

Concept of Development:(In context of Developing Countries)

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Abstract

Concept of development has drawn wide academic interest in Public Administration during the past five decades of the past century.. This was the period when colonisation collapsed and erstwhile colonies of Western powers witnessed the light of independence. They have to break through the chavicious chain of poverty they were caught in due to centuries of exploitation, which required a critical minimum effort to break through the condition. So they discarded the notion of development provided by their erstwhile masters. With the process of liberalisation in the economy, the concept of development has reached a new phase where it is being equated with good governance, which in turn means a retreating state. But in My view, state in developing countries should not withdraw from the welfare functions while providing ample space for private initiative in the economic field.

Key words- dynamic process , diffraction, discretion, sustainable.

Introduction

During the last few decades, we witnessed constant preoccupation of social scientists with the concept of development. The United Nations announced the sixties as the first decade of development and the seventies as the second decade of development. This widespread concern with development is evidently due to the fact that a large number of countries of Asia and Africa, which were earlier under foreign domination, emerged out of colonial yoke, and development was the single agenda of all these newly independent countries. They were of the opinion that their political freedom and newly gained sovereignty would facilitate and precipitate their multi-dimensional development. The concept of development is a universal concept. Development is an ever changeable and dynamic process. It is a universal concept, which means differently in different context. The Brandt Commission rightly observed, "Development never will be, and never can be, defined to a universal satisfaction."

DEFINITION

Even though development is a universal concept but due to its ever dynamic and versatile form, there is a great amount of confusion amongst social scientists as to what is 'development'. In this context, John Gunnel¹ holds the view that the problem of defining development is not merely a semantic difficulty; the lack of unanimity about the concept is the result of a deeper theoretical problem in social sciences. The concept of development has numerous definitions. All these definitions of development are different but they are inter-related in one or more aspects. George Gant² defines development "a condition of life, a goal to be achieved and capacity to grow, change and develop." John Montgomery³ defines it as "an aspect of change that is desirable, broadly predicted and planned or at least influenced by governmental action." Esman says⁴, "Development is the rational process of organising and carrying out prudently conceived and staffed programme or projects as one would organise and carry out military or engineering operations."

To Colm and Greiger⁵, development means change coupled with growth.” Weidner⁶ holds the view that when a process is directed towards nation building and socio-economic progress, that process of growth is development. For Hahn-Been⁷, “Development is both a process and a purpose. He, therefore, says that development is a process of acquiring a sustained growth of a system’s capability to cope with new, continuous changes towards the achievement of progressive political, economic and social objectives.” Riggs⁸ has rather detailed definition of development. He says that development is “a process of increasing autonomy (discretion) of social system, made possible by rising level of diffraction.” “Discretion”, he observes, is “the ability to choose among alternatives.” For Riggs “diffraction is the degree of differentiation and integration in a social system.” “The emphasis on ‘discretion’ has enabled Riggs to view development as involving “the increased ability of human societies to shape their physical human, and cultural environments.”⁹ A developed system then is capable of changing its environment to a greater degree than an underdeveloped system. Such capability may or may not be used to increase output, that is, a developed system could even have a low rate of output or growth, although in an empirical situation such a case might occur only rarely. Likewise a change in environment, such as a technological innovation or foreign aid, or a change in climate might bring increase in output or growth of a system, even though the level of “discretion” of the system did not rise, In other words, there could be cases of “growth” without “development”.

A social system, in the process of increasing its “discretion, develops independence with other social system, which are members of its “nexus” or role set. The system is required to co-ordinate its actions with other members of its role set. Such interdependence of a system with other members of its ‘role set’ has been termed by Riggs as “heterogeny”. While the independence of a system in relation to other systems in its role set has been termed by him as “autogeny”. Riggs has observed that development involves an increase in the degree of “discretion” of a social system but a decrease in the degree of its “autogeny”.¹⁰ “Despite such a problem, Riggs’ attempt is an important step in the direction of ecological conceptualisation of development and it probably has relevance to all types of social systems.”¹¹

