

# A Conceptual Analysis of the Theories of Development Under a Democratic Framework

Dr. Pradeep Kumar K.

Associate Professor and HOD, Department of Political Science, Government College, Attingal

**Abstract:** *Planning, participation, and development are the catchwords of politicians, policymakers, administrators, and academicians in the modern period. Development is a multi - dimensional goal - oriented process, and its criteria and goals are determined by the socio - economic, cultural, political, and administrative determinants of the state. The term development theories seek to apply identified tools and approaches to the economic, social, and institutional aspects of developing countries to achieve improvement in the standard of living. It deals with methods and procedures for improving the socio - economic and institutional conditions of developing countries. Different theories of development exist and define development based on different focal concept.*

**Keywords:** Development Theories, Democratic Decentralization, Participatory Planning and Development, Rural Development, Gandhian Concept of Development, Human Capital Model of Development, Sustainable Development, System Theories of Development, Dependency Theories, Political Development, Modernization Theories.

## 1. Introduction

Development is a multi - dimensional goal - oriented process, and its criteria and goals are determined in accordance with socio - economic, cultural, political, and administrative determinants and the background of the country. The term stands for qualitative and quantitative change in various aspects of human life and activities like political, cultural, social, economic, administrative, technological, and sustainable environments. The term development is generally considered in a positive sense. However, if the change is not at the desired level of quantity and quality, it is either mal - development, stagnant, or negative development. To achieve development in the true sense of the word, there should be a healthy relationship between and among the various elements and components of the state system. Hence, development is the change in socio - economic conditions; changes in people's attitudes and perceptions towards social, economic, political, and administrative institutions; and acceptance, participation, and involvement of people in these institutions (Hoshiar, 2001). Hence, development from a decentralized perspective stands for devolution of functions, devolution of functionaries, devolution of finance, people's participation, accountability and transparency, equity and inclusiveness, and so on.

### Dimensions of Development

There are different dimensions of development such as:

**Political development** concerns the distribution of powers between different groups or individuals, particularly the power to control or make decisions about the use of resources (Hill, 2016). It is the study of the stages of change in the structure of government in accordance with the power change of the state.

**Economic Development:** It deals with the production of output and related activities, particularly the commercial and monetary aspects of these activities. The most common indicators of economic development are per capita income and the average annual growth rate of national income.

However, the experience suggests that GDP growth is not having much impact on the lives of the poor. Therefore, it is essential to understand development from the perspective of human well - being. Seers pointed out a list of eight important conditions for development, like enough food, employment, equality, education, democracy, national independence, equal status for women, and sustainability.

**Administrative Development:** It is characterized by technological innovation, which has altered the nature of administrative development and greatly complicated its objectives. According to administrative development, the country needs more and more technically skilled and trained personnel. F. W. Riggs says that the "spread of modern technology has created the ecumene, i. e., a globally interdependent social system" (Riggs, 1960). The modern information and communication revolutions have brought about radical reforms and influenced all aspects of society, especially in the administrative sphere.

**Social Development:** In the social perspective of development, concern for the general welfare of an individual or group of people. It is not just to increase income but to increase people's choices, which may extend to standard education, health, true democracy, cultural identity, social security, sustainability, and many other areas of human well - being. Development must deal with the entire society, not just the economy, and people must be put at the center of the stage (Sundaram, 1997). Another argument in concern with the social perspective of development is that the expansion of social opportunity is a key to development. Expansion of basic and better education, better health care facilities, scientific and effective land reforms and greater access to provisions of social security would enable the marginalized sections of society to lead a less restricted life and make better use of markets (Sen, 2002).

**Sustainable Development:** Sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are all in harmony

and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations (WCED, 1987). For the purpose of bringing radical changes in the areas of institutional sustainability and administrative developments. Institutional sustainability in the development process depends on the management of the institution, people's participation, the performance of scheme or plan implementation, local capacity, the capacity of resource mobilization and the focus on the long - term continuation of the benefits.

