

Human Development Indices: Old and New

Sanjay K Mohanty and Bidyadhar Dehury

In October 2010, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) disseminated the revised methodology of the Human Development Index (HDI) and added three indices, namely, Inequality in Human Development Index (IHDI), the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and the Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to the family of human development indices. These changes were justified on grounds of measuring deprivation, poverty and inequality in the state of human development within and across countries. This paper compares the estimated HDI using the old and new (revised) methodology, and examines the feasibility of constructing the new human development indices (IHDI, GII and MPI) in the states of India.

Results indicate that the value of HDI computed using the new methodology is substantially lower than that computed with the old methodology cutting across the states. However, the overall ranks of the states in the new and old HDI are similar. The computation of life table for socio-economic groups would be helpful to disaggregate HDI and IHDI. The MPI can be computed using data from the National Family and Health Survey-3, but it needs considerable improvement in the conceptualisation and contextualisation of multi-dimensional poverty indicators.

Introduction

In last the six decades, there has been significant advancement in theoretical understanding and methodological innovation in the field of development studies. The theoretical understanding has shifted from growth-oriented approach (by rapid industrialisation) in 1950s and 1960s to the basic minimum need approach (eradication of poverty and hunger) in 1970s, formation and expansion of human capital in 1980s, and human development paradigm in 1990s. The human development report, a milestone of human development paradigm, is a regular annual feature since its first publication in 1990 and most widely used.

Since the launch of first human development report by UNDP in 1990, the human development indices, namely the Human Development Index (HDI), the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Human Poverty Index (HPI-1, HPI-2)

Sanjay K Mohanty, Associate Professor, Department of Fertility Studies, International Institute for Population Sciences, Deonar, Mumbai 400088, Maharashtra, India, Email: sanjay@iips.net.

Bidyadhar Dehury, Research Scholar, International Institute for Population Sciences, Deonar, Mumbai 400088, India, Email: bidya_dehury@yahoo.com.