THIRD WORLD VIEW OF DEVELOPMENT

Paul Lin rightly believes that there has been no value free approaches or value free definitions in the realm of development and development administration since there never existed either in practice or in theory a developmental approach that objectively accorded with the interests of all the social sectors.¹² Soon discrepancies appeared in the functioning of developmental programmes in developing countries due to imposition of western model of development. Nathan Samuyarira¹³ points out “factionalism”, “instability” and ‘chaos’ brought about by increasing ‘differentiation’ and ‘institutionalisation’ in ethnic pluralist societies like Nizeria and Zaire calls for political development and nation building towards self-reliance and meaningful participation of citizens. Scholar of new nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America draw attention not only to the highly ethnocentric, self limiting and historically distorted character of the western development model, but also question the wisdom of applying the theoretical framework built around the American paradigm of system approach, structural functioning and behaviourism to the economic and political scenario of developing societies and the basic assumption of that framework.¹⁴

Ralph Braibanti¹⁵ questions the division of society into ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ and linear view of development and he advocates “the contextual non-linear approach and he calls for change in

context of profound comprehension of a system's cultural past, its existing social organisation, its economic relations and the psychic needs of its people."

Development need of newly independent countries was decisively different from developed one. The developed countries have to break through 'vicious circle of poverty'. The vicious circle of poverty in which an underdeveloped country is caught consists of low income, low saving, low investment, low rate of growth and, therefore, low level of income. Similarly, the low level of income and standard of living means low education, low level of health and, therefore, low production capacity and low income.¹⁶ Gunnar Myrdal, in his Cairo Lectures¹⁷ talked of the law of cumulative causation. Just as a series of positive factors with the higher level of investment, higher technology, higher education and training leads to further development – a kind of a 'virtuous circle of progress'. There is conversely 'a vicious circle of poverty, low income, low saving, low productivity, low development and, therefore, low income. Progress and development require that the underdeveloped countries should break through this vicious circle. This requires a 'critical minimum effort'.¹⁸ Without such an effort, it is not possible to overcome vicious constraints from which the economy and the society of a poor country suffer. Third World view of development has been very precisely expressed by Malcolm Adiseshah, According to him development in developing countries can be measured by the extent to which the balanced pattern of society is created by the number of people who are lifted above the poverty line by education, public health facilities and housing provided to them, by employment generation programmes, by economic growth, price stability, political participation by the people who were earlier deprived of it and by cultural progress.¹⁹

Unlike the western notion of development, which gives primacy to economic growth as the aim of development, third world view of development encompasses socio-economic aspects of development. Third world view of development places emphasis upon agriculture in place of industry, rural development in place of urbanisation. Politically determined needs form the basic agenda of economy in place of profit motive based market determined priorities. In third world countries GNP per capita is no longer considered the index of growth. Development is viewed in terms of individual welfare. Top down planning is discarded in favour of participative planning.²⁰ Western model of development can be justifiably suitable for the developing countries. Developing countries should devise indigenous relations for their problems for their development efforts to be successful. Western model of development treat growth in GNP. Modernity and system change as the objective of development, which in fact is a means of development. Emphasis of developmental efforts should be on people development and it should have as its objective providing acceptable standard of living for the vast majority of people who are poor and under-privileged in developing countries.²¹

NEOLIBERALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

With the process of liberalisation in the economy, the development has achieved a new meaning. We may say that it is reminiscent of negative liberalism of 16th century, which believed in negative state – a state which limited itself to the minimum functions of maintenance of law and order and which functioned just as a referee between competing economic groups and whose functions was to see that the game was going on fairly according to the rules of game. The negative government did not perform welfare functions. But with increasing labour unrest, the government has to perform welfare functions to safeguard itself against the advancing tide of labour unrest. Under the impact of economic liberalisation especially since the 1990s, the state is again turning to be a negative state. Now

development is being equated with good governance. 'Good governance' is a new word that has entered into the vocabulary of public administration since the 1990s. Under the impact of economic liberalisation, it is being interpreted into two contradictory styles:

First, development may mean greater privatisation, disinvestments and capacity of the government to utilise limited resources for the maximum benefit of people in society. This concept of state speaks for a retreating state, which should not interfere in the economic process of the society. On the other hand, development is interpreted as a synonym for big governance. Developing countries face the challenge of preventing the degradation of the environment, empowerment of women and protection of economically vulnerable systems of society. In a developing country like India there are wide disparities between rich and poor; infrastructural development is lacking, level of illiteracy is high, basic health facilities are not available to a large segment of population and there are discrimination against women and socially and economically backward sections of society. Development means even growth of all sections of society. So, for development to occur it is necessary that the state should not retreat and roll back its functions to the minimum level. For development, the state has to perform social welfare functions of poverty alleviation, infrastructural development, childcare, basic health protection, etc.

