European Economic Letters
ISSN 2323-5233
Vol 14, Issue 4(2024)
http://eelet.org.uk

Development and its measuring indicators

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Received:29 /09/2024, **Accepted**:18 /10/2024, **Published**: 30/11/2024

Abstract:

Developmentis a goal that all countries and governments seek to achieve, whether these governments are liberal, socialist, or mixed.

Therefore, governments and countries have allocated exorbitant funds to achieve this, even through external borrowing.

In order to achieve goals, an accurate controlling methodology ishighly required to monitor all variables that contribute effectively to the success of the goals and their embodiment in the field, as well as to avoid any deviations that hinder the fixed goals.

Accordingly, this needs reliance on reliable standards and indicators in judging the success or failure of the development programs pursued by countries and governments in the advancement of their societies.

Key words: Development, the growth, Economic development, Social development, Comprehen sive development, sustainab le development, Indicators.

Introduction

Initial signs of development emerged from the beginning of human existence on Earth, manifested in construction and various activities to meet human needs for sustaining life. As living standards and construction methods evolved, population groups formed with the primary goal of preserving life and exchanging benefits. With the expansion of these groups into different regions and the lack of all necessary life requirements, various signs of development emerged in these societies to achieve maximum satisfaction and benefits.

As human expansion progressed, conflicts arose among groups to meet and protect their needs using various means and methods. This was notably evident during and after the two World Wars, which led to the development of programs and plans by nations and governments aimed at improving their societies and ensuring stability. Both advanced and developing countries, as well as those under colonial rule, implemented various developmental programs. These programs require specific regulations and tools, known as standard mechanisms, to guide and correct them. These are referred to as statistical or standard indicators of development and their determinants.

This research aims to clarify the importance of standard indicators of development, which are crucial in assessing whether programs should continue, be corrected, or abandoned. To address this paper, the following questions were raised:

- Are these standard indicators necessary and should they be relied upon to judge the development and success of the development process?
- Are these standard indicators applicable to all types of developmental programs for all countries and governments?

- Do these standard indicators provide a true and accurate representation of development trajectories?

To answer these questions, we propose the following hypothesis: Standard indicators are important tools for revealing the extent to which developmental goals are achieved. However, these indicators may be effective in certain aspects of development while being less so in others. Therefore, some countries and governments may find them credible, while others may find them misleading. Consequently, these indicators require precision in data, honesty, and transparency in their processes, and accuracy in their numerical values to be more realistic and closer to actual reality rather than nominal.

Concept of Development and Growth

Both growth and development are crucial indicators in any country, relied upon to set plans and policies.

1. **Definition of Development:**

The term "development" can be confusing as it might refer to comprehensive, independent, sustainable, economic, or social development. The World Bank, in 1991, defined development as improving quality of life, particularly in poor countries. This quality includes higher levels of health, education, nutrition, clean environment, personal freedom, and a high standard of living. Thus, development is viewed as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures. Development encompasses three core values (Tudor, pp. 55-56):

- **Capability to Live:** This refers to fulfilling basic needs. All humans have certain basic needs, such as food, shelter, health, and protection, without which life becomes impossible.
- **Self-Esteem and Respect:** This means feeling worthy and respecting oneself, not being used merely as a tool for others' interests, but having respect, honor, and self-esteem.
- **Freedom and Slavery:** This involves having the right to choices that align with values and ethics, without infringing on others' freedoms, as well as freedom in choosing goods and services, political participation, and freedom of expression, which is an indicator of human freedom.

Therefore, development is both a tangible reality and a psychological state where society seeks means to achieve a better life.

2. **Growth:**

The concept of growth was used by Simon Kuznets, who viewed growth as akin to development in meaning. Growth, like development, is characterized by (Matanious, 1989, pp. 123-124):

- Growth refers to a continuous and steady increase in a specific aspect of life, usually occurring through gradual evolution and transformation (Mustafa, 1986, pp. 53-54).
- Growth is the increase in national output or gross domestic product over a long period, often occurring spontaneously without government intervention (Matanious, 1989, pp. 123-124).

