Chapter Three

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction
In this chapter, an attempt has been made to highlight the ideological discourse of community development by providing an overview of the theory and practice of community development and its practice principles.

Before discussing the term of community development, it would be better to examine both the term ‘community’ and ‘development’ separately.

3.2 Community
Community is generally seen as a ‘good thing’: as something to be valued or desired. Although there can be no doubt that communities have been and can be oppressive, this negative view is usually far outweighed by the good feelings the word seems to generate (Ife, 2009).

In recent era, community is defined in myriad ways: in geographic terms, such as a neighbourhood or town (‘place based’ or communities of place), or in social terms, such as a group of people sharing common chat rooms on the Internet, a national professional association or a labour union (communities of interest) (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).

Communities usually have a geographical base; they are usually located in a given portion of the earth's surface. Communities come into being and are sustained by good communications – the generation and circulation of messages that are meaningful to its members (Lotz, 1971).

For a geographical community, the only thing that its members should be expected to have ‘in common’ is a connection to that particular locality; no other criteria for membership of the community should be required, formally or informally (Ife, 2009).

There are a couple of key points to emphasise in the concept of ‘Communities of place’ rather than ‘Communities of interest’. It focuses on
social relationships that are defined by territory rather than simply by interest. Example of a ‘community of interest’ would be a group of people who have common hobbies or interests. A community of place includes a group of residents who have common interest related to territory or place (Robinson & Green, 2011).

It has long been common to draw a distinction between geographical communities, defined in terms of specific geographical location, and functional communities, where there is some non-geographical basis for the definition; for example, the Muslim community, the Brahraman community or the business community (Ife, 2002).

The word ‘community’ has at least ninety-four definitions in the literature, according to The Dictionary of Social Sciences. The use of the word community must begin with the whole human community, and with the understanding that all acts of all humans interact with all other acts, even though this action is transmitted through a number of intermediaries or linkages. This consciousness must pervade all community development work. But, at the local level, the community is a functional unit. It may be a neighbourhood, a barrio, a village. Essentially it is a group of people who come together, even for a short period, in a common attempt to better their own lot and that of others (Lotz, 1971).

Mattessich and Monsey (2004), conducting a review of literature, recommended various definitions of community such as:

> ‘People who live within a geographically defined area and who have social and psychological ties with each other and with the place where they live’ (Mattessich & Monsey, 2004, p. 56). This definition has both the idea of ‘community of place’ as well as ‘community of interest’.

A grouping of people who live close to one another and are united by common interests and mutual aid (National Research Council, 1975 cited in Mattessich and Monsey, 2004, p. 56). This definition insists on community as
a system of interpersonal relationships based on mutuality and reciprocity which is used to achieve some common goals.

A combination of social units and systems which perform the major social functions…….(and) the organization of social activities (Warren 1963 cited in Mattessich & Monsey, 2004, p. 57). This definition represents community as a network of social institutions that delivers major functioning of the community (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).

Worsley (1987, pp. 112-115) has recommended some important features for the term community:

- ‘community as locality’, which is closest to its geographical meaning of a ‘human settlement within a fixed and bounded local territory’;
- denotes a ‘network of interrelationships’, characterised by conflict as well as mutuality and reciprocity;
- a particular type of relationships, one that possesses certain qualities; this infers to the ‘community spirit’ or ‘community feeling’.

Maser (1997) has also suggested some characteristics of community which are as follows;

**Social participation** – where and how people interact to foster the feelings of value and self worth

**Mutual aid** – services and support that are both mutual and reciprocal

**Economic production, distribution and consumption** – where the local community attempts to not only generate employment but also ensure the marketing of produce and also the import of essential foods where necessary

**Socialization** – educating people about cultural values, customs and traditions and acceptable norms
Social Control – the structures for maintaining these cultural values and norms

Ife (2009) has given certain associations related to the term of community, which are as follows;

Human scale – Where numbers are small so as to ensure readily accessible interactions and a measure of ownership and control over structures, thereby allowing for empowerment

Membership and belonging – people having acceptance and respect within community leading to the status of belongingness and membership and allowing them to loyal to the community

Collective – people perform together as a group to the community interest goals through collective and collaborative efforts

Mutual rights and responsibilities – Members having common rights with responsibilities towards the community by engaging themselves to activities leading to the community interests and support to sustain the community composition

3.3 Development

Like ‘community’, the word ‘development’ has positive connotations, though these are often counterbalanced by the poor reputation of many ‘development projects’ and the perception that a good deal of harm has been done in the name of ‘development’, especially in the so-called ‘developing world’. ‘Development’ then, like ‘community’, is both problematic and contested (Ife, 2009).