**Rural Development:** Rural development is a complex process that can be achieved through adequate regional planning, strong central coordination, effective local - level organization, and active people's participation in various planning and implementation stages. 'India lives in its villages' This idiom is as true today as it was over seventy - five years ago. As a country like India, the majority of the people live in rural areas, so one of the major objectives of the nation is to improve the quality of life of the rural population. The rural development process may be successful if the programs implemented through the PRIs match the needs and aspirations of the rural people. So, continued efforts have to be made by the government to strengthen local governance, institutionalize people's participation and empower women and other weaker sections through the PRIs (Surat, 2003).

**Participatory Planning and Development:** In the general social concept, development is a dynamic process of the betterment of life and the good - conditioned living standards of human beings. Decentralization and devolution of political, administrative, and fiscal power may change incentive structures for political participation and the ability of previously powerless groups to participate, thus creating conditions for bargaining that are more beneficial to downtrodden sections of society. Planned development is a process of deliberate human efforts for the accomplishment of pre - desired organizational goals or desired directional change. T. T. Thahana states that development planning is a process of organizing national economic and social efforts for the promotion of the achievement of clearly defined national development goals (Thahana, 1974).

### Theories of Development

Development theories seek to apply identified tools and approaches to the economic, social, and institutional aspects of developing countries in order to achieve improvements in the standard of living (Todaro, M. P., 2000). It deals with methods and procedures for improving the socio - economic and institutional conditions of developing countries. Development theories originated in the mid - 20th century, when decolonization occurred and the economic disparity between European and underdeveloped nations became obvious. There are different theories of development that exist and define development based on different focal concepts. For instance, modernization theories of development stress the political, religious, and cultural features of society. On the other hand, the World System and Globalization Theories seek to evaluate external relationships and different points in the development of countries. It also focuses on external reform policies that deal with relations between dependent and independent

countries (Szymanski A., 1982). The following are the major theories of development.

### Modernization Theories of Development

Modernization Theories of Development or the Free World Model of Development was actually the justification of American Hegemony in the context of the Cold War. The theory was the combined contributions of the scholars of economists, sociologists, historians, politicians, and anthropologists, and the determinants of development identity by them included both economic and non - economic factors. The focus of modernization theory is cultural change directed at institutional structures in non - industrialist countries. It explains inequality within or between states by identifying different values, systems, and ideas held by different nation - states (Martinussen, 1997). The essence of the theory was the transfer of Western technology and rationality without changing class structure as a means of development and removing all social and ideological obstacles to such a process (Alavi and Shanin, 1982).

Modernization Theories of Development were based on several assumptions, like (a) that the application of western science and technology in order to increase production is essential for development. (b) The process of development can be delineated into a series of stages; all societies pass through those stages. (c) In the process of development, traditional social and political institutions are replaced by modern ones. (d) Traditional feudal forms of political power will be replaced by democratic forms of governance (John Makay, 1990). The theory stresses the importance of political development in the progress and climactic improvements of the economic conditions of the state in the background of social and cultural reforms. So, modernization theory gives more importance to political development with levels of coverage that consider history, sociology, political science in general, and area studies (Berger, M. T., 2004).

In the practical sense, the theory failed to address the problems of rural development, especially in developing countries and, to that extent, is not relevant. In developing countries like India, the non - existence or ineffective implementation of rules and regulations aimed at preventing private companies or groups from dominating their domestic markets. At the same time, in free market - oriented Western democracies, such rules and controls are effectively implemented. It has taken a few new directions, such as the establishment of a new economic order and the guarantee of basic needs and structural adjustment programs, etc.

### Dependency Theories of Development

The Modernization Theory was a failure to face the growing inequalities, poverty, violence, and military coups in the newly independent states of the African and Asian Continents. In dealing with the crisis situation in these countries, the development scholars are forced to seek an alternative; the dependency theories of development arise in this historical paradigm. The intellectual foundation of the new paradigm was rooted in the ideas of Karl Marx, Engels, and other Marxist thinkers. They believed that the process of social change was not gradual and evolutionary, as assumed

by modernization theory. Instead, it was the product of class struggle as the engine of social change and development. Although the argument of a radical dependency outlook and the revolutionary aspects of social change exist, they do not demonstrate the extract result of classical Marxism or Leninism in their evolution and consideration of historical development and underdevelopment (Haque, M. S., 1999).

