

Dynamics of Development and Distress

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of distress is a universal accompanist of development in all its phases. In this paper, an effort would be directed towards seeing how development worked towards attaining our planning objective of 'Growth with Equity'. Such development was sought for, as would lead to 'trickle down effect' of the benefits of growth. 'Development sans Equity' would lead to 'Deprivation' promoting 'Distress'. For this paper the factors that lead to distress would be classified into Economic (Poverty, Inequality and Unemployment) and Non-Economic (Corruption and Environment). For an examination of Poverty (Global Hunger Index), for Inequality (Gender Inequality Index) and for Unemployment (unemployment rates) for the period 2013-17 would be taken into account. As far as the non-economic factors are concerned for Corruption (Corruption Perception Index score) and for Environment (Carbon Emissions (metric tonnes per capita) data) would be undertaken. Subsequently, a correlation would be run between these factors and HDI an indicator of the level of development.

Keywords: Growth with Social Justice, Development sans Equity, Deprivation, Distress

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of India has had a rich and illustrious history, as one of the longest living civilizations in the world and like any other civilization has witnessed various ups and downs with prima-facie objective being the welfare of its people. The society after independence flowed from the concept of India empowered. It was this very vision that empowered millions and millions of freedom-loving Indians to give their all, for the liberation of Mother India from the yoke of the British Colonial Rule and now for keeping the promises made then. A vision to see our motherland freed from the scourge of bhok (hunger), berozgari (unemployment), bhay (fear), brashtachar (corruption). A vision to see India, the world's cradle of civilization transform itself yet again into a benign global power, that called for an empowerment of the people of the nation.

Grievously truncated by partition, India emerged an independent nation on August 15, 1947 to abide its 'tryst with destiny', faced with the stupendous task of rebuilding the nation. Independence had to go beyond political independence and much depended on how the economy shaped up. The vision of self-reliant and independent economy could be given practical shape through the Constitution of the country. An all-out effort was made to break the colonial legacy to build an independent self-reliant economy by rejecting both capitalism and communism, and instead opting for 'Golden Mean'—the Mixed Economy Model, in pursuance of long-term objective of setting up of 'Socialistic Pattern of Society'. Growth with Equity and Self-Reliance was sought for, to address the problems of Poverty, Unemployment and Inequality. Mahatma Gandhi had always insisted that India would truly become independent only when the poorest of the poor people would be free from human suffering i.e. 'To wipe every tear from every eye' and to reach 'Unto the Last'. An overwhelming concern for the poor, a multi-dimensional view of poverty and human deprivations, the focus on freedoms, the need to expand opportunities and ensure equal distribution were considered fundamental to a strong human development perspective. Such development was sought for, as would lead to 'trickle-down effect' of the benefits of growth. The jingle was 'Growth with Social Justice' whether it was the Nehruvian Model of growth or its replacement by the new LPG model. 'Development sans Equity' would lead to 'Deprivation' promoting 'Distress'.

Starting with the measurement of the first "D" i.e. Development — "To Develop" is an active verb and conveys the idea of auto-happening – a flow from eternity to eternity. Economic growth is mainly concerned with the plane of biological survival. Having over-emphasized the latter, it was but natural to face the crisis of existence. Thus, mankind has been progressing and regressing at the same time. It is a pity that the life form, which had the capacity for persistent progression, went astray and considered marking-time as forward march. The dawning of this reality has put a question mark on our development performance on the one hand, and the search for alternatives, on the other

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so in that it conveys that development is not only changing but also changing into something is better (Teune, 1988). Four major indicators for development are as follows in the study:-

- (1.2) Gross National Product
- (1.3) Physical Quality of Life Index
- (1.4) Human Development Index

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Materialistic Development and Distress

It is rightly acknowledged that the true parameter of development with the ultimate aim of human happiness is removal of poverty, unemployment, inequality, corruption ever since our fight against the colonial rule. Yet, the phenomenon of human deprivation and distress is found to be widespread in all the countries even though they are at different levels of socio-economic development. While millions of people in economically backward countries are deprived of basic needs like food, clothing, shelter, clean drinking water, sanitation and other amenities necessary for a decent living, a large number of people in advanced countries are distressed as a result of several problems which are essentially a by-product of industrialization, recurring recessions and rapid economic and social change in the post-development phase. These seem to result in unemployment, high crime rates, high divorce rates, drugs, drunkenness and new diseases, bringing out that the phenomenon of Distress is a universal accompanist of Development in all its phases.