Considering these contradictory interpretations of development we may propose that the government may withdraw from the field of industrial production making room for privatisation but the government must undertake new responsibilities in facing the problem in the social sectors of society. Development is a dynamic process and it at present calls for a new interaction between the government and the society. It should be a collective and balanced responsibility shared among the government, non-governmental organisations, co-operatives and the people. The concept of development is of special relevance for developing countries. The western model of development, which is being imposed on the developing countries in the post-liberalisation phase of economy and by GATT provisions raises suspicion about the real intention of the developed countries in the world, does the western model of development stands for economic progress or for a new strategy of domination over the developing countries. Development in developing countries should be based upon some norms, which should be the guiding factor of development. In Indian context, constitutionally enshrined values of secularism, socialism, democracy, should be the norms, which should guide the development process. In the absence of norms, the process of development would be directionless and a directionless development would create chaos in the system. For a systematic development to occur, development should be along some predetermined norms. Transparency of any system is essential for the development. Secrecy in any system creates a tainted system. People should have access to have knowledge about the functioning of government. Besides, people should be participants in the process of plan formulations and implementation. Accountability is another factor that is essential in the development process. Development is for the people. So administration should be responsible to the representative of people who, in turn, are responsible to the people.

DEVELOPMENT: A MULTI FACETED CONCEPT

Development is a complex concept. It has social, economic, political, administrative aspect. No dividing line can be drawn between different aspects of development. They all contribute in the development process. We agree with Malcolm Adiscshiah when he writes, "...development is a function of series of variables and not just of economic variables of industrialisation, urbanisation, international trade and national income level; but also of enlightenment variables of schooling, literacy and media exposure,

the power variables of participation, the personality variables of motivation, need achievement and sympathy. The diversity of cultural variables of local temporal aspects of social-cultural behaviour and the ecological variables of population, organisation, environmental and technology together with principles of inter-dependence and differentiation. Development must thus be conceived in a holistic, organic, dynamic, valuational manner. Its planning requires human-centred approach.”²²

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Political development could be assessed in terms of the stabilisation and consolidation of participatory political institutions where such development takes place, the political authority is responsive to the people and conversely people have faith in political authority. People in reality have opportunity to participate in political process.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development may be conceived in terms of progressive social integration. If society is fragmented in warring groups or societal cleavages, if there is social discrimination against minority groups, if one sector of a society dominates over other or where one social group has privileges and another group has social disabilities, society is not a developed one. Social homogenisation is integral to development, without harmony, there cannot be unity and social solidarity and without them society will be termed as under developed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is the most important need of developing countries. Economic development is a long process for which no universally acceptable index can be determined.

Development only in terms of increase in GNP is no longer considered acceptable since what matters is the composition of GNP. Does it consist of luxury goods consumed only by the rich or the goods of mass consumption? Do the masses have requisite purchasing power so that essential needs can be translated into effective demand. Masses would have the requisite purchasing power only if they have gainful employment opportunities. Hence full employment must go along with development. The latter may require priority being given to minimum social consumption, redistribution of productive system, banking resources, ownership of assets and entitlement in favour of the poor. Hence direct assault on poverty rather than reliance on only the trickle down effect.²³ It was the simplistic belief of the optimistic 50s that the poverty was the consequence of low income and if national income could be boosted up through greater investment, poverty would disappear automatically. However, the experience of past decades have led to the dethronement of the gross national product (GNP) from the high pedestal on which it was placed by the economists. The pioneering work of Mouris David Monts and Michelle B. McAlpin, ‘Measuring the condition of India’s Poor’ is intended to help in developing an alternative strategy on the basis of the concept of physical quality of life index (PQLI).²⁴ The authors consider that the PQLI captures the total effect of social and economic policy as well as distribution of income. Substantial PQLI must require the presence of a solid social infrastructure and cannot be generated merely by some quick technological innovations.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Administrative development is a very important part of development. Development of administration denotes administrative reforms, administrative changes or enhancement of administrative capabilities to achieve the set goals and to others it stands for differentiation, integration and increased autonomy of social system to interact with the environment.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Culture is that part of any community which provides idealistic values to citizens. Values are a very subjective phenomenon and they keep on changing with the march of civilisation. Administrative framework of a society cannot afford to remain untouched by cultural development. Administration has to keep itself attuned with cultural changes taking place in society. Otherwise due to social dissatisfaction social culture will collapse.

