

Social Well-being and its indicators

'Social well-being' is an important and contemporary concept of human and social geography and more precisely that of humanistic geography. The concept emphasizes on the distributional perspectives of various welfare and humanistic aspects of man and the human society. The basic focus of this humanistic approach is on 'who gets what, where and how'. Social well-being refers to a condition in which the needs and wants of people are satisfied.

Accd. to Eyles, the renowned Human geographer of the contemporary world, 'A well society is one in which people have sufficient income for their basic needs, where poverty has been eradicated, where people are socially and economically mobile and respectful of the dignity of others, and where they have access to goods and services in a stable and participatory environment'. This is a kind of ideal situation from the social and geographical points of views.

It is mainly a concept associated with the American school of geographical thought and came into prominence after 1970s with the advent of the 'Critical revolution in Geography'. Smith, Knox and Grey were the pioneers carrying out studies in this particular field.

Indicators of Social well-being

Social well-being is a condition of man/ community/ society that can be measurable qualitatively as well as quantitatively. For the assessment and judgement of well-being in a society, various social- economic- cultural indicators/ parametres can be applied. However, unlike the other well known concept of 'Human Development', there is no fixed standard for the set of indicators in this case. Depending upon the socio- economic- political status of the society/ population under review, the well- being indicators are selected.

Some major well-being indicators applied worldwide

Income and wealth

Social environment

Education and educational attainment

Health and medical care

Cultural order

Political awareness

Recreation and liesure

Social disorder