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Social Dynamics - Social Progress Indicator

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Abstract:

A growing economy is impacted by its society in various ways. In India where social progress is inclusive of people from diverse cultures, caste and creed. Disturbance of any of its constituents can lead to imbalance of various performance indicators viz a viz GDP, SPI, SDG, CPI, HDI etc.

*India has now and then faced a direct attack by its own bodies towards social progress, e.g the recent onslaught of pandemic has emerged as an ice test to highlight the aspect of social response against an unknown calamity. The high and lows of society can be represented by an indicator, known as **social progress indicator**. The index is inclusive and determines the equity of wellness, development and income generation capacity.*

A society with a progressive index is indicative of the present concept of equity, diversity and inclusivity. It is also indicative of an integrated model of norms and values.

Keywords: Society, Wellness, Dynamics, Indicators

Prof. Porter has quoted on India -India is set to create a social progress Index (SPI) that will mirror the track record of individual states on various counts. Which is likely to emerge as a tool for accountability in governance and politics.

(A) Introduction:

A society can be defined as a group of individuals involved in persistent social interaction, or a large social group sharing the same spatial or social territory, typically subjected to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations. Society is a process. For a given society, its norms and values are of utmost importance. The norms and values give a person a complete being, a movement of confidence and self-actualisation.

A society starts with an individual, healthy family, efficient school of learning, efficient work environment, effective teamwork, effective networking and entrepreneurship. A society consists of

completely developed beings who have identified their full potential. It is very important for the society and its elements, to provide success and recognition to their social process. To develop it in a competitive way.

Self-actualisation, in psychology, is a concept regarding the process by which an individual reaches his or her full potential. Similar to Goldstein, Maslow saw self - actualisation as the fulfillment of one's greatest potential. Maslow's theory of actualisation - Self - actualization needs are the highest level and refer to the realisation of a person's potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences, Maslow (1943) describes this level as the desire to accomplish everything that one can, to become the most that one can be.

The society, its content and harmony gets disturbed by the extremist elements, ups and downs of the politics, government rules and regulations, Social behaviour, external forces - foreign interference, natural calamities .

A large and populated country like India, it is very important to display the growth and progress of its economy and society through indicators. It becomes easy to understand the economy and become competitive in the various goals and disciplines. The most important and effective indicators are GDP, HDI, SPI, SDGI.

(B) Objective:

1. To identify if social progress is a direct output of economic progress.

a. Secondary database

1. As the ripples of demonetisation and a poorly designed and hastily implemented Goods and Service Tax (GST) spread through economy that was already struggling with massive bad loans in the banking system, the GDP growth rate steadily fell from over 8% in FY17 to about 4% in FY20, just before Covid-19 hit the country.

2. The Human development Index(HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions. Calculations of the index combines four major indicators: life expectancy for health, expected years of schooling, mean of years of schooling for education and Gross National Income per capita for standard of living. Out of 189 countries, India has ranked 131 on the Human Development Index 2020 prepared by the United nations development programme. With an HDI value of 0.645, the country fell in the medium human development category.

3. The four categories of the social progress index-We divide these indicators across three broad dimensions of social progress: Basic human needs, Foundations of wellbeing, and opportunity. Within each dimension, there are four components that further divide the indicators into thematic categories. India is ranked 117. 66.24 - Basic human needs 50.15 - Foundation of well being,

54.01 -Opportunity.

4. The index is developed in collaboration with the United Nations in India. It tracks the progress of all states and UT's on the 115 indicators framework (NIF) of the Ministry of statistics and Programme Implementation. The index is a key tool for focussed policy dialogue, formulation and implementation through development actions, in line with the global SDG framework. It helps in identifying crucial gaps related to tracking the SDG's and the need for India to develop its statistical systems. India's SDG score improved by 6 points from 60 in 2019 to 66 in 2020-21- on account of improvement in performance in providing facilities including clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy among others.

