



Western and Eastern Development Perspectives: a Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

A comparative analysis of western and eastern development perspectives is carried out in this article based on qualitative research. There is continuous and unabated promotion of western type of political economy of capitalism which has expanded the industrial system and created a consumer society. The eastern scholars proposed an alternative development model to overcome the imbalance created by western model. They identified the development goals by taking into account the human side of development. The Millennium Declaration emphasizes that no individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The earth summits have pleaded for sustainable development which is a balancing act between three key perspectives - economic, social and environmental. There is common agreement among the scholars that development ultimately means the development of the people, culture, environment and other aspects which benefit the mankind immensely. The champions of alternative development have rightly emphasized a human touch to the process of development which means the development of women and weaker sections of the society statistically and otherwise.

KEYWORDS

Preamble

The word development is broad enough to include several aspects under its ambit. Development is a multi-dimensional and multi-directional revolution which improves the standard of living of the people. Development is a multi-pronged attack against the factors and forces which have manufactured poverty and allied ill-effects. Development has several dimensions – educational, scientific, technological, and environmental. Scholars have defined development in different ways by taking into account several factors associated with the process of development. A comparative analysis of western and eastern development perspectives is carried out in this article based on qualitative research.

Historical Perspective of Development

During Vedic period all citizens of the society regardless of their professions had the benefit of access to resources and were treated equally in the social and economic spheres of life. Buddha created a new religion called 'Buddhism' which ensured equality, fraternity, justice and collective welfare. Buddha established a welfare state and made India a model country in the world, according to (Dissanayake, 1984:05). The colonial forces institutionalized the exploitation of the mankind economically, politically and otherwise.

The Industrial Revolution brought about a new age of material progress which enabled the capitalists and feudal lords to rule the roost in the name of development. There were global disparities in the post-Industrial Revolution period from the point

of view of development. There were clear cut division of the world into developed world and under-developed world. The World War II provided a new dimension to global politics and economy. It was indeed a conflict of interest between fascists and democrats. Democracy had become a new way of life after the war. The US President Truman (1962) proposed a Point Four Program for global peace and prosperity.

There was systematic development of capitalist system in Europe, America and elsewhere which was based on the western development perspective. The world witnessed a definite shift from agricultural economy to industrial economy which benefitted the market forces. The development of communist movement led by Marx and Engels provided an alternative to capitalism. The last quarter of the 20th century witnessed the re-incarnation of economic and political colonialism headed by America and other dominant nations in the name of globalization. In the present times, the political system is also controlled by the capitalist forces which are wedded to statusquoism. Today, a new dimension to development is added by the neo-colonial forces led by America which has deprived the mankind from the fundamental right to development. The world has witnessed a new age of marginalization of the weaker sections under the control of dominant powers.

Key Concepts of Development

The western capitalist model of development aims to promote the positive and beneficial side of modern capitalism with emphasis focused on hedonism, consumption and individualism.

There is continuous and unabated promotion of western type of political economy of capitalism which has expanded the industrial system and created a consumer society. The stress was on economic development since almost all new born nations sought rapid strides in poverty alleviation after World War II. The fixation with the 'Dominant Paradigm' in the fifties and sixties slowly gave way for a critical evaluation of its efficacy and relevance. The economic approach is being replaced with social, political and cultural matrix which emphasizes a new set of indicators of development. Mao, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Schumacher, Beltran, Tehranian, Gunnar Myrdal and others questioned the wisdom behind the wholesale transfer and application of western concept of development for the development of backward nations and sections.

The development of a nation involves the transition from a traditional economy to a modern industrial complex-the traditional society, pre-conditions for takeoff, take-off, drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption. The social structure of traditional society is essentially hierarchical and Political power is concentrated in the hands of aristocracy (Rostow, 1960:14). Economic development of a nation is primarily dependent on industrial development, urban development and market oriented economy. A type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita incomes and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organization (Rogers, 1976:12).

The poor of the world could not be helped by mass production, only through production by the masses". He prescribed a simple, cheap and free technology as against super-technology which has converted man into a slave deliberately (Schumacher, 1973:15). Development is a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment (Rogers, 1976:12).

Development 'from below' is not – as might be assumed – simply related to the level at which decisions on development are taken. A change in the level of decision making is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for strategies of development 'from below'. Development would need to be considered again as an integral process of widening the opportunities of individuals, of social groups and territorially organized communities at small and intermediate scales, to mobilize the full range of their capabilities and resources for their common benefit in social, economic and political terms (Stohr, 1981:19).

