REVISITING AND REFRAMING
THE CONCEPT OF 'DEVELOPMENT BY PEOPLE'

Dipannita Das

M.A Sociology, Jadavpur University,B.Ed (Department of Teacher Education, BSAEU erstwhile WBUTTEPA)

ABSTRACT

Alterations of social patterns and changes in mechanisms of social action form a crucial part of social change in society. Development can be often referred to as a term that mainly incorporates progress, amelioration, and change. As an orderly procedure, it reflects a sequence of activities. However, we cannot observe a halting point when it comes to development as it is characterized by its continuity. The term often recalls the functioning of major organizations like the United Nations, World Bank, or Bretton Woods Conference. Professor Yogendra Singh posited that "Development is a strategy of planned social change which is considered desirable by the members of a society."

Participation of people in a democracy is not just a sociological imperative but also an essential part of human development and growth. Promulgation of social development can be witnessed in every corner of today's world but its implementation remains a blurred portrait.

Premised on secondary literature, the study elucidates the meaning of 'Development by people' and notes its significance. Central to the theme is 'Participation' in development process, hence the paper elaborates on the process through which the same can be achieved. Since the nature of the participatory population varies from place to place considering the diversity and other multifarious reasons, the study also takes into account the limitations of the same approach.

INTRODUCTION

The term Development has been interpreted by different academicians and theorists in myriad ways starting from Amartya Sen to John Rawls. Etymologically, the term refers to 'unfolding', namely the progressive unfolding of capacities. The developmental literature incorporates various types of development ranging from regional to economic to sustainable to urban and so on.

The emergence of the concept of Development dates back to the early 1950s. Initially, Development can be noted as a post- World War II concept that was popularized to denote positive changes and significant economic change throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America, and South Eastern Europe. This asserted that change in Economic Performance Models and National income accounts marked growth and development during that stipulated period. The declaration of the 1960s as the Development decade by the United Nations led to a burgeoning amount of literature redefining and reanalyzing the concept. Thus, the notion of Development was underpinned by modernity, and the focus primarily was restricted to the economic arena of development only. With the introduction and acceleration of massive reorganization programs by agencies like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations, and the

Marshall Plan, the focal point was heavily on economic terms to achieve development as the first step. The aim was to help other nations for securing one's own benefits like America helping Europe and Europe lending a hand towards the 'Third World' countries.

Four major policy and theoretical perspectives regarding development have been enlisted as (1) Modernization Theory (roughly 1940s-1950s) (2) Dependency Model (1960s-1970s) (3) World System (1980s-2000s) (4) Market Reform (1980s-2000s).

Envisage Development from the Sociological Perspective

The lexical meaning of sociology is ultimately connected to the idea of development. Previous definitions of development suffered from weaknesses as they often ignored the humanitarian aspects of development and the welfare of people by limiting its locus to the economic sphere. Since development cannot be only economic growth subtracting societal progress, it started incorporating other dimensions too. Thus, it is termed as a process for paradigmatic change through improvement in quality of life, health, and transformation of social structure for the overall benefit of society.

We find the shadow of the concept of Development, even though not that explicitly, in the exemplary works of sociologists namely

Auguste Comte's Law of Three Stages, Emile Durkheim's proposition on Mechanical and Organic Solidarity and Division of Labour, Herbert Spencer's ideas on evolution, Max Weber on work ethic, Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism and Karl Marx's historical materialism, series of the mode of production and societal progress.

The first Human Development Report (HDR) of The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990 marked the beginning of a new era. Under Mahbub ul Haq three key positions were posited, namely, (1) Decent standard of living (2) Long healthy Life (3) Knowledge. Later on, the areas of political freedom, participation in decision-making, women's rights, environmental rights, and sustainable living were added.

Remapping the Concept of 'Development by People'
What is the Concept of Development by People?
Democracy in its lexical sense refers to as "rule of the people". Participation of people in a democracy is not just a dire necessity but also an essential part of Human Growth. This portrays that incorporating cooperation, creativity, self-help, self -confidence, responsibility is a dire necessity. Participation can thus be elucidated as a process where individuals take charge of their own lives and contribute to solving their societal problems.

'Participation' has been found as a dire necessity through which development strategies can be realized. This happens through active involvement, people's innovative ideas and appropriate organization at the grass root level and development agencies and policymakers need to reach them to know the 'community basic needs'. In simple terms, the participation of people implies 'taking part'. Therefore, participation of public in sociocultural, political and economic realms connected to their lives not only forms as an icon of empowerment but also lays down the foundation for democratic governance.

Thus it includes the following: (i) people oriented; (ii) right- and responsibility-based; (iii) right to development; (iv) right to participation; and (v) right to information.

