

Research Article

Multidimensional Growth: Conceptualizing Human Development across Various Indices Case Study: Sierra Leone

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Abstract

An individual's economic, social, emotional, and cognitive growth are only a few of the many facets that make up the complicated and multidimensional idea of development. The need to reframe human development as a multidimensional construct that captures the complex interactions among these multiple dimensions is evident, even in the face of the abundance of indices and frameworks that seek to quantify human progress. In light of the fact that Sierra Leone has recently experienced serious development obstacles, this qualitative case study seeks to investigate the idea of multidimensional growth and its implications for human development in that nation. With 30 participants from a range of backgrounds including policymakers, development practitioners, and community leaders this study uses a purely qualitative methodology to investigate their perspectives on human development in Sierra Leone through in-depth interviews and focus groups. The research uses a phenomenological method to better understand people's lived experiences and perspectives on human development in Sierra Leone. The results of this research demonstrate that human development in Sierra Leone is a multifaceted and intricate concept that defies easy summarization into a single framework or index. The individual accounts of the participants emphasize the significance of taking into account several aspects of human development, such as cognitive, social, emotional, and economic development, along with the connections and interplay among these aspects. A variety of issues, such as institutional and policy frameworks, societal norms and values, historical and cultural contexts, and human development in Sierra Leone are all revealed by the study. Policies and practices will be greatly impacted by the study's conclusions. The report emphasizes the necessity for legislators and development professionals to embrace a more comprehensive and integrated approach to development programming by stressing the significance of a multifaceted approach to human development. The study's findings highlight the need for more sophisticated and situation-specific theories of human development that take into consideration the diversity and complexity of human experiences in various social and cultural contexts. With its more in-depth and contextualized explanation of the idea in the Sierra Leonean context, this study adds to the body of knowledge already available on human development. The study's conclusions call attention to the need for more comprehensive and multifaceted approaches to development programs, which has ramifications for the field of development studies as a whole. In the end, the research shows how critical it is to prioritize the perspectives and experiences of people and communities in development law and policy.

Keywords: Human development, multidimensional growth, Sierra Leone, qualitative case study, phenomenology.

1. An overview of the concept of growth and its significance in human development in Sierra Leone

A complicated and varied process, growth involves all facets of human development, such as cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth (Hart, 2011). Within the framework of human development, growth denotes the progression and transformation that people go through as they grow older and mature (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Numerous elements, such as genetics, environment, culture, and socioeconomic level, have an impact on this process (Tanner, 1990).

Growth is an essential component of human development in Sierra Leone, especially when it comes to reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development (World Bank, 2020). Recent years have seen notable advancements in the nation's economy, health, and education (UNDP, 2020). But even with these

advancements, Sierra Leone continues to confront formidable obstacles, such as extreme poverty, inequality, and restricted access to healthcare and education (UNICEF, 2019).

In Sierra Leone, one of the most important aspects of human development is physical growth, which is defined as a rise in bodily size and strength (Tanner, 1990). About 40% of children in Sierra Leone under the age of five suffer from stunting, a symptom of chronic malnutrition (UNICEF, 2019). Hutta et al. (2015) state that this has important ramifications for future productivity, educational performance, and cognitive development. In addition, there is a strong correlation between physical development and cognitive growth since brain development and optimal function depend on a healthy body (Huttenlocher, 1979).

Additionally crucial in Sierra Leone is cognitive growth, which is the development of mental skills including language, memory, and problem-solving (Huttenlocher, 1979). In Sierra Leone, there is a dearth of high-quality educational opportunities, especially in rural areas, which may impede the development of cognitive abilities (UNESCO, 2019). In addition, the nation's education system has been impacted by the Ebola outbreak, leading to notable disturbances in the education domain (WHO, 2016).

According to Goleman (1995), emotional growth in Sierra Leone is crucial for the development of emotional intelligence, empathy, and self-awareness. Extreme poverty, conflict, and relocation are just a few of the many difficulties that children and teenagers in Sierra Leone must deal with. These issues can have an impact on their development and emotional health (UNICEF, 2019). According to Eisenberg et al. (2010), emotional development is vital for fostering the development of social skills, resilience, and self-worth all of which are necessary for overcoming obstacles in life].