The first HDR released in 1990, revealed that there is no automatic link between economic growth and human progress. Modest levels of income in case of several countries were found to be translating into fairly respectable levels of human development, creating an interest in examination of relationship between Development (HDI)¹ and Distress

METHODOLOGY

For an examination of relationship between development and distress levels in the country for this paper the factors leading to distress have been classified into Economic and Non-economic for period (2013-17).

Economic-Poverty (Global Hunger Index, GHI), Inequality (Gender Inequality Index, GII) and Unemployment(unemployment rates).

Non-Economic-Corruption (Corruption Perception Index score) and Environment (Carbon Emissions (metric tonnes per capita) data) HDI, a composite index of socio-economic progress would be taken.

Subsequently, a correlation would be run between these factors and HDI value.

HDI: Economic and Non-Economic Factors

Pearson Correlation Table	Global Hunger Index (GHI)	Unemployment	Gender Inequality Index (GII)	Corruption Perception Index	Environment Degradation (CO2)
Human Development Index	.797	-.916	-.509	.903	.946

Economic Factors

India being a Welfare State, an assurance of dignified life calls in for a in deprivations as reflected in existing Poverty, Inequality and Unemployment levels.

Material Progress and Poverty

Countries where the level of poverty is relatively large tend also to exhibit low values of human development. Though there has been a decline in poverty ratios in the country yet, eradicating hunger remains a key challenge. **GlobalHunger Index²** (2013-17) has been taken as an estimator of extreme hunger as a proxy for poverty.

HDI and Global Hunger Index (GHI) (0.797)

Strong positive correlation suggests that as Human Development Index increases (indicating better human development), the Global Hunger Index also tends to increase (indicating worse hunger conditions). It is suggestive of pockets of hunger or inequality, affecting the overall food security in certain areas, despite overall development.

Material progress and Inequality

Poverty is not the only goal. Removal of inequality in income and consumption is an important ingredient of the Philosophy of Welfare State. There has been an increase in the Gini Index from 32.1% in 1983 to 35.7% in 2011. The incidence of polarization of wealth is more marked in case of developed countries.

According to World Economic Forum (2017), rising inequality in income and wealth pose a risk to the global economy and may lead to increased political instability. Further, the HDR (2017) brought out that despite economic progress inequality has remained a challenge for India and that around 26.8 per cent of India's HDI value is lost on account of inequalities.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) to work towards a more inclusive growth has come out with other indices such as the Gender Development Index (GDI), the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), each of which focus on a different aspect of human well-being.

In this paper **Gender Inequality Index³** (GII, 2013-17) has been used to measure inequality.

HDI and GII (-0.509)

Moderate negative correlation between Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII), which suggests that as Human Development Index increases, gender inequality tends to decrease, leading to more equitable gender outcomes. However, the strength of this correlation is moderate, so it may not be as strong or consistent.

Development with Unemployment

Yet another manifestation of the existing disparity in the country is the existing unemployment that goes against the right of the individual to lead a dignified life. It is a situation when the rate of growth of population is greater than the rate of growth of labour force, and that of labour force is greater than that of employment opportunities.

Employment generation is a particularly salient linchpin between economic growth on the one hand, and poverty reduction and development on the other. The unemployment rates⁴ from 2013-17 have been taken for the present study.

HDI and Unemployment (-0.916)

Strong negative correlation suggests that as Human Development Index increases, unemployment tends to decrease. Deprivation both on economic and non-economic front lead to distress. Therefore, an examination of non-economic factors (Corruption and Environment) would be done.

