

**WORLD SOCIAL WELFARE ANALYSIS:
A THEORETICAL MODEL¹**

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One of the marked features of the current turmoil in international affairs is the growing distrust of economic values and concepts as points of departure for world social welfare planning. Such critical phenomena as "gross national product," "balance of payments," "investment," "productivity," and "profit," as valuable as they are to economists, are now recognized to be of only limited value in planning for the social needs of people throughout the world. As a result, new approaches to world and national social welfare analysis must be developed.

Addressing himself to just this issue, Alvin Toffler, the author of *Future Shock*, has written:

The energy crisis is only one component of a more inclusive breakdown that should be called the general crisis of industrialism. The industrial system, based on a high energy consumption, repetitive work, factory production, bureaucratic organization, and materialistic values, is now cracking and splintering in many locations at once. We are experiencing the first tremors of the Super Industrial Revolution, and the sudden, but unsurprising shortage of energy is only one incident in this historic transition. Our problem is not simply to save a few gallons of gas a week but to begin thinking through the design of a whole new social order to replace industrialism.¹

Similarly, the Canadian Prime Minister asked as early as 1971:

...Shouldn't we, in short, be replacing our reliance on GNP with a much more revealing figure --- a new statistic which might be called "Net Human Benefit?"²

Questions such as those raised by Trudeau and Toffler, are continuing to be raised by other world leaders,³ welfare scholars,⁴ and various international bodies,⁵ and, as such, are of central interest to the world social welfare community. One need consider only the recent international conferences on world hunger, the status of women, the law of the sea, the "population explosion," and quality of the environment among others to recognize that economic solutions alone are no longer perceived as offering adequate answers to these exceedingly complex but vital human social concerns. The notion that social development

follows upon the heel of economic development has come under the grave scrutiny and, far the present at least, this doctrine and its implied social values can no longer be accepted as established reality.

Instead, more complex models of world national social welfare development must be constructed. These approaches must be both parsimonious and readily understandable and must integrate economic factors in a broader, more dynamic, model of world social welfare development. The resulting conceptual models, for example, must take cognizance of the interlocking nature of political social, and cultural forces as they interact with prevailing patterns of national social needs and the availability of resources which can be used in meeting those needs. The dominant social philosophy and purpose(s) of a given nation at a particular point in time must also be represented in these conceptualizations.

In the paper which follows, the authors present what we believe to be a viable model of national social welfare development which achieves the various objectives outlined above. This model, based on the concept of national "social vulnerability," is both descriptive and interactive and can be used to identify present priority planning areas. Because of its unique construction, we also believe that the model can serve as a point of departure for re-examining world welfare data from a new perspective, one which solves many of the conceptual problems experienced by welfare scholars for at least the past two decades.

NATIONAL SOCIAL VULNERABILITY

Social vulnerability refers to the extent to which people reside in adverse social situations and, as a result, are more likely to be subjected to injurious or otherwise debilitating experiences.⁶ Level of social vulnerability is directly related to degree of exposure to such experiences which, if inadequately protected against, will render the exposed individuals less competent in dealing with the routine tasks required of daily living and negate other planning objectives. When applied to a nation, social vulnerability is conceptualized as existing to the extent that available national social resources

(e.g. social welfare programs and services) are insufficient to meet the human needs of the nation's population taken as a collectivity (e.g., malnutrition; literacy; inadequate housing; excessive taxation; contaminated environment, etc.). The resulting gap between needs and available resources, as viewed in the appropriate political-social-cultural context, is a direct indicator of the actual and potential social hazards to which the population are exposed. Consequently, social vulnerability is highest among these nations where social needs far outpace available resources and lowest in those situations where resources and needs converge so as to reduce the seriousness of the hazards to which the population is exposed.

Conceptually, national social vulnerability incorporates both quantitative and non-quantitative observations, albeit the non-quantitative measures, for purposes of conceptual simplicity, must, at some point, be symbolized by quantitative terms.⁷ More specifically, indications of national social vulnerability can be grouped into six dynamically inter-related clusters of concern to social welfare planners

- A. the prevailing social philosophy and purpose of a nation as reflected in its constitution, official documents, and major policy statements;
- B. the level of national human need as reflected through standardized statistical reporting procedures;
- C. the level of national social resources available to meet the social needs of the nation's population, e.g. social welfare programs and services;
- D. the degree of political stability characteristic of a nation at particular moments in time;
- E. forces within the society which either support or disrupt the structure of the family as the basic social unit;
- F. the presence of countervailing cultural forces which create intra-group conflicts and disrupt historic traditions, values, customs, and beliefs.