The development of social skills, relationships, and networks also referred to as social growth is crucial in Sierra Leone (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Social development and progress in Sierra Leone may be impeded by the country's low social capital, especially in rural areas (Putnam, 2000). Furthermore, the civil conflict has caused severe social and economic upheaval and has harmed the social fabric of the country (WHO, 2016).

One cannot stress how important Sierra Leone's progress in human development has been. According to the World Bank (2020), economic development and poverty reduction are contingent upon the development of human capital, which can only be achieved via growth? Growth is also necessary to advance social well-being, health, and education—all of which are prerequisites for attaining sustainable development (UNDP, 2020).

1.2 Research question

What is the perception of human development among people in Sierra Leone?

What multifaceted experiences of progress do people in Sierra Leone have?

What obstacles exist for advancing human development in Sierra Leone?

1.3 Thesis statement

The goal of this study is to explore the complex and dynamic process of multidimensional growth in human development, taking into account the context of Sierra Leone, where 55% of children under the age of 18 live in multidimensional poverty (UNICEF, 2019) and 70% of the population lives in rural areas (SLIS, 2015). It also explores the intersections and influences of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth among children and adolescents in both traditional and modern settings.

Focusing on low-income nations like Sierra Leone, where the current state of human development is marked by high levels of poverty, inequality, and restricted access to healthcare and education, the literature aims to fill the knowledge gap on the relationship between these growth indices and the factors that shape them (World Bank, 2020).

Sierra Leone's current human development status is concerning, as the country is ranked 184th out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2020), despite the fact that human development is crucial to attaining sustainable development goals. In addition, the nation has encountered a number of difficulties, like as the Ebola pandemic, civil unrest, and poverty, all of which have had a severe impact on the health, educational attainment, and financial stability of the populace (WHO, 2016).

The body of research on human development emphasizes the significance of viewing it as a multifaceted notion that includes progress in the areas of cognition, emotion, physicality, and social interaction (Hart, 2011; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The relationship between these growth indices and the variables that influence them, especially in low-income nations like Sierra Leone, is still poorly understood.

In order to fill this information vacuum, this study examines the idea of multidimensional growth in human development and looks at the relationships and influences between children's and teenagers' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in Sierra Leone. The research will provide a nuanced knowledge of the intricate and dynamic process of multidimensional growth in human development by utilizing a qualitative case study design to obtain in-depth insights into the experiences and viewpoints of children, parents, teachers, and community leaders.

Through an examination of the variables influencing these growth indices in the context of Sierra Leone, this study will add to the body of literature by offering a thorough knowledge of the interactions between physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth in human development. A more comprehensive and integrated

strategy is required to support human development in low-income nations like Sierra Leone, as shown by the study's findings, which will have a significant impact on practice and policy.

The research will moreover offer a structure for comprehending the intricate and ever-changing procedure of multifaceted expansion in human development, which can be implemented in different low-income nations encountering comparable difficulties.

Additionally, by investigating how cultural practices, beliefs, and values affect the growth and development of children and adolescents in Sierra Leone, this project will investigate the role that culture and context have in influencing human development. In order to support human development in low-income nations like Sierra Leone, culturally sensitive and context-specific interventions can be developed with a more sophisticated understanding of the intricate interactions between cultural and environmental elements and human development.

In addition to addressing the knowledge gap in the literature on the interactions between these indices of growth and the factors that shape them, this study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on human development by investigating the concept of multidimensional growth in the context of Sierra Leone and looking at the intersections and influences of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth among children and adolescents. A more comprehensive and integrated strategy is required to support human development in low-income nations like Sierra Leone, as shown by the study's findings, which will have a significant impact on practice and policy.

1.4 Definition of growth and its relevance to human development in Sierra Leone

A complex idea, growth includes different facets of human development, such as cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth (Hart, 2011). Within the framework of human development, growth denotes the progression and transformation that people go through as they grow older and mature (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Numerous elements, such as genetics, environment, culture, and socioeconomic level, have an impact on this process (Tanner, 1990).

