
Evolving a Theoretical Perspective on Human Security and Development

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Abstract:

The term human security and development have undergone major change in the light of national security. Both are non-traditional elements of security. They are mutually interrelated to each other. A nation cannot imagine proper development with no reference to human security. Human security is mostly concerned with 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'. If a nation is able to protect its individual from fear and gives ample opportunity of freedom to fulfil its basic need then a nation can progress and secure its territory. The author tries to analyse the conceptual aspect of human security and development. Hence, enhancement, value progress, economic welfare due to modernization have clear bearing on the notion of human security.

Key words: Human Development Index, environmental awareness, freedom from fear, freedom from want, food security, political security, community security, World Development Report on Poverty.

INTRODUCTION

The term human security and development have been analysed in the changed security environment. Today, development and

human security are the two most frequently used terms. Both objectives are to fulfill the needs of the state. Various social sciences have focused on the subject of human security and development. This implies that a state is associated with the well-being of an individual. The performance of an individual well-being has much relevance to such social environment and cultural structure to which he belongs. Both the terms are also related to humanitarian aspect.

Development is a state of progressive enhancement. Today, it includes both physical and monetary factors which are vital for national security. The physical factor implies the area of physical and material resources. The monetary factor is related with economic development. Though, the term human security means the protection of state in the physical sense but now it covers individual areas of political, economic, environmental, education, healthcare and infrastructural surroundings. Human Development Index (HDI) is often considered as the standard of measurement of the development of a country. It is the yardstick of the security of a nation state.¹ Both are connected with the well-being of the individual and state.

DEVELOPMENT

Development is often referred as user friendly term. It assumes progress in various area. Development may also means the diffusion of the values and life style. It is diffusion of whatever is universally desired. Hence technology is an indicator for developing new concept of development. For example, the third world countries could not progress because of past colonialism and poverty, inequality of land distribution, and traditional farming technology. Social and political organizations were not well coordinated. Moreover, low standard of farming and handcrafting of consumer goods could not generate surplus for investment. The basic elements of infrastructure such roads,

bridges and dams were primitive. The lack of health care and education affected the society. The only solution lies was the adoption of the superior technology, institutions and habits and values. Modern technology has become a part of the new life style. The country's progress depends upon industrialisation and urbanization. Urbanization has also facilitated the spread of the communication media and thereby enhanced the distribution of information. There are certain sections of theoreticians and practitioners who do not refuse to see socio-economic changes as development. Their demands are to nurture, liberate and even energize the poor and powerless classes. These changes should focus on human rather than on material resources.

Development should include not only comforts, productive and creative capacity but also self-reliance and capacity to interact effectively with one's socio-physical environment. At the lower level the approach of empowerment becomes important. Hence, health and education are important and shapes properly the development of nation-states. For the promotion of these basic amenities, community development through self-help is one big step towards development. Development can be divided into two broad categories. In the first broad category it is focused on harmonic interests. The author of *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) Adam Smith developed reaction to modernism. His school called for the minimum governments' intervention in economic transition. The second approach lays emphasis on development through modernization. Its chief spokesman, Walt Rostow, accepts the principle of stage of "take off". The revolution of rising expectations could accelerate social mobility. Samuel Huntington believed in the third world of cultural causation. In the 1980s Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye proposed the model of interdependence. Economic issues and tools have become as important as national security issues.

HUMAN SECURITY

Human security as a non-traditional dimension of national security has assumed much importance in recent times. The emphasis is on the individual's efforts. In this age of globalization, human security places more importance to individual than security of the state. As such, it challenges the concept of conventional security. The concept of conventional security emphasizes the state to defend from external aggression and to protect a state's boundaries, institutions and values. Thus, the focus is more on the development of military capabilities. After the Second World War the developed countries have increased their military capabilities. This could be possible only where the state enjoyed economic and social stability. Within the state, there are various groups that operates for different goals and their security issues are different. After the fall of the Soviet Union, it was evident that military security was not the sole factor in protecting the territorial integrity of the state. Hence, economic power assumed much more important because it fulfilled the requirements of common men, women, children and workers. Hence, the state territorial sovereignty cannot solely depend upon the traditional national security but equally important is the self-preservation and economic well being of individuals. Therefore, one has to take the holistic view of the security. Both traditional and non-traditional threats have to be addressed by the state.