The interactive nature of these quite different social forces is illustrated in the theoretical scheme presented in Figure 1. Each factor occupies one face of the six-sided cube. For analytical purposes, arrows are used to indicate the direction of greatest social vulnerability. We believe that social vulnerability will be highest among those nations which are : 1) elitist in social organization; 2) high in unmet 'human need; 3) low in available social resources; 4) politically unstable; and where both 5) family structures and 6) traditional cultural forces are in a state of disintegration. Conversely, nations possessing the opposite characteristics are believed to be less socially vulnerable. One should not infer from this hypothesis, however, that nations characterized by relatively low social vulnerability are "socially invulnerable." To assert this would represent a grave fault in both logic and prudence. One can reasonably expect, however, that nations relatively low in social vulnerability will experience greater success in achieving their social goals than will those nations whose needs are expansive and resources exceedingly scarce.

A. National Social Purpose

National social purposes serve as cohesive forces which bind a nation's people to one another in their efforts at achieving a better quality of life for themselves and their progeny. Such purposes are often stated in the most global of terms - "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" - and emphasize the shared ideals and values toward which scarce national resources are to be directed. The pursuit of these ideals is always compelling but, in the nature of ideals, their full realization is rarely possible. Nonetheless, the collective commitment to these purposes comprises an important social force in the life stream of the nation and, as such, their impact on divergent patterns of national social welfare development must be understood and valued by the welfare planner. Formal statements of the nation's social purposes are to be found in its official documents and official rhetoric, particularly its constitution and oaths of allegiance when available, or governmental speeches and position when not.

