

**Development Research Methods**  
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**Module No # 01**  
**Lecture No # 01**  
**Reflections on Development Studies & Development Research**

Hello and welcome to NPTEL MOOC's course of Development Research Methods. I have titled lesson one of this lecture of this course as "Reflections on Development Studies and Development Research". What we will cover in today's lesson is as follows.

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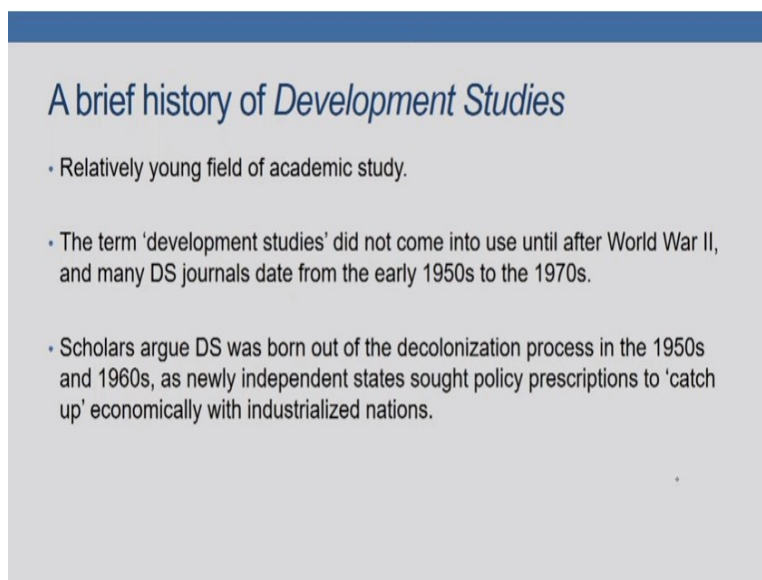


First, we will look at what are the characteristic features of Development Studies and what is the scope of Development Studies. Understanding the scope of Development Studies is very important for us when we move ahead in the various tools and techniques of development research methods, because the theoretical apparatus from which development research and development research methods draws most of its tools and techniques are from the theoretical apparatus of Development Studies.

We will then look at how do we distinguish between development practitioners and development academics, which will give us a very brief idea about development practice and which is where most of the development research methods are situated in or are applied to. Lastly, we will also look at what do we mean when we say doing development research or when we do development research and where the development tools and techniques come in, when we are talking about doing development research.

So, let us begin with the first, that what are the characteristic features of Development Studies and what is the scope of Development Studies. Now, the theoretical apparatus from which development research methods draws its tools and techniques is from the discipline of Development Studies.

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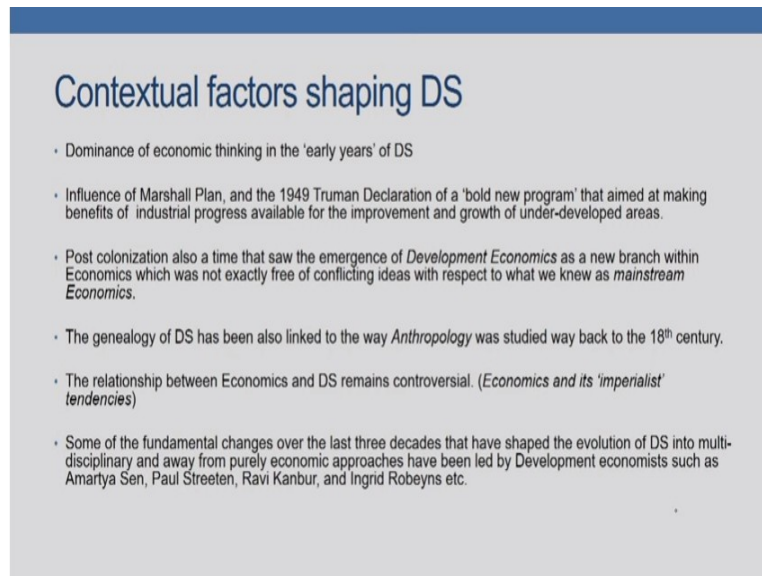


And if you look at the brief history of Development Studies, you will see that it is a relatively young field of academic study. And in fact, the term Development Studies itself did not come into use until after the post-Second World War period. And many of the Development Studies journals started emerging only during the early 1950's and the early 1970's.

And therefore, many scholars have argued that Development Studies is basically born out of the decolonization process of the 1950's and 1960's, when newly independent states sought policy prescriptions to catch up economically with industrialized nations, and because of this, there has

been an economic dominance as far as or the dominance of economics as a subject in the field of Development Studies, which is also been captured by the literature on contextual factors shaping the discipline of Development Studies.

