

CHAPTER I

HOW TO ATTAIN DEVELOPMENT

1.1. The Theoretical Approaches to Development

The developing countries, in their endeavour to develop their backward economy, have set before them goals and plans of development. They have also realised that a change is needed in their political and social framework. In their attempt at overcoming poverty and backwardness they have taken into account the social and cultural dimensions of underdevelopment which are as important as the economic.

To understand the transition going on from a stage of underdevelopment to a higher level of technical performance a number of socio-theoretical approaches have been advanced. Here we identify five sociological approaches and analyse their implications for the Government's policies dealing with underdevelopment.¹

1.1.1. 'The Ideal Typical Index Approach'

Here we have two variants :-

(a) Pattern Variable Approach² : This approach derived from Max Weber and Talcott Parsons makes use of Max Weber's concept of 'ideal type' and Parsons' concept of 'pattern variables'. Parsons took the idea of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft from Tonnies, which he used for differentiating different types of

societies. Gemeinschaft means community and is defined as intimate, private and exclusive living together. This includes family or kins group, neighbourhood or a group of friends. Gossellschaft is defined as something which is consciously and deliberately entered upon. These groups are primarily concerned with economic interests.

He later on realised that although a structure might show attributes belonging to one polar type it often possessed other attributes which did not necessarily belong to that type. Parsons was of the view that the dichotomy of Gemeinschaft and Gossellschaft could be shown to possess a number of independent alternative variables. He isolated these variables and tried to explain all actions in terms of these alternative variables, that is as conforming to them or directed towards one of them.

These choices are those between Affectivity and Affective Neutrality, Diffuseness and Specificity, Particularism and Universalism, quality orientation and Performance orientation and Self-orientation and Collective-orientation. Though in reality these variables are found in a continuum and do not form polarities, in deciding how to act, different societies show conformity towards one set of variables rather than the other. Thus, according to Parsons, actions in developed countries are guided more by Affective Neutrality, Specificity, Universalism and Performance while actions in underdeveloped countries are guided more by Affectivity, Diffusion, Particularism and quality.

Any society trying to develop itself should change its choice of pattern variables, and guide its action by the variables which guide actions in the developed countries. Roselitz has used this approach in his studies.

(b) 'The Historical Stage Approach'. It is associated with Rostow, who identified five stages through which a nation's economy has to pass in order to reach a developed stage. These five stages of economic growth are³ —

(1) The Traditional, which according to Rostow 'has evolved within limited production functions'. Both in the more distant past and in recent times the story of traditional societies is a story of endless change, reflected in the scale and patterns of trade, the level of agricultural output and productivity, the scale of manufactures, fluctuations in population and real income. But limitations of technology decreed a ceiling beyond which they could not penetrate'. (2) The Preconditions for take off marked by 'evolution of modern science and scientific attitude; and the lateral innovation that came with the discovery of new lands, converging with the impulse to create new technology'. (3) The take-off 'consists in essence of the achievement of rapid growth in a limited group of sectors, where modern industrial techniques are applied'. (4) The drive to maturity could be defined 'as the period when a society has effectively applied the range of modern technology to the bulk of its resources'. (5) The age of high mass consumption, when the economy turns towards the objectives of (a) welfare

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stage (b) extension of consumption beyond basic food shelter and clothing and also to mass consumption of durable consumer goods and services and (c) national pursuit of external power and influence through increased allocation of more resources to military and foreign policy.

According to this approach underdeveloped countries are in the traditional or second stage and can reach the 'take-off' stage only through the provision of aids and assistance by developed countries. It also points out the social and cultural impediments which could delay the 'take off stage'.

Both the pattern variable and stages of growth approaches are similar in the sense that they measure development with the help of an ideal typical index.

1.1.2. 'Diffusionist Approach' : The second approach has been termed by Manning Nash as the diffusionist approach. According to this approach development occurs only by the diffusion of skill, technology, capital and cultural values from developed countries. It is assumed that underdeveloped countries lack these elements which are very important for development, and scholars are trying to identify the social and cultural factors which prevent the diffusion of these necessary elements. The underdeveloped countries will fail to develop without the assistance of the developed countries and this aid is 'altruistic' in nature, a sacrifice made on the part of the advanced countries in the interest of the receivers.

