

The Concepts of Developed and Developing Countries as Typologies of Societies

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Abstract: The term “developed country” is synonymous to “industrialized country, post-industrial country, more developed country, advanced country, and first-world country.” The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, and the United States of America are only a few of those considered as developed countries. A developing country, on the other hand, is one that has a low level of industrialization. It has a higher level of birth and death rates than developed countries. Its infant mortality rate is also high due to poor nutrition, shortage of medical services, and little knowledge on health. The citizens of developing countries have a low to medium standard of living because their per capita income is still developing, and their technological capacity is still being developed. There is also an unequal distribution of income in developing countries, and their factors of production are not fully utilized. Developing countries are also referred to as third-world countries or least-developed countries.

Keywords: Concepts, developed, developing, typologies, societies

INTRODUCTION

The southern hemisphere, usually referred to as the developing world, however, creates the greatest number of challenges for social scientists. Colonialism, imperialism and expansionism on the part of western powers drastically changed the structure of societies in the developing countries. However, although colonialism resulted in a diversity of structures, these have to date failed to bring about development of the Third World. As Alant [1] aptly conclude “...the social structures of the Third World are not conducive to the development of these societies”.

In this regard, Maritz [2] writes:

There is much evidence that the Third World does not fit into the image of the industrial societies. For these reasons, it is necessary to describe the Third World as another type of social structure and to develop a mere appropriate frame of reference which can be used as a basis for the analysis of societies in the Third World.

In support, Zijderveld [3] typifies a large number of societies which he calls the Common Human Pattern (CHP) world. Effectively, what Zijderveld [3] refers to as CHP world are what many writers call primitive or developing countries. He compares these societies with what he terms modern societies. He concludes that these societies are different and summaries these differences thus:

CHP (developing) societies are characterised by a high cultural integration based on mechanical solidarity. Industrial [developed] society, on the contrary, have a highly differentiated pluralistic social structure and their social integration tends to be structural

and functional rather than cultural and traditional [3].

The conceptualisation of developed and developing countries

After the Second World War (1939 – 1945), with the dismantling of European imperialism, the former colonies were often referred to as the “newly independent” or “emergent nations”. Because their evolution towards full statehood required the modernisation of their predominantly subsistence economies terms with economic rather than political connotations became popular [4]. These countries were then usually described as “underdeveloped”, but later more polite terms such as “less developed” or “developing” gained currency. This latter term was thought to be more attractive because of its optimistic tenor.

Social scientists are notorious for their inability to agree even on basic terms when it comes to more developed and less developed countries. As a result, attempts to claim preference for any of the terms are mentioned here futile and doomed to pointless controversy. For example, over the years, the attempt

to review the use of the term Third World and to list the countries which comprise it has usually elicited a spate of dissenting contributions. Hardiman and Midgley [4] suggest that it is partly for this reason that most publications on development use these terms loosely and refer to countries of Africa, Asia, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Pacific as developing, while those of Europe and North America as well as Australia, New Zealand and the former Soviet Union as developed.

The developed countries are usually classified as such because of their relatively high levels of living and relatively good standards of health, education, housing and welfare. They are also characterised by modernity, high levels of urbanisation and slow rates of population growth. By definition, developing countries lack most if not all of these characteristics. However, there would be exceptions. For example, as the World Bank [5] pointed out, countries like Kuwait, Hong Kong and Singapore have over recent years recorded higher per capital incomes than several developed countries. In a sense, it can be argued that there are many countries which belong to both the developed and the developing worlds. However, these exceptions do not negate the validity of the developed-developing dichotomy. Generally, countries which are poor in economic terms have very high rates of population growth and low standard of health and education. As already established, the Third World has its own distinguishing characteristics as a type of a society, hence this study's acceptance of it in the conceptualisation and i Developed countries have infrastructure in place - such as roads, bridges, water pipes, fuel lines, electrical wiring, fiber optic wiring, and septic/sewage and runoff drainage or treatment systems, to name a few - and the technical capacity to take care of all their citizens with such infrastructure services as mechanical repair or maintenance facilities, doctors and medical facilities, etc. In short, a developed country has three things: It has stuff, it has people to take care of that stuff (and of other people), and it has people who make money and give up part of that money to pay for stuff. Almost all of these economies are fairly stable, and least emerging. A good example of a developed country is Germany.

Developing country is largely similar, but the existing infrastructure is usually either old or poorly maintained (or both), and the people have less money to spend on stuff and so there are either fewer experts or the quality of the products that they make or the services they provide is lower than in a developed country. These countries are mildly infected with corruption and are trying to come out of the political and economic crises. Most of these economies are rapidly emerging ones. A good example is India.

Underdeveloped country has a lot of people, but lacks some (or all!) basic infrastructures for some or all of its citizens, and so the people have no stuff and must make money which they are then expected to give to their government, who will then give them stuff. This doesn't often happen, however, because governments in these kinds of countries are invariably so corrupt that calling them 'governments' at all is ridiculous.

CONCLUSION

Developed countries that are also known as More Economically Developed Country are sovereign states that have a highly advanced economy and technological infrastructure. These are more industrialized than less developed or developing countries. The criteria for measuring the economic development of any country is GNP, GDP, per capita income, better infrastructure and highest standard of living. The main characteristic of developed countries is that these have post-industrial economies means the service sector provides more wealth than the industrial sector. The another factor of development and statistical measure in developed countries is Human Development Index of United that measures a country's level of human development. Developed countries are doing well in all areas including better standard of living, education and communication facilities, health care, high GDP, higher per capita, technological development, increased life expectancy, etc. The revenue in developed countries comes from the industrial sector rather than service sector.

Developing countries that are also known as underdeveloped and less developed countries are countries with low Human Development Index and less developed industrial base. As compared to developed countries, these relays heavily on service and agriculture sector rather than industrial sector. The factors that make any country a developing or less developed country are lower life expectancy, less education and less literacy rate, less money, unequal utilization of wealth, higher fertility and pregnancy rate. Less developed countries depend upon the policies of the developed countries to support them establishing industries across the country. They have improper government and unstable political system. The country doesn't enjoy the better standard of living because of the differences between having and have not. Women don not play a greater role in these countries and are restricted to clerical nature of jobs only.

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