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## IMPACT OF STOCK MARKET LIBERALIZATION ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGING COUNTRIES

## DR. S. BEULAH MABEL ASST. PROFESSOR DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES FATIMA COLLEGE MADURAI

### ABSTRACT

Out of the many liberalization policies implied by the government of India, FII scheme is very important to the stock market as well as the economy of India. This scheme has opened the domestic stock market of India to the rest of the world and has allowed the foreign investors to invest in the shares of the companies listed on the stock exchange. Many empirical studies have been done in the past to analyze the impact of the stock market liberalization on the behaviour of the stock market and the economy as a whole.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Liberalization, Stock Market.

#### **EMERGING STOCK MARKET**

The term "emerging stock markets" most often is intended to mean stock markets based in developing economies.(http://wwwold.itcilo.org/actrav/actravenglish/ telearn/global/ilo/equity/ifckey.htm). According to Dara Khambata (2000), the state of development of a country can be measured by its level of income i.e. the Gross National Product (GNP). The other standard for qualifying for the label of "emerging" stock market is to notice if the process of change has began like growth of size, sophistication, and turnover.

In order to define the emerging stock market, International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group uses four characteristics namely; invest ability, change (Financial, political and economic), growth and size and liquidity. Monthly Emerging Stock Market Indexes are published by the IFC in order to assist the developing countries and help the investors measure the performance of their portfolios invested in these countries.

#### IMPACT OF STOCK MARKET LIBERALIZATION

Many studies have been done in the past to analyze the effects of market opening on the economic development of the country and there are evidences that show that market opening has positive effects on the emerging economies. Liberalization is very beneficial to the emerging economies as it allows the inflow of foreign capital for the economic development of the country. Bekaert and Harvey (2000) found that liberalization may enhance the growth prospects for a country (see Obstfeld 1994), leading to increased prices. Henry (1999) establishes that growth in aggregate investment rises as a result of financial and economic liberalization. Kim & Singal (2000), explain that there are many hypothetical advantages of opening sock markets to foreign investors as it provides opportunity to attract foreign capital to finance economic growth. Boyd and Smith (1996) and Levine and Zervos (1996, 1998) show theoretically and empirically that liberalization accelerates the development of equity markets and is positively related to long-run economic growth. Besides, Rajan and Zingales (1998) compare the countries with differences in the development of financial markets and conclude that development of financial markets facilitates economic growth by reducing the cost of external finance.

Kim and Singal (2000) after analyzing the data of 15 emerging countries conclude that diversification is beneficial to domestic firms as it allows them to access lower cost of funds from international investors. Further, they say that efficiency of allocation of capital will be improved as the foreign investors demand transparency and improvement in disclosure of rules. The foreign investors in order to protect themselves against expropriation of capital by governing investors will insist for accountability of management and shareholder rights. The risk of stock holding will reduce if there is a persuasive and reasonable response to these demands which, in turn, will lower the cost of capital. The result is consistent with Bekaert and Harvey (1999), who find that increases in equity flows are associated with a lower cost of capital. Similarly, Henry (1998) finds that liberalizing countries experience an upward revaluation of the domestic stocks, which reflects a reduction in the cost of equity capital.

Global diversification takes place due to foreign equity flow which has other benefits for emerging economies. Obstfeld's (1994) model explains that resource allocation improves owing to international risk sharing through global diversification. Moreover, large steady state welfare gains are generated by stock market integration and international diversification. Levine & Zervos (1998) also suggest that according to their research, reduction of international investment barriers boosts economic development and enhances stock market liquidity which in turn leads to faster rate of economic growth in long run. Henry (2000b) and Bekaert et al. (2002) also agree to this and specify that liberalization causes a rise in cumulative domestic investors which hypothetically stimulates economic growth. Bekaert et al. (2001) authenticate that an "official equity market liberalization" leads to an increase in average annual per capita GDP of around 1% controlling for other macroeconomic, demographic, and financial factors that have been shown to predict cross sectional variations in economic growth.

Levine & Zervos (1998b) show that the rise in growth rate of capital stock due to opening of stock market is just temporary and is not a permanent increase. Henry (2000b) contradicts this statement and says that this does not mean that investment is not at all affected by liberalization of capital account and the capital stock growth rate might increase temporarily. From the research conducted on 11 developing countries, Henry (2000b) documents that after the opening of the stock markets, the growth rates of private investment is abnormally high. According to the sample of countries analyzed, 8 countries experience a higher growth rate of private investment after one year of liberalization over the year without liberalization. In the second and the third year 10 and 9 countries experienced growth in the private investments.

There are certain risks associated to the opening of the stock markets which need to be taken care of by the policy makers. The inflow of private capital can endanger the viability of markets; unbalance the functioning of the country, lead to careless lending, relaxation of reforms etc. Dara Khambata (2000) explains that in order to have well developed economies, efficient stock market development must be accompanied with liberalization of financial sector and pragmatic macroeconomic policies must be followed. Uncertainty is created by financial instability which can badly damage the market efficiency and cause substantial economic instability. The benefits of liberalization must be weighed against the various risks and uncertainties and according to Kim & Singal (2000), the benefits are likely to overweigh the perceived benefits. The probable side effects of market opening will be controlled by the government of most of the countries by using various policy measures. Hence, majority of emerging countries will reap the benefits of liberalization by successfully controlling the ill effects. Therefore, one of the objectives of this research is to find out the growth of Indian economy due to the inflow of foreign capital i.e. the effect of market capitalization in the GDP of India. The benefits of opening of the stock markets are also observed.