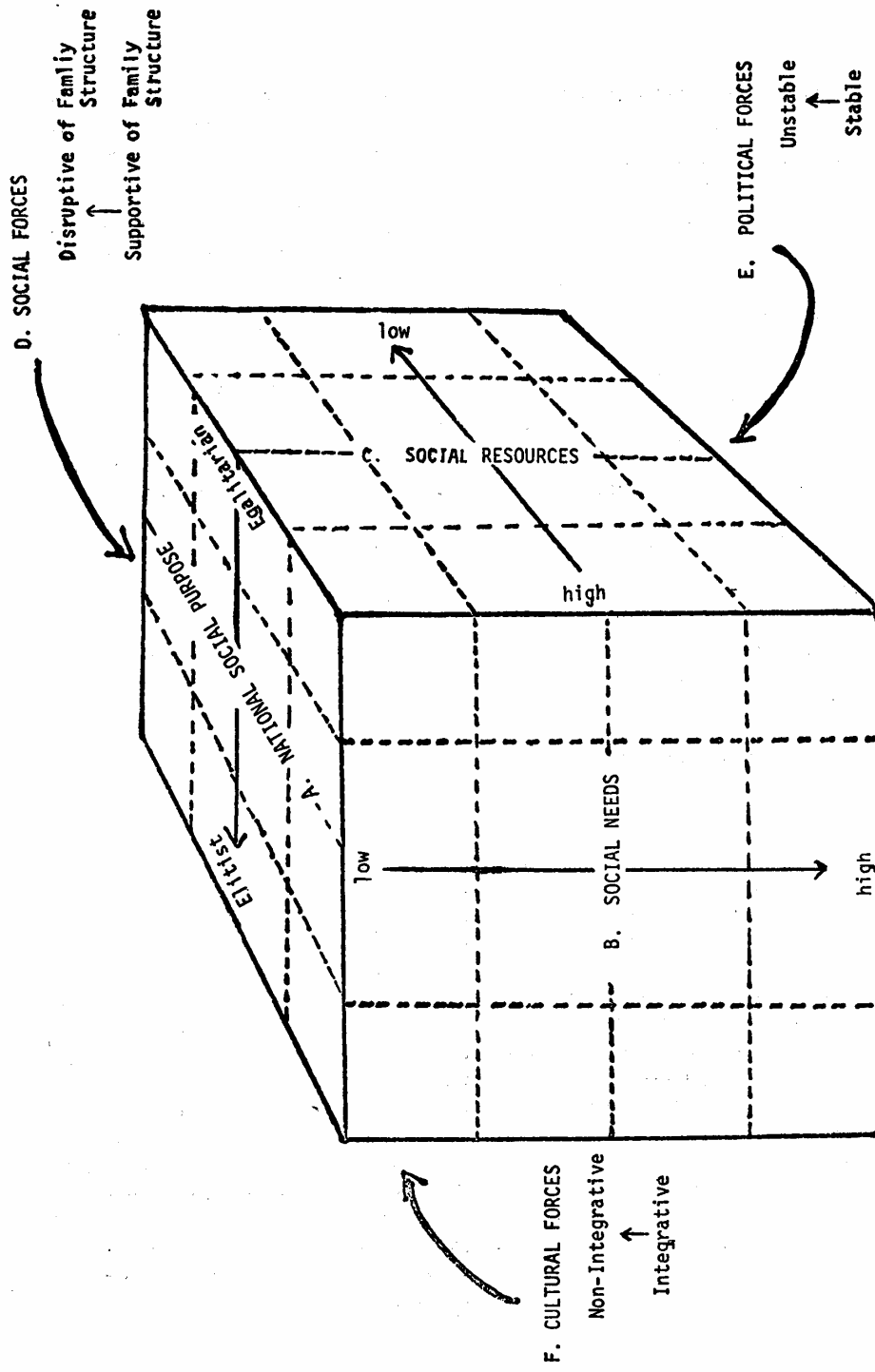


Figure 1. Three Dimensional Model of National Social Vulnerability

On a continuum, national social purpose can be thought of as ranging from "egalitarian" purposes on the one hand to "elitist" purposes on the other. That is to say, nations can be grouped together on the basis of the degree of emphasis placed on mass subservience to the needs of a limited number of persons in positions of preeminence (e.g., traditional monarchies) or power (e.g., military dictatorships) within the society or in terms of the degree of emphasis placed on the advancement of the "common good" through reasonably equal access for all citizens to available social resources (e.g., health care, education, suffrage, etc.). Though admittedly somewhat simplistic in its conceptualization, the reality is that many nations can be grouped according to one or another end of the continuum. The vast majority of the world's nations, however, are characterized by some mixture of these two opposing purposes and can, therefore, be expected to be found at interim points along this continuum.

In the past, social elites have been landowners (in 18th Century Europe and now in India, South America, and Africa), commercial entrepreneurs (in 19th Century Europe and now notably in South America, Africa and the U.S.A.), corporate executives (in Europe and South America), some professions (notably the medical profession in the U.S.A., trade unions in Northern Europe, and favoured "party members" in the U.S.S.R.), or other relatively small groups of community members (e.g. "Aristocrats"). It seems to be historically evident that all societies have some elites, but the question arises whether the whole society should (which is a moral judgment) be organized to either retain the political, economic and social power of existing elites (or create new ones, as in the Communist societies) or whether a whole society can be so organized that it distributes the benefits of the society's overall operations to all members of society. The experience of the industrialized nations seems to be that there is a growing national assumption that certain benefits are the inalienable rights of all human beings--just because they are human beings.

For purposes of the proposed model, nations whose social purposes are more oriented toward providing for the needs of small groups of elites are hypothesized as being more socially vulnerably than are those nations whose organizing purposes are oriented toward serving

the needs of the total population. This assumption is argued on the basis that human needs among mass populations have a greater likelihood of being reduced within those nations whose social purposes are oriented toward meeting the needs of the total population. Such an expectation cannot be made of nations preoccupied with advancing the quality of life for relatively small segments of the population.

