SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT- REGIONAL DISPARITIES.

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INTRODUCTION

▶ Growth and equity are the twin objectives of any economy. Growth depends on the resource base, input use and infrastructure development. Besides physical infrastructure, social infrastructure is vitally important to the States' economic future. Strong social infrastructure is the foundation of the strong economy. For sustain economic growth, we need educated, healthy and secured people.

▶ There are regional disparities regarding the development of education and health .Hence in this paper an attempt is made to analyse the regional disparities in the social infrastructure in South Pacific Islands.

Objective, Data Base and Limitations.

- The objective of this paper is to analyse the Disparities in the Social Infrastructure of the people in different economies in South Pacific. To examine how the economies are classified according to (a) index of Human Development (b) Index of Gross national income (GNI) per capita PPP .The selected variables are:

- Income: Per capita GNI Measured in PPP (US dollars)

- Education: (a) Education Index; (b) Mean years of schooling (years);

- Health: (a) Life expectancy at birth (years),(b) Infant mortality rate; and (c) Maternal mortality rate.

- Human Development Index.

Methodology

- Since the publication of HDR in 1990, researchers made contributions to examine from different angles. Prior to UNDP'S HDI, Morris (1979) constructed a composite index of infant mortality rate, literacy and life expectancy and termed as Physical quality of life.

- In this study Index of variable is defined as;

$$Index\ X_i = \frac{Actual\ value\ of\ X_i - Minimum\ value\ X_i}{Maximum\ value\ X_i - Minimum\ value\ of\ X_i}$$

To examine how far the south pacific economies varied in respect of human development is presented in the following tables.

TABLE 1: CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES ACCORDING TO INDEX OF INCOME AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

	Index of HD				
Index of Income	< 0.250	0.251 - 0.500	0.501 - 0.750	0.751 & above	Total
<0.250		2	2		4
0.251 - 0.500			1		1
0.501 - 0.750			2		2
0.751 & above			1		1
Total	-	2	6		8

This analysis shows that there is a positive correlation between the income and human development. It is interestingly note that two economies namely Vanuatu and Kiribati even they belong to very low income group but they are in moderately high human development group.

TABLE 2: CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES ACCORDING TO INDEX OF INCOME AND EDUCATION

Index of Income	Index of Education				
	< 0.250	0.251 - 0.500	0.501 - 0.750	0.751 & above	Total
<0.250		2	2		4
0.251 - 0.500			1		1
0.501 - 0.750			2		2
0.751 & above				1	1
Total	-	2	5	1	8

This analysis also shows that very high and moderately high income economies are also belong to the same in education index. But among very low income economies viz. Vanuatu and Kiribati are better in education index than the other two economies viz. PNG and Solomon Islands.

TABLE 3: CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES ACCORDING TO INDEX OF INCOME AND LIFE EXPECTANCY

Index of Income	Index of Life Expectancy				
	< 0.250	0.251 - 0.500	0.501 - 0.750	0.751 & above	Total
<0.250	1	1	1	1	4
0.251 - 0.500			1	1	2
0.501 - 0.750				2	2
0.751 & above			1		1
Total	1	1	3	4	9

This analysis shows that even Marshall Islands belongs to low income group but it belongs to very high life expectancy at birth group. And two economies viz, Tonga and Samoa even they belong to moderately high income group but both belong to very high life expectancy at birth group.

TABLE 4: CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES ACCORDING TO INDEX OF MEAN YEARS OF SCHOOLING

Index of Income	Index of Mean years of Schooling				
	< 0.250	0.251 - 0.500	0.501 - 0.750	0.751 & above	Total
<0.250	2		1	1	4
0.251 - 0.500				2	2
0.501 - 0.750				1	1
0.751 & above				1	1
Total	2		1	5	8

This analysis shows that even Vanuatu belongs to very low income group but it belongs to very high mean years of schooling group. And two economies namely Samoa and Tonga even they belong to low income group they belong to very high mean years of schooling group.

TABLE 5: CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES ACCORDING TO INDEX OF INFANT MORTALITY

Index of Income	Index of Infant Mortality				
	< 0.250	0.251 - 0.500	0.501 - 0.750	0.751 & above	Total
<0.250	2			2	4
0.251 - 0.500		2			2
0.501 - 0.750	1	1			2
0.751 & above	1				1
Total	4	3		2	9

This analysis shows that two economies namely Solomon Islands and Vanuatu even they belong to very low income group but they belong to very low infant mortality rate. But two economies which belong to very low income group namely PNG and Kiribati but both belong to very high infant mortality rate.

TABLE 6: CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES ACCORDING TO INDEX OF MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE

Index of Income	Index of Maternal Mortality Rate				
	< 0.250	0.251 - 0.500	0.501 - 0.750	0.751 & above	Total
<0.250	1	2		1	4
0.251 - 0.500		1			1
0.501 - 0.750		1			1
0.751 & above	1				1
Total	2	4		1	7

This analysis shows that even Kiribati which belongs to very low income group but it belongs to very low maternal mortality rate group. And two very low income economies namely Vanuatu and Solomon Islands both belong to moderately low maternal mortality rate group.

With reference to PNG it belongs to very low income group among south pacific islands. Regarding HDI, PNG belong to moderately low human development group. But in human development variables, in case of life expectancy at birth and mean years of schooling PNG belong to very low life expectancy and mean years of schooling group. .And regarding infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate PNG belongs to very high infant mortality and maternal mortality rates.

Conclusion

▶ Many programs are social rather than economic wherein the spread effects will be more and media plays an important role. The success of these programs depend on the degree of combination of individual and public actions coupled with the support of personal and social institutions.

▶ Recently PNG introduced free education and free health policies with the objective if improving human development. With the effective implementation of these two policies PNG will improve its human development. PNG has a significant opportunity to have a sustainable human development with the commencement of the LNG project.

Thank you