Development also has several meanings, including modernisation, urbanisation, industrialisation, social or political transformation, technological improvement, and economic growth. The idea that development involves change directed toward some particular social or economic goal (Robinson & Green, 2011).
Development is done by man, for man. It involves the application of the most modern scientific techniques in the physical, biological and social sciences, in order to solve the problems of poverty and human inequality as quickly as possible. But these techniques must be applied with an understanding and a respect for the dignity of the individual, his group and his culture (Lotz, 1971).

The idea of development is almost universally valued, even though the way in which development has been implemented is widely criticised. However, this critique of the forms that development has taken suggests that development by itself is not sufficient to bring about a desired result. The way in which development is implemented is crucial, and in this sense there is a similarity with community (Ife, 2009).

Development can, and will, mean very different things in different contexts; what represents good development for one community may be bad development for another. Helping people to think about and define what ‘development’ means in their context is an important part of a community development process (Ife, 2009).

Development is a process that increases choices. It means new options, diversification, thinking about apparent issues differently and anticipating change (Christenson & Robinson, 1989).

Development involves change, improvement and vitality – a directed attempt to improve participation, flexibility, equity, attitudes, the function of institutions and the quality of life. It is the creation of wealth – wealth meaning the things people value (Shaffer, 1989).

An important issue in discussing the idea of development is the relationship between development and growth. Often, especially within economics, the two are used interchangeably, as if ‘development’ is simply another word for growth, or as if the achievement of growth implies that development has also been achieved (Ife, 2009).

Development can be defined in a number of ways, and usually an attempt is made to distinguish development from ‘growth’ (which implies simply an
increase in quantity) and from ‘progress’ (which is altogether too vague a term). There is an enormous amount of material on how to promote economic growth, and how to increase per capita income, which is measured in monetary terms. Development, however, means more than mere material increase. It involves increase in the social and the human spheres, a better life (in qualitative terms) for all people in a given area, as well as an increase in material wealth. Development is measured in such terms as infant mortality (Lotz, 1971).

That the two are different is obvious. In the human life cycle, for example, growth only occurs during the first two decades of life, but development (including intellectual, social, moral and cultural) can continue until the day we die. Growth can be equated with quantitative change – simply getting bigger; whereas development implies qualitative change – getting better – which can be transformative or renewing. While growth and development can go together, this is not a necessary or universal connection. Sometimes bigger is better, but at other times small is beautiful (Ife, 2009).

It should be apparent that development has a very different connotation than growth. Development implies structural change and improvements within community systems encompassing both economic change and the functioning of institutions and organization (Boothroyd & Davis, 1993; Green & Haines, 2002). Development is deliberate action taken to elicit desired structural changes. Growth, on the other hand, focuses on the quantitative aspects of more jobs, facilities construction, and so on – within the context that more is better. One should carefully distinguish, then, between indicators that measure growth versus development. By these definitions, a community can have growth without development and vice versa. The important point to note, however, is that development not only facilitates growth but also influences the kind and amount of growth a community experiences. Development guides and direct growth outcomes (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).
3.4 Community Development

Over past decades, the academicians and community development practitioners have discover various disputed values, objectives and principles in demanding to define the term of community development. There are harmony in scholars’ view that community development has diverse meanings, theoretical base, and practical applicability. The concept is not consistent and unified but characterizes a range of meanings which embrace many shades of community development that are not inevitably well-suited but reproduce fussy political and social rehearsal in the circumstance in which they take place (Sihlongonyane, 2009, p. 136).

Kenny (1999) points out that by the end of twentieth century, community development has been recognised as a field by acting as a catalyst to the ‘issues and problems of mankind and society’. This indicates that communities became empowered, started to identify their own needs and problems and their collective actions made possible to mutually take control over their own lives.

Kenny (1999) claims that the meaning of community development has a broad scope and varying theoretical base. Nowadays, the focus is on citizen needs, human rights and people’s choices and opportunities, the emergence of community based organisations to offer resources that can be utilised by community to counter with their own problems in their own manner.

Community development has many varying definitions. Unlike mathematics or physics where terms are scientifically derived and rigorously defined, community development has evolved with many different connotations (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).

Community development is often viewed as a normative science, advocating public participation and civic engagement. By normative science, we mean that it is not objective and value-free but is shaped by value and norms. It also may mean that community development is more of an ‘act’ than a ‘science’. There is no conceptual map for how to work with all communalities (Robinson & Green, 2011).
Community development has evolved into a recognized discipline drawing from a wide variety of academic fields including sociology, economics, political science, planning, geography, and many others (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).

Community development has evolved to include a much broader focus than just poverty. Affordable housing, job training, and social services continue to be the ‘meat and potatoes’ of community development programmes. Community development, however, has expanded to include local issues such as education, healthcare, and the environment. Thus, community development is a field composed of many disciplines. For example, individuals from any of the following disciplines may become involved in community development--- anthropology, business, education, economics, geography, organisational behaviour, sociology, or social work. The common thread that runs through various discipline and issues is the continuing importance of place and the value (necessity) of public participation in decisions that affect local people (Robinson & Green, 2011).