Explicating the need for 'Development by People':
Development by people grew out of the 'gap' which existed between the development agents or experts and the people for whom the policies have been planned, implemented and executed. The divide between the two sets of actors was too large as policy makers were armed with good skills, intellectual capacities, resources and power while on the other side, the people tended to be dependent on those experts as they were powerless, voiceless, with little or no knowledge. This gap led to antagonism and hostility among the two sets of actors resulting in the failure of some developmental projects. Hence, to bridge this divide participation and development by the people is a conceptual solution. People participation thus takes on the role of being both a methodology as well as a strategic goal of development.
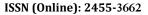
For instance, if we are working on a developmental project in a rural area in India, it's extremely important to figure out which sectors of the village community participates, how they wish to participate and envision development, how they reflect on their basic needs, whether the upcoming the development project satisfies them, or whether it does not, and what measures can be adopted to restructure the project focusing on that area's basic needs. Significantly, without active intervention, people in the lower rungs of the socioeconomic and political ladder will not be able to achieve progress. If agencies and political machinery turn a deaf ear to their needs and structure a developmental plan solely according to what the strategists think should be done in a particular area, then there may be chances of dismay and non-success.

1) Basic Needs Approach
Tracing the trajectory of the basic needs approach, we can recall the contribution of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who mentioned different groups of needs. One of them refers to a group where good can be achieved and negative can be avoided. Basic needs vary from community to community based on region, socio- economic status, classes, castes and various other areas, yet at the same time, some fundamental needs can be marked as food, shelter and clothing. Thus, reflecting on the basic needs of a particular community is an essential component of the Development by People concept. For instance, a social worker along with an experienced team may anticipate the requirements of a region to be delivering basic education to female children and focus on implementing that. Subsequently that may be successful but also lead to dismay later. Instead, the real need may be good sanitation and drinking water facilities so that the people present there can first satisfy the most rudimentary needs. Eventually, after that, they will be able to think of elementary education or universal adult franchise. Development by People thus takes into account focusing on the *Basic Needs* of people during capacity building and the process whereby the people invest in the improvement of their livelihood.

2) People's Empowerment
Empowerment of the local people takes a crucial stance here as reaching the masses and generating active effort sums up the base of any development project or assignment. Often the minority or needy or poor or underprivileged are excluded due to a lack of communication or educational facilities. For instance, a sanitation project may only take into account the picture of women's privacy and health but it may have more underlying concerns which can only be expressed by the women of that area themselves. Thus, it can be suggested to communicate with locals and understand indigenous knowledge and needs first, for greater effectiveness of social development. However, in the development sector, people's participation differs greatly ranging from attending meetings or labour contributions to deciding on the already planned solutions by experts. Overall, the final goal can be asserted as self-organization and collective action in decision-

making in all those development projects that will affect their lives.

3) Role of Organizations

The Nation's role is pivotal when proceeding towards the bottom-up concept of Development by People. The Nation was at the core of the Indian developmental picture right from the Colonial regime. A great role of the state machinery was solicited to eradicate the gross inequalities and backwardness of people after independence. As a result, the "Mixed Economy" model was introduced by the country. Throughout the length and breadth of India, major framed policies and strategies of development failed to benefit the people as it was not decentralized and their basic needs were not heard of. Hence, the prime motive of state machinery may be focused on the people's necessities, demands and basic requirements. Thus, the quality of development is dependent on the efficiency and efficacy of political machinery. Neoclassical economists tend to prioritize the market and 'invisible hand' over the state or nation but in considering this concept of development by people, but here in this case, the leaders may take a decision to 'reach the people themselves and let them reflect on their community needs to vigorously ensure social progress.

The typology of Participation by individuals may include:
- Participating passively
- Communication with Policy Makers
- Problem Analysis by forming a People's Organization
- Cooperative Decision Making (by engaging directly)
- Collaborative Learning
- Self-Mobilization among people
- Participation in Information giving
- Interactive Participation

Currently, NGOs have taken a lead role in developing the missing link and going forward with people-centered development where the common people are given the privilege to participate and raise their views in the decision-making process of the development programs that directly affect them. The Swabalamban (self-reliance) program of Nepal, the Grameen Bank and Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) of Bangladesh, and the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) of India are examples of such development where the concept of development by people was applied.

Drawbacks of implementing 'Development by People'
- Corruption and red-tapism may curb the process.
- The ones in power often restrict the common masses from engaging themselves or limit it to particular social groups, for example, women
- Participatory Development may put constraints in the process due to the scattered nature of masses and low
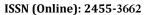
level of awareness. They may fail to realize even the importance of 'Participation'.

CONCLUSION

Nevertheless, the concept of Development by People is a necessary condition for equality, democracy, and the social upliftment of the masses. The development agent here equally plays the role of a catalyst or facilitator with basic needs as the prime focus. Good quality of life not only encompasses psychological and economic factors but also social and physical factors. Thus, 'development by people' is the framework where development is woven around people and by themselves. It ensures putting the capabilities of people to use for their social amelioration and lives.

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