(C) Research Methodology:

The research has been primarily done on the secondary database for the period 2017-2021 for INDIA. The statistics have been obtained from the published data on Niti aayog, various state websites and websites of municipal corporations. The database is exhaustive and has details pertaining to state, municipal jurisdiction. Published data of Scores of various indicators are available on the websites. For the research purposes the four indexes are- GDP (Gross domestic product), SPI(Social progress Index), HDI(Human Development Index), SDGI (Social Development Goals Index).

Human development Index is designed to reflect average achievements in three basic aspects of human development - health, knowledge and standard of living a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth ; knowledge, as measured by mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling;

Social progress Indicator includes education, health, employment and unemployment rates and gender equality.

The Sustainable development goals indicator was adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet , and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Gross domestic product - The total value of goods produced and services provided in a country during one year.

For every society it is very essential that its equilibrium, balance is maintained. A society has to be wellness, educated, and progressive for a growing economy. The society as a whole is judged, and is an end result of its constituents. The constituents are its people, infrastructure, civic amenities and natural environm. The development of a society is obstructed by external elements. The forces can be Foreign, Political , Governmental , Environmental or Social.

India, although a growing economy still lacks the thrust to pull out from its - in various sectors. From the year 2017 India has improved upon its performance indicators. The most important

being the gross domestic product. The others trailing, Human development Index, sustainable development goals index, and the social progress indicator.

India, the second highest populous country does not do justification to the population statistics. China which leads in the trajectory is higher in all the indicators than India. Thus the indicators confirm that for India there is still a lag in wellness, foundation of need and opportunity.

The statistics and the indicator show that the social development and environmental concerns are often not accorded the attention they deserve in public policy discourse. The reason for this is that they are often seen in direct conflict with economic prosperity. Over the years, development practitioners have realised that there is a strong link between social, environmental and economic development. This, they opine, is central to why there needs to be measurement and benchmarking across these vital dimensions of development.

Table I

(a) Statistics for major indicators for the period 2016-2021 :

Indicators/Year s	GDP (Gross Development Product) (in billion U.S. dollars)	SDGI(Sustainable Development Goals Indicator-Score)	SDI (Social Development Indicator-Score)	HDI(Human Development Indicator-Score)
2016-2017	2651.47	78.4	55.13	0.630
2017-2018	2701.11	58.1	56.13	0.640
2018-2019	2870.5	61.9	56.81	0.642
2019-2020	2708.77	60	57.75	0.645
2020-2021	3049.70	66	56.80	0.645

Table II

b. Statistics for population of India for the period 2016-2021

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Population (in billions)	1.32	1.33	1.35	1.36	1.38	1.39
Urban population(%)	33.2%	33.6%	34.1%	34.5%	35%	36%

Table III

c. Statistics for Unemployment in India for the period 2016-2021

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Unemployment (in %)	22.6	22.72	22.85	23.01	23.5	unpublished

a. Foreign factors:

The onslaught of COVID-19 pandemic has widened the urban rural divide. There has been loss of work, employment. Loss of livelihood. The most hurt were the startups, smaller production houses. The migration of the labour from the point of work called off many productive units. The movement was another negative factor towards social progress. There was loss of human consistency on grounds of deliberate ostracisation, elimination and discrimination on grounds of pandemic. After March 25, 2020, when a national lockdown was implemented, economic activity slowed down sharply. As a result, output fell by a whopping 25 percent (year on year) between April and June, the first quarter of the FY21 fiscal year.

The informal sector, where the vast majority of India's labor force is employed, has been particularly affected. As in most countries, the pandemic has exacerbated vulnerabilities for traditionally excluded groups, such as youth, women, and migrants.