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The slide is titled "Contextual factors shaping DS" and contains a list of six bullet points. The text is as follows:

- Dominance of economic thinking in the 'early years' of DS
- Influence of Marshall Plan, and the 1949 Truman Declaration of a 'bold new program' that aimed at making benefits of industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of under-developed areas.
- Post colonization also a time that saw the emergence of *Development Economics* as a new branch within Economics which was not exactly free of conflicting ideas with respect to what we knew as *mainstream Economics*.
- The genealogy of DS has been also linked to the way *Anthropology* was studied way back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- The relationship between Economics and DS remains controversial. (*Economics and its 'imperialist tendencies*)
- Some of the fundamental changes over the last three decades that have shaped the evolution of DS into multi-disciplinary and away from purely economic approaches have been led by Development economists such as Amartya Sen, Paul Streeten, Ravi Kanbur, and Ingrid Robeyns etc.

You will see that there is a lot of dominance of economic thinking in the early years of Development Studies of the 1950's and the 1960's. And some of the early influences were for example, the Marshall Plan, which talked about providing economic aid to the European countries to be able to build up their nations in the post-Second World War period. As also the 1949 Truman declaration of a bold new program, which basically aimed at making benefits of industrial progress being made available to the so-called underdeveloped areas of the world. And therefore, you could see that the footage came from the economic ideas, spiraling the question of development, so to say.

Post-colonized period or post-colonization as we have come to know also was a time that saw the emergence of development economics as a new branch within economics, and which was not exactly free of conflicting ideas with respect to what we know as mainstream economics. There was a lot of conflict in terms of how to understand the economy, how to look at the economy, what are the tools and techniques that will be used to understand the functioning of the economy with respect to the development economists, vis-a-vis the mainstream economists. And, that also

in a large way influenced development thinking and Development Studies in both the Global North and the Global South.

The genealogy of Development Studies has also been linked to the way anthropology was studied way back in the 18th century, when the British government funded a lot of studies from the colony's funds to study the development of the societies of the colonized countries. And that also entered into the way Development Studies was looked at. Most of these studies were anthropological studies therefore, there is a link between how anthropology was studied by the British anthropologists in the colonized countries.

The relationship between economics and Development Studies remains very controversial, because there is a school of thought which says that economics derives most of its theories and solutions from the imperialistic tendencies of the western economic order. And therefore, it is a slightly difficult terrain with respect to economics and Development Studies. However, most of the dominant ideas that went on in the 1950's and 60's and 70's with regard to Development Studies were largely being influenced by the dominant economic ideologies.

If you look at the changes that have happened over the period of last three decades, particularly starting from the 1990's, some of the fundamental changes that have shaped the evolution of Development Studies into a multidisciplinary and away from purely economic approaches have been led by development economists such as Amartya Sen, Paul Streeten, Ravi Kanbur, and Ingrid Robeyns etc. And therefore, you would see that there is a lot of economic theorization or economic understanding of some of the development issues that continues to provide shape and foundation to the issues taken up in Development Studies. However, there is an increasing tendency towards interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary within the overall discipline of Development Studies so to say.

So, these are some of the contextual factors that shaped the emergence of Development Studies.

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## What are the distinctive features of DS?

- DS has a normative point of departure from other social sciences – and this is to *improve peoples lives* – and thus a shared commitment to the practical and policy relevance of teaching and research.
- Growing interest among DS teachers, researchers and thinkers in addressing *local, and global inequality – particularly gender inequality.*
- The above is one of the reasons why feminist economists, anthropologists, geographers, political scientists, and so on have been drawn to DS.

But if we have to ask what are the distinctive features of Development Studies, and that is important, because that provides some kind of a normative departure of Development Studies from the vast array of different kinds of social sciences. How do we distinguish Development Studies as a unique social science as distinguished from various other social sciences that we know of, for example, sociology or economics or political science or anthropology. And it is important we distinguish this because it is crucial for us to ensure with respect to what are the research tools and techniques that we want to apply with respect to the development question that we are investigating or we are following within the domain of Development Studies.

So, what are the distinctive features? The first is that Development Studies has a normative point of departure from the other social sciences and that normative point is that Development Studies as a discipline is interested in improving people's lives or it is investigating the questions that have a lot of influence or that impact people's lives. And therefore, there is a shared commitment to the practical and policy relevance of teaching and researching Development Studies.

So, one of the first questions to begin with when we are researching development or studying development, and considering the fact that development is a multi-faceted concept, it is a multi-dimensional concept, and development usually almost always has an impact on the human lives or on the lives of people living within a certain region, therefore, one of the first questions that we ask is what are the different kinds of changes that the development question that we are pursuing is leading to?

There is a growing interest among Development Studies teachers, researchers, and thinkers in addressing local and global inequality and particularly gender inequality. And various studies have shown us that inequality is one of the most important factors which is fueling poverty and distress in various parts of the global order today. And, it is the study of inequality which has interested people from various social sciences and various other domains within the social sciences towards that discipline of Development Studies.

So, these are some of the reasons why groups of scholars belonging to the domains of feminist economics or anthropologists, geographers, political scientists have been drawn to the discipline of Development Studies. So, therefore, the underlying factor when we are studying the distinctive feature of Development Studies is basically whether we are improving people's lives in the pursuit of the question of development that we are studying,

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### Heterogeneity in the subject matter of DS

- Shared interest in *less developed countries*, or *developing countries*, or the *South*, or *post-colonial societies*, formerly known as the *Third World*, and *comparative analysis* therein.
- Teaching and research in DS increasingly emphasizes on heterogeneity and diversity in what was perceived as homogenous (eg. economic behaviour of developing countries). If one compares disparate countries of the Global South in the 1950s and today there has been a clear divergence in their development paths to be put together as a homogenous category.
- Increasingly DS is recognizing context specific matters and moving away from universal laws.
- The connecting theme is, in general, post colonial countries, or the Global South, and standards of living within them. Sometimes transition countries of eastern Europe, former Soviet Union and OECD countries are also taken up as subjects of inquiry.

