the respondents came in Dhaka due to having living facilities. The study revealed that after migration, most of the poor women work either as house maker (41.4 %) or as garments labor (18.6%) where their monthly income level is between 1000and 5000 taka. Besides this nature, the migrated women are also working at street as vendors (12.9%) or doing private services (5.7%). But for the high cost of living 52.9 percent women out of 68.6 percent expend their whole income which cannot change their luck.

Table-1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the poor migrated women

Characteristics	N=70	(%)
Age of the respondents		
18 – 27	27	38.6
28 – 37	16	22.9
38 – 47	14	20
48 – 57	8	11.4
58 +	5	7.1
Occupation		
Government Service	3	4.3
Private Service	4	5.7
School Teacher	12	17.1
Garments Worker	13	18.6
Vegetable seller	9	12.9
House maker	29	41.4
Education		
Primary	29	41.4
Secondary	7	10
higher secondary	3	4.3
Illiterate	15	21.4
No education	16	22.9
Family Status		
Nuclear Family	60	85.7
Joint Family	10	14.3

5.2 Social relations, communication and process of communication with previous relatives

The rural women are migrating in urban area, which does not mean that they don't have a relation with earlier relatives, though they try to make a sustainable relation with present neighbors. A significant numbers of respondents (77.1%) informed that they have still kept their relation with neighbors and frequently are communication with them while only around 23 per cent of the women don't have any relation with their neighbors. However, the migrated women in urban areas keep connection with past neighbors and relatives directly or indirectly via mobile phone (7.1%) or telephone (70%) who once before letter for communication. It is seen that among the migrated women modern system like mobile phone is becoming more popular rather than traditional system. In fact, this social relation is not only to keep their social bonds but the women contact with their relatives for looking after their properties i. e. land, house and other

valuable properties. For example, about 19 percent of the women out of 70 looked after their land through mobile phone or telephone while rest of the respondents are communicating with parents and other family relatives to seek information about them. But, a slight significant change was found among the garment workers who are still unmarried, they are communicating with their parents, as their family is completely depended on their income. These poor women are not only supporting their family but also they have an important contribution to national income and GDP. Even, they have to pass a hardship in their life after migration in city for 2 or 3 years up to get good jobs. The study also concentrated to understand the level of relation with their relatives and neighbors. Around 59 per cent of the respondents have a good relation with them while the relation status of nearly 6 per cent respondents are good and about 36 per cent of the respondents have on an average relation with their relatives living in village or rural areas. It is evident that in urban life old social network and social ties are becoming less important due to changing the nature of demands of women, as the concentration and efforts are aimed to fulfill the daily demands and life sustaining materials and to make a new network within urban social structure through involvement in different types of jobs and social ties.

5.3 Factors contributing to change social ties and life pattern of the migrated women in urban areas

Globalization has a vast impact on the life of migrant women. This impact can be measured by simple component like watching television, communication pattern, changing food habits and dress. For example, television is an important element of globalization which plays key role in changes of life pattern and style. The study makes a clear comparison between watch of television before and after migration. It is found that only 39 per cent of the total respondents got chance to watch television and enjoyed the traditional bangle program before migration. The survey has identified a significant change in their behavior which it reveals that over 77 per cent of the total respondents get an opportunity to watch television and the programmes are different than compared to earlier time. It is observed that around 76 per cent of the migrated women now enjoy Indian bangle serial or Hindi movie instead of bangle drama or movie. Even, around 60 per cent noted that their languages have been changed due to watching Indian serial and now they are able to speak in Hindi. Like television, the migrated women are using mobile phone for different purposes including for taking with others (97.1%), listening music (28.6%), watching

video (17.3%), as fashion (8.6%) and need for work (74.3%). Moreover, there are changes in women's pattern of dresses, their changes in hospitality and food pattern. The women are now accustomed with foreign foods like noodles, bottled drinks etc. The significant changes was also observed that they are now using mobile phone to build up a social network through face book (17.1%), twitter (10%) or any other relevant network (5.7%) while before migration these poor women were not familiar with internet or face book. Even, it was observed that approximately 16 per cent respondents celebrated Valentine's Day and friendship day after migration after migration. They noted that these changes are because of the impact of the new epoch (27.1 %), independence of women (38.6%) and overall for globalization. Thus, through these processes the migrated women are now interconnecting with global village and trying to be a member of global network. Globalization has kept a crystal clear impact upon them for being a member of new social and virtual social ties.

