Keeping Track of the Health of the State: Social Index – A Proposal

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Social Index --- Today’s Outline

- What and why?
- What’s gone before
- An index for New Mexico
- Neighborhood Applications
- Discussion
What IS a social index?

- From a height, an overlook
- A composite of single indicators of issues of societal concern
- Many particulars ➔ global condition
Why have a Social Index?

Why do we have daily/ weekly reports of:

- Dow-Jones Average
- Gross Domestic Product
- Consumer Confidence Index
- Consumer Price Index . . .
- etcetera, etcetera
‘and now for the financial news’

The condition of our economy:

✓ Told in vivid precise terms
✓ Through a highly developed monitoring system of economic indicators and indexes
✓ Story of dynamics & change regularly summarized
✓ Forms basis for debate, discussion, policy intervention throughout society

Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy
Social / health monitoring

- Where to go for regular summary of social health of nation, state, county
- Social / health indicators infrequently released, assessed
- No generally accepted index of agreed upon indicators re social conditions’ improvement & worsening
Social / health monitoring

- Context typically missing or inadequate
  - many issues often seen as crises
  - too often portrayed as individual’s problem or isolated events
  - difficult to place relative importance in larger picture

- What becomes society’s basis for debate, dialogue & intervention?
What has gone before ...

- United Nations
  - UN Development Programme: addressing human development matters

- Connecticut
Human Development Indices

- Human Development Index
- Overall achievement in a country of longevity, knowledge, decent standard of living

- Human Poverty Index-2 (for high income countries)
- HDI plus social exclusion/participation

- Both indices include resource & outcome indicators
Current Applications

No automatic link between human development and human poverty
Components of Indices

- **Human Development Index**
  - Life expectancy, adult literacy rate, primary to tertiary school enrollment ratio, GDP per capita
  - Data series since 1975 for countries, by regions; analysis of index & its components

- **Human Poverty Index-2**
  - Probability of not surviving to age 60; adult functional literacy rate, percent living below poverty, unemployment
Index of Social Health of Connecticut

- Index includes indicators about:
  - Children (infant mortality, child abuse)
  - Adults (unemployment, average weekly wages, health care costs)
  - Youth (suicide, high school completion, teen births)
  - All Ages (violent crime, affordable housing)

- State, counties from 1970 on
- Trend of index & its components
Index of Social Health of Connecticut

Indicators:

- Children (infant mortality, child abuse)
- Adults (unemployment, average weekly wages, health care costs)
- Youth (suicide, high school completion, teen births)
- All Ages (violent crime, affordable housing)
Current Applications

Analyzed individual indicators & counties to understand
Published in The Social State of Connecticut
A Proposed Social Index for New Mexico

- First approach - determine if combining Vision of Health Indicators into a “Vision of Health Index” represents a Social Index for NM
Vision of Health Indicators Used

- Teen birth rate
- Child abuse rate
- Homicide rate
- Alcohol-related death rate
- Drug-related death rate
- Adult abuse rate
- Suicide rate
- Hepatitis B rate
- Motor vehicle injury death rate
Calculating a rate ratio

Cibola County drug-related death rate divided by the New Mexico drug-related death rate

- $10.9/15.6 = 0.7$
Calculating mean rate ratio

Plugging rate ratios into the index formula

\[
\text{mean RR} = \frac{\text{[(RR}_1+\text{RR}_2+\text{RR}_3+\text{RR}_4+\text{RR}_5+\text{RR}_6+\text{RR}_7+\text{RR}_8+\text{RR}_9)]}{9}
\]

mean rate ratio = index
Vision of Health Index County Values

Lowest (Best)
- Los Alamos 0.33
- Union 0.53
- DeBaca 0.63

Highest (Worst)
- Rio Arriba 1.91
- Sierra 1.63
- Quay 1.59
Advantages to this Index Method

- The index number actually means something
  - Chavez County’s value of 1.51 means that on average Chavez County’s rates for these 9 indicators are 51% higher than average NM rates for the same indicators
  - Allows for comparison to NM’s rates
A Proposed Social Index for New Mexico