1.1.3. Psychological Approach : The third approach which has been termed the 'psychological approach' has been developed by McClelland, Kunkel, Hagen and others. According to this approach a society which is highly motivated towards achievement will have more entrepreneurs which will lead to higher productivity and economic development. According to McClelland and others not the social structure "but only a high degree of individual motivation or need for achievement is the alpha and omega of economic development and cultural change".⁴ He further says "we end on a practical note : a plan for accelerating economic growth through mobilising more effectively the high-achievement resources of a developed country, to select and work directly with the scarce achievement resources in underdeveloped countries particularly in small and medium scale business located in provincial areas".⁵

These three approaches have many similarities. A. Gunder Frank identifies them in the following way.⁶ "The first mode" (including the pattern variable and historical stages approach) "is ideal typical in that it sets up supposedly typical characteristics of development. The second mode concerns itself with how these characteristics of the first mode are supposedly diffused from the developed countries to underdeveloped ones. Finally, the third mode and herein lies its pioneering service, tells us how the typical characteristics, that are identified in the first and diffused according to the second mode, are to be acculturated by the underdeveloped countries if they wish to develop."

1.1.4. Conflict Approach of C. Wright Mills : The fourth approach stands midway between the first three and the last namely the Marxist approach. C. Wright Mills was the exponent of this approach, which he brought out as a protest against the earlier approaches which he found ahistorical, formal and abstract.

His understanding of development and underdevelopment was based on concrete historical studies of both types of societies with its focus on change and conflicts rather than equilibrium.

According to A.S. Joshi this approach "assumes that the relations between the so-called developed societies and the underdeveloped societies are not necessarily those of Santa Clara and the beneficiaries. It postulates that developed societies are themselves ridden with tensions, conflicts and are historically experiencing mighty contradictions and strifes which may lead them to various types of debacles".⁷ The developed countries also are in conflict with the underdeveloped countries.

The study of underdevelopment by this approach makes the different types of conflicts in and among societies the main point of focus. This approach is similar to that of the Marxists because it gives importance to the historical setting of societies and to the different types of conflicts. But it differs from the Marxist approach as it does not explain conflict in terms of production relations; neither does it accept the capitalist class to be the ruling class. It claims that it is

the elites controlling the political, economic and defence machinery of the state which holds actual power and which is the main source of conflict between the elite and the masses.

1.1.5. The Marxist Approach : It makes use of Marxist analyses of societies and strategies of social studies to understand underdevelopment. According to this approach underdevelopment has been a result of colonisation of third world countries by advanced capitalist countries. Colonization took place with the primary aim of supplying raw materials and providing markets for goods produced in the advanced countries. Independence has however not changed the picture because power lies with the capitalist class of these countries. The capitalist system has spread its exploitative resources with the help of Government machinery into the farthest corner of rural areas integrating even the marginal farmers and sharecroppers into the system and thereby leading to a permanent state of underdevelopment. It is only with the destruction of the capitalist system and establishment of socialism that development can take place. Andre Gunder Frank was one of the primary exponents of this approach.

The difference among these approaches is that the first three lays importance on values while the fourth and fifth on structure. According to the former, developed countries have a value system which is conducive to development and for underdeveloped countries to develop emergence of the necessary values is of primary importance.

The last two approaches look for structural changes in society. The Marxists put the primary responsibility of backwardness on the capitalist class, according to them the so-called governmental measures aimed at bringing development only hides the basic exploitative interests of the capitalists.

1.2. Ecological and Historical Perspective.

The study of different theoretical approaches is necessary for understanding the working of different developmental agencies in the hill areas of Darjeeling district. In addition, our study of the two villages in Kalimpong I has an ecological dimension which cannot be ignored if a comprehensive study of development of hill areas is to be made. It has an important role in determining the economic standards of the people.

The two villages under study like the other hill villages of the district experienced the process of colonization which entailed forced immigration of Nepalese in these hill villages. The main reason behind the encouragement of migration was the consideration of revenue which would be earned by the British from cultivation of land which had been mainly left as forests or used for jhum cultivation till then.