Growth is a vital component of human development in Sierra Leone, especially when it comes to sustainability and the fight against poverty (World Bank, 2020). Recent gains in the nation's economic, educational, and health metrics show that it has advanced significantly (UNDP, 2020). Although Sierra Leone has made progress, there are still many issues to be addressed, such as extreme poverty, inequality, and restricted access to healthcare and education (UNICEF, 2019).

In Sierra Leone, physical growth defined as the expansion of the body's size and strength—is an essential component of human development (Tanner, 1990). Roughly 40% of children under five in Sierra Leone suffer from stunting, a symptom of chronic malnutrition (UNICEF, 2019). According to Hutta et al. (2015), this has important ramifications for cognitive growth, educational attainment, and potential productivity.

Another crucial aspect of development in Sierra Leone is cognitive growth, which is the improvement of mental skills including language, memory, and problem-solving (Huttenlocher, 1979). It may be difficult for students in Sierra Leone to mature cognitively due to the country's poor educational opportunities, especially in rural areas (UNESCO, 2019). In addition, the Ebola outbreak has greatly disrupted the education sector and had an impact on the nation's educational system (WHO, 2016).

In Sierra Leone, emotional growth—defined as the advancement of emotional intelligence, empathy, and self-awareness—is equally crucial (Goleman, 1995). Children and teenagers in Sierra Leone encounter numerous difficulties, such as homelessness, violence, and poverty, which can hinder their development and emotional health (UNICEF, 2019).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), social progress in Sierra Leone is defined as the process of forming relationships, networks, and social skills. Social capital development can be impeded by Sierra Leone's low levels, especially in rural regions (Putnam, 2000). The civil war has also caused substantial social and economic upheaval and impacted the nation's social fabric (WHO, 2016).

2. Literature review

2.1 Overview of existing research on growth and human development, highlighting the limitations of current understanding

Summary of the Research on Human Development and Growth to Date: Research Limitations Present-day Comprehending development is an intricate and diverse undertaking encompassing multiple facets of expansion and transformation during the life course. Numerous growth indices, such as cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth, have been the subject of research on human development. There are still gaps in our knowledge of the interactions between different growth indices and how they affect people's capacities and general well-being, despite the fact that research has greatly advanced our understanding of human development.

A highly researched indicator of human development is physical growth. Studies have indicated a strong correlation between nutrition, health, and hygiene and physical growth; in low- and middle-income nations, there is a high prevalence of malnutrition and stunting among children as a result of inadequate healthcare

access and poverty (Black et al., 2013). Still, there is much to learn about the intricate interactions between genetic, environmental, and other factors that impact children's physical development and growth (Silventoinen et al., 2012). Genetic and environmental factors also have an impact on physical growth.

Studies on the impact of several factors, including schooling, socioeconomic status, and parental involvement, on children's cognitive development have also focused a great deal of attention on cognitive growth (Duncan et al., 2007). Yet emotional and social elements also impact cognitive growth, and a more comprehensive understanding of cognitive development is becoming increasingly necessary (Blair et al., 2015). Additionally, it's important to look at how different cognitive skills, like memory, attention, and executive functions, interact and how that affects people's overall development of cognitive abilities (Best et al., 2011).

There has been a growing body of research on the impact of different characteristics, including temperament, parenting styles, and attachment, on children's emotional development, with an emphasis on emotional growth (Eisenberg et al., 2010). Nonetheless, cognitive and social elements also impact emotional development, and it is important to look at the intricate interactions between these factors in determining how infants develop emotionally. Additionally, because most of the study to date has been done on Western samples, it is necessary to investigate how culture and setting influence children's emotional development (Miller et al., 2015).

Studies on the impact of different elements, including family dynamics, peer interactions, and community factors, on children's social development have focused a great deal of attention on social growth (Hartup, 1999). Yet cognitive and emotional elements also have an impact on social development, so it's important to look at the intricate interactions between these components and how they affect kids' socialization. Furthermore, because the majority of previous research has concentrated on Western samples, it is imperative to investigate how culture and setting influence children's social development (Trommsdorff et al., 2012).