Growth thus refers to a continuous increase in specific life aspects, and can be social or economic, affecting various life dimensions such as social, economic, cultural, educational, and health.

3. **Types of Development:**

Development can be categorized as follows:

- **Economic Development:** Defined as the process of moving the national economy from a state of underdevelopment to progress, or more precisely, transitioning from a backward social status to an advanced one (Omar, 1972, pp. 207-208). Baldwin also defined economic development as a socio-economic process that eradicates underdevelopment in all its indicators and causes (Mohamed, 1986, pp. 45-46). Norkus also indicates that economic development is significantly related to human capabilities, social trends, political conditions, and historical factors.
- **Social Development:** This refers to a process of social change affecting the social structure and functions to meet individuals' social needs. Social development is not merely about providing specific services but involves two main variables:
  - The first variable: Changing old social conditions that no longer align with contemporary life patterns.
  - The second variable: Establishing a new social structure derived from the old one, creating new relationships and values, and satisfying individuals' needs. Social development involves collective changes in structure and functions aiming to meet social needs (Mohamed, 1986, pp. 27-28).
- **Comprehensive Development:** Defined as a historical transformation affecting economic, political, and social structures, including national culture. It is driven by internal forces rather than external ones, within political institutions that enjoy public acceptance and allow for continued development. Most members of society view this process as a revival and continuation of fundamental values and national culture (Khater, 1999, pp. 16-17). Comprehensive development is also seen as achieving economic and social progress through intentional and planned measures to increase overall production of goods and services faster than the population growth rate. It aims for significant and sustained increases in real per capita income and improving income distribution to favor low-income populations, achieving justice and social stability (Islamic Economics Journal, 1995).

Comprehensive development from the Islamic perspective: is a dynamic, sequential process aimed at eliminating 'economic and social backwardness to achieve the progress of the Islamic community.' It views comprehensive development in Islam as relying on two main dimensions (Abdul Badi, 2006, p. 316):

-The social dimension: this dimension represents the Islamic perspective on social issues, intersecting at three circles: human beings and society, work and expenditure, halal and haram.

-The economic dimension: this dimension reflects the Islamic perspective on economic issues, intersecting at three circles: resources and production, needs and satisfaction, distribution and balance.

II. Indicators of Development and Their Measurement Criteria: The following points summarize this topic:

1. **The Nature of Development Indicators and Their Dimensions:** Before discussing the criteria and indicators of development, it is essential to define what an indicator is:
   - **Nature of the Indicator:** An indicator is a measure that summarizes information about a specific phenomenon or issue. It answers specific questions posed by decision-makers and provides quantitative or qualitative information that helps prioritize development efforts. Indicators are crucial for formulating policies and developing plans that achieve

the goal of improving the quality of life for citizens. They are also an effective mechanism for measuring the extent of progress towards targeted goals at various levels of communities (populations), serving as a foundation for appropriate and efficient developmental decision-making. Additionally, they provide a standard numerical representation that can be calculated, integrated into equations, and compared with other countries periodically (Jeddah).

- **Importance of Development Indicators (Jeddah):** The importance of indicators is significant and can be highlighted in the following points:
  - They measure and monitor the rate of achievement in implementing development strategies, policies, and programs.
  - They inform the local media.
  - They help in formulating development policies and strategies.
  - They enhance the performance of local and national councils.
  - They contribute to reducing sectoral isolation.
  - Additionally, they provide information that can be easily communicated to decision-makers.
  - They can directly contribute to improving decision-making processes.
- **Dimensions of Development Indicators:** Since indicators vary based on their intended use, they have specific fields for study, which encompass the following dimensions:

- **Economic Dimensions:** Some of the criteria or indicators within this area include investment in productive sectors, taxes and subsidies, job opportunities, income, and net revenues, among others.
- **Social Dimensions:** This includes job opportunities, demographics, literacy rates, education, consumption, income, debt, and equitable distribution in decision-making processes.
- **Ecological Dimensions:** Among these ecological indicators are exploitation rates and changes in the area and quality of cultivated land.
- **Administrative Dimensions:** This includes property rights, cultural participation, and the capacity for creativity.