Indian administration scenario has been a very hotspot in recent time for the fast cultural changes taking place here. If social aspiration of masses is not re-counted then India would have definitely witnessed a social and political revolution in place of a democratic system. Indian democratic system is testimony of the fact that we have successfully acclimated our administration to fast pace cultural changes of our society.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is a new dimension of development. Development must not be at the cost of the nation's life supporting system consisting of soil, water, forest and other natural resources. Environment has to be protected and conserved so as to make life, future life possible. Man's needs are increasing and accordingly the environment is also being altered. Indeed, nature's capacity is too accommodating and too regenerative, yet there is a limit to nature's capacity especially when the pressure of an exploding population is increasingly mounting. What is required is the sustenance, conservation and improvement of the changing restless and fragile environment.

Martin Clark sums up the concept of sustainable development when he says, this (sustainability) stability is in part, the politics of community – a community that has been destroyed by modern progress and needs to be recreated. But it is the environment that is at the centre of attention. All main stream Green recognise the need for major structural change in politics and society in order to protect it. The environment is one and indivisible, but it is also fragile.

INDIA'S APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

When India attained Independence, her economy was poverty ridden and was badly affected by war, famine and partition. The earnest demand of the hour was economic development. The Indian population was desperate for development. In that condition, it was not possible to leave the issue of development to the rough and tumble of market forces. Laissez faire policy was not a viable solution for a society, which was sharply stratified. It could have led to uneven development in different sectors of her economy. So, it was decided that a well thought out and properly chalked out programme of development should be formulated on which will be based on the future course of development of the country and which will take care of all the social sectors.

India could not afford to have a too centralised system of control, which would be incompatible with freedom and democracy. A centralised economy also has the danger of evoking resistance from various territorial and functional constituents of her rather heterogeneous economy. India has, therefore, tried to evolve a procedure of economic planning which is not too rigid or centralised and it is able to mobilise the willing cooperation of people for a balanced programme of rapid economic development. India embarked on the process of planned economic development in the year 1951. The National Planning Commission headed by the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru set up to comprehensively assess the natural and manpower resources of the country and to prepare plans for the mobilisation of these resources for economic development aimed at raising the living of masses of

people. Jawaharlal Nehru was committed to planning ever since the year 1927 when he visited Soviet Russia and saw how the plans brought about economic transformation in that country in a short span of time. Even before Independence, he was appointed by the Indian National Congress as the chairman, National Planning Commission, which produced valuable development plans for different sectors of the economy. However, after independence, when Nehru supported the idea of Planning, he was opposed by Finance Minister John Mathai who raised many objections to the introduction of Planning. As a result of the difference of opinion, John Mathai resigned. It was not that Jawaharlal Nehru alone was amongst the public men who accepted the idea of a planned approach to economic development. As far back as 1934, Sir M. Visweshwariah, the Engineer statesman advocated planning for India's economic development. Even Private Businessmen had produced a Bombay plan before Independence. Hence adoption of planning as the instrument of development was but a logical culmination of ideas that had gathered momentum in years before Independence.