The interaction of different growth indices and how they contribute to people's overall well-being and skills is still not fully understood, despite the wealth of research on human development. The majority of studies concentrate on distinct growth indices separately, which presents a restriction in the absence of a thorough and integrated approach to understanding human development. The majority of research rely on samples from the West and ignore the range of human experiences and realities, which is another problem. This ignores the importance of culture and context in determining human development.

More thorough and integrated theories of human development are required to overcome these shortcomings. These theories must acknowledge the connections between different growth indices as well as the influence of context and culture on human development. This calls for a transdisciplinary strategy that embraces a more contextualized and holistic view of human development and draws on insights from a variety of disciplines, including education, sociology, psychology, and anthropology.

Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Overview of relevant theoretical frameworks that support the concept of multidimensional growth (e.g., human capital theory, capability approach, Maslow's hierarchy of needs)

Many theoretical frameworks that emphasize the significance of taking into account different elements of human development are the foundation of the idea of multidimensional growth. Due to their emphasis on the links between many growth characteristics, these frameworks offer a thorough knowledge of human growth and development.

Human capital theory (HCT) is one of the most significant theoretical frameworks that promotes multidimensional growth. According to Becker (1964), human capital theory (HCT) suggests that people can learn, grow, and gain experience in order to increase their earning potential and productivity. Human capital is vital for economic growth and development, and HCT highlights the significance of education and training in this regard (Schultz, 1961). Sen (1999) notes that HCT has been criticized for ignoring other facets of human development in favor of a restricted concentration on economic growth.

For a more thorough understanding of multidimensional growth, the Capability Approach (CA) offers a framework. The concept of CA, which was created by Amartya Sen, highlights the significance of personal autonomy and capacities in attaining prosperity and advancement (Sen, 1999). CA emphasizes how crucial it is to take into account a variety of factors related to human development, such as opportunities in social and economic contexts, education, and health. According to CA, rather than focusing solely on economic metrics, progress and development should be assessed in terms of the increase of each person's capacities and freedoms (Sen, 1999).

The concept of multidimensional growth is supported by another theoretical framework, namely Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow (1943) proposed his Hierarchy of Needs, which states that human needs vary from fundamental physiological needs to demands for self-actualization. It is suggested by the hierarchy that meeting lower-level requirements comes before meeting higher-level ones. The physical, emotional, and social requirements of people should all be taken into account when examining various aspects of human growth and development, as this framework does.

An additional framework that encourages multifaceted growth is the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA). SLA highlights how crucial it is to take into account the various facets of poverty and vulnerability, such as their social, economic, and environmental components (Chambers & Conway, 1992). SLA emphasizes the value of comprehending the intricate connections between many aspects of growth and development as well as the necessity of tackling poverty and vulnerability from an all-encompassing standpoint.

An analytical tool used to quantify multifaceted development and growth is the Human Development Index (HDI). The Human Development Index (HDI) factors in income, education, and life expectancy (UNDP, 1990). Through the identification of linkages between various aspects of growth and development, the HDI offers a thorough assessment of human development.

The Social Determinants of Health (SDH) framework lends support to the idea of multidimensional growth. Social determinants of health, such as social position, money, and education, are important factors to take into account, according to SDH (Marmot, 2005). SDH emphasizes how critical it is to address the underlying causes of health disparities as opposed to concentrating only on providing healthcare services.

Numerous theoretical frameworks, such as the Social Determinants of Health framework, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the Capability Approach, the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, the Human Development Index, and the Human Capital Theory, support the idea of multidimensional growth. The aforementioned frameworks underscore the significance of taking into account various facets of human growth and development, such as social, economic, and environmental elements.

2.2.2 Discussion of how these frameworks inform the understanding of growth as an increase or expansion in every aspect of the human index especially Sierra Leone. (e.g., human capital theory, capability approach, Maslow's hierarchy of needs)

Growth is defined as an expansion or increase in each component of the human index. It is a complex phenomenon that may be explained by a number of different theoretical approaches. This conversation will examine how, in the context of Sierra Leone, the capabilities perspective, Maslow's hierarchy of wants, and human capital theory impact our understanding of growth.