- Comparison of Vision of Health Index to socioeconomic indicators
  - Indicators used included:
    - Child poverty
    - Income inequality (Gini coefficient)
    - High school dropout
    - Unemployment
    - Household vacancy
Comparison of Vision of Health Index to Socioeconomic Indicators

Assessed the correlation of Vision of Health Index county values with those for rate ratios for each socioeconomic indicator

- Child poverty 0.14
- Income inequality (Gini coefficient) 0.41
- High school dropout 0.22
- Unemployment 0.03
- Household vacancy 0.17
Comparison of Vision of Health Index to Socioeconomic Index

- Combined first four indicators into “socioeconomic index”
- Correlation with Vision of Health Index
  - 0.28
Socioeconomic Index County Values

- **Lowest (Best)**
  - Los Alamos: 0.28
  - DeBaca: 0.81
  - Lea: 0.83

- **Highest (Worst)**
  - Luna: 2.32
  - Taos: 1.37
  - Dona Ana: 1.35
A Proposed Social Index for New Mexico

- What should we do now?

- How about combining a health index with a socioeconomic index?

- Proposal: try out the Connecticut Social Index Indicators for NM using the NM rate ratio based method
# A Social Index for City Neighborhoods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Mean for Albuquerque Zip Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>3.6% (Census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Households in Poverty</td>
<td>6.3% (Census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Not Enrolled in School</td>
<td>11.2% (Census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Occupancy</td>
<td>42.9% (Census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Vacancy (not used)</td>
<td>10.9% (Census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality</td>
<td>5.92 per 1000 (VRHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Birth Rate</td>
<td>61.2 per 1000 (VRHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Related Crime</td>
<td>13.1 per 1000 (APD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Index** = (mean of 7 indicators’ ratios to county rates)
## Ranking of Zip Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Social Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87102</td>
<td>East Downtown &amp; South Broadway</td>
<td>2.0067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87108</td>
<td>SE Heights</td>
<td>1.8183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87105</td>
<td>South Valley (SW)</td>
<td>1.3023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87116</td>
<td>KAFB</td>
<td>1.1540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87104</td>
<td>Old Town</td>
<td>1.1142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87106</td>
<td>UNM &amp; South (SE)</td>
<td>1.0731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87107</td>
<td>North Valley</td>
<td>1.0554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87121</td>
<td>West Mesa</td>
<td>1.0526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87123</td>
<td>SEH to 4 Hills</td>
<td>0.9966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87110</td>
<td>Near NEH</td>
<td>0.9113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87109</td>
<td>NE</td>
<td>0.8954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87113</td>
<td>Far North Valley</td>
<td>0.7682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87112</td>
<td>NE Heights</td>
<td>0.7491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87114</td>
<td>North Valley &amp; Paradise Hills NW</td>
<td>0.6862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87111</td>
<td>NE Heights</td>
<td>0.6806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87120</td>
<td>West Side</td>
<td>0.6734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87118</td>
<td>KAFB</td>
<td>0.6332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87122</td>
<td>Sandia Foothills</td>
<td>0.2865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHILDREN NOT ENROLLED

FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS BELOW POVERTY LINE

VICE CRIME

VACANT HOUSING (NOT INDEXED)
Comments and Conclusions . . .

• Social Indices invite comparison.

• The ‘mean rate ratio’ can highlight disparities.

• Neighborhoods may not agree on a definition of ‘neighborhood.’

• Neighborhoods may not agree on the mix of indicators.

• Indicators useful to neighborhoods; index useful to agencies.

• Trending will enhance meaning; comparison across time is more relevant than comparison across neighborhoods.

• How would you compose – and use – a social index?
References

- **Human Development Report**

- **The Social State of Connecticut**
  Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy, various years. [http://www.cga.state.ct.us/coc/socindex/index.htm](http://www.cga.state.ct.us/coc/socindex/index.htm)