Development and Corruption

Corruption not only cripples a country's economic growth, it also gives rise to other inhuman practices such as child labour, human trafficking, child mortality, illiteracy, environmental hazards and most importantly terrorism. To identify this, Corruption Perception Index⁵ score (2013-17) taken.

HDI and CPI (0.903): The correlation between the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) is 0.903, which is strongly positive. This suggests that as the Human Development Index increases (indicating better human development), the Corruption Perception Index also increases (meaning lower perceived corruption). In other words, countries with higher HDI tend to have lower levels of corruption, and this relationship is quite strong.

Development and Environment

With development there has been an ever-increasing concern towards environment. According to the World Economic Forums (2017) Annual Global Risk Report, climate change has been regarded as the second most important global risk factor bringing into question the very nature of development towards which we have been moving. HDR (2017) brought out that climate change remains big threat for India. Deteriorating air quality in major Indian cities and its impacts on human health are also worrying. In this paper Carbon Emissions (metric tonnes per capita) data⁶ (2013-17) has been taken.

HDI and Environment Degradation (CO2) (0.946): The correlation between the Human Development Index (HDI) and Environmental Degradation (measured by CO2 emissions) is 0.946, which is also strongly positive. This indicates that higher levels of human development (as represented by HDI) are associated with higher levels of environmental degradation, in terms of CO2 emissions. This may suggest that more developed countries tend to have higher emissions due to industrialization and higher energy consumption.

CONCLUSION

The paper has drawn attention towards the concept that development sans equity would eventually accentuate distress. Distress is an accompaniment of development. An effort has to be directed to strike a balance so that distress can be taken care off by going in for inclusive growth. Socio-economic disparities, social and political unrest, cultural disparities, technological unemployment, environmental changes and corruption need to be addressed. Solving the climate crisis will address inequality, strengthen the global economy and promote global health. Failure to address the climate crisis would threaten the future of humanity. An accentuation in the levels of corruption not only increases the levels of poverty but also inequality, depriving the marginalized groups of equitable access to vital services such as healthcare, education, water and sanitation. It proves to be a major obstacle in achieving SDGs. With corruption there cannot be sustainable development. Economic development alone does not lead to human development. What is called for is not only an effort directed towards human development and reduction in inequality in human development but also in improving the health system of a country. Share of expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP should increase and the vulnerable sections of the society need to be taken care off so as to contribute towards equitable growth.

End Notes

1. HDI value as calculated in the Human Development Reports has been used. Score (0-1)
Low human development – **HDI** (0.0 and 0.5), Medium human development- **HDI**(0.5 and 0.8) and High human development- **HDI** (0.8 and 1.0)
2. Global Hunger Index from Global Hunger Index Reports. It combines four equally weighted indicators:
 - a. **Undernourishment:** the proportion of undernourished people (with insufficient caloric intake) as a percentage of the population.
 - b. **Child Wasting:** Proportion of children under the age of five who suffer from wasting (low weight for their height), reflecting acute under nutrition.
 - c. **Child Stunting:** Proportion of children under the age of five who suffer from stunting (low height for their age), reflecting chronic under nutrition.
 - d. **Child Mortality:** the mortality rate of children under the age of five
Score range (0-100) 0- No hunger and (100) Worst score. Low ≤ 9.9 , Moderate 10.0-19.9, Serious 20.0-34.9 (India), Alarming 35.0-49.9 and Extremely Alarming ≥ 50.0
3. Gender Inequality Index (GII) introduced by HDR in 2010. The value ranges between (0-1).
(0) indicates 0% inequality indicating men and women are equal
(1) indicates 100% inequality.
It is based on three dimensions:
 - a. Reproductive health (MMR)
 - b. Empowerment (share of participation in parliamentary seats and secondary and higher education)
 - c. Economic Activity (Labour market participation)

4. India Unemployment Rate 1991-2020, World Bank
5. Corruption Perception Index score has been taken. It ranges from (0 highly corrupt-100 most clean country).
6. Carbon Emissions data in (metric tons per capita) from 1960-200, World Bank.

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