2. Indicators Used to Measure Development: There are several indicators and measures employed to assess development, including:

- **Ratios and Rates:** These are indicators used to clarify and disclose the nature of the phenomenon under study (Zayed, 1988, p. 115). They facilitate comparisons between phenomena. Some ratios are considered general indicators known as averages; since some ratios may be very small, they often require multiplication by a fixed number, typically 210, 310, or 410, depending on the phenomenon (Zayed, 1988, p. 116).
- **Correlation Coefficients:** This is a statistical method for studying the relationship between changes in the values of one variable and another (Haikal, 1986, p. 178). Correlation indicates a relationship between two phenomena, such that if one changes in a certain direction, the other tends to change in a similar or opposite direction. Correlation aims to describe the degree of association between variables and is useful for:
  - Determining the strength of the correlation (strong, weak, or none).
  - Identifying the direction of the relationship (positive or negative).
  - Providing indicators for estimating one variable in terms of another.

- Offering a basis for studying and analyzing causal relationships.
- Serving as an indicator of accuracy, reliability, and objectivity, which is crucial for ensuring the validity of tests and data collection procedures (Zayed, 1988, p. 157).

3. Indicators and Index Numbers:

- **Indicator:** An indicator is a sign or symbol used to measure a specific phenomenon or event, which has numerical determinants that explain the state of the phenomenon, either trending positively, negatively, or remaining stable (Lacour, p. 62).
- **Index Numbers:** These are relative numbers created to indicate and measure movement or change in a specific phenomenon relative to a base year (Sami, 1997, p. 79). Index numbers are often presented as percentages, with a chosen base period, typically a year, several years, a month, mid-month, or a specific day. These index numbers are used to measure changes in various economic or social phenomena, such as price changes, changes in purchasing power, and changes in income, among others (Zayed, 1988, pp. 123-124).

III. International Indicators and Dimensions Used to Measure Development:

1. **Most Commonly Used International Indicators for Measuring Development:** In 1996, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme identified a set of indicators known as housing indicators, which included 46 indicators. Five additional indicators were added, incorporating housing into urban indicators, making them more comprehensive by including transportation, infrastructure, and economic and social development indicators. The Global Urban Observatory recommended that these indicators reflect the specificities of each country and community, and they should include the following groups:

A total of 51 indicators were defined and classified as follows (Jeddah):

1. Basic data group.
2. Urban indicators group.
3. Housing indicators group.

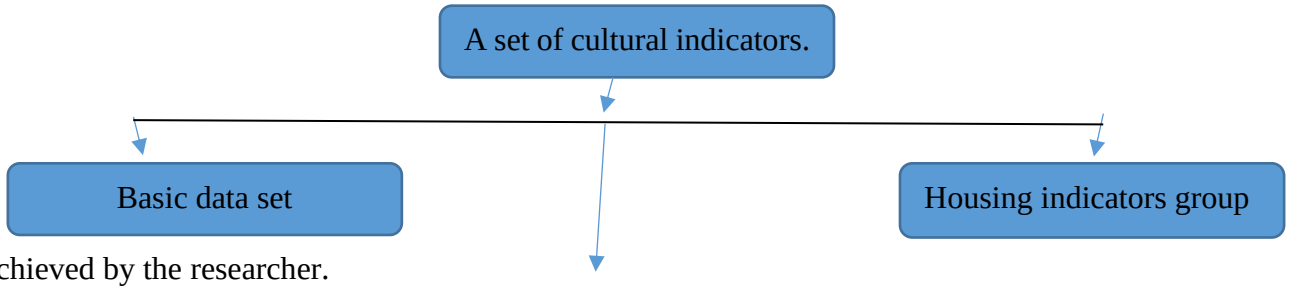
These three groups were reclassified into seven groups based on data sources:

- **General City Background Indicators:** 10 indicators.
- **Economic and Social Development Indicators:** 9 indicators.
- **Infrastructure Indicators:** 5 indicators.
- **Transportation Indicators:** 3 indicators.
- **Local Indicators:** 9 indicators.
- **Housing Indicators:** 8 indicators.
- **Environmental Management Indicators:** 5 indicators.

Hence, the following figure shows us the types of these fifty-one indicators.

Figure No. (01): represents the fifty-one internationally agreed indicators..

European Economic Letters
ISSN 2323-5233
Vol 14, Issue 4(2024)
http://eelet.org.uk



Achieved by the researcher.

General background indicators of the city	Economic and social development indicators	Infrastructure indicators	Transport indicators	Environmental management indicators	Local indicators	Housing indicators
1.Percentage of land use. 2. Measuring the size of the city's population/by gender/age/density, people/km2. 3. The annual population increase rate or the annual population growth rate. 4. Percentage of families headed by a woman. 5. Average family size. 6. Family formation rate. 7. Income distribution categories. 8. Average per capita GDP in the city. 9. Percentage of type of housing tenure. 10. Distribution ratio of total holding	1. Percentage of poor families. 2. Percentage of informal employment. 3. Per capita hospital beds. 4. Mortality rate of children under the age of five. 5. Expectation of life at birth. 6. Illiteracy rates for adults (15 years and over). 7. Enrollment rate in pre-university education. 8. Work intensity. 9. Crime rate.	1. Percentages of the level of home connections to utilities. 2. Percentage of access to clean water. 3. Average per capita water consumption. 4. The median price of water. 5. The percentage of investment in the city's infrastructure components	1. Percentage of job posting type. 2. Average business travel time. 3. Annual expenditure ratio (investment spending on roads/person in the city). 4. Car ownership rate. 5. Length of roads in the city (km).	1. Percentage of treated water. 2. Solid waste production/person kg. 3. Percentage of solid waste disposal methods. 4. Measuring the size of the city's population/by gender/age/density, person km2. 5. Percentage of demolished homes that are ready to collapse (during the past five/ten years).	1. Average per capita GDP of the city. 2. Average per capita investment spending in the city, 3. Debt service ratio. (Percentage of local debt asset payments/total municipal annual expenditures). 4. Percentage of workers in localities/total city population 5. Wage and salary rate. 6. The percentage of disbursements from local contracts out of the total disbursements. 7. Number of voluntary non-governmental organizations/100NGOS thousand population. 8. The level of government that provides services in the city/municipality//secretariat/governorate/sub-municipality/district Governance that provides services in the city/municipality/secretariat/governorate/sub-municipality/district. 9. Level of control over local decisions (decision-making authority): local/regional/central/sub-municipality/directorate.	1. Average house price/average house price/average family income. 2. House rent/income rate. 3. Land price/income ratio. 4. Average per capita square meters per home. 5. Percentage of homes that meet official requirements (planned/total buildings). 6. Home production ratio (number of homes built last year/number of population). 7. Percentage of fixed buildings (strong structures/total buildings). 8. Home investment (real estate investment/GDP)

European Economic Letters
ISSN 2323-5233
Vol 14, Issue 4(2024)
http://eelet.org.uk

Source: Jeddah Governorate Urban Observatory, Jeddah Governorate Municipality, previous reference.

11. Common Criteria Among Countries for Measuring Development:

Due to the variety of indicators and measures, some are commonly used in certain countries while others are not. Therefore, there are common criteria across all countries, including:

-Criteria Related to Income Aspects: Many economists believe that key indicators for measuring the progress and growth of societies include:

1. National income and growth index.
2. Gross domestic product (GDP) index.
3. Per capita or average income.

1- National Income:

National income is defined as the net value of goods and services produced by the population of a country within a specified time period, usually a year (Mohammed Ridwan, 1990, pp. 54-53).