There is also a lot of heterogeneity in the subject matter of Development Studies. To begin with, there is a lot of shared interests among the teachers and researchers of Development Studies and those shared interests are located in the less developed countries or the developing countries or the South or the post-colonial societies formerly known as the Third-World Countries. And the mode of analysis is that of a comparative analysis. So, we are trying to situate what is the progress that has taken place in the Global South vis-a-vis the Global North or what is the progress that has happened in different categorization of countries within the Global South and

the Global North and so on. So, there is a shared interest in studying the social, economic and political issues surrounding the less developed countries.

Teaching and research in Development Studies has increasingly emphasized on heterogeneity and diversity and in what was perceived as homogeneous. For example, in the 1950's and in the 1960's, influenced by the large scale mainstream economic thinking of economic behavior of individual countries or countries categorized under different categories, say developing countries or developed countries, there was a lot of homogenization of economic behavior. So, for example, the idea was that, if there are certain countries which are located in the Global South, the economic behavior of these countries would exactly be operating in a certain manner. For example, the idea of savings rate for example, or the levels of food consumption expenditures or non-food consumption expenditures. There was a tendency towards homogenizing the economic behavior of certain sets of countries.

But if one compares disparate countries of the Global South in the 1950's and today, you would see that there has been a clear divergence in the development paths to be put together as a homogeneous category. For example, if we take the country Ghana and put their development indicators vis-a-vis the country South Korea, and we compare the development paths between the 1950's and the present, you will see that although they can be categorized broadly or loosely under the set of developing countries, their paths of development are absolutely divergent, and the status of development as they exist today are also almost contradictory to each other. So, therefore, Development Studies or a comparative study of developing societies allow us to look at the heterogeneity of development conditions between different countries.

And therefore, increasingly Development Studies is being recognized as being context specific and there is a movement away from universal laws. We cannot with a lot of surety and conclusiveness say that there are certain countries which will definitely behave in a certain manner. So, it all depends upon the context specificity of the questions of the countries that we are taking into our analysis.

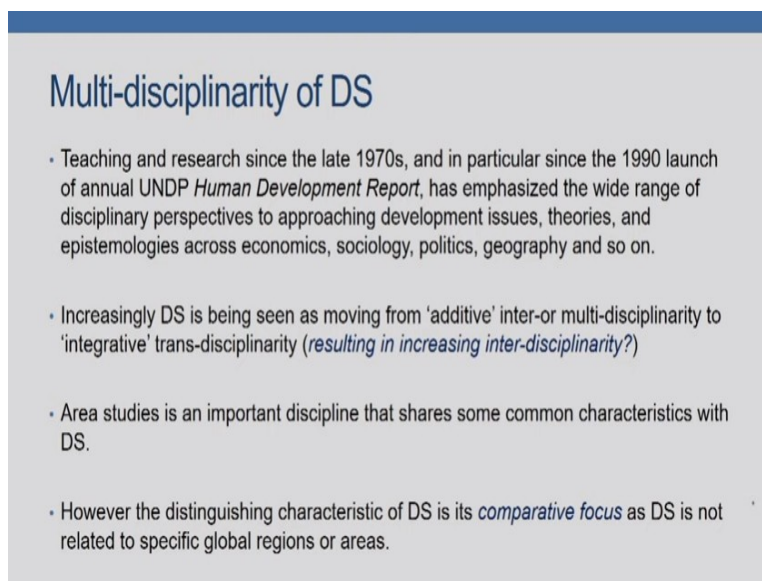
The connecting theme in general, in the post-colonial countries of the Global South and standards of living within them, that is the connecting theme of studying Development Studies in all of these countries. And sometimes the development issues of transition countries of Eastern

Europe, former Soviet Union and the OECD countries are also taken up as subjects of inquiry within the broad discipline of Development Studies.

So, the underlying point here is that there is a lot of heterogeneity in the subject matter of Development Studies, while there's a lot of focus on the developing countries or the less developed countries or the Global South as we may want to call it, but Development Studies as a discipline has also been focusing a lot on the comparative analysis of the performance of the Global North vis-a-vis the Global South and so on.

Let us now move on to a very important issue of what is referred to as multidisciplinary of Development Studies.

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**Multi-disciplinarity of DS**

- Teaching and research since the late 1970s, and in particular since the 1990 launch of annual UNDP *Human Development Report*, has emphasized the wide range of disciplinary perspectives to approaching development issues, theories, and epistemologies across economics, sociology, politics, geography and so on.
- Increasingly DS is being seen as moving from 'additive' inter-or multi-disciplinarity to 'integrative' trans-disciplinarity (*resulting in increasing inter-disciplinarity?*)
- Area studies is an important discipline that shares some common characteristics with DS.
- However the distinguishing characteristic of DS is its *comparative focus* as DS is not related to specific global regions or areas.

