

New theories for third world?

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Day after day, I continue to wonder why the underdeveloped countries are still underdeveloped. Although this issue has been deemed one of this century's major problems, its treatment by developmental economists - both classical and radical - leaves much to be desired. Social ignorance and gross presumptions have led to the application of obsolete theories to the new Third World nations that have completely different circumstances. This is analogous to an African proverb: "is the talisman taken from a dead man so lucky that it protected him from death?" The drastic decline of the British economy is further proof that these outmoded theories are ineffective, and could do no good to the developing nations.

One of the criticisms Karl Marx put forth about capitalism was that economics could not be treated as a separate discipline because it could never function on its own. Without delving into the political aspect of Marxism, the ethical aspect should be noted. What Marx probably had in mind was an integration of economics and ethics. Capitalism could not have survived in Britain without the rule of democracy; democracy being the ethics in this case. And yet economists tend to ignore the ethical structure of the Third World. The theories developed in Europe or America are fitted around the ethics of that society, and couldn't hope to work elsewhere.

The ignorance of the ethical structure within the Third World has made developmental economists operating in those areas resort to a trial and error system. When their theories fail, as they are bound to, the third World is blamed as being inefficient, primitive, and disinterested in market economy. They forget that the Sahara trade routes of Timbuctu, Taodeni, and Tagheza which led the Europeans into Africa were hundreds of years old when the European Economic Council was established.

There are presently no scientific theories of development or distribution of wealth which can lend a clue to the underdevelopment of the Third World, because the problem is purely one of ethics. Nothing will be accomplished until economics can condescend to the people's ethics. Let us examine two of these developmental theories.

First is the theory of dual economy, which divides the economy into two broad and independent sectors - agricultural and industrial. The industrial is market orientated and follows profit maximizing. The agricultural sector is stagnant production for subsistence. According to Arthur Lewis, development will only occur in this system when the industrial sector is able to absorb the surplus from the agricultural sector. This, however, is incompatible of the rural areas on the metropolitan cities. On the international level, this resulted in the underdeveloped countries depending on the rest of the world for financial aid to support their industrialization. Because

the developed world gives nothing for nothing, the receiving countries must ship the primary products of the agricultural sector to these nations. Contrary to the expectations of the developed world, the poorer countries found themselves consumers of the former, and their own development went into oblivion.

The second economic theory is that of underconsumption. This states that the underdeveloped

world, the Third World was struck by spiralling inflation and gross inequality.

So, what is to be done? The solution won't be easy, be the development theorists should rid themselves of the obsolete and inefficient theories and return to empirical research, this time within an interdisciplinary framework. Using the standing theories will not help the underdeveloped countries, as has been proven without a doubt.



countries lack purchasing power, thus the consumption is inadequate to create a market that would stimulate the economy. This already a myth because policy makers in the Third World have applied it, resulting in what economists call demonstration effect. By adapting the purchasing patterns of the developed

Ethical direction must be given to political and economical decisions and processes for a more equitable distribution of wealth in the world, and for economic development. Until economists take into consideration the ethics of a social structure, a solution to underdevelopment will never be found.

"HOW SEXIST ARE YOU!"

(a non-sexist questionnaire)

1. When writing an essay or paper which involves reference to a non-specific person, do you use
 - a) he
 - b) she
 - c) s/he
2. Hurricanes are named after females because
 - a) it sounds nice
 - b) men name hurricanes
 - c) women and women only are unpredictable
3. As a child did you ever want a toy that you found only the opposite sex played with. (trains, dolls, cooking sets, tool kits, etc.)
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) I'm too insecure to answer
4. When someone says "Act like a man" or "Be lady-like" do you
 - a) agree
 - b) cringe
 - c) smile and walk away

5. As a child did you ever feel you were being forced by adults to do stereotyped activities?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
6. Did you do these activities?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) only when it was to my benefit
7. As a boy, did you ever cry?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) yes, but in private
8. As a girl did you ever engage in physical violence?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) yes, but in private
9. Do you ever feel that some clothing (besides the strongly stereotyped) is for one sex only and if you wore it you would look butch or feminine?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) I wear what I like to wear

10. Would you feel comfortable wearing something not completely acceptable by your "PEERS"?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) if they didn't like it the first time, I wouldn't wear it again
11. If you saw a father and son hugging each other in public, would you
 - a) be embarrassed
 - b) scream "faggots!"
 - c) smile and wish you had that relationship
12. If your mother wanted to support the family while your father stayed at home, would you
 - a) think she was domineering
 - b) admire her
13. Are your norms "society's" norms?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) I am my society, I can make my own choices

There are no correct or incorrect answers. You are what you make yourself. Think about it!