The imperialist concept of socio - economic and political relations changed colonial nations into sources of cheap inputs for production in capitalistic nations, as well as markets for their products. This capitalistic mode of arrangement always worked to the benefit of imperialistic power and not for indigenous nations. Such a view of the dynamics at work in the capitalistic system meant a complete reversal of the logic of modernization from the promise of development to impoverishment. This was the fundamental argument of the Marxist School of Thought, which came to be known as the Dependency Theory (Katar and Shishodia, 2016). The chief spokesman for the theory was Andre Gunder Frank, who dismissed the modernization theory as useless from a policy perspective. He asserted that the relations between rich and poor nations were not only non - beneficial to the latter but also positively destructive, hindering, and distorting their development. In this view, development and underdevelopment were both results of interactions between societies (John Makay, 1990). The theory was very popular in the 1970s as it provided a possible explanation for the perpetuation of the problems of poverty and stagnation in developing countries, despite concerted efforts at solving them.

According to this theory, the capitalistic world system would cause a labor upheaval that damages the domestic economies of underdeveloped countries. It diminishes the economic growth rate and also has a negative impact on the welfare of the majority of the people. Further, since there is no basic equality in the goods that are processed and exchanged for raw materials, It caused a relatively long - term decrease in the price of primary goods compared with the price of processed goods. Again, over - focusing on the exports of specific raw materials will result in a country having an unbalanced reliance on only one sector. It badly affects the amount of taxes the government can receive and will negatively influence the government's ability to fund health and social programs (Williamson B., 2001). In spite of the contrasts between modernization theory and dependency theory, we saw some common features, like that both theories basically focus on the development conditions of the Third World, the mythological similarities and the ideological construction of the nation - state unit, the application of bilateral structural theoretical systems, etc. (Reyes, G. E., 2001).

### World System Theories of Development

The World System Theory argues that international trade specialization and the transfer of resources from less developed countries to developed countries (core countries) prevent the development of less developed countries by making them rely on core countries and by encouraging peripheralization. The World System Theory therefore views the world economy as an international hierarchy of unequal relations. A country can change its position in the global

hierarchy with changes controlled by the World System. In other words, wealth is taken from semi - periphery or periphery zones to economics in the core countries (Szymanski, 1982). It deals with the world - wide forms of capitalism and envisages social change through culture - directed relationships. The theory also explains inequality by identifying different cultures and the role of the state in international connections. Such a situation started when international trade interactions played a more important and influential role than national government roles and activities. Most of the world system theorists consider that, as a whole, this is the only theory that unites the socialists in the twentieth century (Reyes, G. E., 2001).

According to Wallenstein, the world system is a multiple cultural system with a single division of labor, and its basic feature is having a pool of labor in which different divisions and areas depend upon each other in exchanging the provisions of those areas (Wallenstein, 1974). As Szymanski pointed out, most of the world system theorists argue that there is only one world system, the capitalist world economy, and specifically that this single system incorporates the socialistic countries. That means in the twentieth century there was only one world system, namely, the capitalist trade economy (Szymanski, 1982).

Onyemelukwe traced the sources of world system theory in the early 1970s as a reaction against structuralist theories. This viewpoint did not accept the idea that the wrong model of social structure would lead to countries becoming impoverished. According to this idea, it is foreign capitalistic countries that are responsible for the underdevelopment of such poor countries. Paradoxically, the way ahead for underdeveloped countries is to adopt the practices and systems, including accounting, of developed nations. These changes inevitably have a negative cultural impact (Onyemelukwe, 2005).

