

A Study on Human Development Index in India

Dr. Vijayakumar. N

Assistant Professor (Sr. Gr) in Commerce, B. S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

ABSTRACT

The Human Development Index (HDI) was developed by Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq and Indian economist Amartya Sen in 1990, and later adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to measure a country's development for evaluating the progress of countries towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in 2015 and consists of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, and map to the dimensions of HDI and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) well-being framework. According to the Human Development Report 2023-24, the top 10 countries are Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Hong Kong, China (SAR), Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Ireland, Singapore, Australia, and the Netherlands, and India ranked at 134th position, having a score of 0.644. Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite statistical measure to evaluate and compare the level of human development in different regions worldwide. This research paper aims to evaluate India's current human development by analysing the Human Development Index. The study's findings show the positive trends in life expectancy, mean and expected years of schooling, and overall HDI parameters in India.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable Development Goals, Human Development Index, Gross National Income, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of human development, which emerged in the late 1980s, puts people at the centre of the development agenda, and in this concept, economic growth and wealth are considered as means to development, not an end in itself. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been bringing out a global Human Development Index for all the countries, including both developing and developed countries. The Human Development Report is released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) every year. It captures three major dimensions of human development that are access to knowledge, a long and healthy life, and a proper standard of living. The HDI report was first released in 1990.

Statement of the Problem - The importance of strengthening the human development (HD) achievements in a country to augment its growth potential is well known in development literature. Several initiatives to enhance the HD level have been introduced in India in recent past. However, the Human Development achievements still vary significantly across Indian States. The Human Development Report Office convened a thematic consultation on the 2023 Human Development Report, with a specific focus on the evolution of institutions in a changing world, and how learnings from the past can be applied to design

future-proof organizations. Some countries have excellent human development, whereas others struggle to offer basic services.

Need of the study - Human development helps people to lead healthier, longer, and knowledgeable lives. The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone, and to highlight the need for greater attention to the distributional aspects of development.

Conceptual framework of the study - Three components of HDI are as follows: HDI is a composite index that measures average achievement in human development, taking into account three indicators: Life expectancy at birth (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3), the maximum age that a person is expected to live. Expected years of schooling (SDG 4.3), Enrolment ratio for students in primary, secondary, and higher secondary education. Mean years of schooling (SDG 4.4) Gross national income (GNI) (SDG 8.5) Total income of a country divided by the total population.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Human Development Reports (HDR), brought out by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), define human development as a process of enlarging people's choices.

According to the 2023-24 Human Development Report (HDR), titled 'Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarised World,' India ranks 134 on the global Human Development Index (HDI). Switzerland has been ranked number one.

Raj et al. (2023) analysed "Economic Growth and Human Development in India". This paper mainly focuses on three factors related to human development and economic growth in India. First, the pattern of relationship between economic growth and human development in India at the national and state levels. Second, whether economic development is being transferred to the state level, and third, whether human development is changing at the state level.

Mehrotra and Parida (2021). Studied evidence of convergence in cross-sectional HDI in the Indian context has been reported; these studies refer either to a few data points or rely on secondary data on HDI taken directly from published reports.

III. Objectives of the study

1. To study the concept of Human Development Index
2. To explain the components and significance of the Human Development Index
3. To analyse the status and position of the Human Development Index of India in different years.

IV. Research Methodology of the Study

In this study is purely based on secondary data were collected from the various reports of human resource development ministry, UN Sustainability report, various Human Development Reports of United Nations Development Program (UDNP), Indian National Human Development Reports, state-level government statistical report, NSSO, different publications of Government of India, NSS Survey, various Economic Surveys, newspaper articles, journal papers and website sources are used.