The community development literature is filled with contradictory notions about the field. The literature is often divided among those who promote ‘development-in-the-community’ and those who advocate ‘development-of-the-community’ (Shaffer & Summers, 1989). This distinction is often characterised as process versus outcomes (Robinson & Green, 2011).

3.5 Definitions of Community Development
The key concept of community development can be expressed through many definitions as discussed below:

Dunham (1968, p. 142) classifies Community Development as: ‘organising people’s efforts toward improving conditions of community life and the capacity for community integration and self-direction’. This definition comprises four basic elements: a designed program, the idea of self-help, technical assistance through the external agents as well as local agents in terms of various expertises for the support of the community.
‘For community development to occur, people in a community must believe working together can make a difference and organise to address their shared needs collectively’ (Flora, Flora, Spear, & Swanson, 1992). It indicates that community development is a procedure that enables community to work as a group to achieve shared goals through their collective effort.

Community development is ‘a group of people in a community reaching a decision to initiate a social action process to change their economic, social, cultural and environmental situation’ (Christenson, Fendley, & Robinson, 1989). This definition suggests that community development is (a) a process; (b) to create change in life cycle in terms of social, economical, cultural and environmental; (c) with the help of formal or informal group within community; (d) through the instrument of social action.

Community development is ‘a process that increases choices. It creates an environment where people can exercise their full potential to lead productive, creative lives’ (Shaffer, 1990). It consists of basic fundamentals: community development as a process, the idea of community capacity, creation of opportunities, and upliftment of their living standard.

Community development can be defined as ‘a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance upon the community’s initiatives’ (United Nations, 1955 cited in Dayal, 1965, p. 7). This definition also describes four basic terms of community development; (a) a planned process, (b) the idea of social change, (c) the encouragement of people participation, and (d) motivation for self reliance.

Community development is ‘a process where people are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the
economic, social and cultural conditions of communities and communities are integrated into the life of the nation enabling them to contribute fully to national progress’ (United Nations, cited in Biggs, 1999; Cavaye, 2000). It suggests that community development is government initiative (programme) to integrate communities with differences to improve the socio-economic well-being of community that leads to national advancement in broader term.

Community capacity is ‘the combined influence of a community’s commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities’ (Aspen Institute, 1996). The idea of ‘build capacity’ in the development process is meant here to make able community to achieve its defined goals. The word ‘capacity’ carries with it an idea of what the community is supposed to accomplish. The outcome is completely defined; the role of community work is then to help build the ‘capacity’ for this to be reached (Ife, 2009).

Community economic development is ‘about identifying and harnessing local community resources and opportunities and stimulating sustainable economic and employment activity’ (Kenyon, 1994).

Sanders (1958) saw community development as ‘a process moving from stage to stage; a method of working towards a goal; a program of procedures and as a movement sweeping people up in emotion and belief’. This definition explains community development as a step by step process to generate increased people participation through self help initiative from community residents to achieve its defined goals.

Green and Haines (2002) define Community development as ‘a planned effort to produce assets that increase the capacity of residents to improve their quality of life. These assets may
include several forms of community capital: physical, human, social, financial and environmental’.

Community development is ‘asset building that improves the quality of life among residents of low- to moderate-income communities, where communities are defined as neighbourhoods or multi-neighbourhood areas’ (Gerguson & Dickens, 1999, p. 5). This definition consists of four concepts i.e. creation of assets, economically weak communities, the idea of neighbourhood, and improvement in their life.

Community development is ‘a place-based approach: it concentrates on creating assets that benefit people in poor neighbourhoods, largely by building and tapping links to external resources’ (Vidal & Keating, 2004, pp. 125-137). This definition represents that community development is a project to help the economically weak community to improve their living standards through the creation of assets with the support of external resources within a specific geographical boundary.

‘Community building in all of these efforts consists of actions to strengthen the capacity of communities to identify priorities and opportunities and to foster and sustain positive neighbourhood change’ (Chaskin, 2001, p. 291). Community organising means bringing people together to address shared problems and to increase their say about their decisions that affect their lives. Community development occurs when people form their own organisations to provide a long-term capacity for problem solving (Rubin & Rubin, 1992); it helps people overcome the feeling that they face problems alone or that they are to blame for their problems and it combats the sense of helplessness people feel in dealing with the problems that confront them.