And here you would see that it is important, when we are looking at issues of development research methods, it is important that we identify what are the boundaries of Development Studies. And, Development Studies shares a common interest with respect to multidisciplinary because multidisciplinary is an approach to understanding multidimensional development, the basis of which is that the sum of the disciplines will be greater than their components.

Teaching and research since the late 1970's and in particular, since the 1990 launch of annual UNDP Human Development Report, has emphasized the wide range of disciplinary perspectives to approaching development issues, theories, and epistemologies or the systems of knowledge



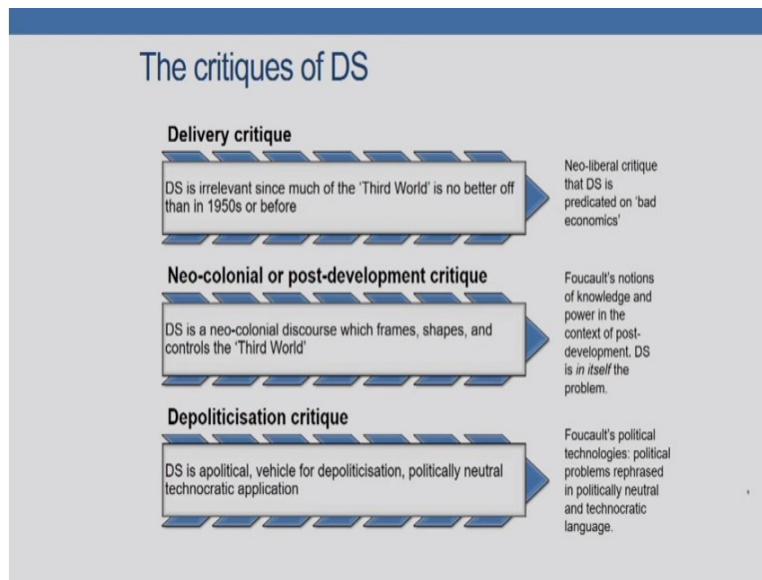
across economics, sociology, politics, geography, and so on. And it is interesting to note how Development Studies moves from 'additive', inter-or-multidisciplinary to 'integrative' trans-disciplinarity. And this has resulted in an increasing interdisciplinarity among the different social sciences within the broader domain of Development Studies. So, today, economists have a lot to draw from geographers, they have a lot to draw from sociologists, they have a lot to draw from anthropologists, even the humanities, to be able to come up with a very holistic understanding of how development needs to be approached in a certain region for example.

Similarly, various other social sciences also draw their basic understanding about the economy or the functioning of economy from the economists. So, what has happened in the last few decades is that, interdisciplinarity within the broader canvas of Development Studies has increased and that is a positive outlook, which the subject of Development Studies has provided to the group of social scientists.

Another important discipline which shares some common characteristics with Development Studies is what we know as area-studies and however, the distinguishing characteristic of Development Studies vis-a-vis area-studies is that, it has more comparative focus, because Development Studies is not related to specific global regions or areas, but looks at the comparative performances of countries or regions within the broad canvas of the global economic, socio-economic order. So, in that sense, multidisciplinary is the fulcrum of the theoretical apparatus of Development Studies and to that extent, because development is a multi-dimensional concept and Development Studies as a theoretical apparatus focuses on multidisciplinary, development and research methods are also multidimensional and multidisciplinary in nature.

And therefore, when we look at the various tools and techniques that are applied to the study of Development Studies, we rarely ever a focus only on quantitative research methods or qualitative research methods. We have moved towards more of mixed methods research with respect to development research. There are situations where quantitative research or quantitative research methods take a dominance and there are areas where qualitative research methods take a dominance and there are areas where a good mix of quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. And therefore, mixed methods have come up as a new area of development research tools and techniques which will be the thrust of our course on development research methods.

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Now, there have also been a number of critiques of Development Studies as a discipline which is also very important to look at, because this gives us a sense of what are the different schools of thought that have been engaging themselves with the ideas of development and the issues of development pertaining to different countries across the world. Of the various critiques that have been forwarded against the subject of Development Studies, various scholars have categorized them under various sub-headings. I have for the sake of our course here, identified them as the following; One is the delivery critique, second is the neo-colonial or post-development critique and the third is the depoliticization critique.

So, the delivery critique is mostly talking about the fact that Development Studies as a discipline is probably irrelevant, since much of the Third World today is no better-off than what it was in the 1950's or before. And this critique is coming from a neoliberal point of view, where the neoliberal critique dedicates this Development Studies as being influenced largely by bad economics. And therefore, the first critique relates closely to the neoliberal critique, and it is based on the argument the Development Studies is predicated on bad economics and therefore has led to consequences such as state-led development or import substitution or protection of domestic enterprises and so on. And some of the rabid critiques of this point of view are economics such as Milton Friedman, Anne Krueger and Deepak Lal. And what the critics from the delivery critique point of view think that Development Studies in itself is a problem. And

therefore, the tools and techniques which have been taken up by the domain of Development Studies has not resulted in much change in the development situation of the countries where it has been applied.