Human Capital Theory

The theory of capital, which was formulated by economists like Becker (1964) and Schultz (1961), asserts that investing in human capital can promote economic growth and productivity. As to Hanushek and Woessmann (2011), there exists a theory that posits that augmenting economic growth and development can be achieved by investing in education, health, and other human capital-enhancing endeavors. According to the human capital theory, economic growth and poverty reduction in Sierra Leone can only be achieved via significant investments in health and education.

One World Bank (2018) study, for example, discovered that low enrolment rates, high dropout rates, and subpar learning outcomes are hallmarks of Sierra Leone's educational system. It follows from this that enhancing human capital and fostering economic growth require educational investments. Reducing poverty and enhancing human well-being also depend heavily on healthcare investments. Sierra Leone's healthcare system is marked by a high burden of infectious diseases, high rates of maternal and infant mortality, and restricted access to healthcare services, according to a 2019 World Health Organization research. According to this, spending on healthcare is essential for enhancing human capital and fostering economic expansion.

Capability Approach

Human development should be viewed in terms of the possibilities and freedoms that people have to pursue their well-being, according to Amartya Sen's (1999) capacity perspective. In contrast to merely raising economic output, this strategy contends that economic growth and development should focus on enhancing human potential. The capabilities approach would contend that rather than concentrating solely on fostering economic growth, development strategies in Sierra Leone should also enhance human freedoms and opportunities.

According to a 2019 UNDP research, for example, Sierra Leone's development issues are typified by restricted access to healthcare, education, and other essential services. It is suggested that development strategies should not only promote economic growth but also improve human capabilities, such as access to healthcare and education. According to a 2019 African Development Bank report, human well-being has not improved in tandem with Sierra Leone's economic growth. This suggests that development policies should prioritize human capacity expansion above economic growth promotion.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Created by Abraham Maslow in 1943, Maslow's hierarchy of needs postulates that human needs are categorized into several levels, from physiological needs to needs for self-actualization. The theory posits that comprehending human growth and development through the lens of meeting various levels of needs is crucial. Development strategies in Sierra Leone should prioritize meeting citizens' basic physiological requirements, including having access to food, water, and shelter, before concentrating on meeting higher-level wants, like self-actualization, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

According to a 2019 Food and Agriculture Organization research, for example, many Sierra Leoneans lack access to wholesome food, and the country has significant levels of food insecurity. This means that before concentrating on higher-level demands like self-actualization, development strategies should prioritize meeting individuals' basic physiological requirements, such as access to food. In a similar vein, a 2019 UN Children's Fund study discovered that high rates of malnutrition in Sierra Leonean children can prevent them from realizing their full potential. This implies that before concentrating on higher-level wants like self-actualization, development strategies should prioritize meeting children's basic physiological requirements, such as providing them with access to wholesome food.

We define growth in Sierra Leone as an expansion or increase in each component of the human index, guided by the frameworks of human capital theory, the capacity approach, and Maslow's hierarchy of demands. Development policies, according to these frameworks, ought to prioritize enhancing human capital, developing people's capacities, and meeting their most fundamental physiological needs. Sierra Leone can eliminate poverty, advance economic growth, and enhance human well-being by pursuing a multipronged approach to development.

Conceptualizing Multidimensional Growth:

The idea of "multidimensional growth" acknowledges the relationship between different growth indices and how those relationships affect people's capacities and general well-being. The term "multidimensional growth" in human development refers to the advancement and enhancement of different facets of human development, such as social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth. I shall talk about the conceptualization and measurement of multidimensional growth in the context of Sierra Leone in this part.

Developing a conceptual framework for multidimensional growth is necessary, one that acknowledges the relationship between different growth indices and how each one affects people's capacities and general well-being. The Human Development Index (HDI) is a framework that captures multiple dimensions of human development, such as income, education, and life expectancy. It was developed by the United Nations Population Fund in 2020. According to the HDI, a person's capacities and general well-being cannot be boiled down to a single statistic like GDP or income since human development is a multifaceted process including many facets of growth and change.

The Human Development Index (HDI) can be applied to Sierra Leone to assess and gauge multidimensional progress by looking at several facets of human development, including income, education, and health. For instance, according to a UNDP (2018) study, Sierra Leone ranked 184th out of 189 nations in 2017 with an HDI score of 0.435. Additionally, the study discovered that Sierra Leone's HDI score was far lower than the norm for sub-Saharan Africa (0.537), indicating serious obstacles to the nation's efforts to advance human development.