Revenue was in terms of cash which led to the commercialization of agricultural products where poor farmers had to face competition and the vagaries of market forces. This was further aggravated by the ecological conditions of the hills

which is not conducive to the production of a very high level of agricultural wealth.⁶ This process led to the marginalisation of the hills leading them to be cast aside and dependent on an external environment.

Natural factors brought about a disruption of forces between man and his natural environment which can be seen from the fact that heavy rains and deforestation caused soil erosion which in turn has led the soil levels to sink. Intensive cultivation of land which was formerly forest terrain led to great pressure on land as the terrain had earlier supported a system of production involving pastoral and farming occupations and thus provided subsistence and stability to the families residing in the area.

Dispersed farms and homesteads in difficult hilly terrain led to a deterioration of the production system and the capacity to produce food. Settlement of households on small fragmented farms on mountain slopes for the primary purpose of obtaining revenue had led to the impoverishment of poor farmers. Payment of revenue in cash led to indebtedness as output was not sufficient for the payment and this also led to the loss of land. This in short was the social and ecological condition of the hills when development agencies started functioning.

1.3. Phases of Development Policy :

In this section we will study the different phases through which the policies of the Government of India for rural

Development has passed since Independence and prior to Independence.

Development of rural areas had been a matter of concern not only in the post-Independence period. The British administration was aware of the problems of usury, rural credit, transport, irrigation, rural education and the land relations existing in the countryside. Gargopadhyay in 1938 wrote that the privileged sections which had vested interests in the tenancy system grew at the expense of the poor peasants and the latter knew the former as money lenders, landowners, agents to absentee landowners and dealers in agricultural produce and later as candidates to legislatures from rural constituencies. He observed that "we may declare in our public utterances that we are all of the same bone and flesh but illiteracy, disease, social tyranny and abject poverty furnish a picture that reveals conspicuous abnormality in the physiological growth of the two parts".⁸ The agriculture department was opened under the Vice Royalty of Lord Mayo but it was in a stagnant position without any improvement till Lord Curzon took office. He started working out a policy of research and education, but even with these dilatory measures no change was observed in the lives of the peasantry.¹⁰ The reason behind this was that the administration was only interested in receiving revenue from the rural areas. The pressure exerted on the peasantry by landlords for payment of revenue being the main reason behind their poverty, any positive and effective measure to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry would reduce the amount of revenue earned from them.

In the initial stage of the post-Independence period the country had to face problems involving the social and economic reconstruction of the nation. These problems were to be solved through the system of Democratic Socialism where policies were to be formulated by the representatives of the people, while implementation was in the hands of administrators at the official level. The political machinery of the nation was given the responsibility and power to initiate and carry out the process of reconstruction. The Planning Commission was formed in March, 1950 and the aim to implement policies for planned national development was realised in the first Five Year Plan which came into operation in April, 1951.

The Rural Development Programmes initiated in the Post-Independence period was a part of the general programmes for national reconstruction and were supposed to make political freedom meaningful to the large masses of the Indian population. Problems of poverty, illiteracy and health in rural areas were in need of immediate attention from the planners and the Community Development Programmes was the first step in reconstructing India's rural society.

The aim of the Programme was (1) to provide for a substantial increase in the country's agricultural production and for improvements in the system of communications in rural health and hygiene and in village education; (2) to initiate and direct a process of integrated culture change aimed at transforming the social and economic life of the villages. The programmes, their plans

planning and execution were to be based on cultural values and norms.

A.R. Desai has classified the Government measures during the period when Community Development Programmes were in action into the following categories.¹¹

- a. Measures to extend and improve the extant agriculture.
 - (i) Reclamation of certain lands for cultivation
 - (ii) Construction of major and minor irrigation projects
 - (iii) Production of improved seeds, fertilisers and tools, as well as insecticides.
- b. Measures to reform land relations.
 - (i) Vesting of estates of the intermediaries
 - (ii) Placing of limitations on future acquisitions of land by different classes of people
 - (iii) Tenancy reforms designed to reduce rent and give security to the tenants against eviction
 - (iv) Restriction on sale and mortgage, letting and subletting of lands.
- c. Measures to protect farmers from the oppression of creditors.
 - (i) Numerous measures to regulate private money lending
 - (ii) Numerous measures to scale down debts.
- d. Measures to bring about an allround development of rural areas such as would result in the strengthening of the national economy.