Table-2: Factors contributing to change social ties and life pattern of the migrated women in urban areas

Characteristics	N=70	(%)
Watching television		
Yes	54	77.1
No	16	22.9
Types of programs		
Bangla movie	17	24.3
Bangla Drama	10	14.3
Magazine program	35	50
Hindi movie	52	74.3
Hindi serial (star Jalsa)	53	75.7
Hindi magazine program	48	70.9
English movie	23	32.9
Indian bangle serial	53	75.7
Use of mobile phone		
Yes	56	80
No	14	20
Purposes		
To Talk	68	97.1
Listening music	20	28.6
Watching Video	12	17.1
As people use	7	10
As fashion	6	8.6
Need of Work	52	74.3

Use of virtual Social Network

Face book	12	17.1
Twitter	7	10
Other relevant network	4	5.7
Don't use	47	67.1

5.4 Occupational adaptation process, economic independency and social network

The women migrate in urban areas due to poverty, after migration they have to do work where the study showed that nearly 66 per cent women did not have any work before migration but after migration over 90 per cent women have to work for their survival. The migrated women took different efforts to get a job after migration. Around 20 per cent of women got job with help of pre-acquainted person while over 31 per cent of women managed jobs through communication with relatives who are living in urban areas and more than 11 per cent of the women are trying to get new jobs by establishing social network with new neighbors. The women, who migrated with husband, managed jobs with help of husbands and acquainted person of husband. However, the most of migrated women do job to increase their household income and to lead their family needs. It is seen that due to having an income source the status of migrated women are increasing in family members and are becoming solvent economically. Even, they save money for child's education and future needs. For instance, around 23 percent of women are now economically solvent and are able to meet up their family requirements while in disaster prone areas they had no income and importance among the family members. The poor women are also contributing in development of national economy and global economy through doing different tasks in urban city.

Table-3: Occupational adaptation process and economic independency

Characteristics	N=70	(%)
Employment pattern before migration		
Yes	24	34.3
No	46	65.7
Employment pattern after migration		
Yes	63	90
No	7	10
Process of getting jobs		
By pre-acquainted person	14	20
By relatives living in urban areas	22	31.4
By new neighbors living in slums	8	11.4
By husband or any other family members	26	37.1
Economic independency of poor migrated women		
Increasing household income and family supports	29	41.4
Becoming solvent	6	8.6
Saving money	22	31.4
Paying dept	13	18.6
Buying land in rural areas	7	10
Fulfill day needs	35	50

5.5 Communication and network with new urban neighbors

The poor migrated women make a new network at the working place with their colleagues. It was revealed that in the job sector over 60 per cent of women mentioned that there have a good relation with colleagues and other service hold at working place that have given them a lot of advantages while the relation with new colleagues of more than 17 per cent of the women is not so good. Only about 6 per cent have had bad understanding during working period and no comment about the understanding and relationship constituted over 17 per cent. Though, in some cases, they have no good relation, they communicate with them on regular basis and share their problem and try to get supports from them. The survey data noted that over 67 per cent of women had good communication with their neighbors and colleagues who support them to get and to adapt with new jobs, the migrated women revealed. The women, moreover, maintain their relationship with colleagues and neighbors by mobile/telephone or face and face or by face book that have established an interpersonal relationship with them. Thus, it is evident that the use of mobile phone or any other devices indicates that the poor migrated women gradually come into contact with and establish new social ties with urban social network in globalized system which

paves the way for adapting with changing social structure. Because, social network as a plot of relevant ties between the objects establish a connected network within similar groups compared to other groups. This means that the behavior of each group within in same connected network varies according to their needs, demands and choices in urban structure. It is also evident from the study that though the poor migrated women are unable to connect with global network, they have a strong bonding among them within micro social network in urban areas. These new inhabitants in urban areas keep their social relations or networks through regular communication which is a major invention of globalization.

6 Concluding Notes

This paper has attempted to demonstrate and to measure the nature of social network in the process of adaptation of poor women and also to assess the impacts of globalization on social culture and economy. Social network is increasingly becoming more affordable and wide spread in all culture of people and also extending social relation with new urban inhabitants. Globalization has introduced new opportunities for all people. After migration in urban areas these poor women enter into the global development process through establishing social network that is used to adapt with new environment and to get jobs. Establishing social network to communicate or interact with other individuals is an important social adaptation technique of poor migrated women. Even, the poor migrated women are now getting benefits economically and are supporting their family. Though the rural women are migrating for many uncomfortable reasons they are now being able to cope with new environment and they are taking parts in the development of country's economy.

Though the system of social network and globalization has brought the world closer to the root people of the country, it has brought some negative impacts on the mass population and the migrated women are not far away from these impacts. As the result of globalization and easy access to technology, the migrated women are being the victim of cultural assaulting. Moreover, the behavior of migrated women like food habit, language, watching traditional culture, dress is changing due to closer contact with new urban life. Thus, it is the time to impeditment the bad impacts of globalization. Some strict rules should be taken to remove the cultural diffusion. The utmost importance should be given on the field of language. People should think of their

tradition and they should be aware about the rituals.

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