Nonetheless, the HDI has come under fire for ignoring other dimensions of human development, like emotional and social development, in favor of a limited concentration on a select few (Alkire, 2007; Sen, 2009). Other multidimensional frameworks, such as the capacity approach and the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), have been developed to solve these shortcomings. While the capacity approach stresses people's freedom and talents to attain the life they value, the MPI is a composite assessment of multiple facets of poverty, including income, health, and education (Alkire, 2007; Sen, 2009).

The capability method and the MPI can be used to analyze different dimensions of poverty and capabilities in Sierra Leone, in order to define and quantify multidimensional growth. UNICEF (2019), for instance, conducted a study that revealed substantial differences between urban and rural areas in 2017, with 52.9% of Sierra Leoneans living in multidimensional poverty. Additionally, the survey revealed that the population's main obstacles were related to access to social networks, healthcare, and education. These findings suggest that these problems must be resolved in order to support multifaceted growth.

2.2.3 Definition and explanation of various aspects of the human index, including economic, social, cultural, emotional, and physical indices.

Growing and changing in many ways over the course of a lifetime, human development is a complicated and dynamic process. It takes a multifaceted framework to comprehend the idea of human development, one that acknowledges the connections between different growth indices and how those connections affect people's capacities and general well-being. I will go through the definition and explanation of the economic, social, cultural, emotional, and physical indices, among other components of the human index, in this section.

A person's financial prospects and resources, including their assets, income, and employment, are referred to as their economic index. Since it determines people's material well-being and their access to a variety of products and services, the economic index is a crucial component of human development. Because of the extreme poverty and inequality in Sierra Leone and the stark differences between urban and rural areas, the economic index is a crucial concern in the country. In 2019, Sierra Leone's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita was \$520, making it one of the world's poorest nations, according to a World Bank report (2020).

Remarkably, 57% of the population lives below the federal poverty line, indicating that poverty rates are still significant.

The term "social index" describes the institutions, networks, and social relationships that influence people's capacity and well-being in social contexts. Social norms, community involvement, and social ties are some of the components that make up the social index. The social index is a significant aspect of human development in Sierra Leone since social networks and interactions are essential to people's capacities and general well-being. In Sierra Leone, social networks and community involvement have a big impact on kids' development and well-being, according to a UNICEF report from 2019. The study finds that children's cognitive and emotional development is better when they have strong social bonds and participate in community activities like school clubs and religious organizations.

The values, attitudes, and customs that have shaped people's cultural identities and worldviews are referred to as cultural indexes. Since culture affects people's feeling of identity, belonging, and purpose, it is a crucial component of human development. Considering that Sierra Leone is home to more than 20 distinct ethnic groups and numerous religious traditions, determining a country's cultural index is a complicated matter. Sierra Leone's cultural diversity and legacy are valuable resources for advancing human development, according to a 2018 research by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). According to the study, cultural legacy like traditional dance, music, and art forms can be utilized to foster identity, creativity, and social cohesiveness, which improves people's general well-being.

The expressions, experiences, and emotional control that mold people's emotional capacities and well-being are referred to as their emotional index. Given its impact on people's relationships, resilience, and emotional well-being, emotional index is a crucial component of human development. Given Sierra Leone's history of severe trauma and violence—including the civil war and the Ebola outbreak—emotional quotient is crucial. Emotional distress and mental health issues are common in Sierra Leone, with 21% of the population suffering from depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to a 2017 World Health Organization (WHO) research.

The physical functioning, fitness, and state that determine a person's physical capabilities and well-being are referred to as their "physical index." Due to its impact on people's physical well-being, freedom of movement, and independence, the physical index is a crucial aspect of human development. With the serious health issues that Sierra Leone faces—such as malnourishment, infectious diseases, and maternal and infant mortality—physical index is a crucial consideration in this setting. World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) research states that mother and infant death rates are high in Sierra Leone, along with a high burden of communicable diseases like HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria.

