UNIT 3: PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT (I)

UNIT STRUCTURE

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3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- understand various perspectives on development
- describe the liberal, Marxist and social perspective on development
- know the three ideologies, liberalism, Marxism and socialism as an ideologies on development
- criticise liberalism, Marxism and socialism as perspectives on development.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this unit is to explain about what is development and its various perspectives. The concept of development can be defined as the process of advancement in terms of quality of human life. It can be measure in terms of wealth, culture, education, healthcare, opportunities etc. But the different perspectives have defined development in various ways and given various meanings. From this unit we will come to know the concept of development from the liberal, Marxist and social perspectives.

3.3 LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT: IDEOLOGY, WHAT IS LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT, CRITICISM

Liberalism is accepted as one of the most influential modern political ideologies. It was developed in the 19th century in the west with the roots of the European Enlightenment.

Liberalism as an ideology

Liberal Ideology is not only related to the economic, social, and political fields, rather there are divergent streams of liberal thoughts, particularly for the individual freedom related to the state. Some liberals put more emphasis on economic freedom and allow greater government intervention, while others uphold the idea of minimum state intervention.

Liberalism has its roots in the writings of the 17th century. English political Philosopher John Locke, who emphasised on the priority of individual rights to life, liberty and property, and the elimination of coercive intervention by the state, which is taken as the prime violator of liberty.

Liberal perspective on development

Liberalism has provided a unique perspective of social, economic and political development. But over the past two hundred years and so, there has been a struggle between the supporters of economic liberalism and the defenders of social liberalism. And finally each of the two conflicting perspectives has come out with definite concepts, theories and ideologies to realise the importance and visions of society. Again, the leading perspectives on development, like, the Marxist and the liberals, both have different interpretations on equality and the methods of secured justice for the victims of unequal economy, social and political arrangements. The argument has been built on the issues of the scope of market prices.

Ideologically, liberalism is opposed to the ideals of socialism. Liberalism offers a distinctive vision of society. It explains about the freedom and the

free competition in the field of economic, entrepreneurship, and the role of the state in the control of production and of free citizenship.

As a political ideology, it stands for a social and political atmosphere in which authoritarian demands are registered and the fundamental rights of the individuals and groups, such as the right to freedom, free exercise of religion, speech and associations are promoted.

Criticism

Though Liberalism is accepted as one of the most influencing perspectives on development, it is not free from criticism. Socialist critique of the liberal perspective is based on the interpretation of inequality and social justice. It has been argued that the economic order characterised by inequality would promote further inequality and social injustice in an atmosphere of free market competition. Sociological criticism is on the idea of the individual autonomous self absurd; they have also rejected the possibility of neutral rule which would guarantee the promotion of equal opportunities for all, a precondition of individual liberty.

3.4 MARXIST PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCTION, MARXISM AS AN IDEOLOGY ON DEVELOPMENT, CRITICISM

Karl Marx was the most influential thinker of development in the 19th and 20th century. Around half of the world population followed his suggestive paths of restructuring the social and political organisation and economic development. His contribution to the theory of development is simply unparalleled and path-breaking.

Marxism as an Ideology on development

Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis that views class relations and social conflict using a materialist interpretation of historical development and takes a dialectical view of social transformation.

Karl Marx has defined class as all people who share a common relationship to the means of economic production. Those who own and control the means of production, slave-owners, feudal landowners, or the owner of property such as factories and capital-are the dominant class. And on the other side those who work for them such as slaves, peasants or industrial labours - are the sub - ordinate class. The relationship between the two classes is not only one of dominance and subordination, but also of exploitation.

The capitalist class makes use of the state as an instrument of oppression and exploitation. Thus at every stage there are broadly two classes: the owners of means of production, that is, exploiters on one side and the exploited on the other. History presents nothing but war between the classes. Every exploiting class at each stage gives rise to an opposite class.

Materialistic interpretation of history is another basic perspective of Marx for Development. As Marx has stated, economic conditions determine historical phenomena. All evolution is the result of the economic forces alone. Marx regarded the economic forces as the predominant dynamic agency of human society and its history.

Criticism

Marx and his thoughts have been widely criticised. Especially, Marx's theory of conflict and his political ideas have been highly criticised. The most distinct feature of modern capitalism has been the emergence of a large middle class, consisting of managerial, professional, supervisory and technical personnel. However Marx argued that the capitalist society's inevitable tendency towards radical polarisation and self restructuration is too simplistic and fallacious. The Marxian idea of capitalism has not taken into cognisance the advancement of new technological inputs and new employer-employee relationship in the changing world. Many of the aspects are covered in the theory of modernisation and critical theory.

The theory of materialistic interpretation of history is also not free from the criticisms. Marx intended the theoretical scheme of historical materialism to have a universal character. But his researches were limited almost entirely to the 19th century capitalist society. Marx has given only fragmentary accounts of the other types of societies .Again, Seligman has criticised, Marx by stating that only economic factors are not responsible for the wars and conflicts.Other factors such as political conditions, religion, language, art and science are also equally responsible.