B. National Human Need

Indicators of a variety of human needs are routinely collected by national and international bodies. These data are published regularly and constitute a primary source of information used by governmental and world relief organizations in documenting need and in making decisions regarding the disbursement of scarce resources. The United Nations and its associated agencies (such as WHO; ILO; FAO; UNICEF; ECOSOC; UNCTAD) are particularly active in this area and collect certain types of data on a continuing basis from each of its member nations. These world-wide data are then organized and distributed at pre-scheduled intervals.⁸ Additionally, most nations collect other types of socially useful data for purposes of national social planning and research.⁹

These data provide invaluable information on the state of human need present in a nation from one point—in time to another and, as such, permit the design of special time series and effectiveness, studies. All of these data sources are relevant to the welfare scholar and planner.

For purposes of determining level of national social vulnerability, careful analysis of national human need data must be undertaken. These data must be "fitted" into an appropriately derived "Index of Human Need" which considers the importance of each component factor in describing or otherwise defining the nature of human social need in a given nation relative to other factors included within the index. At a minimum, the index must seek to incorporate some combination of the following types of already quantified, readily available, data into a single measure of national human need.

1. Physical and Mental Health: Rates of infant mortality, infant morbidity, maternal deaths, births and,

abnormalities, drug and alcohol dependency, suicidal patterns, mortality trends, malnutrition, general access to medical services, and rates of tuberculosis.

2. Economic Status : Median income levels, patterns of employment and unemployment, economic dependency ratios, consumer bondage, net worth interest rates for home purchase and labor force participation rates.
3. Educational Status: Median educational level, functional illiteracy rates, college enrollments, college graduation, school dropout rates, and general accessibility to educational programs.
4. Taxes: Per capita taxes paid, tax-income effort, (i.e. governmental input, and its impact on wealth distribution), tax-services effort (i.e. governmental output).
5. Occupational and Work Life Patterns: Average weekly hours worked in manufacturing, weekly earnings, percent workers in agriculture and 'human service occupations, over and under employment.
6. Family Stability : Percent broken families (death, divorce, abandonment) rates of illegitimacy, abortion patterns, age dependency ratios, percent dependent on some form of public assistance.
7. Housing: Average number rooms per person, number owner occupied units, average rental cost ' housing starts, etc., in relation to existing local standards;
8. Crimes Against Persons: Rates of assaults tapes, murder, and robbery.
9. Inter-group Conflict and Tensions: Racial and ethnic conflicts, riots, wars, patterns of conflict resolution.

Once constructed, the Index of Social Need then can be used to articulate differential levels of human need as illustrated in the model summarized in Figure 1. This information is an essential part of the total model and forms the

basis for determining the "adequacy" of available national social resources to meet identified human needs.

C. National Human Resources

The capacity to respond to social needs varies in direct relation to a society's access to adequate social resources. These resources include currently available social welfare programs and services as well as the natural wealth of a nation, e.g., raw materials, labor, energy, capital, etc. The quality of family life, rich cultural traditions, and political stability also constitute important sources of natural social wealth for a society which the social planner would be wise to not ignore or minimize in his planning activities.

Obviously, societies characterized by high social vulnerability must commit a substantial proportion of their total resources to social welfare activities. Not infrequently, international relief and public aid organizations supplement the national resources available to a population (United Nations, International Red Cross, American Friends Service Committee, etc.), but, typically, these supplements are directed to one or another subgroup within the population which requires special assistance (the malnourished, disaster victims, rural communities, and so on). The combination of capital wealth, social wealth, and supplemental assistance, however, constitute the primary sources of wealth available to a society for engaging in social welfare activity and, for purposes of the theoretical model, must be taken into account in any analysis.

In particular, emphasis is placed on the organized social welfare activities of a society as experienced in the variety of its social welfare programs and services. To that end, the following criteria should be used to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of social welfare activities as they seek to reduce significant areas of human need:

1. To what extent are the services "socially sanctioned" -- that is, are they undertaken under the auspices of a publicity responsible authority on behalf of the people of the society? The actual operating agency of a service may be non-governmental or governmental--as

in many hospitals, schools, insurance programs, utilities--but it should be operated "in the public interest" and subject to some means of public supervision.

and welfare, the "standards" of service are essentially matters of professional judgments.

- d. to the political structure in which it operates.

2. To What extent are services "accessible" to all members of society?

- a. without financial barriers;
- b. without administrative and logistical barriers;
- c. without political barriers;
- d. without pre-conditions or stigma.