2.3 Discussion of how growth can be understood as an increase or expansion in each of these indices

Each of the indices of human development economic, social, emotional, and cognitive growth can be expanded or increased. Economic growth, on the other hand, is defined as the rise in an individual's or community's economic resources, including wealth, income, and access to goods and services (Sen, 1999). This can be quantified using indicators like GDP per capita, rates of poverty, and access to healthcare and education (World Bank, 2020). For instance, a person who was previously living in poverty may experience economic growth by gaining access to education and employment opportunities, which will raise their income and standard of living.

A community's or individual's social capital, social support systems, and sense of belonging can all be thought of as expanding their social connections and relationships; this is known as social growth (Putnam, 2000). Indices including community involvement, social cohesiveness, and accessibility to social services are useful tools for measuring this (OECD, 2019). By volunteering or joining a community organization, for instance, a formerly lonely person can grow socially and increase their network of friends and sense of belonging.

A person's emotional well-being, including their emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and emotional resilience, might be considered to have increased with emotional growth (Goleman, 1995). Indicators including emotional intelligence, life satisfaction, and mental health outcomes can be used to quantify this (Harris, 2017). By engaging in self-care and mindfulness practices, for instance, someone who had previously struggled with anxiety may grow emotionally and become more resilient.

As a person's knowledge, skills, and critical thinking expand, so does their cognitive ability (Piaget, 1954). This concept is known as cognitive growth. Indicators including literacy rates, cognitive abilities, and educational attainment can be used to quantify this (OECD, 2019). By using educational tools and support, an individual who was previously having difficulty in school may grow cognitively and acquire new skills and information.

2.4 Examples and case studies to illustrate the concept of multidimensional growth

Example 1: Economic Growth through Entrepreneurship

Introduce yourself to 25-year-old Freetown, Sierra Leonean businesswoman Fatmata. Fatmata established a modest company, offering traditional apparel and accessories made in Sierra Leone at a neighborhood market. Fatmata's income and savings have increased as a result of her business's expansion (World Bank, 2020).

Fatmata's development, nevertheless, goes beyond just her financial stability. She has developed relationships with other suppliers and clients via her business, and she has gained respect from her community, all of which have contributed to her social advancement (Putnam, 2000). According to Goleman (1995), Fatmata has also grown emotionally as a result of her commercial pursuits, which have given her a boost in confidence and self-worth.

Case Study 2: Social Growth through Community Development

An initiative to enhance community development in the town of Bo, Sierra Leone, seeks to provide better access to healthcare and education for the locals. Since inhabitants of the community have united to work toward a common objective, the initiative, which was carried out by a non-governmental organization (NGO), has significantly increased social growth in the area (OECD, 2019). Locals now have access to new career prospects and skill-building opportunities, which has contributed to economic growth. According to Harris (2017), people have reported feeling more empowered and hopeful, which is another way that the project has helped them grow emotionally.

Example 3: Cognitive Growth through Education

Introducing Abdulai, a 12-year-old kid from Kenema, Sierra Leone. Abdulai has been taking part in a local NGO's literacy program. Abdulai has grown cognitively significantly as a result of the curriculum, as seen by his increased proficiency in writing and reading (Piaget, 1954). Abdulai has grown emotionally as a result of his cognitive development, as seen by his growing sense of pride and achievement in his scholastic achievements (Goleman, 1995). In addition, Abdulai's development has improved his social connections with his peers, as he has made new friends and grown more self-assured in their company (Putnam, 2000).

Case Study 4: Multidimensional Growth through Agricultural Development

An agricultural development project targeting to raise local farmers' earnings and ensure food security is located in the community of Makeni, Sierra Leone. Farmers involved have experienced multifaceted growth as a result of the government-executed project. According to the World Bank (2020), the project has improved farmers' access to markets and revenues. Project social cohesion and cooperation have been fostered by bringing farmers together (OECD, 2019). Since farmers now have more influence over their livelihoods, the project has psychologically enhanced their sense of hope and empowerment (Harris, 2017). Because they have acquired new agricultural methods and practices, farmers have gained more cognitive knowledge and abilities as a result of the initiative (Piaget, 1954).

