

Original Research Article

Determinants of Social Development

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ABSTRACT: *This research paper explores the concept of social development as an alternative model of development, emerging in response to the imbalanced outcomes of economic growth in India during the 1950s. It highlights the realisation that economic development has predominantly favoured the wealthy, exacerbating the gap between the rich and the poor, and how policymakers and thinkers sought a more comprehensive approach that incorporates social factors into economic planning to ensure a balanced and inclusive development process. Drawing from various academic perspectives, this research paper sheds light on the significance of social development as a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to achieving balanced and inclusive progress while highlighting the connection between social development and cultural values within a community. The paper also talks about the indicators and scores of social and human developments in India and how their scores give us a picture of the progress of the people-centric form of development.*

KEYWORDS: *Social development, Economic development, Economic growth, Determinants, Social Development Indicators (SDI), Social Progress Index (SPI), Human Development Index (HDI), Indicators.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The striking development in India that transpired as a result of the economic development in the 1950s could not ensure social welfare. Economic growth did not contribute to the progress of society. The policymakers found that economic development worked mostly in favour of market forces, helping the rich more than the poor, further increasing the gap between them. Economic growth helped only a few and resulted in large destitution and social backwardness. This put economic prosperity and social backwardness in the country at loggerheads, which further resulted in an imbalanced form of development. The economic theories of growth failed to ensure a balanced development, which compelled the then-thinkers and policymakers to adopt a different model of development.

In 1956, economists such as Gunnar Myrdal suggested adopting a more comprehensive form of development that would also take social factors into account (Fujita, 2004). According to him, there can be no economic prosperity if it cannot eliminate social miseries. With this, global agencies like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank also advocated for the incorporation of social issues in economic planning to make development more in favour of the masses. The proposed alternative model of development was ensured to be more comprehensive and multifaceted in nature so that it would impact every section of society. Hence, the concept of social development surfaced as a more effective substitute for development to achieve a healthy and balanced development.

2. DEFINING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development is a paradigmatic shift in the social and economic framework of a country. It focuses on the qualitative changes in the economy that facilitate the society to fulfil the aims and objectives of its people. So, when development is measured in the form of better and higher levels of productivity, efficiency, creativity, expertise, performance, self-sufficiency, etc., that ensures qualitative improvement in the lives of people, it can be considered as social development. In other words, 'society-centric development' focuses on improving the welfare of every human being in society, so that they can achieve their full potential. Thus, the success of every society is directly related to the welfare of its citizens. Moreover, the UN promoted social development as a reliable measure of a more egalitarian form of income and wealth distribution (Brunswick, 2009) to attain social justice, poverty eradication, employment generation, maximizing facilities for education, health, housing, and social well-being for the underprivileged sections of society. These have been regarded as the very foundation of social development indicators.

¹ Economic development is a qualitative measure while economic growth is a narrower and more quantitative concept. The former focuses on the betterment of the quality of goods and services produced, while the latter talks about the increase in the number of goods and services produced in the economy during a time period. For instance, if the number of buildings and roads is increasing in a city, then it can be safely said that it is growing. But if the buildings and roads are not of good quality and standards, then the city is 'just growing' and 'not developing'.

Renowned academician James Midgley, in his book ‘Social Development- The Developmental Perspective in Social Welfare’, has stated that “planned change designated to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development can be termed as social development” (Midgley, 1995). Similarly, American sociologist and anthropologist Herbert Blumer, in his essay ‘The Idea of Social Development’, has opined that social development is closely related to the cultural values of a community (Blumer, 1937). M. S. Gore, an Indian social scientist and writer, in his book, ‘Social Development: Challenges Faced in an Unequal and Plural Society’, has defined social development as a measure of economic growth and social justice that takes into account the eradication of inequalities and development of social services, including those of public welfare services (Gore, 2003). Thus, social development encapsulates the idea of a sustainable society that upholds human dignity by empowering the poor and disadvantaged groups to allow them to develop and achieve their rightful dreams.

3. DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development is a process. Various factors contribute significantly towards it, which are:

- i. Education of the society about their rights and building awareness around it.
- ii. A well-determined and strong will on the part of the political government.
- iii. The notion of equality amongst the members of the community.
- iv. Sense of empowerment in people to avail opportunities.
- v. Shift in cultural values of the community.

With the expansion of the horizons of education, there would be greater awareness among people. This ensures their higher involvement in the developmental process by standing up to inequalities and fighting against social evils like poverty, hunger, etc. Similarly, the political will of the incumbent government is very necessary to realise the dream of social development. If the government is proactive and willing to fight against social evils like poverty, unemployment, unequal distribution of wealth, hunger, poor health conditions, etc., then the fight against social injustice can be easily fought. All of the initiatives would fall flat if there is no change in the attitude, cultural values, and traditions of the people.

3.1. SOCIAL INDICATORS OF DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Define abbreviations and acronyms the first time they are used in the text, even after they have been defined in the abstract. Abbreviations such as IEEE and SI do not have to be defined. Do not use abbreviations in the title or headings unless they are unavoidable. Social Development Indicators (SDI) in India comprise two methods of measurement¹:

- i. **Social Progress Index (SPI):** It offers a rich foundation for measuring and analysing the varied elements of social progress while reinforcing greater human welfare.
- ii. **Human Development Index (HDI):** HDI is used as an index for determining the development measurables of a country that evaluates the social aspects of a healthy life, attainment of education, and having a decent standard of living.