3. To what extent are the services "effective"? The problem here is to evaluate service effectiveness, but the public interest requires that some criteria should be met to demonstrate that it serves that purpose(s) for which it was established.

4. To what extent are the services "responsive"?

- a. to the full range of beneficiaries' needs
 - 1. as they perceive them;
 - 2. as the community perceives them to affect the community;
 - 3. as society, including international society, perceives them.
- b. to the economy
 - 1. as a deliberate choice in the selection of national priorities in the use of resources
 - 2. as providing adequate return for expenditures involved.
- c. to professional standards, i.e., in many fields, especially health

Information of the type required above can be gathered through periodic surveys and inventories of available services.¹⁰ These data, in turn, can be related to identified social needs and, to the extent that gaps in the social welfare service system are found to exist, new services should be developed to respond these needs. Social vulnerability reaches its peak in those countries whose needs are great and resources few. Conversely, social vulnerability is reduced substantially within those countries with adequate resources to satisfy major social needs, e.g. malnutrition ceases to be a national social problem when effective programs and services designed to reach the hungry have developed. Inferentially, the degree of exposure to the potentially damaging effects of social vulnerability is most favorable among those nations where needs are comparatively low and resources plentiful.

D. Social Forces

The fourth side of the model relates to the assessment and definition of those critical social forces present within each community and society. Because of its unique importance to the social welfare of the total society, these forces can best be studied in relation to their impact upon the family -- its structure, functioning, and shifting patterns of organization.

More particularly, as societies move toward increasingly higher levels of wage based industrialization, major shifts repeatedly occur in the structure of family life. These shifts tend to be long lasting and, for many societies, may be entirely irreversible. When of a damaging nature, these consequences affect not only the structure of the family but, from a broader perspective, weaken the overall structure of the society by reducing the level of family functioning and increasing national social vulnerability. In this regard, the move toward more complex levels of industrialization carries with it at least three long-lasting unintended consequences for the family :

1. it encourages women to enter the work force in increasingly larger numbers. As a result, the society must begin to provide many of the services that were hitherto performed by women as "family obligations" -- such as child care, health care, and household maintenance -- which have thus become major "welfare services" of the industrialized countries.
2. it reduces the role of men in the family from a function related to maintenance and protection of the family to that of maintaining a sufficient income from "work" (together with the other earners in the multiple-earner household) so as to pay for their family maintenance services. This trend is encouraged by a variety of incentives -- the most recent of which in the U.S.A. is the right to deduct the cost of a daycare for children from the taxable income of the family.
3. it increases very greatly the degree and nature of dependency in society, viz. young children are encouraged to remain in school or university until their late teens and early 20's and older people are systematically excluded from the active labor force at fixed ages (usually 65) so as to make room for younger workers.

2. the care of non-productive persons
3. the support of dependency created by work conditions.

These recent developments reflect only part of the hidden costs of industrial growth, and the experience of past years in the growth of industrial systems suggests that as these costs to people become evident, the society must create social institutions (family allowances, public education systems, public pension programs) that will take care of the consequent social needs at "public" expense.

Quite obviously, in the process of moving toward attainment of the "better life"-- measured today almost invariably in purely economic terms --many societies have created for themselves social welfare problems of a magnitude never before experienced or anticipated. The problems are frequently of enormous proportions and rarely, if ever, can they be solved with purely economic or other material resources. Welfare planners must be cognizant of these unintended consequences of industrial development on family life and should recognize that bureaucratically administered welfare programs and services alone can never replace those unique social goods and services produced by the family as part of its set of unquestioned duties and responsibilities. In our judgment, forces operating within a society which threaten essential family structures should be considered as contributing to increased national social vulnerability whereas efforts to strengthen family functioning strengthen both the society and its individual members.