India has now completed more than five decades of planning. Except for the six Annual Plans during the years 1966 to 1969, 1979-80 and 1990-92, which came to be described as Plan holidays, India has been following the system of preparing five year plans in the context of long-term perspective plans. Within the framework of the five-year plans, annual plans are also prepared and are integrated with the budgetary process. Every five-year plan has a mid-term appraisal. Indian plans are comprehensive in the sense that they cover both public investment and private investment and also all sectors of the economy. Secondly, Indian approach to planning has been described as that of that of democratic planning as distinguished from totalitarian planning. It gives an important place to popular participation. Thirdly, India's approach to planning is for balanced development, in the sense that all sectors including agriculture, industry, infrastructure as well as service sector have been accorded their own place. Fourthly, India's approach to planning is aimed at the establishment of the socialist pattern of society. In other words, equitable distribution of income and provision of full employment opportunities have been the objectives along with that of increasing the rate of growth of the Gross National Product (GNP). Many approaches to development have been adopted ever since the country embarked upon planned programmes of economic development in 1951.

NATIONAL EXTENSION SERVICE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The National Extension Services were introduced in 1952 as a result of the report of Grow-More-Food Committee²⁵ appointed during the war period. The Community Development Programme²⁶ was introduced on the basis of the Nilokheri Experiment for establishing a new community life for the refugees uprooted by the partition. The names of two individuals are associated with these programmes, while Sir V.T. Krishnamachari, the first Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission was a great supporter of the National Extension Service. Sri S.K. Dey was the founder of the Community Development Programme. Both received the blessings and patronage of Jawaharlal Nehru.

The work of Albert Mayer, an American Architect in Etawah, U.P. was another aspiration. The National Extension Service learnt a lot from the work of Land Grant Colleges in USA, which made many people feel the National Extension Service and Community Development Programmes were concepts favoured from USA and transplanted in India. The National Extension Service aimed at setting up machinery, which would extend agriculture supplies, services and technical know-how to the door of the cultivator. The Community Development Programme aimed at building up self-reliant rural communities, which would be able to articulate its felt needs into local development. These programmes

were supported financially, technically and administratively by the government. Both these programmes were combined into the administrative set up of 5,000 Community Development Blocks, which were established throughout the country over a decade from 1952 to 1962. Each Block attempted to bring about multipurpose rural development through the help of an extension and development agency consisting of a block Development Officer, Extension Officers. i.e., subject matter specialists in different areas of rural development and the village level workers.

In the initial years of Community Development, great enthusiasm was shown all around both by the administration and the people at large. The opening of the Community Development Block was an occasion for a great display of popular enthusiasm. People voluntarily came forward for 'Shramdan Work' in local development projects. However, after a decade of euphoria, a sense of exhaustion seemed to come over the development programme. The impetus of change appeared to have petered out. The Block administration fell into a rut of routine matters. People appeared to have lost all their enthusiasm for Community Development. Even Jawaharlal Nehru who was enthusiastic about the programme in the initial years of Community Development observed that the programme had lost its elan had faded away and became a pale shadow of its former self. One of the main reasons why the Community Development Programme was routinized was that it was identified with a stereotype scheme with a stereotype budget implemented in a mechanical manner. The tyranny of targets and allocation of funds was such that the programme ceased to be live programme organically connected with the ends and objects of economic development and social change. Development organisations failed to connect the block programme directly with their overriding objectives of development, i.e., abolition of poverty, provision of full employment, special attention of the underprivileged sections of the community, fight against the scarcity and drought conditions, etc. As a result, instruments and programmes for the realisations of these objectives were found outside the framework of Community Development Programme and organisations. All these should have been the part and parcel of the Community Development Programme.

The second great shortcoming of the Community Development was its failure to get related to local resources – soil and water and other resources, flora and fauna, fish, forest wealth of the local community. It was not related to, on the one hand, to the ultimate objectives of development. It was also not meaningfully related to the mobilisation of the local resources. The third shortcoming of the Community Development Programme was its failure in initiating or appreciating the dynamics of development. The dynamics of development stands for the process through which one thing leads to another through which development becomes self-sustained. This chain effect was not seen in the Community Development Programme because the programme was static and was not thought in terms of dynamics of development. Finally, the Community Development Programme in the absence of its connection with the ultimate objectives of mobilisation of the local resources and area development for dynamic change did not use the technique and concepts of scientific planning at the block and district levels. In spite of all these shortcomings, these two programmes built up the basic infrastructure of development administration throughout the country, with all its failings, the framework of block administration provided the machinery of local development at the ground level throughout the country.