2-Gross National Product (GNP):

This is the total value of final goods and services produced by the economic agents of a country over a year (Sami, 1997, p. 69). It includes returns from national investments abroad and encompasses value added by residents within the country, whether regionally or nationally. **However**, GNP is not purely domestic, as part of this added value may be produced outside the country (François, 2008).

Professor Meade argues that economic growth is linked to the recognition of gross national income; as this growth rate increases, so does the positive assessment of a country's economy, and vice versa. However, this indicator is not universally accepted in economic circles, as increases or decreases in GNP may not lead to positive or negative results. An increase in national income does not imply economic growth when the population grows at a faster rate, nor does a decrease imply regression when the population declines. This indicator is also limited when assessing growth amid significant immigration.

3-Economic Growth Rate: Economic growth refers to a continuous increase in real per capita income over time. Thus, average per capita income equals total income divided by the population: Average per capita income = Total income ÷ Population (Ajeema, 2000, pp. 98-97). This indicates each individual's share of total community income, meaning economic growth goes beyond simply increasing total income or output; it results in an improved standard of living for individuals, represented by an increase in their share of total income, which only occurs if the growth rate of total income exceeds that of the population. Therefore: Economic growth rate = Total income growth rate – Population growth rate (Ajeema, 2000, pp. 18-11).

Additionally, economic growth implies an increase in real per capita income rather than just nominal income.

- **Nominal Income:** Refers to the number of monetary units received by an individual over a specific period (usually a year) in exchange for the productive services they provide.
- **Real Income:** Calculated as nominal income divided by the general price level. Thus, the economic growth rate can be expressed as:

Economic Growth Rate=Real Income Growth Rate−Population Growth Rate(Ajeema,2000,p.12)

Additionally, the real economic growth rate is calculated as the increase in nominal per capita income minus the inflation rate. Therefore, measuring economic growth can be represented by the following equation:

$$\text{Growth rate} = \frac{\text{Real income in } _{tn} \text{ time period} - \text{Real income in the period } _{tn-1}}{\text{Real income in the period } _{tn-1}}$$

- **tn:** The year to be compared, meaning a year after.
- **tn-1:** The comparison year, known as the base year, which is a year before. It is calculated as nominal income divided by the general price level, indicating the quantity of goods and services that an individual can obtain by spending their nominal income over a specific period.

Accordingly, if nominal income increases by a certain percentage and the general price levels rise by the same percentage, real income will remain stable, and there will be no improvement in the standard of living for the community. However, if the increase in nominal income is less than the increase in prices (inflation rate), real income per individual will decrease, leading to a deterioration in the living standards of the community. Thus, achieving growth is primarily linked to an increase in nominal income that exceeds the inflation rate.

- **GDP:** Gross Domestic Product.
- **GNP or GNI:** Gross National Product.

This rate is used over two consecutive periods (Ajeema, 2000, p. 99).

4-Average Per Capita Income: The national income indicator and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) indicator are metrics reflecting the overall economic growth of a country (Ajeema, 2000, p. 98). However, certain segments of society and regions may be marginalized, which can prevent a comprehensive assessment of the community's levels of development. Therefore, average per capita GDP is considered one of the most commonly used and reliable indicators for measuring economic progress in a country (Sami, 1997, p. 65).

12-Indicators Related to GDP and Urban GDP: These include:

1-GDP Indicator: This is a measure used to assess the growth and development of communities. GDP (Haikal, 1986, p. 374) quantifies the goods and services produced by economic activity over a specific period, usually a year. It is calculated by evaluating the goods and services produced during the year at market prices and summing these values (Aqasim and Qadi, p. 135).