#### IMPACT OF LIBERALIZATION ON INDIA

A common characteristic of all the researches explained above is that they study the effect of liberalization on a sample of countries and their research is not country specific. This makes it difficult to analyze the effect of opening of the stock market on India as the results are calculated on average basis only. But according to the research conducted by Kim & Singal (2000), India experienced high volatility around market opening. The rates of inflation were higher in the

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pre liberalization period but stabilized after liberalization and the volatility of inflation decreased significantly after the market opening. Bekaert et al. (2003) showed that there was an increase in real GDP growth as well as real investment growth after financial liberalizations in India.

Unlike the researches explained above which observe the average market behaviour of a sample of emerging countries during pre and post liberalization period, there are certain studies done which analyze the impact of opening up, on India and its stock market.

Chandrasekhar (2000) explains that India did not witness the currency crisis in 1990s and thereafter which the other countries faced due to liberalization. This was because India did not liberalize its capital account to the extent done by the other countries. After opening of the stock market in 1992, there was a considerable rise in the inflow of foreign capital. According to the market observers, foreign inflows are a very important force for driving the markets up. Chandrasekhar (2000), after examining the trends of the market describes that there was an extreme volatility in Sensex during the years of liberalization but also documents that the structure of financial markets of India is also a cause of volatility. Further he suggests that the markets of developing countries like India are thin or shallow in three senses namely; (i) stocks of only a few countries are traded actively in the market. Even though there are more than 5000 companies listed on the stock exchange, BSE Sensex assimilates only 30 companies, trading in whose shares is perceived as a symbol of market activity, (ii) a large proportion of shares is held by promoters, financial institutions and others interested in corporate control or influence leading to the availability of a small proportion of shares for routine trading, and (iii) the number of players trading in these stocks is also small.

The financial press portrays the flow of foreign capital as the foremost driver of the Indian stock market returns. While, Chakrabarti (2001) suggests that the foreign inflows are the effects rather than cause of the performance of stock markets. The analysis of daily data predicts that the sole driver of foreign inflows in the post- Asian crisis period was the performance of the stock market whereas the analysis of monthly data in the pre- Asian crisis period indicates some contrary interconnection. Mukherjee et al. (2002) also confirm this return chasing behaviour of the FIIs by analyzing the daily data from 1999 to 2002 and discover that the sale of Indian stocks by foreign investors is a consequence of returns and not purchases. On the contrary, Gordon and Gupta (2003) perform an analysis on the monthly data for the time period 1993-2000 and determine that there is a negative relationship between foreign inflows and lagged stock market returns which suggests negative feedback trading. Hence, there is a need for analyzing more recent data to understand the relationship between FIIs and stock market returns.

According to the Finance Ministry of India's report (2005), the main concerns regarding vulnerability of India's capital market to FII inflows can be classified into three parts: about the outflow of 'hot money' and creation of chaos in both securities and foreign exchange markets, about too much inflow, and leading of upward pressure on either the exchange rate of the domestic currency or prices or both, and about 'foreigners' capturing a large part of the markets in securities. Two precise worries about chaos caused by FIIs centre around the problems of "herding" – where many FIIs may trade in similar ways – and "positive feedback trading" where FIIs buy after positive returns and sell after negative returns, thus aggravating market volatility.

Financial Liberalization leads to the financial deepening and growth of the economy. It helps in increasing the presence and role of financial agents but at the same time it forces the government to adopt a deflationary attitude to placate financial interests. Due to liberalization, the agriculture sector and the small scale industry had limited access to savings and credit availability, the development of which was necessary for the efforts made for poverty reduction. The emphasis on macroeconomic management was shifted from fiscal to monetary policy which was inexorably focused on inflation targets. This resulted in tight money conditions and higher interest rates which were also favoured as it helped in attracting foreign capital inflows in a more liberalized environment. The process of financial liberalizations also led to financial instability but overall it had a positive effect on the stock market and the economic development of India.

#### CONCLUSION

Opening of the domestic stock markets for the foreign institutional investors acts like a two edged sword, which has many benefits but at the same time exposes the emerging economies to certain risks. It attracts more and more foreign capital which is used to finance the economic growth of the country and speed up the expansion of equity markets by making them globally assimilated, more liquid and superior. The cost of capital is reduced as the foreign investors demand accountability of management which reduces the risk of holding stocks. The competence of market prices is also increased due to larger market size, development of capacity of members investing in the market and higher exposure to latest information. In contrast, the inflow of foreign capital can also lead to financial instability in the country which can badly damage the market efficiency and cause substantial economic instability. It can also endanger the viability of markets; unbalance the functioning of the country, lead to careless lending, relaxation of reforms etc. In the conditions of economic depression, financial crisis are most likely to take place. Besides, it can put pressure on the monetary policy and deteriorate the political support for further reforms. Hence, the benefits of opening of the stock markets should be reaped by the emerging economies by controlling the risks and ill effects related to it.

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