### The Human Capital Model of Development

The human capital models place more importance on manpower investment in the process of development. In this model of development, the human being acquires mental and physical abilities through education, training, health care, and the pursuit of some spiritual methods such as yoga or meditation. Theodore Schultz, who elaborated on the concept of human capital and explicitly considered investment in human capital as an important determinant of development, The model considers the totality of human potential and emphasizes the need to harness it for the good of people. The theory also considers and respects people's culture, religion, and social values and structures. It is more relevant and applicable in developing countries than any other model, especially in countries like India.

The Human Capital Model approach to development is based on the following three assumptions, which have been ignored in the classical theory of development: (a) Human capital and mental capabilities are partly inherited and partly acquired, and they vary from individual to individual; that is, the classical assumption of homogenous labor forces does not hold. (b) Human capital directly contributes to development through its positive effect on productivity and through the reduction of resistance to the diffusion of new

technologies in the economy, especially in the rural sector and (c) Human resources are inexhaustible and are available in plenty in all developing countries of the world, including India. If properly developed and utilized, human resources can contribute significantly to development (Schultz W., 1964). This model seems most appropriate for labor - intensive developing countries such as India, where a lot of underdeveloped human resources are renewable and, hence, inexhaustible.

### Gandhian Concept of Development

Gandhiji never believed in founding or stating any dogmatic 'ism', including 'Gandhisim'. For him, truth was never final or rigid and life was an "experiment with truth." He was a kind of scientific openness based on religious faith in truth. The result is that Gandhisim is not a coherent body of doctrine and the Gandhian model is not a definite and clearly stated paradigm. One has to decipher it from his experiments with truth in action, from the vast body of Gandhian literature and in a continuous dialectic with life (Raghavan Iyer, 1973). The Gandhian plan of rural development sought all - round development, bringing into full and active play all the resources of the individual. His major concepts and broad vision of society included 'Sarvodaya,' 'Swadeshi', 'Village Swaraj' and 'Panchayati Raj' (Choudhary Kameswar, 1998). It involved the building of every aspect of human life and envisaged a society based on self - sufficiency, self - government, and self - sufficiency in villages. Self - sufficiency implied that all the requirements in the way of food and other necessities of life would be grown or manufactured in the village.

The term 'Sarvodaya' is connected with the Gandhian concept of development. The term 'Sarvodaya' is the title of his Gujarati version of Ruskin's book 'Unto This Last'. This book contained the following important principles of Sarvodaya: (a) the good of an individual is contained in the good of all; (b) all works have the same value and have the same right to earn their livelihood from their work; and (c) the life of labor, i. e., of the tiller of the soil and of the handicraftsman, is the life worth living. Sarvodaya is the principal goal of directing all social effort. It aims at the development of all, regardless of class or creed, cast or gender, race or notion, or even majority or minority. It is a principle seeking a man - centered socio - economic - political system with a human face and soul, both as a means and an end, emphasizing ethical excellence and covering both individual and social needs and the development of the whole (Umapathy M., 1994).

Another Gandhian concept of development is antyodaya. Antyodaya means the development of the hindermost. The hindermost being the weaker link of society; if he develops naturally, it leads to Sarvodaya. Unlike the Western survival of the fittest formula, Antyodaya puts his development as the first and foremost priority of all social effort. It can serve as the prime test of all social policy. The other term of Gandhisim, Aparigraha in Sanskrit, means non - acquisition in excess of need. He was against the Western model of individual life, i. e., the maximization of wants, acquisition, and consumption. It led to a concentration of affluence with a few on the one hand and poverty and misery on the other. Sarvodaya demands that each individual practice Aparigraha

at some reasonable points to enable others to get their minimum. It also leads to a sustainable and environment - preserving life of symbiosis between man and man and man and nature. The other concept is the trusteeship system. In this system, property belongs to God or to all and the holder manages it only as a socially responsible trustee. It led to an economic system based neither on private property nor on state property but on trusteeship. Einstein said about Gandhi: if his concept cannot be realized in the near future, at least we have the hope that, if he were hundred and fifteen years ahead of us, his dream would be considerably realized in the coming decades and centuries. The biggest challenge in human development is to retrieve, refurbish, experiment, and inch towards the Gandhian dream of Sarvodaya through Antyodaya (Umapathy M., 1994)