The real measure of development is man himself. Development must be seen in terms of its contributions to human survival, progress and welfare. Anything that works against this triple objective is anti-or mal-development (Mishra, 1981:10). The United Nation's Conference on Trade and Development (1997) cautioned the world above western perspective of development which benefitted the industrialists and dominant powers. It also identified the widening development gap between the developed nations and under developed nations.

Modernisation, critical perspective and liberation perspective are closely associated with the practice of development (Melkote and Steeves, 2001:08). Development is a complex, participatory process, involving stakeholders and beneficiaries and aimed at improving the overall qualities of human life through improvements in a range of social sectors in environmentally responsible manner (Cambridge, 2002:03).

The basic needs perspective of development and sustainable development perspectives provided a human touch to the process of development all over the world. The Third World scholars advocated that the inequalities created by material development must be compensated by meeting the social needs of the people and ensuring equality of opportunity over a wide

range of human activity. They proposed an alternative development model to overcome the imbalance created by western model. They identified the development goals by taking into account the human side of development.

Development Goals

Most of the constitutions and development plans of the world have identified certain specific development goals which include the following:

- Raise the quality of life for all groups of people in the society.
- Induce a faster, balanced and sustained economic development.
- Increase the income levels of people.
- Broaden the areas of social, economic, political and cultural justice by making equitable distribution of service among all sections of the society possible.
- Increase in the quality and supply of human resources for higher productivity and remove obstacles to the process of development.
- Maintain and improve the status and quality of environment.
- Promote science and technology as well as creativity.
- Encourage competitiveness in the production and export of goods and services.
- Utilize foreign exchange reserves, at the optimum level, check inflation, allow foreign investment in the domestic sector and create national resources.
- Maintain the cultural heritage of the country.
- Facilitate the progress of women and weaker sections of the society.
- Adopt inclusive development, integrated development and sustainable development strategies in order to create a welfare state.

Models of Development

Every country which is politically independent needs a development model in the present times in order to achieve the goals of national development on the basis of constitutional provisions, legislative approval, right development vision and meaningful developmental priorities. The scholars have argued that blind application of western model of development does not deliver goods which benefit the mankind in the Asian, African, Latin American and Middle Eastern countries which are entirely different from Europe and America economically and other wise. In the age of liberalization, privatization and globalization, the social and economic divisions among and within the countries are growing because of the blind adoption of dominant development model which benefits the neo-colonial forces. The economic approach is replaced with social, political and cultural matrix which emphasizes a new set of indicators of development.

Unilinear model of development was given by Walt Rostow and Daniel Learner which is known as the non-communist manifesto. Rostow (1960:14) suggested a five-stage model for the development of a nation which involves the transition from a traditional economy to a modern industrial complex-the traditional society, pre-conditions for takeoff, actual take-off, drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption. According to this model, the traditional society has to be transformed on the basis of science, technology, rationality and other progressive means and methods. The ultimate stage of development is that of high mass consumption according to Rostow and Learner.

The diffusion model of development emphasized that the masses need the benefit of interaction with the research and development systems. The communication and development investigations highlighted the need for diffusion of innovations, technologies and resources. The diffusion model consists of five stages of adoption of innovations namely – awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption (Rogers 1978:13). But this model has been widely appreciated by the scholars and users of innovations in view of its practical advantages.

Development scholars designed mechanistic model of development which emphasized participatory communication and development. People need to be helped because they lack understanding, ability and resources for the adoption of innovations and allied progressive measures (Servaes, 1985:17). The intervention of change agents, community leaders, opinion leaders, catalysts of development and other sources is absolutely essential for adoption of innovations and achievement of development by the target group.

The transactional communication model is an extended version of the knowledge sharing model. According to this model, three levels of participation namely- active, creative and continuous exist in the society (Nair and White, 1987:11). The knowledge sharing model of development is based on a co-equal basis wherein the benefactor and the beneficiary share the knowledge, exchange the information, convince each other and achieve the progress (Ascroft and Masilela, 1989:01).

