WORLD SYSTEMS THEORY

World Systems Theory is another development theory that came up as a response for the other two development theories. It suggests that there is a world economic system in which some countries benefit while others are exploited (Lechner, 2014). The modern nation state exists within a broad economic, political, and legal framework which he calls a “world-system”. Just as individual behavior cannot be understood without reference the sociocultural system in which they are members, individual societies or nation states cannot be understood without reference to the world-system in which they are embedded (Elwell, 2012).

According to Wallerstein, the capitalist world-economy is divided into 3; the core states, the semi-peripheral states and the peripheral states. Core countries are prevailing capitalist countries which exploit peripheral countries for labor and resources or raw materials. Peripheral countries in the other hand are the least developed. They are exploited by the core states for their cheap labor, raw materials, agricultural production among other resources that may be useful to development. Semi-Peripheral states share characteristics of both core and peripheral states. This system is poised to allow for a more comprehensive and flexible view of global economic and political interconnections.

Even though the system is deemed to have the strength of flexibility, the following are some weaknesses;

1. Constantly changing state of the world economy′. Fewer and fewer countries fall into this category as time goes on and globalization expands Wallerstein’s “external” economy label can be no longer applied.
2. Negative Example. Colonial America′ Exhibit characteristics from the “periphery” and “core” categories Semi-periphery economy′ Lack of a strong Central Government

From the weaknesses and strengths discussed above, the theory does not have the ability to achieve authentic human development since some of the principles of social life are not indorsed in one way or the other. For instance, the principle of the universal distribution of goods, in capitalist economies, people only gain something, according to what they have achieved. This is in violation of this principle since not all the citizens in a country are equal. Even though this is a weakness to be talked about critically, the World Systems Theory should be critically thought of because it upholds all the other 4 principles in weak ways.

# References

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