The second critique is what is referred to as the neo-colonial or post-development critique. This is based upon a neo-colonial discourse which frames, shapes and controls the Third World it is said. And this mostly relates to Michael Foucault's notions of knowledge and power in the context of post-development. And this critique posited Development Studies as an imperialist discourse which sought to impose a western view of development as modernity on the Third World. And this is a position which has been sustained by various writers such as Escobar, Gustavo Esteva, Wolfgang Sachs, among many others, and they also say that Development Studies is in itself the problem.

The third critique, which is also an extension of Michael Foucault's works related to political technologies, is that, they say that Development Studies results in de-politicization and therefore it is referred to as de-politicization critique. So, what do they say? This third critique relates to the extended power of the state and technification of development as a set of concepts and techniques needs to be applied to the planning state. This problem resonates with Foucault's political technologies or political problems rephrased in politically neutral technocratic language, while state functionaries or development professionals are typically the experts here. So the de-politicization critique basically says that various development agendas which are taken up are made politically neutral, and then presented in a very technocratic language, which eventually does not provide solution in the process, because the people who are then in power are basically the technocrats within the state led system and they refer to themselves as the experts, but real solutions are not being provided, because it becomes a politically neutral technocratic application.

There have been various responses to some of these criticisms that have been made as part of the critiques of Development Studies. For example, in reply to the neocolonial discourse critique, it has been recognized that Development Studies is of course, not a homogeneous body of knowledge. And like any other body of knowledge, it is subject to a significant degree of internal contestations. The post-development critique of Foucault for instance, cannot be applied to much of what constitutes alternative or non-orthodox development paradigms. For example, the

Marxist or the non-Marxist, structuralist and dependency theories, which obviously cannot be put under the neoliberal framework. Therefore, much of the neo-colonial or post-developing critique does not apply to the alternative strategies or paradigms that already exist within the larger domain of Development Studies. In reply to the de-politicization critique, it has been argued that the normative point of departure of Development Studies is in itself a political statement on global poverty and inequality, although it is worth repeating that the Development Studies is not a homogeneous body of knowledge.

When we began looking at what are the characteristic features of Development Studies and what is the multidisciplinary or multidimensionality within the discipline of Development Studies, we began with the idea that Development Studies provides a normative departure because it is investigating into the question of what are the changes that are happening in people's lives. And therefore, as a response to the de-politicization critique, various scholars have argued that this itself is a political stand to be taken in response to the levels of inequality or global poverty that is existing and therefore, the de-politicization critique probably does not apply to Development Studies. However, these contestations enrich the discipline of Development Studies and these contestations in the form of critique are necessary for Development Studies academics and Development Studies practitioners to be able to engage themselves with these issues and come up with better solutions.

Now moving on. After having understood the fact that development research methods draws a lot of its tools and techniques from the theoretical apparatus of Development Studies, and after having understood that, what is the focus of Development Studies and what are the different kinds of disciplines that have a shared or common interest with Development Studies, let us now move on to this issue of development practice or development practitioners. Often we come across this term that what is development in practice, how do we practice development or who are the practitioners of development. Often, you will see that the bureaucracy and the academic bodies, they do not always work in unison. So, bureaucratic apparatus or the political parties or the NGOs or community based organizations who work on the field directly with the people are trying to implement certain development projects, whereas, academicians have a set of theories to work upon, they have an analytical framework to work upon, and often there is a disconnect between these two bodies.

So, therefore, one is Development Studies academics and the other is Development Studies practicing or practicing of Development Studies. And therefore, it is important for us to distinguish between the two.

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**Development practice & Development Studies**

- Academics vis-à-vis Practitioners

The traditional province of a practitioner lies in *action, a tradition of relevance*:

- i) In changing or facilitating change in the world
- ii) Continuous contact with people and situations
- iii) A framework (project, programme, organisation) within which findings can be operationalised
- iv) A basic orientation which sees people as subjects of their own development, not as objects for research by outsiders

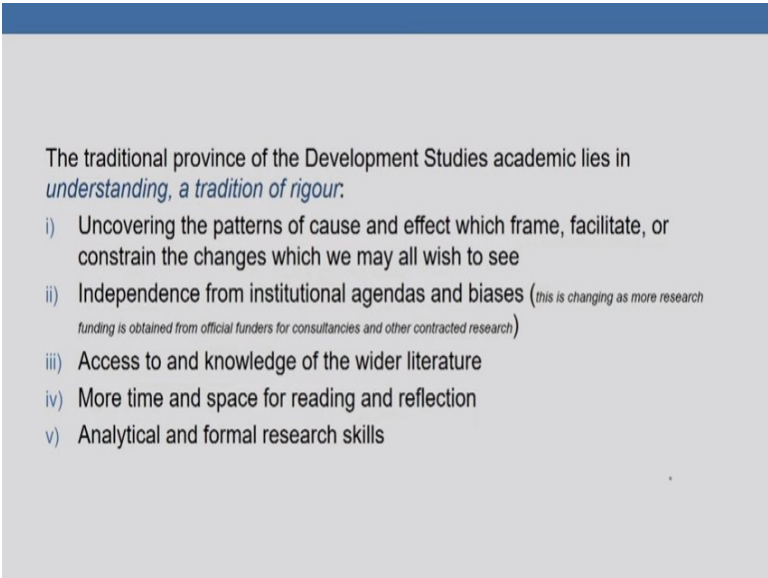
So, who are the academics vis-a-vis the practitioners? Now, the traditional province of a practitioner lies in action and that is a tradition of relevance. So, the practitioners are people who are actioning in the field. They are actioning the research that has been carried out by the academics. So, one is that the practitioners are those who are involved in changing or facilitating change in the world. For example, if they are NGOs or NGO personnel working on the field, trying to implement a certain policy program which has been framed and designed by the government, then we would say that there is a practitioner in action on the field. So, practitioners are those who are changing or facilitating change in the world.