Table No.1 Rank of countries by Human Development Report 2022 - 2023

RANK	COUNTRY	HDI VALUE	Countries with the Human Development Index (HDI)
1	Switzerland	0.967	Very high

2	Norway	0.966	Very high
3	Iceland	0.959	Very high
4	Hong Kong	0.956	Very high
5	Sweden	0.952	Very high
6	Denmark	0.952	Very high
7	Germany	0.950	Very high
8	Ireland	0.950	Very high
9	Singapore	0.949	Very high
10	Australia	0.946	Very high
75	China	0.788	Highest
78	Sri Lanka	0.780	Highest
87	Maldives	0.762	Highest
125	Bhutan	0.681	Medium
129	Bangladesh	0.670	Medium
134	India	0.644	Medium
144	Myanmar	0.608	Medium
146	Nepal	0.601	Medium
164	Pakistan	0.540	Lowest
182	Afghanistan	0.462	Lowest
193	Somalia	0.380	Lowest

SOURCE: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) compiles the Human Development Index (HDI) of 193 nations in the annual Human Development Report.

The above table reveals that in 2022, India's Human Development Index (HDI) value was 0.644, placing it in the "medium human development" category and ranking 134th out of 193 countries and territories. The HDI categorizes countries as follows: low (below 0.550), medium (0.550–0.699), high (0.700–0.799), and very high (0.800 or greater).

Table No.2 India’s Human Development Index (HDI) 1990-91 to 2022 – 2023

Year of report	Expected Years of Schooling	Mean Years of Schooling	Life Expectancy at Birth	GNI per capita (2017 PP\$)	HDI Value	RANK	Human Development Classification
1990 - 91	7.3	3	58.5	1789	0.434	114	Low
1995 - 96	8.3	3.3	60.2	2087	0.458	120	Low
2000 - 01	8.5	3.6	62.1	2573	0.483	129	Low
2005 - 06	10	4	64.1	3305	0.527	137	Medium

2010 - 11	11.1	4.4	65.7	4589	0.570	138	Medium
2015 - 16	12.0	6.2	68.6	5391	0.609	130	Medium
2020 - 21	12.2	3.5	69.7	6,681	0.645	131	Medium
2021 - 22	11.9	6.7	67.2	6,590	0.633	135	Medium
2022 - 23	12.6	6.57	67.7	6,951	0.644	134	Medium

Source: Compiled from Human Development Report 2023-24 and Economic Survey of India.

The data presented in Table 2 shows the trends of Human Development Index (HDI) parameters in India from 1990-91 to 2022-23, India saw improvements across all HDI indicators – life expectancy, education, and Gross National Income. Life expectancy rose from 67.2 to 67.7 years, expected years of schooling reached 12.6 from 11.9, Mean years of schooling increased to 6.57, Gross National Income (GNI) per capita saw an increase from \$6,542 to \$ 6,951, and GNI is the total amount of money earned by a nation’s people and businesses.

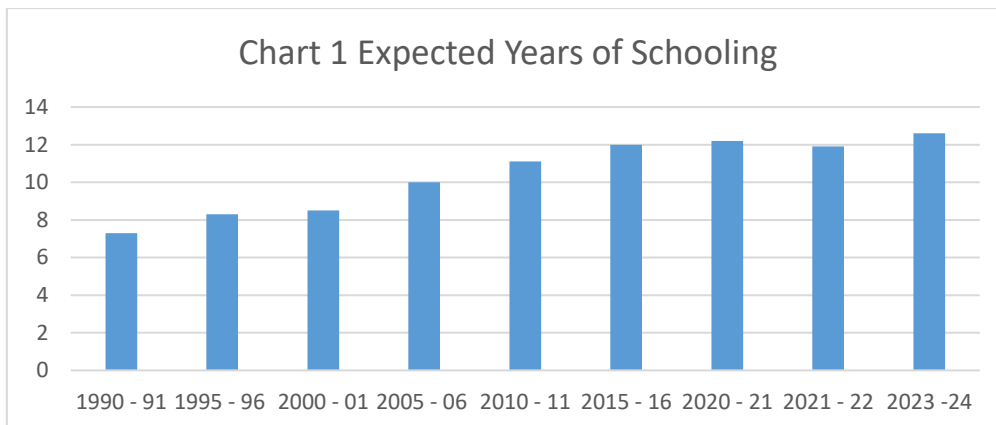


Chart 1 shows the Expected Years of Schooling Between 1990 and 2022, changed by 4.6 years and mean years of schooling changed by 3.8 years.