A major change took place as a result of constant criticism of Community Development that it was a general programme which did not pay sufficient attention to number one priority namely agriculture. Following the report of the Ram Subhag Singh Committee, the Community Development

Programme was substantially modified from the generalised programme into a programme concentrating on agricultural development. Eighty percent of the time of Gram Sevaks was earmarked for agriculture. The Development Commissioners were designated as Agricultural Production Commissioners. The Community Development Programme as such has now been given up and what we have are a number of special programmes.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

A special feature of the Community Development Programme was that in its formulation and implementation the rural community and its leaders were expected to play an active role. But after some time, people lost their enthusiasm for the programme. If redirection towards agriculture represented one major modification of the Community Development approach the latter was the introduction of Panchayati Raj. The latter was the consequence of the report of the Committee on Plan Projects (COP) of the Planning Commission, which was headed by Sri Balwant Rai Mehta (1959). The Committee pointed out that there was no adequate popular participation in the Community Development Programme. It was essential, therefore, to kindle popular enthusiasm by bringing the entire programme with the block administration machinery under the elected representatives of people. The representatives of people were to be elected to local government institutions at three tiers namely, The Panchayat at village level, the Panchayat Samiti at block level and Zila Parishad at the district level. The concept of Panchayati Raj was enthusiastically supported by Jawaharlal Nehru who felt that Panchayat members were important grass root administrators who should be allowed to make mistakes. Panchayati Raj also derived its sanction from article 40 of the Directive Principles of state Policy of the Constitution which laid down that Panchayats should be promoted as units of self-government. Unfortunately, though introduced with great fanfare, the Panchayati Raj system did not become a success and soon became moribund. The state governments gave a short lift to Panchayati Raj institutions. Regular elections were not held and they came under the rule of the Administrators appointed by the Government.

The Ashok Mehta Committee in 1977 made a plea for the resuscitation of the Panchayati Raj institution since they had a vital role to play in the field of rural development. The concept that Blocks and districts should be organised as units of planning and development came with Community Development and Panchayati Raj Programmes. The plan documents also underlined the importance of planning from below. In pursuit of the concept of local planning, The Planning commission appointed the Dantwala committee, which gave recommendations on procedures of block level planning.

73RD AMENDMENT OF INDIAN CONSTITUTION (1992)

With the enactment of the 73rd amendment of the Indian constitution, a new era has started in the federal democratic structure of Indian Constitution and Panchayati Raj institutions have received a Constitutional status. Due to enactment of the 73rd amendment almost all the States, except Jammu and Kashmir, National Capital regime of Delhi and Arunachal Pradesh have formulated their laws for the implementation of the amendment. It has a very comprehensive status and it does not exist in any other developing country.

The chief characteristics of this are as follows:

- Three tier Panchayati Raj system for all the states above the population of 20 lakhs.
- Regular elections for Panchayats every five years.
- Reservation of states for SC/ST and for women (not less than 1/3rd of total seats).

- Establishment of State Finance Commission for making recommendations in relation to financial powers of the Panchayati Raj institutions.
- Establishment of District Planning Committee for making proposals for the development of the entire district.

Such powers have been provided to Panchayati Raj institutions that are essential for working as institutions of local self-government, which includes: (a) making plans for economic development and social justice, and (b) entrusting powers and responsibilities to Panchayat bodies at proper level for implementation of programmes related to economic development and social justice.

the 73rd amendment of the Indian Constitution is a very important milestone in regard to entrusting administrative and financial powers to local bodies and thus to make people's real participants in the process of development. Now almost all the government-sponsored programmes are being prepared by local bodies and thus it is a great incentive for people to be real partners in the process of development. For the implementation of these programmes vast financial resources have been made available to local bodies and funds are being devolved directly to these local bodies by the government. A definite percentage of the tax revenue of the state government has been fixed for different level Panchayati Raj bodies.

So, at present development administration in India has reached into a new phase where a very rich soil has been laid in which people participation oriented bodies may flourish and people consequently may feel that it is the programmes for which they have to work. The success of these measures has yet to be tested on the scale of time.

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