They are also the people who are in continuous contact with people and situations on the ground. And practitioners prefer to work within a framework within which the findings can be operationalized and these frameworks are mostly in the form of a project or a program or an organization. So, often there are supranational agencies, for example, the ILO- the International Labor Organization or the Food and Agriculture Organization or you have the UNDP or the UNICEF, who work within a project format in association with, in collaboration or in partnership

with various government agencies where specific designs are put forward by them and implementation is carried through community-based organizations or civil society organizations with guidance from the supranational agencies. So, practitioners always like to work within a framework.

Practitioners also have a basic orientation which sees people as subjects of their own development and not as objects for research by outsiders. So, the practitioners exercise a degree of sensitivity when they are implementing the research findings on the ground because they see people as subjects of their own development. So, they do not go with a more paternalistic idea about what development is, but they consider people as subjects of their own development.

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The traditional province of the Development Studies academic lies in *understanding, a tradition of rigour.*

- i) Uncovering the patterns of cause and effect which frame, facilitate, or constrain the changes which we may all wish to see
- ii) Independence from institutional agendas and biases (*this is changing as more research funding is obtained from official funders for consultancies and other contracted research*)
- iii) Access to and knowledge of the wider literature
- iv) More time and space for reading and reflection
- v) Analytical and formal research skills

So, what is the domain of the Development Studies academic? The traditional province of the Development Studies academic lies in understanding or in a tradition of rigor. So, what they are effectively trying to do is to uncover the patterns of cause and effect which frame, facilitate, or constrain the changes which we may all wish to see. Among the comparative advantages of academics, one might include independence from institutional agendas and biases. Because the element of rigor is associated with academics, because they have their own analytical frameworks with which to study the issue of development, it is believed that there is a lot of independence or it is expected that there is a lot of independence from institutional agendas and

biases. But this is changing more rapidly as more research funding is being obtained from official funders, for consultancies and other contracted research by academic institutions or academics individually.

Development Studies academics also have access to more knowledge and wider literature, which makes it essential for them or it makes it easier for them to come up with better analytical frameworks with regard to the development question that is being investigated. Academics also have more time and space for reading and reflection. And of course, they have more analytical and formal research skills. So, these are some of the individual characteristics which help us distinguish between development practitioners and development academics.

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A stylized depiction of the development community

Academic/research-based group	Practice/policy-based group
Researchers in universities, institutes and think tanks in the South and North	Operational staff of CSOs in the North and South such as trade Unions, NGOs, voluntary bodies, religious groups, other pressure groups, campaigning bodies and private sector including international business
Research staff of CSOs in the North and South such as trade Unions, NGOs, voluntary bodies, religious groups, other pressure groups, campaigning bodies and private sector including international business	Those working in the Media – in the South and the North
Researchers in govts and other public bodies in the South and North at various levels including bi-lateral donor agencies such as Dfid, USAID etc.	Politicians and bureaucrats in govts and other public bodies in the South and North
Research staff of supra-national agencies such as IMF, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, WTO, FAO etc.	Operational staff of supra-national agencies such as IMF, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, WTO, FAO etc.

Various stylized depictions of who constitute the development community has also been worked out. A working stylized depiction of who constitute the development community is as follows. So, if we divide the development community into two groups, the academics or research-based groups and a practice or policy-based groups. In the research-based groups, you have researchers in universities, institutes, and think-tanks in the South and North. So, by the South and North we mean here Global South and the Global North. Practice or policy-based groups, you have the operational staff of civil society organizations in the North and South, such as trade unions,

NGOs and Non-Governmental Organizations, voluntary bodies, religious groups, other pressure groups, campaigning bodies and private sector, including international businesses.

Similarly, the research staff of CSOs in the North and South also constitute the academic research-based group. Those working in the media in the South and the North that are pursuing the question of development, investigating them, reporting them, researching and reporting them, they also belong to practice or policy-based groups. There are journalists or media-based organizations that are involved in rigorous research of the development question, who may also fall within the academic research-based groups. Among the researchers, you also have governments and other public bodies in the South and North at various levels, including bilateral donor agencies such as DFID, USAID, etc. Under the policy-based groups that are politicians and bureaucrats and governments and other public bodies. Similarly, research staff and operational staff of supranational agencies such as IMF, UNDP, ILO, WTO, FAO, UNICEF etc., may also fall into the academic research-based groups and practice or policy-based groups.