In attempting to arrive at an adequate assessment of these social forces within the model, it is necessary not only to obtain the data relating to the extent and cost of providing the necessary services once performed by the family, but also to know the nature and degree of social acceptability that attaches to such related social conditions as :

- a. The acceptability of women's' work;
- b. The acceptable ages for employment;
- c. The extent of social acceptance for the care of dependent persons, most notably the aged, by the society;
- d. The social acceptability of public services to replace the :
 1. home making functions

E. Political Forces

Another aspect of welfare that requires attention is the strength and play of political forces within the country and between countries. Every recipient of welfare services is a voter in a democratic country where the vote still counts as a major political weapon. Candidates for election are acutely sensitive to the fact that each child has two parents who can vote, and thus education services have become a very considerable part of the budget of every political subdivision in such countries. Every old person (and they now represent something like 1 in 10 of the population in the heavily industrialized

countries) who receives a state pension from the national retirement system is a voter and/or supporter. Every beneficiary of Unemployment Compensation (in times of economic stress, this can rise and has even to as high as 10 percent of the work-force) is a voter or a potential supporter. Employers who rely on the "welfare services" to stabilize their work force and maintain it when it cannot be employed, are also powerful political and economic figures in their communities and substantial contributors to political funds. The political force of these large numbers of people is less visible in the dictatorships, miligarchies, or oligarchies that now proliferate throughout the world, but it is a notable political fact that, in the last resort, a nation or society is only governed when the elite in power represents the needs and views of a substantial majority of the community. The current (1975) upheavals in Africa, Greece, Portugal, and Spain are evidence enough of this fact. The rise of the Trade Unions (or organized labor) to political strength in all countries of Northern Europe is evidence of the political strength of workers organized for industrial purposes. Trade Unions, committed as they always have been, to raising the standards of living of their members, have provided the organized political strength of many elected representatives in their countries and are the power behind many other regimes of "worker-elitist" character. In the shifting play of international politics, the significance of organized labor, whether through their own inter-regional organizations or as forces behind national representation on international bodies like the I.L.O. or the U.N. and its associated agencies must be seen also as a political force.

Free political strength of populations, not organized as workers but nonetheless organized by village, by commune or by tribe are potential political forces in many "less developed" countries as can be seen by events in Africa and Asia since World War II. The interplay of these conflictual forces can be contained within our model of social welfare development. Viewed from this perspective, highly unstable political situations, whether occurring among the country's leadership or among the populace, increases national social vulnerability and retards social welfare development efforts. Political stability, on the other hand, increases the likelihood of sustained social planning and human need reduction for both the short and long run.

F. Cultural Phenomena

It is a visible fact that the forces of a nation's "culture" will strongly influence the development of its welfare services (i.e. its religious traditions, social values, societal norms, etc.). Thus, the traditions of individual freedom and individual responsibility that are part of the cultural heritage of the North American community and have become enforceable rights in their constitutions and law have, in many ways, determined the growth of the welfare services of North America. The current and recent surges of concern with the freedom of young people and of minority groups or "oppressed" groups (as, for example, women and blacks) will again change the pattern of welfare service on this continent.

Other cultures--for example those of the Middle and Far East, as well as the tribal cultures of Africa--will compel attention to other needs, not so evident in North America. For example, the place of women in those societies will call not only for adjustment of social attitudes but also for political and economic changes which will be disintegrative of the societies as they have now emerged but may, if planned intentionally for that purpose, also become integrative of a new kind of society. This seems to have already begun to happen in the countries of Northern Europe, where the "welfare services" are now strongly entrenched as part of the institutional structure of society. It is not so clear what will be the cultural results of the development of industrial society in countries of Southern Europe, or the Far East or Africa. It may well be that the disintegrative effects of change will outweigh the apparent economic advantages of industrial growth and productivity. Each country, then, needs to identify and attempt to assess the probable cultural impact of new policies before embarking on them. Otherwise the institutions of society may provide insuperable barriers to progress or, if economic progress is achieved, the society must become culturally at war and largely untenable.

Conceptual interdependence

No single factor in the model can or ought to be considered without reference to the model's other dimensions. To consider needs or

resources without appropriate reference to the political, social, cultural, or competing national purposes operating within a society, for example, would result in a limited perspective of the dynamic forces affecting that society's national development. That is to say, the social forces within a given society are impacted upon by the level of national political stability or instability present at given moments in time and these forces, in turn, are affected by the cultural values of the society, its organizing social purposes and its available national resources as well as patterns of human need. Similarly, the family, as the basic unit within the society, must be examined both in terms of its functioning as a national resource and as a social unit with many needs of its own. The family also functions to impart the essential cultural values and norms of the society to its offspring and, typically, persists as one of, the most resilient social forces mediating undue or otherwise unwarranted efforts at rapid social change.