Panchayati Raj: Gandhiji envisaged that each village in India would be a republic, where the village panchayat would have the full power of managing its affairs. He expected the Panchayat to perform the legislative, executive, and judicial functions necessary for the smooth functioning of the village economy. Various developmental activities, such as education, health, and sanitation, would also be taken up by the village panchayat. It is good and in conformity with Gandhiji's views, that India now has made Panchayati Raj Institutions statutory bodies by passing the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1993. It hopes that Gandhiji's dream of local self - government through the village panchayat will now be fulfilled (Katar and Anil, 2016).

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, which revolutionized the democratic administrative system in India, was bound to have far - reaching consequences for the political process of the country. It marked a new era in the federal democratic set - up of the country by providing constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Through the Act, the Constitution ensures a certain sphere of activity for the grass - roots democratic institutional governments of the country. Local self - government institutions would no longer exist at the mercy of those in power at the state level. It also provided for the empowerment of weaker sections and women who, until now, could not get adequate representation in the local councils. This amendment sought the establishment of multi - tier elected panchayats at the district, sub - district, and local levels. These institutions act as the prime instrument of decentralization at the grass - roots level of development and also as a mechanism to ensure optimum use of resources.

### Developmentalist Theory on Decentralization

The origins of development theory may be attributed to the liberal democratic concept of decentralization and also influence some assumptions of modernization theory. James Manor identified some of the causes that led to the latest waves of decentralization, which include the degeneration of the patronage system and corruption of ruling parties in less developed countries, over centralization and autonomy of parties and formal institutions, the employment of a public choice approach, increasing government expenditure through the process of decentralization, the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War (James Manor, 2016). Samuel P. Huntington argues that social and economic

modernization did not automatically lead to political development but rather new social and economic conflicts. Political order had to be created through the state and modern institutions (Huntington, 1968).

Developmentalist theorists consider decentralization a necessary condition for improving the planning and implementation of developmental activities. It brings bureaucracy into closer contact with people, thereby obtaining clearer information about rural needs and considerations than central government agencies. This information serves as a base for the formation of more appropriate and feasible development plans and projects (Rondinelli, 1983). It serves as a mechanism to promote local participation in the planning and implementation of development projects. The beneficial effects of participation are very high. Participation encourages people to maximize their own commitment and contribution towards the successful implementation of development projects and also towards making development enduring (United Nations, 1962). Developmentalists believed that decentralized government was needed to institutionalize the participation of local people in development planning and implementation

Another argument of developmentalists is that decentralization helps mobilize local resources for developmental purposes. It allows maximum utilization of local resources, which has an efficiency value quite apart from the other benefits, such as political education, that it may bring to society. It also promotes better and proper coordination of developmental activities in developing countries. According to Diana Conyers, "by employing a decentralization scheme, it is easier to produce integrated plans for specific areas and increase efficiency and flexibility (Diana Conyers, 1981). Local institutions are also likely to provide a better system of supervision and monitoring of ongoing projects by directly involving local people who do some checking themselves.

Decentralization, according to developmentalists, undoubtedly leads to greater government accountability. People in the decentralized administrative system have better access to representatives and officials; they can seek clarification from the representatives for their omissions and commissions. Local government officials working at local levels are more brilliantly aware of live political accountability than the central government, whose responsibility is more remote. The local government has its master at its doorstep (Henry Maddick, 1963). So, decentralization can, to a greater extent, minimize corruption and mismanagement at grass - roots levels. It also helps to develop confidence among the weaker sections of society. In the socialistic pattern of society, decentralization becomes a fundamental ideological principle and essential for creating a system of government in which power is vested in the masses. Hence, development is the change in socio - economic conditions; changes in people's attitudes and perceptions towards social, economic, political, and administrative institutions; and acceptance, participation, and involvement of people in these institutions.

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