What is important to note here is that there is a great deal of complementarity and potential synergy between these two lists that we have just highlighted here. Both accuracy and understanding, and efficacy in action are required if changes are going to be successful. And closer links between action and understanding are desirable in the field of development, because they will lead both to more effective practice and to theory with great explanatory power. Partnerships offer greater potential for interdisciplinarity, integrated work, which is both rigorous and relevant and work at the interface is an excellent way of bridging the divide between macro issues and micro issues. And which is increasing over time, the integration of the academic research-based groups and the practice policy-based groups that informs development practice or that informs further research in Development Studies has been increasing over a period of time.

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## Doing Development Research

- **Doing development research**

- Research in action
- 'Actioning' research

} To be covered in subsequent lectures

Steps involved:

1. Doing Development research and paradigms of development
2. Strategic issues involved in planning and executing sound research
3. Main ways in which information and data can be collected in carrying out development-oriented research

Now, let us move on to the issue of doing development research. What we have covered so far is, first to understand what is this Development Studies, what are the basic characteristics of Development Studies, what constitutes Development Studies and who are the different actors that contribute to the study of Development Studies. After doing that, we had a brief look at how do we distinguish between development practitioners and Development Studies academic. And of course, one of the understanding here is that development practitioners have emerged as a different group of people, as a group of development professionals working on the field in partnership and collaboration with various agencies, whereas Development Studies academics are a different group of people that inform different kinds of questions, that may inform the development practitioners, but of course, there is a need for both of them to act in an integrated manner.

Now, lastly, we will look at the issue of doing development research and on which we will be elaborating in the subsequent lessons that come in the next week, that what do we mean when we say doing development research. Because, when you are doing development research, there are a lot of things that are included within doing development research, and there are a lot of steps that need to be covered when we are doing development research.

Now, there are a lot of contested concepts or various concepts which are also competitive in nature with respect to doing development research. In the literature that have come up in the recent times, a lot of focus has also been on research in action and actioning research. So, what

are the distinctions between research in action and actioning research is something that we will be covering in the upcoming lessons.

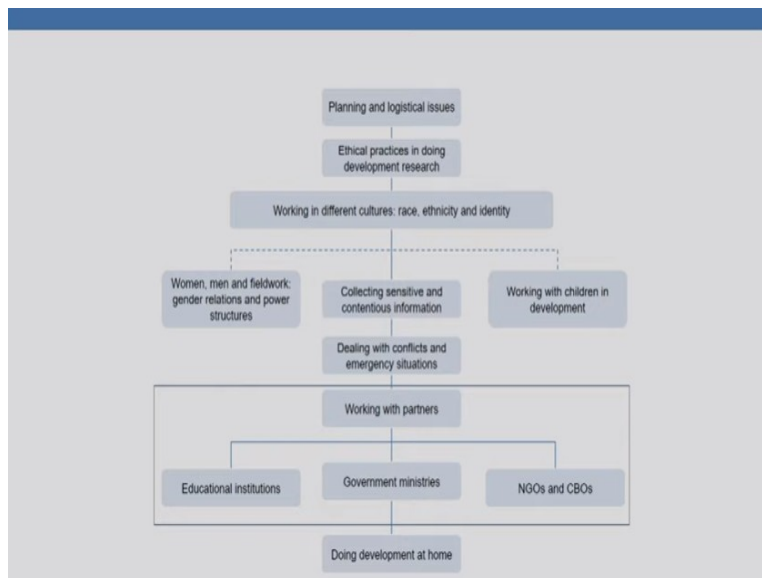
In the introductory lesson today, let us have a look at what do we mean by doing development research and what are the different things to keep in mind when we are engaging ourselves with the idea of doing development research. Now, like various other research tools and techniques that are taken up, there are various steps involved in doing development research as well. One of the first, of course, is to identify the paradigm of development.

There are various paradigms of development and that is something that is a first step towards understanding what is the research terrain or what is the research course that we are entering into. And this is something that we will also be covering in the upcoming lessons. What are the different paradigms of development research that needs to be kept in mind, because the paradigms of development research or paradigms of development also inform us what are the different tools and techniques that should be applied to be able to analyze the data that we have collected or to analyze the development question that we are trying to pursue.

The second step in doing development research is to engage ourselves with the strategic issues involved in planning and executing sound research. Because, when we have a research project in hand, how do we involve ourselves in planning and executing sound research, and because we are dealing with a social issue or development issue, various ethical considerations come in the way of being able to have a sound planning and execution of research.

And lastly, what are the main ways in which information and data can be collected in carrying out development-oriented research.

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So, all of these steps, we will be taking up in the upcoming lessons, but a brief overview of what constitutes the number two, when we say that there are strategic issues involved in planning and executing sound research.