Organic model of development is diametrically opposite to mechanistic model of development. The proponents of organic model argue that the users do not need any kind of external sources in order to convince them about the utility of innovations and other developmental resources. This model also states that people's participation in the process of development is a never ending business and people are commonly exposed to such innovations, resources and practices under normal circumstances. People select their representatives and leaders who are known for leadership qualities, service motivation, problem – solving ability, adaptability and other virtues (Melkote, 1991:09). The organic model of development primarily emphasizes on the integrated media use and participatory communication process regarding the adoption of innovations and achievement of the goals of development.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Millennium Declaration, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly (2000:20) considers certain values to be central to international relations in the twenty-first century. Freedom and equality are considered as crucial factors associated with the creation of a new developmental order in the world. These goals have precisely emphasized that men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Besides this, no individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The salient features of MDGs are as follows:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

The Millennium Declaration reaffirms the many commitments to equity and equality made in the various conventions and declarations that have been produced. Principles of equity and equal opportunity that guide rural development delivery must recognize the different needs, priorities, interests, and constraints of men, women, boys and girls. If agriculture is to fuel the economy and provide the opportunity for diversifying into other livelihood strategies, it is crucial that smallholders, both men and women, have access to productive resources (e.g. finance/credit, water, land, information, etc.). Moreover, rural development must be guided by the principle of gender equity, particularly in terms of property rights and land reform.

Sustainable Development in the New Millennium

For development to be sustainable, it must take account of social and ecological factors, as well as economic ones; of the living and non-living resource base; and of the long-term as well as the short-term advantages and disadvantages of alternative actions (World Conservation Strategy, 1980:24), Sus-

tainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This definition is the most universally quoted definition on sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987:23). Improving the quality of human living within the carrying capacity of ecosystem is called as sustainable development (Caring for Earth, 1991:04).

Sustainable development

- Minimizing use or waste of non-renewable resources- including minimizing the consumption of fossil fuels and substituting with renewable sources where feasible. Also, minimizing the waste of scarce mineral resources (reduce use, re-use, recycle, reclaim)
- Sustainable use of renewable resources- including using freshwater, soils and forests in way that ensure a natural rate of recharge.
- Keeping within the absorptive capacity of local and global sinks for wastes including the capacity of rivers to break down biodegradable wastes as well as the capacity of global environmental systems, such as climate, to absorb greenhouse gases.

Earth Summit in Rio (1992:06) seriously gave a thought to sustainable development which is a balancing act between three key perspectives - economic, social and environmental. According to the triangle, for development to be considered sustainable, each of the three domains must be addressed. Human and social capital equates to health, social security, social cohesion, freedom, justice, equality of opportunity, and peace. This model precisely called upon the policy makers and developmentalists to achieve the goal of development on the basis of eco-friendly initiatives (World Bank, 1994:22). Social and economical development can only take place if the environment offers the necessary resources: raw materials, space for new production sites and jobs, constitutional qualities and environmental safeguards, (Beckerman 1994:02).

The prism of sustainable development was adapted by the Wuppertal school which stipulates four dimensions namely - economic dimension (man-made capital), environmental dimension (natural capital) and social dimension (human capital) as the basis for sustainable development (Spangenberg and Bonniot, 1998:18; Valentin and Spangenberg, 1999:21).

Sustainable development goals could be attained through collective action by the world community, national governments and non-government organizations across the globe. The goal of sustainable development cannot be achieved overnight but it demands a very long-term perspective. It calls for equity among individuals, peoples, countries, regions and generations. Sustainable development often deals with all the areas of human activities such as food, water, forest, air etc (UN Millennium Declaration, 2000).

Assessment of progress toward sustainable development should be guided by a clear vision of sustainable development and identified crucial elements of sustainable development such as justice, intra and inter-generational equity, maintenance of options, meeting of needs, and maintenance of bio-diversity (Swiss Monitoring of Sustainable Development Project, 2001).

Sustainable development means ensuring dignified living conditions with regard to human rights by creating and maintaining the widest possible range of options for freely defining life plans. The principle of fairness among and between present and future generations should be taken into account in the use of environmental, economic and social resources. Putting these needs into practice entails comprehensive protection of bio-diversity in terms of ecosystem, species and genetic diversity, all of which are the vital foundations of life (Second World Earth Summit, 2001:16).

The Johannesburg Declaration created "a collective respon-

sibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development—economic development, social development and environmental protection—at local, national, regional and global levels (World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002:25).

The economic dimension emphasizes the need for improving the human welfare through growth in consumption. The social dimension precisely deals with the inclusive growth and development of socially backward and disadvantaged sections of the mankind. The environmental view focuses on the protection and conservation of ecological systems (Muasinghe, 2007:). The challenge of sustainable development can be effectively met only on the basis of integrated efforts made by the individuals, institutions, governments and civil society organizations.