Mahbub ul Haq was the first to draw the global attention to the concept of human security. He made it clear in the 1994 UNDP's *Human Development Report*. This report became important as it influenced the United Nations (UN) 1995 World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen. The 1994 UNDP's human development report has defined human security as "safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. Human security is protection from

sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life. It is an assurance of protection in jobs, in homes, or in communities.”² It is argued that the scope of global security should include threats in six areas:

- **Economic Security:** The real security issue is economic. Economic security depends upon basic income for individuals. This income generally come from productive and remunerative work. What is important is the need for a publicly financed safety net. As such, one finds that only about a quarter of the world’s people are presently economically secure. As compared to developed countries, the economic security is a serious problem in developing countries because weak economy causes unemployment and it ultimately leads to political tensions and ethnic violence. Today, unemployment is the biggest threat to security. Hence creating job prospects will bring real economic security.

- **Food Security:** Food security is such a vital area that all people want access to food. People should have both physical and economic access to basic requirements of food. According to the United Nations, the overall availability of food is not a problem. But the problem arises when there is proper criteria for public distribution of food and a lack of purchasing power. In the past, the food security problems have been dealt with both at national and global levels. But, their impacts on the states was limited. According to UN, the key is to tackle the problems relating to access to assets, work and assured income which is related to economic security. The key to food security lies in economic security.³

- **Health Security:** Health security guarantees a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. In developing countries, the major causes of death are infections and parasitic diseases. These kill approximately 17 million people annually.

In an industrialized country, the major killers are diseases of the circulatory system, killing 5.5 million every year. The United Nations report shows that in both developing and developed countries threats to health security arises because the poorer people in rural areas are affected. The causes of ill-health are malnutrition and insufficient supply of medicine, lack of clean water or other necessary factors that are conducive to sound health.⁴

- **Environmental Security:** Environmental security protects people from the short and long-term ravages of nature. Pollution is basically a man-made that causes threat to nature. Pollution results from degradation of the natural environment. In developing countries, one is devoid of clean drinking water resources which is the greatest of all environmental threats. In industrially developed countries, major threat comes from air pollution. Global warming, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, is another environmental security issue.

- **Community Security:** Community security protects people from the loss of traditional relationships and values. The aim is to protect people from sectarian and ethnic violence. Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups, are often threatened. Fifty per cent of the countries of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic strife. The United Nations declared 1993 as the Year of Indigenous People. The aim was to highlight the continuing vulnerability of the 300 million aboriginal people in 70 countries. Most of these groups face a widening spate of violence.⁵

- **Political Security:** Political security is concerned with people's basic human rights. In the recent study made by Amnesty International figured political repression, systematic torture, ill treatment or disappearance are still practised in 110 countries. Human rights violations are most frequently done

during political unrest. These violations continue repression of individuals and groups. Terrorism as a major problem has assumed global proportions in recent decades.

These six core areas of security has been merged into two categories: freedom from fear and freedom from want.

(i) **Freedom from Fear:** This school seeks to limit the practice of human security to protecting individuals from violent conflicts while recognizing that these violent threats are strongly associated with poverty, lack of state capacity and other forms of inequities.⁶ It is quite evident that minimizing violence is a realistic and manageable approach towards human security. Thus, emergency assistance, conflict resolution and peace-building are the main concerns of this approach.