2-Urban GDP Indicator: Urban GDP is another tool for measuring the growth and development of communities or regions. However, economists criticize this indicator because it does not account for trade exchanges (exports and imports) with other areas, relying instead on added value. They argue this limits the objective interpretation of urban GDP values, as it may not accurately reflect the productivity and wealth characteristic of the assessed region. They note that production levels and added values may be low, even if income levels are high.

Urban GDP may also be low in certain population areas due to unemployment and the number of workers operating in isolated regions. Conversely, this indicator might be high in some areas while income levels remain low, often due to unequal distribution of investment opportunities or developmental benefits.

13-Indicators Related to Structural Aspects: The development of organized communities requires the structuring of their frameworks, which governments and states aim to achieve, whether in developed or developing countries. This is primarily linked to the economic structure in general and the industrial structure in particular. There are indicators that measure this structure, whether positive, negative, or stable. Among these measures are:

1. The relative weight of industrial output to GDP.
2. The relative weight of industrial exports to total commodity exports.
3. The ratio of employment in the industrial sector to total employment.

Therefore, as these ratios increase, it indicates that the changes achieved are positive in terms of their economic structure and production organization. This increase reflects the level of economic progress and growth; conversely, a decrease would suggest the opposite (Aqasim and Qadi, pp. 33-26).

14- Indicators Related to Social and Human Aspects

- **Indicators Related to Social Aspects:** Social indicators focus on the quality of services that affect individuals' daily lives and the changes they undergo. Several indicators are used to measure progress in this area of development, the most important of which are:

1-Health Indicators: These serve as tools to measure the level of health services. Among these indicators is the number of deaths per thousand residents (which includes various rates such as: deaths per thousand children, child mortality rates for those under five, and infant mortality rates for those under one year). A higher death rate indicates inadequate health services and issues such as malnutrition (Aqasim and Qadi, pp. 33-26).

In developed countries, life expectancy is greater than or equal to 76 years, and daily caloric intake is not less than 3,000 calories (Ajeema, 2000, p. 28). A lower life expectancy signifies imbalances in living standards. Other health indicators include the number of people per doctor and nurse, and the number of patients per hospital bed. The ideal ratio is not more than 1,000 residents per doctor, with some countries seeing this drop to 900. Nurses often serve fewer than 100 patients each, so a lower ratio of beneficiaries indicates societal progress (Ajeema, 2000, p. 103).

2-Educational Indicators: Education plays a crucial role in the development and prosperity of societies due to the advantages that educational production offers, making it an investment rather than mere consumption (Ajeema, 2000, p. 106). Key indicators used to assess the quality of educational services include:

- The literacy rate (proportion of those who can read and write to those who cannot).
- The enrollment rate in various educational stages.
- The proportion of public spending on education relative to the total GDP.

In developed countries, adult illiteracy rates do not exceed 5% and may be non-existent in some cases. An increase in the number of educated individuals positively impacts overall development (Ajeema, 2000, p. 28).

15- Human Development Index (HDI)

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a relatively recent measure developed by the United Nations in 1990. A team led by Amartya Sen and others created this composite index to provide a comprehensive assessment of global development from a human perspective, structuring all capabilities, choices, and opportunities available to everyone within the development process (Social, 2006). Traditional indicators, such as GDP per capita, are commonly used by systems to rank and classify the progress of countries and communities (Lacour, p. 1792).

The HDI has become an important standard for evaluating how well countries meet the basic needs of their populations, as well as measuring wealth, educational levels, and available resources that enable decent living conditions. It is considered a composite indicator.

- **Structure of the Human Development Index (HDI):**
  The HDI is a composite measurement tool that assesses a country's development across three dimensions: life expectancy at birth, educational level, and the size of available resources (GDP per capita adjusted for purchasing power).

