Mains Practice Question

Q. "Globalisation exports goods and imports values."Critically evaluate the impact of global cultural flows on India's family systems and traditional value structures. (250words)

11 Aug, 2025   GS Paper 1 Indian Society

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about Globalisation that how it exports goods and imports values
- Delve into the Impact of Globalisation on Family Systems and on Traditional Value Structures
- Highlight the counterarguments that Globalisation has not completely overridden traditional Indian values
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction:

Globalisation is not **merely the movement of goods,** it is the migration of ideas, norms, and cultures across borders. In India, this phenomenon has catalyzed a **transformation in family structures, traditional hierarchies, and intergenerational relationships.**

Body:

Impact of Globalisation on Family Systems:

- **Shift from Joint to Nuclear Families:** Economic opportunities, especially in the IT and service sectors, have fueled rural-to-urban migration and international migration.
  - The rise of individual aspirations for privacy and autonomy has also weakened the traditional hold of the family elder.
- **Changing Authority Patterns:** The traditional patriarchal structure, where the oldest male member held absolute authority, is eroding.
  - The **financial independence of younger generations, including women**, has led to a more egalitarian and democratic family setup.
  - Decisions regarding children's education, career choices, and marriages are now often made collectively.
- **Altered Status of Women:** Globalization has provided women with greater access to education and employment, leading to their increased economic independence.
  - This has empowered them to challenge traditional gender roles and participate as equal partners in decision-making.
  - The concept of a "**dual-career family**" is now common, changing the division of labor and power dynamics within the household.

Impact on Traditional Value Structures

- **Individualism vs. Collectivism**: A core ten-et of global culture is **individualism**, which emphasizes personal freedom, choice, and self-expression.
  - This contrasts sharply with the traditional Indian ethos of collectivism, where the family or

community's interests often take precedence.
- **Marriage and Relationships:** The traditional institution of arranged marriage is being reconfigured.
  - While family approval remains important, young people now have more agency in choosing their life partners.
  - Furthermore, global concepts like live-in relationships and the increased social acceptance of divorce and single-parent households challenge the traditional sanctity of marriage as an unbreakable, lifelong bond.

While global cultural flows have undeniably influenced Indian society, they have not completely overridden traditional Indian values, as evidenced by:

- **Cultural Hybridization:** Instead of a wholesale replacement, what is often happening is glocalization—the adaptation of global ideas to local contexts.
  - For example, while **fast-food chains like McDonald's have entered the Indian market,** they have adapted their menus to include vegetarian options and local spices (McDonaldization).
  - Similarly, many young Indians may adopt Western fashion and music but continue to participate in traditional festivals and rituals.
- **Revival of Indigenous Practices:** In recent years, there has been a resurgence in promoting Indian cultural practices, such as yoga, Ayurveda, and traditional Indian cuisines, not only within India but also globally.
  - This indicates that globalisation is not always a one-way process, but can also lead to a revitalisation of local cultural practices in the face of Western dominance.
- **A "Global Indian" Identity:** The cultural flows have led to the emergence of a new, global Indian identity that is a synthesis of the local and the global.
  - This individual is often comfortable navigating multiple cultural spaces—**fluent in English, proficient in technology, yet deeply connected to their cultural roots.** This represents an evolution, not an extinction, of Indian values.

Conclusion:

India's cultural landscape is not facing erosion but is undergoing a transformative synthesis of tradition and modernity. **Globalisation,** while introducing new **ideas, lifestyles, and value systems,** presents an opportunity to selectively integrate progressive influences without compromising core Indian values.