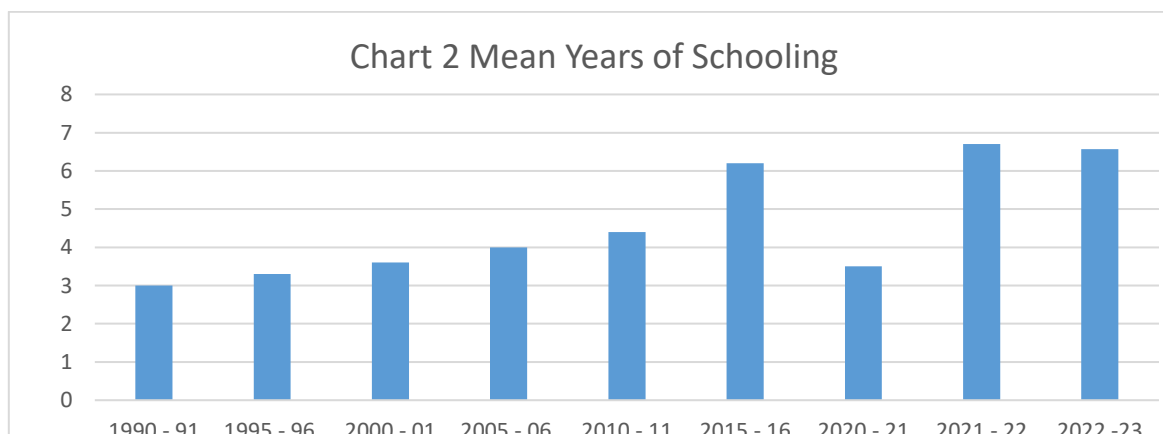


Chart 2 shows the Mean Years of Schooling Between 1990 and 2022 mean years of schooling changed by 3.8 years.

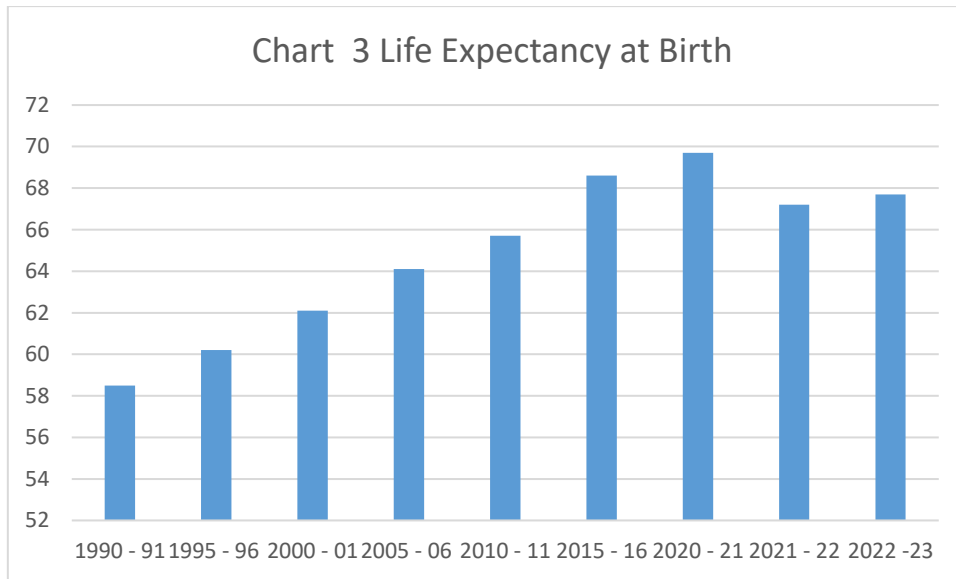


Chart 3 shows the Life Expectancy at Birth Between 1990 and 2022, India's life expectancy at birth changed by 9.1 years.