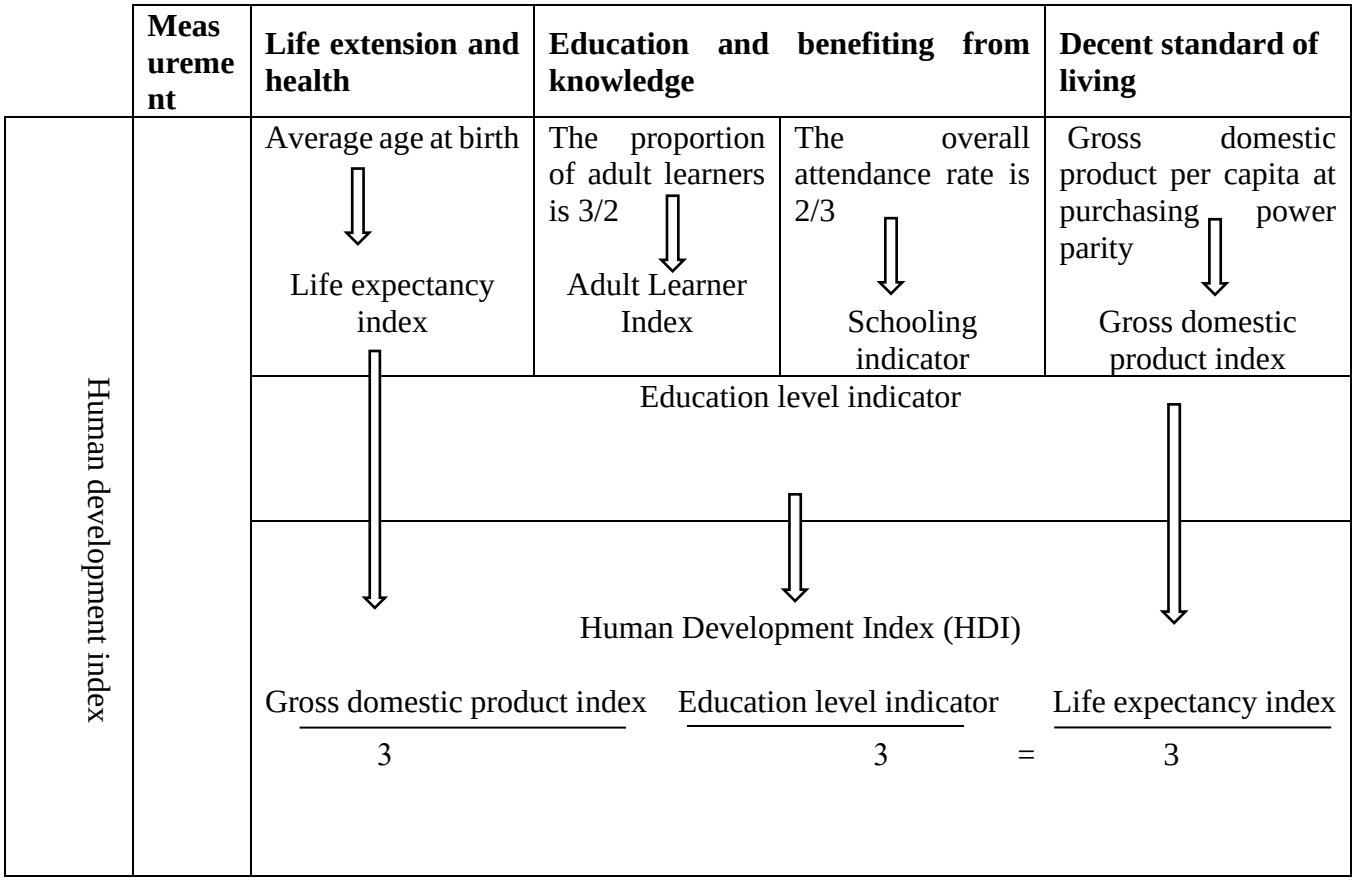
The HDI comprises three criteria:

1. **Life Expectancy:** This reflects the average lifespan at birth, though quality of life does not always correlate with longevity, as life expectancy does not capture various other aspects of life, particularly nutrition and health.
2. **Knowledge or Educational Attainment:** This includes the education level of the population, vocational training, and the practical application of knowledge.
3. **Available Resources:** These are resources that ensure an acceptable standard of living, covering employment opportunities, income generation, land access, loan availability, and participation in economic activities.