(1) Establishment of Community development Blocks and National Extension services.

e. Measures for creating new organisations to assist the process of betterment of the life of the rural people.

(i) Establishment of Co-operative societies, Vikas Mandals, Gaon or Gram Panchayats as well as Nyaya Panchayats.

f. Measures to assist some of the small scale and cottage industries.

The rural development processes in India has passed through many stages in each of which changes in policies and strategies were made in accordance to the needs of the particular period.¹² The Community Development Programme regarded rural development as a process of change in the people's attitude and achievement orientation through the community's effort to bring about socio-economic change.

The Community Development programmes were soon found to be inadequate in bringing about the desired changes and the need for material prosperity was felt which led to a change in the Government's approach to Rural Development.

The second phase which put emphasis on technology and raising agricultural production was marked by agricultural prosperity which was concentrated only in a few areas. Benefits accrued to those with resources particularly land and water, this

led to inequalities between different areas and different sections of rural society.

This led to the third phase of Rural Development which aimed at developing the economic condition of the villagers who belonged to the poorest category. This approach which began in the early seventies was known as the 'Target Group' approach to Rural Development and included programmes for the upliftment of Small Farmers, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural labourers.

The last and fourth phase of Rural Development began when in the late seventies it was recognised that many programmes with similar objectives should be unified, and a strategy of Integrated Rural Development taken up.

IRDP aims at total development of the area and people by introducing institutional and attitudinal changes through the development of agriculture, rural industries, health, nutrition, education and literacy and basic civic amenities. This approach shows many of the features of the CD approach which was earlier given up due to its failure in serving its purpose.

1.4. A Critique of the Development strategy.

In spite of the elaborate experimentation with Rural Development the problem of poverty has survived in the rural areas. The fact that the Government of India did not give due importance to programmes of Rural Development can be seen from the disparities

in allocations made after the first five year plan in the different sectors. Sectors of development which are important for improving the conditions of the masses have received markedly lower priority than the industrial sector and those which mainly build up infrastructure and capacities for the future. This is supported by the following table.¹³

Distribution of Plan Outlays (%)

| Plan No | Year | Agri, Irrigation & Small Industry | Education, health & other social services | Industry, transport & power. |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| First Plan | 1951-56 | 30.0 | 31.1 | 36.8 |
| Second Plan | 1956-61 | 30.5 | 18.0 | 57.5 |
| Third Plan | 1961-66 | 23.3 | 17.4 | 59.3 |
| Annual Plans | 1966-69 | 25.7 | 14.7 | 59.6 |
| Fourth Plan | 1969-74 | 24.8 | 18.0 | 56.3 |
| Fifth Plan | 1974-79 | 23.6 | 17.4 | 59.0 |
| Annual Plan | 1979-80 | 22.1 | 18.1 | 54.3 |
| Sixth Plan (Proposed) | 1980-85 | 25.1 | 16.4 | 56.6 |

Source : An action plan 1982-83 for removal of unemployment, p.7.

The Community Development Projects as well as the successive strategies of Rural Development have been studied by various organisations and scholars, including the Venkatappaiah Committee and the Programme Evaluation Organisation. They point out (a) that the advantages of improvements derived from the programmes

have not reached the small and marginal farmers and the agricultural labours. (b) They also point out that organisations which have been set up for implementing programmes do not in fact identify themselves with the lower sections though they claim to be working for the upliftment of the poor (c) Villagers no longer feel enthusiastic about programmes of Rural Development, they find it difficult to believe that there could be a change in their living conditions.

