

Development: advantages and disadvantages

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Development is often defined in terms of progress, forwardness, and modernity. It is characterized by high-rise building, state-of-the-art gadgets, consumer goods, and an over all idea of a good life. However, according to Amartya Sen, development “ is a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” and also a “ process of removing unfreedoms and of expressing the substantive freedoms of different types that people have reason to value” (Gasper, 2000). This definition has to be further analyzed because the real effects of this so-called development are very much contested.

There have been numerous debates whether development infused positive or negative consequences. Development is a very controversial term and much is to be known with regards to its effects, whether it is indeed beneficial to those under it or it is a curse that they are better off without. Development brings a more comfortable life but at the expense of the environment and the traditional culture of the people. The advantageous effects of development which is primarily focus in the idea of giving a better life for the people under it has also been discussed and taken into account.

This is best described by the changes in the way of life of the Ladakhi people in the midst of development. One of the most important contributions of development is through health and the decrease in life mortality. It is through the progress of science and technology especially in the field of medicine that treatments for diseases which were incurable before are now given solutions. The traditional life of the Ladakhis is a good example. Previously, people in Ladakh die from diseases that western medicine has found a cure for but the introduction of development in this place has aided in solving this problem.

Furthermore, infant mortality in Ladakh which is estimated to be as high as fifteen percent decreases due to improvement in health conditions (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). Development has also given the opportunity for people coming from one part of the world to be more accustomed and familiar with those living in the other parts of the globe. The idea of development has paved the way for better communication and interaction by means of the media, trade, and other methods of progress.

Many Ladakhis are enjoying some benefits of development as the introduction of money and technology made their lives more comfortable than before. They enjoy the ability to travel to new places and buy various kinds of material goods outside like imported rice and sugar which have become parts of the everyday meal of the Ladakhis (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). Development has also answered one of the serious problems in Ladakh, which is illiteracy. It is through the idea of development that new opportunities for education are provided.

Education gives those people who traditionally belong to the socially disadvantaged the chance to acquire higher position. People do not have to be contented by simply being a blacksmith because they could apply for a better job by educating themselves. This opportunity is especially seductive to younger people because of the freedom and mobility that they associate in living the modern world (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). Moreover, education also opens new horizons for these people as they could learn different things coming from various places instead of being confined in their own environment.

Development has brought real improvements to the traditional society of Ladakh. The introduction of money, technology, as well as improvement in the medical conditions entail with it significant benefits for the Ladakhi people. Using these aforementioned factors as a gauge, it can be said that their condition is better and far more comfortable as compared before (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). The effects of development is not always seen in an advantageous lens because there have been instance wherein it has bring more harm rather than good.

This is greatly felt in third world countries or the so-called developing countries that are just recently undergoing the path of industrialization. The study of Ladakh before and after the influences of development came into their place is a good example in order to measure the negative outcomes of development. One of its adverse effects is in terms of the environment. The establishment of factories, buildings, and other form of modernity has taken its toll in the ecological condition of society. The western idea of development has forgotten to include the importance of sustainable development.

A good example is Ladakh, a territory that is situated in the Indian region of Jammu and Kashmir. It is known for its breathtaking environmental beauty especially its mountain formations. For 500 years, the Ladakhis have been self-sufficient as they are only dependent upon their environment where they acquire their basic needs as well as their little luxuries in life. However, this kind of situation changes drastically with the presence of westerners that insisted in changing Ladakh in a more progressive territory.

The usual source of living of the citizens that is greatly through agricultural means is now changed with employment in factories at the center of town. Majority of Ladakhis have their own land but they have foregone tilling their own soil to acquire occupations that give them money in return rather than natural resources that they need. Such kind of thinking is highly influenced by tourists coming in Ladakh that are instilling the idea that their form of life is backward and that through the aid of science they could even maximize the products that they get from the environment.

This perception of development is producing discontentment and greed among the people that forces them to destroy the environment which have been a source of their livelihood for many years just so they could satisfy this new form of desire (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). The presence of new source of modernity in return is polluting their environment. The rivers that have been a source of life for these people could not even be drunk anymore. The fresh air that they once breathed is now polluted and even the land that play an important role in their traditional culture and local economy is being replaced by infrastructures.

Being the case, it is just evident that the idea of sustainable development is not given due importance but rather what is observable is the destruction of the environment that is inconsiderate of the succeeding generations' welfare. Another important drawback that is brought about by development is its ability to destroy the traditional culture that has been the very roots of people's identity. New ideas of what development is, of what is modern and what is not, and even the idea of what is civilized from what is not are threatening the values and traditions that local people uphold.

In the case of the Ladakhs, as their way of life is infiltrated by modernity their value system is also being in changed. These people strongly believed in their strong relationship with nature and among themselves. This is rooted from the idea that each and every life form is dependent upon each other. Nature and everything in it as well as the people have an interdependent and intertwined interaction. One cannot survive without the other and vice versa. Unfortunately, this had changed dramatically.