(ii) **Freedom from Want:** This school focuses on a holistic approach to achieve human security and argues that the threat agenda include hunger, disease and natural disasters. The threats to hunger, diseases and natural disaster are inseparable concepts in addressing the root of human insecurity.⁷ They kill far more people than war, genocide and terrorism combined.⁸ Different from “Freedom from Fear”, it focuses on development and security goals.

The theme of human security is to insure both “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear” for all individuals. In recent years, the concept has been applied more in policy-making and research fields. Thus, human security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities. The exponents of human security do not only limit themselves to the analysis of traditional concept but also covers unconventional concept of national security. They believe that the security in modern context has become more individualistic rather than the state oriented. The people-centric approach becomes more important for national, regional and global integration and also for promoting stability. Human security is necessary for development. Without human security there is no development and it will also affect nation’s prosperity. In other

words, no development is possible without the proper base of human security. Today, the terms development and human security have become almost synonymous. The relationship between the two is that of means and end. Human security is the mean. Development is its end. Human security is the foundation. In this way, human security is the basic condition which promotes the process of development.

Despite their differences, these two approaches to human security can be considered complementary rather than contradictory.⁹ Franklin D. Roosevelt's in his famous Four Freedoms speech of 1941,¹⁰ argues "Freedom from Want" as the third and "Freedom from Fear" as the fourth fundamental universal freedom. The Government of Japan also considers Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want to be at par in sustaining Japan's foreign policy. Japan's Director-General, Yukio Takasu, in his speech at the International Conference on Human Security in a Globalized World in Ulaanbaatar on 8 May 2000 stated that "There are two basic aspects to human security-freedom from fear and freedom from want... We believe that freedom from want is no less critical than freedom from fear" in terms of protecting human life in conflict situations." He gave a comprehensive definition of human security:

"Human security, in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfill his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment—these are the interrelated building blocks of human—and, therefore, national—security".¹¹

UNHDP Report on Globalisation 1999: The 1999 UNDP Human Development Report on Globalisation emphasis was on the theme of human security. It was seen in the context of the 1998 Asian financial crisis. The report argued for deliberate actions to provide human security during economic crises. It resolved to take proper steps to reduce the causes of human insecurity.

World Bank World Development Report (WDR) on Poverty: The World Bank has produced a positive contribution to the human security debate. It uses the term security rather than human security. The World Bank's World Development Report 2000-2001 on poverty identifies three pillars of poverty reduction efforts. There are (i) facilitating empowerment, (ii) enhancing security, and (iii) promoting opportunities. The "security" pillar has been described as "reducing vulnerability-to economic shocks, natural disasters, ill health, disability, and personal violence. It is an intrinsic part of enhancing well being. It encourages investment in human capital and is higher-risk, higher-return activities."

The Commission on Human Security 2003: The Commission on Human Security (CHS) was co-chaired by Amartya Sen and Sadako Ogata. The commission clarified the concept of human security and took note to identify a concrete programme of action. They defined human security as the protection of "the vital core of all human lives in a way that enhance human freedoms and fulfilment".¹² The report elaborated the definition of human security as protecting fundamental freedoms. It meant people's protection from critical threats and situations. It also involved all these processes that could be develop on people's strengths and aspirations. It meant to create political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems. It also meant giving people the building blocks for survival, livelihood and dignity.¹³ The report further pointed out that human security is far more than the absence of violent conflict.

The concept completely addresses both “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”, rather than choosing one out of the two. To attain the goals of human security, the Commission proposed a framework based on the protection and empowerment of people. Empowerment aims at developing the capabilities of individuals and communities so that they can act accordingly to their interests. It will have to protect people from critical and pervasive threats.

Hence, the security threats are not only military but are also nonmilitary threats such as poverty, disease, pollution and illiteracy. These also include economic, health, environment and social threats. It is necessary that these kind of threats need to be taken proper attention because they can harm the security of the individual and the state.