The response of the Government to the COVID-19 outbreak had been swift and comprehensive. A national lockdown to contain the health emergency was complemented by a comprehensive policy package to mitigate the impact on the poorest households (through various social protection measures) as well as on small and medium enterprises (through enhanced liquidity and financial support). The pandemic could not be tackled properly. The immediate response of COVID 19 was lost on the grounds of the ticking clock of the highest COVID affected population. It highlighted the trailing health and hygiene situation of the population. The government had to deliberately take drastic measures for health and hygiene purposes.

b. Governmental Factors:

Demonetisation- On 8 November 2016, the government of India announced the demonetisation of the Rs.500/- and Rs.1000/- note. Demonetisation lowered the growth rate of economic activity by at least 2 percentage points in the quarter of demonetisation. In his book, "I do what I do", former RBI governor, Raghuram Rajan disclosed that he never supported the idea of note ban and felt that short-term impacts of the exercise could outweigh the long term gains. An analysis of the data reveals that demonetisation has failed to meet its stated goals except in certain areas such

as encouraging more digital transactions and more formalisation of the financial system. But the exercise has failed to meet the key objectives, mainly addressing the problem of black money. The pain associated with the exercise has far outweighed the gains.

GST which was implemented after scrapping LBT, did disturb the economy. The GST law requires taxpayers to get themselves registered in all the states of their operations. This not only increases the compliance burden but also increases the financial burden. GST is still incapable with an unreliable IT platform. It is a tax burden on small businesses. There are various laws and rules which need to be still reflected and looked into. The newly introduced GST has hitches as to tedious compliances problems. Unreliable IT platform- the businesses find it difficult in the accessibility and functional abilities of the portal. To pay GST, for the small businesses the tax slab has been reduced to Rs20 lakh- 40 lakh. There is also a difference in GST structure for different states. No appellate body to address GST matters etc.

National population register- The citizenship rules framed in 2003, the NPR is the first step towards compilation of the National Register of India Citizens (NRIC) or NRC. The NPR was first collected in 2010 and then updated in 2015. The National population register has been opposed due to its link with the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship (Amendment) act (CAA). At least 13 states have opposed the NPR update. The citizenship Act procedures went through various protests by the citizens. Protestors in all the regions were concerned that the NRC might be used to deprive Muslims of Indian Citizenship. The protestors include Indian citizens, Migrants, universities, Youth unions and councils, civic bodies and administration. The protest was criticising the act and the government. The procedures could not be taken through due to pandemic

C. Political Factors:

Social development and environmental concerns are often not accorded the attention they deserve in public policy discourse. The reason for this is that they are often seen in direct conflict with economic prosperity. Also many times political and municipal jurisdictions are the major decision makers. However, over the years, development practitioners have realised that there is a strong link between social, environmental and economic development, thus there have been initiatives to be justified on various fronts. So far several composite indices have been developed by development theorists and practitioners but very few look to solely measure social and environmental performance. Some instances which caused furore amongst the commoner and instigated intervention by the NGOs.

a. **Over 2000 trees were cut** - In October 2020, in the cover of night, bulldozers rolled into Aarey and trees were cut amid a dramatic stand-off with protestors. In India From 2005 to February 2018, a total 112,169 trees have been cut-an average of 24 per day. Some standards were disturbed as the norms behind planting the trees, the discipline of the administration and the destruction of property.

b. **ARAI hill** - The Bal Bharati-Paud Phata link road that cuts through the law college hill. The justification given by the PMC is that this 2.1 km link road will help in decongesting Law college Road (and Senapati Bapat Road, Ganeshkhind Rd.) The citizen's group filed a PIL in the Bombay high court against the proposed link Road. The project passes through Vetal Tekdi and the slopes of Law college Tekdi. Vetal Tekdi is considered the green lungs of Pune City with its hill slopes sprouting dense vegetation patches, open shrubs, deciduous forests and plantation areas. The tekdi is a popular hiking and walking destination for Pune's citizen's. The PMC listened to the public interest litigation and has forestalled the work. The Vetal Tekdi area has also been adjudged as a green zone

