

Concept of Development Explored: Theoretical Perspectives**Dr. Shivani Singh, Assistant Professor****Department of Political Science, Dyal Singh Evening College, University of Delhi**

In the vast literature of social sciences, diverse meanings have been attached to the term development. It is mainly since post-1945 that development as priority has been witnessed for the holistic growth of each region or nations of the world. Main reason for this was reconstruction of devastated areas, provisions of basic to the poor section and thus taps the human potential and diverts it towards creativity, dedication and hard work. Weidner applied his view of development in the context of developing countries where the goals of development are headed in the direction of modernity with emphasis on nation building and socio-economic programme.

Most developing societies which had a colonial past being subjugated for many years, inherited a badly shaped economy from their colonial masters, hence after independence, they engaged in bringing about rapid socioeconomic development. Their main motive is to transform the societies by affecting changes in each and every sectors of the economy. For instance, in the field of social services like health, education and water supply, production enterprises like industries, agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and infrastructure like roads, communication facilities, electricity, market centres: all the above activities are being developed within a definite planning framework (Bhattacharya 1979:1). In other words, there is general concern among the developing countries to fare better in terms of improving the standard of living of the masses who have so far been largely deprived of the basic necessities of life. Development in this context thus is an exceedingly complex one involving not just identification of problems but emphasizing upon the right priorities also. Further it requires not only proper planning and mobilization of adequate resources, but also creation of new institutions and strengthening the overall capacity of the existing organisations and implementing programmes and projects within a specific time period. The word development has been treated synonymous to concepts like advancement, modernisation, westernisation and industrialisation. But if development is anything, it is an aspect of social change, involving social, economic, political and administrative development (Bava 1979: 8-9).

Dimensions of Development:

Development is a multi-dimensional phenomenon as it has economic, political, social dimensions.

Social development – It calls for the entire well-being of the people at large, fulfillment of their aspirations, goals and desires. Concept of gross national product was to be replaced by the concept of Gross National Welfare. It requires a well-organised, well-disciplined and well-directed machinery of administration or a cluster of institution in various walks of national life, spread of education and character building. After independence, India launched various development programmes through Five Year Planning in large scale, keeping in mind to improve the conditions of millions of people and free them from squalor, disease, illiteracy, ignorance, poverty and other sources of mankind. For building up a homogeneous society particular attention was to be paid towards infrastructural facilities like drinking water, approachable roads, warehouse facilities, rural electrification, education, health etc. priority thus was given more to societal welfare and individual growth rather than to maintenance of law and order, in order to raise the standard of living of the general public as a whole. In most recent times an additional duty befallen on the shoulders of administration is to hold the different sections of the people together and to prevent the emergence of fissiparous tendencies. For a homogeneous society and social development, social integration is important. An aspect of social development is cultural development. The advent of independence has been a veritable flowering of Indian culture in its manifold manifestation of dance, drama, movie, art and literature. Though much of this is due to spontaneous urges and latent talent in the society, administration has also made its own contribution which is in some cases has been outstanding, e.g. the establishment of various art institutions like art complex of Bhopal –The Bharat Bhavan.

Political Development — Calls for smooth working of representative and participatory political institutions (Dubhashi: 1985: 158). Political modernisation in developing countries means that the masses should participate in governmental decision making, that the parochial loyalties of individual should be replaced by the secular loyalties of citizenship and that the roles of various structures of society should be differentiated instead of remaining diffused (Bhambhri 1971). In India, the Parliament at the centre, the legislature in the states and the Panchayati Raj Institutions at the local level have provided opportunities for participation to the people in political institutions of self-government. These political institutions have been based

on free and fair elections with adult franchise. In these elections ruling parties not only in the states but also at the centre have lost elections (Dubhashi: 1985: 157). The very vocabulary of world politics is now being equated with terms and programmes related to a new view of nation building- the developing areas, the emerging nations, Afro- Asian States, economic development plans, charismatic leaders, technical assistance, point four, the Third World, neutralism, international lending agencies and so on and so forth.

These are some of the widely acknowledged misconceptions regarding the definition of political development.

Political Development as the pre-requisite of Economic Development:

In many of the stagnant economies, particularly in countries attaining independence from colonial rule like India, immediate need was to increase the per capita income. Thus political development was perceived as the state of polity which might facilitate economic growth.

But the problem of political development would vary from country to country and each country had its own set of economic problems. In many countries substantial economic growth is not likely but there may be substantial political changes that deserve utmost attention. Many a times, developing countries are more eager for earnest developments in their political field as compared to growth in their economy. Therefore developing linkages or interpretation of changes in polity solely dependent on economic growth will be like unheeding matters of substantial significance to developing societies. (Pye 1972: 34).

Political Development as Political Modernisation:

There is a general consensus regarding the idea of political development that closely linked to the politics of industrialised societies like the western European societies believed to set the trends bringing important transformations in most phases of social and economic life. So, many people tend to agree that the political development is synonymous with political modernisation. But in actuality certain political norms and concepts like justice, equality etc. have been diffused uniformly throughout the world and are not simply the consequence of science and technology but have by now a dynamics of their own (Pye 1972: 36).

Apart from the above, other misconceptions regarding political development is that it is equated with terms like politics typical of industrialised societies, as the operation of a nation-state, as administrative and legal mechanisms, as mass mobilisation and also emphasising that political development as the promotion of democracy. Certainly some argue that the only form of political development is building of democratic apparatus and practices. But many people are of the view that development and democracy are entirely different and building of democracy can prove to be a positive liability to development.