3.5 SOCIALIST PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT: CONCEPT, WHAT IS SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT, CRITICISM

Concept

Socialism is an economic and political system based on collective or state ownership of the means of production and distribution. Socialism as a doctrine, or some would say a utopia is generally agreed to have been spawned as a reaction to capitalism. Max Weber, saw in socialism an accentuation of the process of rationalization commenced under capitalism.

For the social perspective, development is a process of social change, not merely a set of policies and programs instituted for some specific results. Socialism for development is a concept to explain qualitative changes in the structure and framework of society. It emphasizes the view that inequality impairs growth and development, including poverty eradication efforts and that equality itself is instrumental for economic growth and development. It reminds world leaders that, in addressing inequalities, policy matters.

The socialist perspective on development poses a challenge to the capitalist perspective on development. Contrary to the capitalist perspective, the socialist perspective advocates to abolish private property ownership and private ownership of means of production. The socialist perspective focusses on state ownership of means of production and enterprises, and also emphasises on the development of a state controlled economy. It is

important to note here that in both the capitalist and socialist perspectives of development, the means and ends of the idea of development vary. Unlike the capitalist perspective, the socialist perspective on development emphasises on the equal and just distribution of the products of development process.

Criticism

The socialist perspective of development has been widely criticised for being utopian and not pragmatic in terms of its applicability. The ideals of equal distribution of resources amongst all, as advocated by the socialist perspective, has also been criticised for being unrealistic and unjust. It is to be noted here that the fall of the USSR further strengthened the scepticisms towards the socialist perspective of development. In USSR, the socialist model of development not only failed to deliver the desired result of establishing an egalitarian society, on the contrary there could be seen a rise in the several unhealthy socio-economic indicators like poverty, unemployment, etc.



3.6 LET US SUM UP

- Development can be defined as the process of advancement in terms of quality of human life.
- The concept of Development can be better understood with its perspectives. There are basically three perspectives - Liberal, Marxist and socialist.
- The concept of liberalism was developed in the 19th century in the west with the roots of the European Enlightenment.
- Liberal Ideology is for the individual freedom related to the state including economic, political and social field.
- Liberalism has provided a unique perspective of social, economic and political development. It offers a distinctive vision of society. It explains

about the freedom and the free competition in the field of economic, entrepreneurship, and the role of the state in the control of production and of free citizenship.

- Karl Marx was the most influential thinker of development in the 19th and 20th century.
- Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis that views class relations and social conflict using a materialist interpretation of historical development and takes a dialectical view of social transformation.
- Max Weber, saw in socialism an accentuation of the process of rationalization commenced under capitalism.
- For the social perspective development is a process of social change, not merely a set of policies and programs instituted for some specific results.



3.7: FURTHER READING

Scott John and Marshall Gordon, 2009, (3rd edition revised,) Oxford Dictionary of sociology, Oxford University Press

Giddens, Anthony; 2008, (5th edition,) *SOCIOLOGY*, Polity press, Wiley India pvt.ltd.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What is meant by development?
2. What is liberalism for Locke?
3. How is Liberalism opposed to Socialism?
4. For Karl Marx, what are the two classes in society?
5. How Marx has been criticised for his Materialistic interpretation on History?
6. What is socialist perspective?
7. Write true or false:
   i) Liberal Ideology is particularly for the individual freedom.
   ii) Liberalism has its roots in the writings of the 19th century.

3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The concept development can be defined as the process of advancement in terms of quality of human life. It can be measure in terms of wealth, culture, education, healthcare, opportunities and can be many.

2. Liberalism for John Locke is the priority of individual rights to life, liberty and property, the elimination of coercive intervention by the state, which is taken as the prime violator of liberty.

3. Liberalism is opposed to the ideals of socialism. Liberalism offers a distinctive vision of society. It emphasises on freedom and the free competition in the field of economic, entrepreneurship aspects. Socialism focuss on the rle of the state in the control of production and distribution of resources.

4. Karl Marx has defined that there are two classes: the "dominant class", who own and control the means of production, and the sub-ordinate class, those who do not own means of production.

5. Marx intended the theoretical scheme of historical materialism to have a universal character. But his researches were limited almost entirely to the 19th century capitalist society. Marx has given only fragmentary accounts of the other types of societies.

6. Socialist perspectives is an economic and political system based on collective or state ownership of the means of production and distribution.

7. i) True.

   ii) False.

3.10: MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Mention some of the important perspectives on development?

Q 2: What is the main reason of class conflict according to Marx?

B) Long questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Define Development from the perspective of liberalism.

Q 2: Describe how liberalism has been criticised by the social thinkers.

Q 3: "Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis that views class relations and social conflict using a materialist interpretation of historical development and takes a dialectical view of social transformation." Explain.

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