c. **Fury as Goa's rare wildlife park faces invasion by rail and road** - Mollem national park has long been the emerald in Goa's crown. The verdant jungle which covers this steep area of India's Western Ghats mountain range is home to leopards, Bengal tigers, pangolins, black panthers and hundreds of endemic species of flora and fauna found nowhere else on the planet. The muscular state animal of Goa- the gaur, or Indian bison-is often seen trudging through the forests, and the park's Dudhsagar waterfall is among the highest in the country. The 240 sq km is partially deforested by three invasive projects: the doubling railway line, road expansion and electric power transmission line. This is an area declared by Unesco to be one of the world's eight biodiversity hotspots and which includes a proposed tiger reserve. This project will undo so much which can never be recovered again. An activist with the Goa Foundation who has taken up litigation against all the three projects in the Bombay high court and before a committee of the Supreme Court. although Indian law bans construction in wildlife sanctuaries , the government has approved it in Public interest and Goa's future development.

D. Social Factors:

The most recent effort is the release of an annual global report on measuring and tracking social progress. The report defines social progress as "the capacity of a society to meet the basic human needs of its citizens, establish the building blocks that allow citizens and communities to enhance and sustain the quality of their lives, and create the conditions for all individuals to reach their full potential".

India with respect to the social progress indicator is categorised as a "low social progress" country. A look across the various dimensions of social progress for India shows that it has neither strength nor weakness across various components of basic human needs. Along the foundations of the wellbeing dimension India is weak on access to information and communication as well as health and wellness components. Finally in the opportunity dimension, India is relatively weak in areas of tolerance, inclusion and personal rights.

The crimes against women and children include rapes, violence against children, denying them their right of independence, free-movement in the society. The five year disclosures have

shown marginal decrease in the crimes and violence against women and children. The period during implementation of NPR and NRC through light on growing aggressiveness amongst the youth and the administration. It also threw light on rising obstinacy in the culture of the universities and pillars of education. There was massive vandalism, disruption of property, and manhandling. The movement of labourers from their place of work during the pandemic disclosed another abnormality of our society. It divulged growing discrimination on the basis of caste, income, poverty, religion. The disturbance also confirmed the rise in the societies of migrants from different countries. Also rise of unauthoritative settlements which cause disruptions from time to time.

(E) Conclusion:

- a. The rural population is higher than the urban population. The ratio is stagnant at 70:30.
- b. The youth population is on the rise. The average age of youth is 22-23 years.
- c. The unemployment rate has increased marginally, which is high in the youth sector. The percentage is 23%.
- d. The GDP - India ranks as the 5th highest growing economy.
- e. The social development indicator, India ranks 117. India shows a low score. The low score is reflective of a populist methodology of the country.
- f. The human development index also ranks a very low as 131 in the year 2020. The reason being a high drop out in schooling or higher education.
- g. The indexes fail to show rapid increase due to population outburst, increase in elements, like, migrants, settlements, poverty, caste and religious barriers, income divide and culture barriers.
- h. The sustainable development goals index has a fair growth. The SDG (I) has been implemented keeping in mind development in the 17 sectors of the rural economy. The slump has been due to a pandemic (COVID-19) which has given a massive blow to the rural economy.
- i. Both the indexes - Social development Index and Human Development Index have low ranking due to decrease in tolerance and lack of empathy, lack of positive affinity to both internal and external environment, deteriorating moral values.
- j. Although economic development is at its highest, social progress is not balanced with economic progress.
- k. The massive economic development is sometimes encroaching on the Green Zone. It disturbs the environment and wellness, health and hygiene factors.

(F) Recommendations:

- a. The education policy should have stricter guidelines for 10+2 Education.

- b. The education policy should have strict guidelines for graduate education.
- c. A strict census for female literacy and male literacy.
- d. An education system for Wellness and humanity has to be imparted.
- e. Education system should include Mental Wellness from standard eighth.
- f. A Behavioral and Moral scorecard is required in the Social Progress Indicator.

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