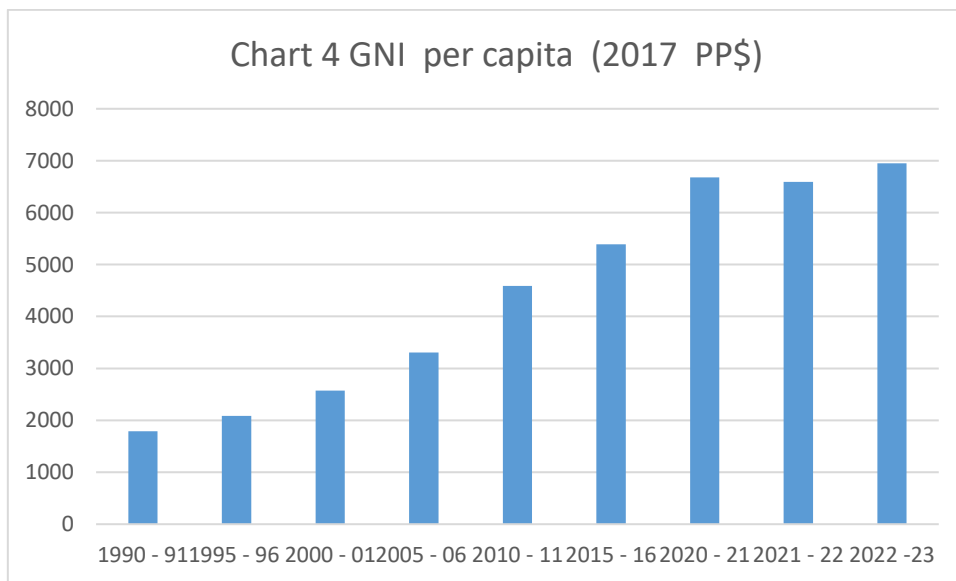


Chart 4 shows the GNI per capita (2017 PP\$) India's GNI per capita changed by about 287.0 percent between 1990 and 2022.

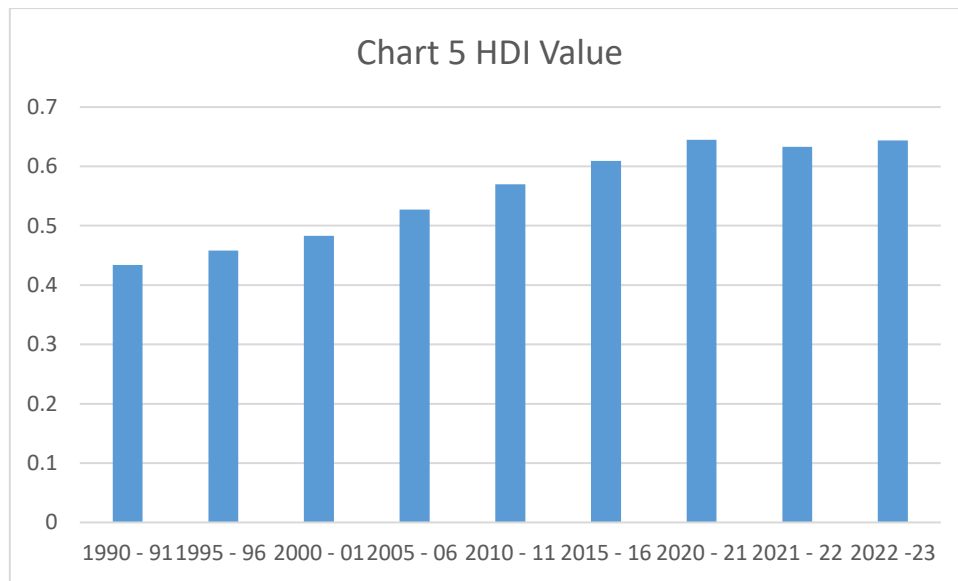


Chart 5 shows the HDI Value Between 1990 and 2022, India's HDI value changed from 0.434 to 0.644, a change of 48.4 percent.