This is a brief hierarchical way of looking at what are the different strategies involved. We begin with planning and logistical issues. We are ultimately reaching at doing development at home, you are carrying out a development intervention let us say for example. So, you start with planning and logistical issues, then you engage yourselves with ethical practices in doing development research. So, for example, if you are doing a study on child labour, or you are doing a study on nutrition status of children, or you are doing a study on wages received by the workers as part of a certain government employment programme, or you are doing the research which informs human rights policies, therefore, we have to engage ourselves with the ethical practices in doing development research. And there are certain set criteria and characteristics which have emerged because of years of human research that has been carried out in various places across domains.

There are also issues that we need to deal with when we are working in different cultures, race, ethnicity, and identity. So, this is again an important factor to keep in mind when we are working in different cultures with respect to all of these domains. Within that with respect to women, men, and field work, the gender relations and power structure. How do we approach field work, when we are trying to address the issues of gender relations and power structures,

because these are all very sensitive issues that needs to be taken up at the family level, and which challenges the power hierarchies or power order within the families.

And therefore, there are different ways of carrying out research when we are looking at these questions. Collecting sensitive and contentious information, working with children in development as I have pointed out, dealing with conflicts and emergency situations. So, a certain ethnic conflict has happened in a certain region of a country and when we are deliberating research, researching children in conflict, we of course, need to visit the field area when the conflict has just taken place and which is clearly a conflict-ridden time to be there as a researcher. But as a researcher, how do we approach the subject matter and the subjects involved in the question that we are researching? That is also a part of development research methods, and there are certain frameworks that need to be adhered to, to be able to address these questions.

Then we come to issues regarding working with partners. This relates to the idea of development practitioners in academics. As an academic if we are approaching a development research project, how do we partner with various supranational agencies, government bodies, or various other collectives- women's collectives, trade union collectives, how do we partner with the different bodies to be able to action our research. So, the partners are mostly from educational institutions, government ministries, NGOs and community-based organizations. When we are partnering in collaboration with all of these are organizations, we can then move towards doing development at home.

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## List of journals

- World Development
- Canadian Journal of Development Studies
- European Journal of Development Research
- Economic Development and Cultural Change
- Development
- Journal of Development Studies
- Development and Change
- Development in Practice
- Journal of International Development
- A Radical History of Development Studies

So, in today's lesson, we have had a brief introduction to the subject matter of development research methods. We have been informed about the fact that the larger theoretical apparatus from which development research methods draws its tools and techniques is the discipline of Development Studies. And the discipline of Development Studies by any means is not homogeneous, there is a multidisciplinary to the discipline of Development Studies because the question of development itself is multidimensional. And therefore, there is a vast array of social scientists coming from different disciplines that have a shared intent, or who have a shared interest in researching the question of development within the broader domain of Development Studies.

And we have also been informed about the fact that Development Studies is also a political project because there is a normative departure from various other social sciences, because developing studies is asking the question of what is the element of change or how are people's lives being improved because of the changes that are happening over a period of time. So ultimately, the development questions that are being asked through the lens of Development Studies or the discipline of Development Studies directly caters to the improved lives of people.

We then also looked at the very critical difference between development practitioners, because practitioners are people who are actioning research, who are working on the field, and the Development Studies academics and also that there is a need for integration between the

development practitioners and the development academics to be able to come up with better solutions for the development question that we are pursuing.

And lastly, we looked at some of the basic issues surrounding doing development research, which is a subject matter of our course and which is something that we will be elaborating upon in the upcoming weeks with regard to the various steps of development research and what are the different things to keep in mind when we are selecting a certain area of study or a certain research question.

These are a list of journals which I would suggest the students of this course, the students who are subscribing to this course make an attempt to read. This is only an indicative list of journals. Of course, the number of journals within the field of Development Studies have increased quite a lot. World development, Canadian Journal of Development Studies, European Journal of Development Research, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Development, Journal of Development Studies, Development And Change, Development In Practice, Journal of International Development and A Radical History of Development Studies.

Most of these journals that I have cited here will inform a serious student of development research methods, with regard to the various development issues and the paradigms of development that needs to be kept in mind when we are pursuing the question of development.

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### References used for this lecture

- Andrew Sumner, "What is Development Studies?", *Development in Practice*, Vol. 16, No. 6, 2006.
- Michael Edwards, "Development Practice and Development Studies: Working Together", *Development in Practice*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1996.
- Andrew Sumner and Michael Tribe, *International Development Studies: Theories and Methods in Research and Practice*, 2008, Sage Publications.
- Vandana Desai and Robert B. Potter, *Doing Development Research*, 2006, Sage Publications.

For a comprehensive literature on the topics covered in this lecture it is also suggested that students go through the reference list of the above cited papers.

These are the references that have been used for this lesson. I would particularly urge the students to take up the book, Andrew Sumner and Michael Tribe on “International Development Studies: Theories and Methods in Research and Practice”. This is a very important book which introduces the students and I will be heavily depending upon the materials collected from this book of Andrew Sumner and Michael Tribe, which informs us about the different kinds of research methods that have emerged since Development Studies started dominating the question of development within the broader domain of social sciences. For a comprehensive literature on the topics covered in this lecture, I would also suggest that the students go through the reference list of all of these above cited papers. So, we will end with today's class. I'll see you in the next week.