Christenson & Robinson (1989, p. 13) outline different notions of understanding the meaning of community development and its practice:
• As a ‘process’ (a method or procedure to bring positive change) such as technical assistance, people participation, self-help etc;

• As a ‘programme’ related to various activities such as employment generation programmes, development of agriculture sector;

• As an ‘outcome’ (the pre-planned and desired outcome) such as more job for youth, housing for poor, better accessibility to healthcare facilities, or civic engagement; or

• As an ‘ideology’ of action ‘to make structural changes in the social, political and economic order of community for a desired result’.

On the other hand, Summers (1986, p. 361) recommends these differing views as follows:

**Reform vs. Revolution:** focuses on whether planned change can occur by simply modifying the existing social system or by replacing it.

**Populist vs. Elitist:** focuses on who should decide the path and method of planned change, the people or experts such as scientists, technicians, professional planners or elected leaders.

**Structural vs. Individualistic:** focuses on whether change efforts should be focused on institutions and social structures or individuals and their behaviours and capacities.

**Outcome vs. Process:** focuses on whether change should be directed at ‘immediate improvements in material well-being or toward developing new social, economic, and political process’ that eventually will lead to a better quality of life.
Pitchford & Henderson (2008, pp. 32-33) suggest community development as:

- a process (not a one-off intervention);
- achieving change within and for communities to problems that they themselves identify (it is not about keeping things as they are and it is not top-down);
- focused on changes that will be about achieving greater equality, justice and respect;
- a collective process and done with (not for or to) communities;
- a process that can be done by volunteers and activists as well as paid professionals.

The Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India (Government of India, 1987) defines community development as:

a) referring to a structure or stage of development as in the ‘organised’ and ‘unorganised’ community;

b) a field of practice such as ‘planning social services’, ‘federal fund raising’, ‘national service agencies and

c) as a method, ‘a way of working on an orderly conscious basis to affect defined and desired objectives and goals’.

3.6 Principles of Community Development

Sillitoe (2002, p. 1) argues that the basic principles of community development practice have evolved from ‘top-down’ approach to ‘grassroots participatory’ approach. There can be seen a shift from the community care and economic development to the establishment of community based organisations and community ownership. Ife (2009) has given some key principles of community development as follows:

3.6.1 Holism

Holism is an integral part of community development. Community should be viewed as a whole and not merely as collection of parts. Every part of
community is interconnected and their functioning should be in a harmony as a system.

3.6.2 Sustainability

Sustainability is a necessity for community development. It ensures that the structures and processes of community development initiatives brought desired change continues into the future.

3.6.3 Diversity

The idea of basing community on diversity seems much more robust and enriching (Nancy, 1991). Every community has unique characteristics depending on the social, political, economic and cultural context. The principle of diversity applies not only within communities but also between communities. It suggests that communities should not try to be the same as each other; rather that the differences should be positive and allow for communities to learn from each other’s experiences.

3.6.4 Organic Development

Community development, because of its process orientation, is more consistent with notions of organic change, and it is often a reaction against sudden radical change that can most readily motivate community-level action.

3.6.5 Addressing Structural Inequalities

Every community has deep rooted structural inequalities in context to caste, class, gender, race/ethnicity, disability and age. Community development must work towards a fairer world, and should seek to counter these inequalities in appropriate ways.

3.6.6 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is a core principle of community development. It is a process that enables communities to increase their capabilities in controlling their lives by engaging all opportunities, resources, knowledge and skills available within communities.
3.6.7 Affirming Human Rights

Community development must affirm and promote human rights and social justice. The success of any approach to community development requires a framework of social justice or human rights. If such a framework is not present, community development can lead to practice that violates social justice principles, entrenching oppressive or unfair practices and excluding minorities, all in the name of a community being self-directing.

3.6.8 Community Needs

The definition of need is critical in community development. Often, however, the needs of a community are defined by others: planners, researchers or managers who undertake some form of ‘need assessment’. Needs must be defined by communities themselves, as they are the experts of their own experience.

3.6.9 Community Ownership

The community ownership is another significant principle of community development. It implies that community has the ability to control over local assets and resources. There should be mechanism within community to develop and conserve the local resources.

3.6.10 Value, Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills

Community development is based on the notion of bottom-up development that local knowledge, wisdom, skills and understandings are necessary for the experience of human community, and need to be valued above top-down wisdom and experience. The people of a community will know more about what is feasible and what is not, what will offend and what will not, and what is likely to work best. This local knowledge is necessary if community processes are to work or be effective (Hines, 2000; Shiva, 2005).
3.6.11 Participation

Participation is a key feature of community development. Community development processes can only operate if there is a high level of genuine participation by community members.

3.6.12 Integrity of the Process

One of the most important principles of community development is the valuing of process. This is directly contradictory to the emphasis on outcomes that is so dominant.

3.6.13 Self-reliance, Independence and Interdependence

A related principle is self-reliance. Consistent with the idea of valuing expertise, self-reliance suggests that a community should where possible seek to rely on its own resources rather than becoming dependent on other communities or on some central authority.