At the present time, we do not argue that one or more dimensions of the model are more important than the others. We do suggest, rather, that each area identified herein must be considered in relation to the specific social welfare needs and problems of given societies. From these case by case analyses, several dimensions may emerge as more salient than others but, for the moment at least, our investigations suggest that all six factors must be considered as integral to the analysis of national social welfare development throughout all of its many stages and variations.

The Model in Action

In order to achieve a high level of conceptual integration, the model can be operationalized by transforming the scores obtained for each component dimension into units of measurement which are comparable for purposes of statistical analysis." These transformed data must then "weighted" so as to reflect their particular saliency within a given society and, in turn, should be tallied together so as to provide us with yet another quantitative score.¹² This new score, of course, is the sought after value on the Index of National Social Vulnerability (NSV), the measure which can then be used to study the complex patterns and processes underlying national or world social welfare development.

Additionally, NSV scores can be plotted on a time continuum. Repetitive plotting of past, present and projected NSV levels should reveal important knowledge concerning those forces which effect social welfare development over time. Certainly, time-series data of this type will vary considerably from nation to nation reflecting the unique interplay of these forces within a particular social and political context. In any event, the systematic utilization of data in this manner will enhance the analytical capability of the planner and should provide him or her with a new tool for understanding the complex interplay of seeming disparate forces operating within the society. Careful analyses of such data should reveal previously unseen patterns of welfare development" and, in most cases, should help to identify the particular constellation of political, social, and economic forces which either contribute toward or impede the development of national social welfare efforts.

Because of the care taken in its construction, we believe that the NSV will reflect much of the conceptual complexity inherent in social welfare developmental efforts. Certainly, the interplay of the various dynamic forces contained in the Index will become quite visible. We also believe that this new tool will meet the pressing need for a more complex, but socially-based, quantitative instrument currently-felt by welfare scholars and planners around the world. Our preliminary data, at least, suggest that our assumptions are not without solid foundation.

Summary

By way of summary, the authors have suggested that a new model for studying national social welfare development must be constructed. A particular model has been suggested and among the advantages associated with its use are the following:

1. the model is both parsimonious and sufficiently complex so as to generate relevant social welfare inquiry;
2. the model takes cognizance of the unique nature of a given society's social, political, and cultural traditions as they interface with current human needs and available resources.

3. the model incorporates the unique social purposes and goals of individual societies;
4. the model contains both quantitative and qualitative data, thus possessing the important advantage of comprehensiveness;
5. economic development is portrayed as only one of many factors contributing to or inhibiting national social welfare development;
6. the model can serve as a basis for describing national social welfare development as a critical factor in development planning and for identifying specific opportunities and constraints affecting further development which may be present at particular moments in time;
7. for ministries of social welfare, and welfare planners generally, the model can be used to direct national planning activities toward those parameters requiring the most urgent national attention;
8. the model can assist in the more purposeful use of scarce national resources so as to more effectively reduce social needs in areas of greatest national vulnerability;
9. standardization of the model will permit cross-national planning and development for the, world-as-a-whole, finally,
10. the model can serve as an operational definition of national welfare development for purposes of specialized research studies and world welfare analysis.

Conclusion

In the present state of world social turmoil, stemming in large measure from a disenchantment with purely economic approaches as solutions to social problems, care must be taken to develop newer and more complex models of welfare development. These models must accurately reflect the unique patterns of social, political, economic and cultural interaction characteristic of a society as they impact upon human social needs and resources present within that society. Further, these more sophisticated models of welfare development must be firmly tied to national social purposes and goals. Clearly, the major task before welfare scholars today is a theoretical one and nothing short of a major reconceptualization of the world development process to include social welfare planning will suffice in meeting our current needs.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

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11) Data are transformed into Z-scores which is the most commonly utilized method for standardizing the scale of a variable of interval level measurement. The Z-score transformation generates a new variable with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Most modern Computer packages contain this statistical procedure within their standard analytical modules.

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