The old tradition wherein they acquire their fundamental means of living in the environment has its limit but this is not the case anymore as progress persist ecological boundaries are being transcended. This is even observably in the relationship of the Ladakhis, which is communal in nature. Before, to be able to sustain their everyday needs they work together characterized by cooperation and harmony amongst them with each individual taking equal responsibilities in the accomplishment of a particular task.

They do such as a mutually beneficial practice because whatever they gained as a group would eventually be advantageous for them individually as well. As the idea of stiff competition enters the frame of mind of these individuals they started to take for granted their communal identity and instead focused on their personal gains. Such incident resulted in the break down of communities as less interaction among them exists due to the fact that they no longer work together in acquiring their needs but rather they compete against each other in order to acquire a job.

The kind of work that allows them to be source of cheap labor, which is seen in the establishment of call centers in India (Can, 2004). This competition has been the cause of friction among citizens. The Indians and Muslims in Ladakh

who has live side by side in harmony for many ears are now experiencing conflict due to the struggle for scarce resources, the unequal competition in the market, and the over all idea of greediness (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). Lastly, development claims to bring security through employment, maximization of resources, and easier access to other parts of the world.

Ironically, its outcomes brought more insecurity not only to the environment but most especially to the perception of the people towards themselves. By means of western tourists and the influence of media, the idea of comparison is produced wherein people like the Ladakhis evaluate their way of life based upon the lifestyle of those in the west. This intends creates an idea of inferiority to these people because they cannot measure up to the western idea of what a good life is. They feel ashamed of what they are as well as to the values and traditions that they once uphold.

Their choices and actions changed in a way that they want to pattern it with the west. Ladakhi people lost their self-esteem and their very sense of self-identity (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). Such kind of mentality is exemplified even in their form leisure. If before they find pleasure by bonding among themselves they now seek new ways of enjoyment. Children now play with toys like Barbie and Rambo and the adults want to watch movies and read magazines. Being the case, this resulted in less time for the family and even changed their perspective of how to view a man from a woman.

A woman should give value to her aesthetic importance while a man should maintain a macho imaged which the media enforces. Even the idea of education has a polarized perspective as it is based upon the western curriculum. Traditional form of education is based upon ones' experienced as

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how it would be useful in their environment unlike the western education that specializes on a particular field that limits a person capability. These aforementioned situations, heightens the insecurity of these people to see themselves as second class citizens and forced them to be prototypes of the westerners.

There are two faces in the idea of development. One side of development has its positive or advantageous effects. Using freedom as a lens could aid in seeing the beneficial outcomes of development. There are three important roles that development contributes in the attainment of freedom. First, its “direct importance” that enables people to decide for themselves without any constraints. Even the poorer section of the society could participate in the market place as they are given the chance to participate in the activities within the market. Second, development entails “instrumental importance”.

This paves the way for people to achieve their desired results through the freedom that development gives them. Development provides the means or methodology that enables individuals to accomplish their objectives. Lastly, its “constructive role” that provides the venue for easier exchanged of information. This allows people to participate more in the formation of policy as they have the ability to express their opinions and suggestions. Development empowers them to participate more and enables them to highlight important issues that should be immediately addressed. However, development also has its negative side.

It is seen in the adverse outcomes that it brought. This is mostly highlighted in the case of Ladakh wherein it has experienced drastic changes in its environment, its way of life, and its people’s perception of themselves.

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Development has affected the ecological state of Ladakh that diminishes the source of natural means for its people. The idea of environmental sustainability has been neglected in order for modernity to take place. The once beautiful place of Ladakh has very disturbing problems of pollution. Another adverse consequence of development is how it undermines the traditional culture of local people.

They no longer adhere to their usual practice of communal activities. The people become more individualistic that resulted in the breakdown of communities. This affected their relationship that is previously grounded in the belief of the interconnectedness of their lives with nature and among each other but has changed due to development. Furthermore, even the way people look at themselves have changed as they lost their self-esteem and identity. They compared their way of life to that of the west, which resulted for them to feel a sense of inferiority.

Ladakhis have to change their selves in order to measure up to their western counterparts. The advantages and disadvantages that development brings should be further studied. A deeper understanding of its effects could aid in finding the balance of how development could best be practiced in such a way that it could helped the people to live a life of comfort without undermining their local values and traditions. The lesson that can be learned from these outcomes is that the meaning of development should be re-assessed and re-evaluated.

Development should not simply be taken as it is especially if the only basis of what development is comes from the polarized definition of western standards. Another factor that also have to be taken into consideration is <https://assignbuster.com/development-advantages-and-disadvantages/>

who really benefits from development. If its really after the good of all or just a few. A better understanding of development and a sense of awareness of how it takes place as well as its results are effective means by which development could be gauged whether it really has advantageous or disadvantageous effects.

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