HUMAN SECURITY AS CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

The concept of development was earlier associated with just economic growth emphasizing on National Income Growth. Hence, on this basis development was seen as a traditional security concept. But after 1970, it was felt by the advocates of development that national income was not only the factor that could fulfill the wishes of the individuals with equity and justice. Today, it is seen that this is a very inadequate characterization of development because average per capita incomes are one important means to achieve such progress. It is not the sole criteria. A series of alternative objectives have been put forward. One such was the PQLI (Physical Quality of Life Index). Prof. Amartya Sen has suggested that the objective of development should be the enhancement of people’s capabilities, or the opportunities open to people of being and doing a variety of things.¹⁴ UNDP’s *Human Development Report* defined the objective as enlarging people’s choices in a way which enables them to lead longer, healthier and fuller lives.¹⁵

Therefore, there is need for humanistic approach to development. The human security approach not only focuses on equitable and pro-poor economic growth but also highlights the importance of human rights and the provision of adequate social services that together give people the right of survival, livelihood, and dignity. The demands of human security are only partly addressed by improving economic growth. People who do not achieve the lowest level of security are those who survive in abject poverty, who fall victim to sudden crisis, or who are caught in the middle of violent conflicts. For these reasons, they are excluded from development. The losses of human capital to these horrible situations are increasing at alarming speed.¹⁶ According to Amartya Sen, “Human security is concerned with reducing and—when possible—removing the insecurities that plague human lives”.¹⁷

The human security, therefore, is concerned with the protection of the people from various threats arising from social, economic, political life and natural disasters. Human security and development focus on people and their lives. Security aims to protect them. Development aims to empower them. Both are two sides of a single coin. Hence both of them can bring sustained improvement in human lives.

CONCLUSION

People can live in an environment of security that is free from poverty and despair when they are well protected by the state. As such every individual should be guaranteed “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”, with an equal opportunity to fully develop their human potential. Developing human security is important to achieve this goal. In essence, human security means freedom from negative threats to people’s rights, their safety or even their lives. Human security has now become a global phenomenon. Human security and human

development are, thus, mutually, inter-related and thus can lead to a conducive environment for each other.

Development is an evaluative concept and hence it is a dynamic concept which believes in progress. It has a definite positive connotation. Enhancement, progress value addition, economic and transformation welfare, due to modernization and urbanization are the hallmark of the development. Thus, human security and development are frequently used in contemporary times because of the following factors:

- Human security and development are interrelated. Without human security development is impossible. Similarly for human security development is essential.
- The interconnected concept of human security and development has undergone major changes in their meaning and scope.
- The concept of security was introduced as protection of territory from external aggressions. It was a protection of national interest. As such it was more related to the nation.
- Human security is concerned with the overall security of individuals and institutions.
- Human security is concerned with 'Freedom from fear' and 'Freedom from want.' It is a people's centric security.

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fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour—anywhere in the world.” Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, “Our Documents: Franklin Roosevelt’s Annual Address to Congress—The “Four Freedoms”, January 6, 1941,” New York, [available at <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/od4freed.html>].

- 11- Commission on Human Security (CHS), “Human Security Now”, New York: Commission on Human Security, 2003, p. 4. Alternate phrasings of this definition include: (i) The objective of human security is to protect the vital core of all human lives. (instead of protect: shield, guarantee, defend, maintain, uphold, preserve, secure, safeguard, ensure that...are shielded); (ii) The objective of human security is to protect the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats in a way that is consistent with long-term human fulfilment. (initial definition was this); (iii) The objective of human security is to guarantee a set of vital rights and freedoms to all people, without unduly compromising their ability to pursue other goals; (iv) The objective of human security is to create political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental conditions in which people live knowing that their vital rights and freedoms are secure; and (v) The objective of human security is to keep critical pervasive threats from invading the vital core of human lives. Sabina Alkire, “Conceptual Framework for Human Security”, 16 February 2002, available at <http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/activities/outreach/frame.pdf>. [16 February 2002]
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