We find from the above analyses that the Government of India's understanding of underdevelopment is based on the first four theoretical approaches which were identified earlier to explain underdevelopment. These approaches analyse social change with the help of concepts like culture contact, acculturation, folk urban continuum, westernization, urbanization, modernization etc. The lack of development is located in lethargy, lack of capital, expertise, traditional practices, ideas and values. The planners too seem to have realised the above factors to be mainly responsible for underdevelopment of rural areas and have therefore tried to tackle them through different programmes of development. We have seen that the programmes have not been successful in improving the conditions of the rural areas, this shows that the first four approaches cannot explain adequately the problem of underdevelopment prevailing in the rural areas.

1.5. Relevance of the Marxian Approach. ¹⁴

The Marxian approach in trying to explain

underdevelopment gives importance to the mode of production. By mode of production is meant the complex of forces or means of production and the relations of production. The means of production include the object of labour and the instruments used, but the production process requires the participation of men who are brought together and thus enter into relation with one another through their specific relation to the means of production. These relations are centred around the ownership and control of the means of production. The Marxian Approach gives importance to the institutional structure of rural societies and ownership pattern of the means of production. One of the proponents of this approach, A.R. Desai identifies India's mode of production as capitalistic,¹⁵ in his opinion the impact of the agricultural development on a capitalist basis is the main reason behind rural poverty. The economy of the rural areas which was subsistence-oriented have been transformed into a market economy where profit is the main purpose of production. Thus the agriculturists who carry on cultivation along capitalistic lines reap all the benefits. The small and marginal farmers are left far behind due to their inability to compete with the rich farmers with their meagre resources.

The rural areas have lost their isolation and hence the exogenous forces which interact with rural society needs to be studied along with the endogenous forces working within the society. The exogenous forces come into interaction with rural society gives it a new shape and leads it towards newer directions.

When we observe the way or mechanism by which the products of a village are marketed we find that it is linked with the expanding capitalist commodity production. We also find that urban and rural areas are getting closer and new links are being developed through the supply of products from the villages.

The capitalist mode of production leads to the dominance of the rural rich, production activities which traditionally were undertaken for collective needs of the rural people is replaced by the only desire for profit. The marginal and small farmers, sharecroppers and agricultural labourers find it increasingly difficult to earn their livelihood. What they produce is not sufficient to meet their subsistence requirements, over and above they have to sell a part of their produce in order to buy other consumption goods. The price they get is not high as they have to make distress sales when supply of agricultural produce is high.

Agriculture is not able to give them employment throughout the year, they undertake labour work either in the construction programmes of the Government or in the farms of the landowners or remain unemployed.

They tend to become passive and are regarded as 'objects of development rather than subjects with powers to shape their destiny'.¹⁶

In the situation which prevails in the rural areas

schemes of development aimed at target groups too are of little help in solving the problems. At the initial stage the benefits were derived by the richer sections, in the later stages too with the development of Target Group approach to rural development the condition of the poorer sections have not improved.

Most of the identified beneficiaries do not belong to the target group and even if they do, the small amount of money given to them seem more like doles than any sincere attempt to remove poverty.

Vested interests have kept the rural masses away from the developments going on in the country, they have also kept them illiterate and prevented them from adopting a scientific and rational attitude towards life.

The proponents of the Marxian approach propose that only by doing away with the capitalistic mode of production can the problem of poverty be solved. Stepping up financial allocation for agriculture, industry and other economic activities will not lead to the development of rural areas, a radical change in the ownership of the means of production is what is necessary. According to Desai the capitalist property and social relations cannot lead to a prosperous industrial and agricultural sector.

From the above understanding of the Marxian approach to rural underdevelopment and development we feel that this approach can explain underdevelopment more adequately than the

approaches discussed earlier. This approach is also applicable to the understanding of the problems of rural development in the hill areas. This has become clearer since the time when agricultural scientists undertook research in finding out crops which could be grown favourably in the hill areas and consequently introduced them in the hill areas of Darjeeling district.

Thus, we find that for the purpose of development of hill areas, growing of commercial crops like horticultural crops, cereals, and orchards are encouraged. Schemes have been undertaken for the above purpose but only a section of the villagers have adopted them, they carry on production along capitalistic lines and earn large amount of profits. The poorer section of the villagers still engage themselves in producing traditional, agricultural crops like paddy and millet which does not grow favourably in the hills and consequently do not experience any change in their living conditions.

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