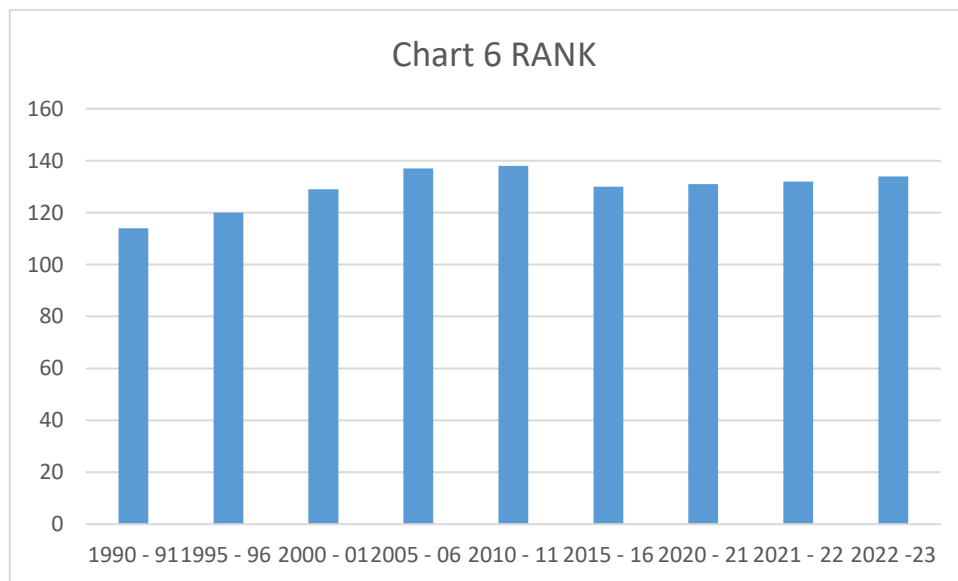


Chart 6 shows the HDI Rank Improved to 134 in 2023 from 114 in 1990.

V. Findings of the study

Key Findings of Human Development Index in India: HDI Rank Improved to 134 in 2023 from 114 in 1990. HDI Value: Increased to 0.434 from 1990 to 0.644 in 2023. Life expectancy at birth: Improved to 67.7 years in 2023 from 58.5.2 in 1990. Expected years of schooling: Increased to 12.6 years from 7.3 years. Mean years of schooling increased to 6.57 years. Gross National Income per capita: Improved to \$6,951 from \$.1789. Category: Medium human development category.

Comparison with the Neighbourhood: India ranks below China (75), Sri Lanka (78), Maldives (87), Bhutan (125), and Bangladesh (129). Myanmar (144), Nepal (146), Pakistan (164) and Afghanistan (182) have been ranked lower than India.

Challenges in Human Development

Unequal Access to Healthcare: Disparities in healthcare availability between urban and rural areas, Pers-

istent malnutrition among children and women, despite government schemes. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs and other lifestyle diseases, and a shortage of public health Infrastructure. Education: Learning outcomes remain suboptimal despite high enrolment rates, Gender Disparity, Dropout Rates, Digital Divide. High youth unemployment despite increased educational attainment. Inadequate access to safe housing and sanitation facilities for millions and Social Exclusion.

Government Initiatives for Human Development: Ayushman Bharat, National Health Mission (NHM), Mission Indradhanush, POSHAN Abhiyaan. Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009: Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Skill India Mission and Digital India.

Living Standards - Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY).

Role of Technology and Innovation - Digital Health, EdTech Platforms, Smart Cities: Enhance urban living through sustainable infrastructure. AI and Big Data: Facilitate targeted policymaking and monitoring.

Way Forward - Investing in Health, Education Reforms, Reducing Inequality, Empowering Women, and balancing development with ecological conservation to ensure long-term well-being.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Human Development Index is a powerful tool for assessing and comparing the well-being and development of nations. It transcends the limitations of traditional economic indicators by considering factors such as health, education, and standard of living. With India's HDI in 1990 standing at 0.434, the 2022 score reflects a positive change of 48.4%. Therefore, if India has to realise its aspiration of becoming a superpower, it must invest to reduce the burden of social and economic disadvantage to vulnerable sections of its population.

VII. REFERENCES

1. https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/India/human_development
2. <https://www.undp.org/thailand/publications/human-development-report2023-24>
3. <https://countryeconomy.com/hdi/india>
4. <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2023-24reporten.pdf>
5. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/opendata/the-human-development-index--hdi--in-uncharted-territory--a-world>
6. <https://www.nextias.com/blog/human-development-in-india/>
7. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Development_Index
8. <https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/human-development-index-india-ranking-1608992272-1>
9. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/hdi-by-country>
10. <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/>
11. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2097921>
12. <https://www.drishtiiias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-analysis/human-development-report-2023-24>.