Sustainable development is a vision of future that provides necessary blue print through which the developmental activities undertaken by the individuals and institutions can be streamlined on the basis of ethical, humanitarian and professional considerations. Sustainability is a community's control of capital; in all of its forms - natural, human, human-created social and cultural life. It ensures that present and future generation can attain a high degree of economic security and achieve democracy while maintaining the integrity of the ecological systems upon which all life and production depend (Guru, 2015:07).

The adoption of the concept of sustainable development by economists and entrepreneurs has led to inequity between the several dimensions of sustainable development, relativating the need for more intensive protection and promotion of natural values and primary resources. The advocates of sustainable development have also sternly warned the policy makers not to take the environment for granted in the name of development. Hence, environment protection naturally constituted the most important element of sustainable development.

Challenges to Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has become part of all climate change policy discussions at the global level, particularly due to adoption of Agenda 21 and the various global conventions on environment. The sustainable development has become an integrating concept embracing economic, social and environmental issues. Sustainable development does not preclude the use of exhaustible natural resources but requires that any use be appropriately offset (United Nations Environment Program, 2010).

Sustainable development is the need of the hour. Series of challenges have cropped up all over the world with regard to the attainment of the goal of sustainable development. The market forces are least committed to the achievement of social justice oriented sustainable development. They have adopted anti environment policy which has brought about increased depletion of natural resources and pollution of every kind across the globe. The uncontrolled growth of population is also mainly responsible for the increase of pressures on the earth. Poverty, ill health, malnutrition, hunger and other factors are also responsible for the increase of epidemic and serious diseases which erode the productive capacity and social setup of nations. Marginalization, many countries are struggling under the combined weight of slow economic growth, heavy burden of external debt, conflicts, corruption, water and food insecurity (Guru, 2015:07).

The goal of sustainable development can be achieved on the basis of a lawful environment in which people are empowered. The climate change is one of the most important global environmental challenges, with implications for food production, water supply, health, energy, etc. Addressing climate change requires a good scientific understanding as well as co-ordinated action at national and global level. The recent UN Convention (2015) observed that the most effective way to address climate change is to adopt a sustainable development

pathway by shifting to environmentally sustainable technologies and promotion of energy efficiency, renewable energy, forest conservation, reforestation, water conservation, etc.

The champions of sustainable environment strongly voiced their concern for increasing food security, reducing freshwater scarcity, protecting the livelihoods of forest dwellers, dry land farmers and coastal settlements and reducing health risks all over the world. The widespread retreat of glaciers and icecaps in the 21st century will also lead to higher surface temperatures on land and increasing water stress. The scientists alerted the policy makers about the moderate to high water stress in the world by 2025. Ecological productivity and biodiversity will be altered by climate change and sea-level rise, with an increased risk of extinction of some vulnerable species on account of anti-ecological developmental endeavors.

Western and Eastern Development Perspectives

The western model of development basically emphasized the blind adoption of development agenda designed by the champions of statusquoism. It benefits the countries which are known as industrial societies which have large number of cities and industrial / trade operations. The capitalists have ruled the roost on the strength of their money power, muscle power and manipulative power. The colonial forces have exploited the weaker nations of the world politically and economically. The World War II provided a new dimension to the global polity and economy. In the beginning, the independent nations of the eastern world inevitably followed the western model which known as dominant paradigm of development. Subsequently, a new realization occurred among the scholars and people of the eastern world regarding the futility of the western model of development. Mao, Gandhi, Ambedkar and other champions of social justice propagated eastern model of development which benefitted the people practically. A large number of developing and under-developed nations of the eastern world have adopted the new paradigm or eastern perspective of development which facilitates distributive justice and development. In the present times, the neo-colonial forces have prevailed upon the developing and less developed countries to switch over to the western model of development since it benefits them. Intellectuals and activists have called upon the eastern people to think globally and act locally in order to safeguard their interest.

Conclusion

A vast body of literature has been generated on the basis of the thoughts and deeds of noble saints and scholars who have enriched the global culture and civilization. Development has been perceived on the basis of several ideologies and models which have been contributed by various experts at different periods. The concept of development has undergone series of changes and modifications from the days of Buddha to Amartya Sen. There are serious ideological differences with respect to the concept of development. The capitalists perceive development purely on the basis of materialism while the humanists perceive development on the basis of natural justice and principles of human rights. There is common agreement among the scholars that development ultimately means the development of the people, culture, environment and other aspects which benefit the mankind immensely. The champions of alternative development have rightly emphasized a human touch to the process of development which means the development of women and weaker sections of the society statistically and otherwise.

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