In nutshell, some commonly shared broad objectives of political development, the foremost being Equality. Equality, in the lexicon of political development, wants citizens to be more active. It also implies universalistic nature of laws which means that laws should be applicable to every territory and more or less impersonal in their operation. Furthermore, equality promotes achievement and merit in the process of appointment to political office rather than upholding the age-old of traditional social system.

After equality, the most important goal of political development is the capacity. Capacity is closely associated with governmental performance. It means how effective and efficient the government is in executing the policy for the people. Also subsequently capacity also seeks a rational administrative system and secular orientation of public policy.

Another important objective of political development is that of differentiation and specialisation. Offices and agencies have their own distinct functions which may not be understood as fragmentation of the different part of the political system but specialisation based on ultimate sense of integration. In nutshell, the problem of political development revolves around the relationship among the political culture, the authoritative structure and the general political process.

Phases of Political Development:

The very first phase of development was dominated by the idea of increasing the output by focusing only on economic growth. Economic concentrated primarily on output goals; growth at any cost became the slogan of the day. One can trace the beginnings of this kind of economic development from the writings of Adam Smith, Ricardo, Malthus. Their main argument being

laissez faire doctrine is the best policy for economic growth and the capitalist system, the best assurance for maximum production.

The second phase of development stressed more on the relationship between economic development and social change. It was realised that institutional factors hindered economic progress and technological change. As a consequence of this realisation every attempt was made to strengthen and modify institutional framework of society. Moreover, as a result of these, the second, phase of development will be remembered for the development of modernisation paradigm.

The third phase of development can be described as reactive and responsible. It was born out of strong reaction against the growth centred theories of development and called for unconventional human centred development.

The fourth phase is a reflective phase, which emphasizes on the need to alter the world as well as the national to ensure human survival. A new International Economic Order is necessary both for the North and the south, for the developed, the developing and the underdeveloped.

Dependency Theory:

After the Second World War, economists in Latin America analysed development from a completely different angle by giving the theory of centre-periphery imbalance. The main argument behind this theory was that technological progress or industrialisation was concentrated mainly at the centre. The periphery or the primary producers did not gain in terms of end products. The lion's share of the gain from the increased primary production was appropriated by the economies of the developed countries; a situation further aggravated by the tariff policies of the advanced nations. The entire economy of the periphery was dominated by the industrialised metropolitan centres led some of the ECLA (Economic Communication for Latin America) thinkers to start a new line of thinking which described Latin American economy as dependent rather than merely peripheral. One of the most influential exponents of this thought was Celso Furtado whose emphasis on structural change ultimately led to the dependency model which finally found its culmination in the writings of Ander Gunder Frank. One of the weaknesses of this theory is that it places all the responsibility for underdevelopment on the industrialised west and fails to consider the internal and the domestic

factors. This theory with its emphasis mostly on the underdevelopment of Latin American Countries fails to take into account the global situation as this kind of underdevelopment exists in Africa and Asia also. Undoubtedly, the theory unleashed some important question regarding periphery and its problem which were discussed in a way never done before.

Development Administration:

Since the World War II, emphasis has been put on Development Administration. It was only with the writings of John Gauss, Fred Riggs, Weidner who attempted to fill this gap in administrative theory by giving shape to the ecological dimension to the Public Administration and coining the concept of Development Administration. Administration has manifested in various fields like nation- building, social change, industrialisation, cultures and also includes a pollution free environment to ensure sustainable development for the citizens.

The new emphasis of development administration would be in favour of quality of life, satisfaction of basic needs and improvement of human conditions. Thus the core idea of development says Fred. W. Riggs is very simply to take off the covers and reveal what lies within. Therefore development is a far reaching transformation of social system and the goal requires not only the creation of a new system but also the end of an old one. (Riggs, 1978).

Sustainable Development:

The dominant concern within the field of development is the degradation of the environment which is faced by the developed and the developing alike and is therefore relevant to the entire area of Public Administration. Development is necessary but in harmony with nature. Environment should not be disturbed at any cost as it will disturb the entire flora and fauna, plant kingdom and animal kingdom.

Sustainability involves protection and preservation of nature which is very crucial to hold the life support system. It is also essential to maintain the cultures of human diversity, of values and freedom to choose. But the present way of high consumerist lifestyle defies the goal of sustainable development. Human mankinds are the reason for the unsustainability of nature. Human beings consume the resources faster than the earth can replenish. Further humans are dumping wastes in excess as compared to the earth's capacity to intake. Henceforth, development which does not see beyond the present and lacks the goals to conserve over a

longer period, the resource base on which it stands may jeopardise the sustainable development. Development planning thus, must look to the future and make conservation of resources as an integral part of policy making.

A development theory is basically a study of societal change of its process, directions and appropriateness. Processes involved in social change can therefore be studied only through an inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach. What is more important is that a theory of development should not overlook the social realities.

In conclusion, the three dimensions of Political development i.e. of equality, capacity and differentiation, are true for all kinds of developments, as lying at the heart of development process. As pointed out by Pye, development is not unilinear, nor is it governed by sharp and distinct stages, but rather by a range of problems that may arise separately or concurrently. (Pye, 1972: 34)

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