3.2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INDEX OF INDIA

The social development index lies on the framework of three indicators, i.e., basic human needs, foundations of human well-being, and opportunity. Basic human needs include access to basic healthcare, nutrition, water and sanitation, shelter, and personal security. The determinants of human well-being include access to basic education, information, and environmental quality. And as far as opportunities are concerned, they are linked to personal freedom and choice, personal rights, social inclusion, tolerance, and access to advanced education.

In 2022, the Economic Advisory Council-Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released a report² on India’s performance in the field of Social Development, which has ranked India in the 110th position out of 169 nations on the Social Progress Index (SPI) with a score of 60.2/100 (Pandit, 2022).

TABLE 1 Social progress index score- India (States and U.T.s)- 2022

	States	SPI	Rank
Tier I (Very High Social Progress)	Puducherry	65.99	1
	Lakshadweep	65.89	2
	Goa	65.53	3
	Sikkim	65.10	4
	Mizoram	64.19	5
	Tamil Nadu	63.33	6
	Himachal Pradesh	63.28	7

¹ That are the averages for the whole country.

² Social Progress Index: States and Districts of India

	Chandigarh	62.37	8
Tier-II (High Social Progress)	Jammu and Kashmir	60.76	10
	Punjab	60.23	11
	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	59.81	12
	Ladakh	59.53	13
	Nagaland	59.24	14
	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	58.76	15
Tier-III (Upper Middle Social Progress)	Uttarakhand	58.26	16
	Karnataka	56.77	17
	Arunachal Pradesh	56.56	18
	Delhi	56.28	19
	Manipur	56.27	20
Tier-IV (Lower Middle Social Progress)	Haryana	54.15	21
	Gujarat	53.81	22
	Andhra Pradesh	53.60	23
	Meghalaya	53.22	24
	West Bengal	53.13	25
	Telangana	52.11	26
	Tripura	51.70	27
	Chhattisgarh	51.36	28
	Maharashtra	50.86	29
Rajasthan	50.69	30	
Tier-V (Low Social Progress)	Uttar Pradesh	49.16	31
	Odisha	48.19	32
	Madhya Pradesh	48.11	33
Tier-VI (Very Low Social Progress)	Assam	44.92	34
	Bihar	44.47	35
	Jharkhand	43.95	36

Source: PIB India (PIB, 2022)

The U.T. of Puducherry has performed remarkably and got the highest score of 65.9 in the SPI of India, in factors such as personal freedom and choice, shelter, water and sanitation, etc. Assam, Bihar, and Jharkhand have secured the least in the scorecard due to their slow development in sectors such as education, health, sanitation, etc. (PIB, 2022).

3.3. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

The indicators of Human Development in India are:

- i. Life Expectancy
- ii. Infant Mortality Rate
- iii. Maternal Mortality Rate
- iv. Schooling and Adult Literacy Rate
- v. Percentage of people below the poverty line

Per Capita G.D.P, i.e., purchasing power parity

TABLE 2 Human development index score- India (States and U.T.s)- 2021

Rank	State/ U. T	HDI (2021)
High Human Development		
1	Kerala	0.752
2	Goa	0.751
3	Chandigarh	0.744
4	Delhi	0.730
5	Puducherry	0.726
6	Lakshadweep	0.715
7	Himachal Pradesh	0.703
8	Sikkim	0.702
Medium Human Development		

9	Jammu and Kashmir	0.699
10	Punjab	0.694
11	Haryana	0.691
12	Maharashtra	0.688
12	Mizoram	
14	Tamil Nadu	0.686
15	Manipur	0.678
16	Uttarakhand	0.672
17	Nagaland	0.670
18	Karnataka	0.667
19	Arunachal Pradesh	0.665
20	Daman and Diu	0.661
21	Telangana	0.647
22	Meghalaya	0.643
23	Rajasthan	0.638
23	Gujarat	0.638
24	 India (average)	0.633
25	Andhra Pradesh	0.630
26	Tripura	0.629
27	West Bengal	0.624
28	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.620
29	Chhattisgarh	0.605
30	Assam	0.597
31	Odisha	
32	Madhya Pradesh	0.596
33	Uttar Pradesh	0.592
34	Jharkhand	0.589
35	Bihar	0.571

Source: Global HDI Data Lab (Lab, 2023)

India has been in the 132nd rank out of 191 countries in the Human Development Index (ET, 2022). Two factors that are of more significance are Schooling and Life Expectancy. India has seen a striking growth between 1990 and 2019, where life expectancy has grown by 11.8 years, while the average length of schooling has increased by 3.5 years, and expected years of schooling increased by 4.5 years (Pandit, 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

Social development found a significant weightage in its development agenda right after India gained its independence. But as far as reality is concerned, growth-dominated development had taken precedence over the people-centric form of development. However, ever since the late 1960s and the start of the 1970s, there has been a major shift in the way development has been functioning, both in planning and practice. The notions of social development seem to have seeped into the minds of policymakers and lawmakers. As Prof. Amartya Sen came up with the concepts of 'Expansion of choice and freedom among people', there has been a striking change in the social development thinking and practice in India (O'Hearn, 2009).

The government has realised the importance of social development as a measure of human welfare and has adopted more pro-people policies lately, which include social sector development, participatory planning, and the basic needs approach. This includes providing more quality education, healthcare services, nutrition, personal freedom, choice, and inclusion.

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