To clarify the structure of this index, it can be summarized as follows:

Figure No (02): Shows the method of structuring the Human Development Indicators (HDI).

European Economic Letters
ISSN 2323-5233
Vol 14, Issue 4(2024)
http://eelet.org.uk



Source: National Report on Human Development, National Economic and Social Council in cooperation with the United Nations P.N.U.D. Programme, Algeria, 2006, p. 17.

1. **Life Expectancy at Birth:** A health indicator.
2. **Educational Attainment:** Comprising two sub-indicators: literacy rate (weighted 2/3) and average years of schooling (weighted 1/3).
3. **Economic Indicator:** The average income per capita.

According to these three criteria, the mathematical formula is as follows:

$$\text{(HDI) Human Development Index} = \frac{\text{Life expectancy guide + educational attainment guide + average income guide}}{3}$$

Therefore, if:

- **HDI ≥ 0.8**: The country has a high level of development.
- **0.5 ≤ HDI < 0.8**: The country has a medium level of development.
- **HDI < 0.5**: The country has a low level of development (Ajima, 2000, pp. 113-112).

One of the most important areas where the Human Development Index (HDI) is used includes:

A. Governments and countries use it to assess the performance of essential social services by comparing one country's performance to another, which stimulates local and national discussions that help understand how individuals benefit from these services.

- It guides social spending towards priorities.
- It highlights the degree of inequality in human development levels within a single country.

- This index allows for new types of comparisons between countries, clarifying which countries have successfully translated economic growth into genuine human development or have failed to do so (Ajima, 2000, pp. 119-111).

Note:

1. These criteria can be adjusted at the national level, particularly those related to GDP, but it is difficult to calculate them at the regional or local level within a country.
2. Exchange rates are also challenging to address due to significant disparities and difficulties in determining output, as local communities in a country often lack the necessary structures and financial capacities to fund regional data bases.
3. Additionally, the income scale varies greatly between developed countries and those in the process of development, as well as within the country itself.
4. Moreover, the GDP considered is an indicator derived from both public and private resources; while public resources can be controlled (referring to public sector institutions), the private sector cannot be easily monitored, as it often benefits from public resources, whereas the opposite is not true (meaning the public sector does not benefit from the private sector).

IV. Conclusion:

The conclusion we draw from this topic is closely linked to what Dinine Juliet stated: "Civilizational backwardness shocks and surprises, confronting many issues like filth, disease, loss, death, and no one understands whether this backwardness will remain merely a statistical item reflected in low income, housing, poverty, early mortality, and disguised unemployment" (Tudar).

As Edgar and Neziye pointed out: "Economists have treated the issue of development as if it were merely exercises and practices in applied economics, detached from political ideas and excluding the role of individuals in society. A long time has passed before we managed to integrate economic theory into political economy, which can explain how societies can be more productive and also of higher quality through human development rather than the development of things, that is, achieving human development" (Tudar).

Therefore, the programs and plans adopted by countries and governments, along with the substantial funds allocated to uplift their societies, should focus on developing and guiding the human mind in a sound, rational, and pure manner.

These standard indicators are crucial for revealing development pathways, but they require accurate and transparent numerical data and goals to ensure the success of the development process. Based on the above, we propose the following recommendations:

1. For development to be sound, its measurement indicators must also be accurate, necessitating sound human development.
2. Rely on effective programs linked to the human element, which positively impact their contributions to achieving comprehensive and sustainable development in various fields.
3. Laws must be regulated and effectively implemented, from the preparation of programs to their execution, focusing on the beneficiaries of these programs.

These steps will enhance the realization of genuine development, benefiting individuals and society as a whole.

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