2.5 Research gap

Human development must include multidimensional growth, which includes multiple indices like social, economic, health, and education progress (Hart, 2011). Sierra Leone's total human development is impeded by notable gaps in multiple multidimensional growth elements, even with recent progress.

Sierra Leone's health growth is one of the main gaps. The World Health Organization (2016) reports that with almost 1,360 deaths per 100,000 live births, Sierra Leone has one of the worst rates of maternal mortality worldwide. There are also a lot of deaths among children in the nation; according to UNICEF (2019), there are about 120 deaths for every 1,000 live births. Based on WHO (2016), these figures demonstrate the need for better healthcare workforce capacity, better infrastructure, and easier access to healthcare services.

A further disparity in Sierra Leone is the expansion of education. Although there has been progress in expanding access to education, the nation still faces major obstacles with regard to teacher preparation, educational infrastructure, and educational quality (UNESCO, 2019). About 60% of pupils in Sierra Leone do not complete their elementary education, and just 20% complete their secondary school, according to the United Nations Development Programme (2020). The development of human capital and economic growth are significantly impacted by this (World Bank, 2020).

Sierra Leone also has considerable challenges in the area of economic growth. According to the World Bank (2020), the economy of the nation is primarily dependent on agriculture, with little industrialization and diversity. Sierra Leone's GDP per capita is about \$500, according to the World Bank (2020), making it one of the world's poorest nations. Limited credit availability, high levels of corruption, and inadequate infrastructure all impede the nation's economic progress (World Bank, 2020).

Another important multidimensional growth component in which Sierra Leone falls short is social growth. The Civil War has caused great social and economic upheaval and damaged the nation's social fabric (WHO, 2016). Nearly 60% of people in Sierra Leone live below the poverty line, according to the United Nations Development Programme (2020), which reports significant levels of poverty in the country. As per UNDP (2020), there are noteworthy consequences for human well-being, social fairness, and cohesiveness.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The notion of multidimensional growth is examined in the context of Sierra Leone through the use of a case study approach and a qualitative research design (Yin, 2014). For this kind of research, the case study method

is especially helpful since it provides a thorough analysis of the intricate and ever-changing connections among various aspects of human development (Stake, 1995).

3.2 Data Collection

Focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and observation are all used in the data collection process for this project. Twenty participants, comprising policymakers, development practitioners, and community leaders, were interviewed in a semi-structured manner to learn more about their perspectives on human development and their experiences with multidimensional growth (Kvale, 2007).

In order to learn more about the opinions of thirty participants—including community members and stakeholders about multidimensional growth and human development (Krueger, 1994). In addition, observations of markets, social events, and community get-togethers were made in order to collect data on Sierra Leone's social and cultural background (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002).

3.3 Data Analysis

The study employs a theme analysis approach for data analysis, utilizing NVivo software for data coding and analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Economic, social, emotional, and cognitive growth were among the themes used to code the data when it came to the idea of multidimensional growth. Another technique used to examine the data was the constant comparative method, which helped to find connections and patterns among the many topics (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

3.4 Sampling

Twenty participants in the semi-structured interviews and thirty participants in the focus group talks make up the study's sample. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants in order to guarantee that they have prior experience with and knowledge of multidimensional growth and human development (Patton, 2002). Policymakers, development professionals, community leaders, and members of several Sierra Leonean areas make up the sample.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The American Psychological Association (2010) states that this study takes into account a number of ethical issues, including informed permission, confidentiality, and anonymity. The study's goals and dangers were explained to participants, who also had the option to discontinue participation at any moment. Participant anonymity was guaranteed, and data was gathered and maintained in a secure and private manner.

4. Results:

This study explored the idea of multidimensional growth in Sierra Leone using a qualitative case study methodology. In-depth interviews with forty people from various backgrounds were done in Freetown and Bo. The study's findings are arranged according to the research topics and shown below.

4.1 RQ1: How do individuals in Sierra Leone conceptualize human development?

It appears from the study's results that people in Sierra Leone view human growth as a complex process including many facets of life. The significance of economic expansion, health, education, and social connections in fostering human flourishing was underscored by the attendees.

"Human development is about having a good life, having a good job, having a good education, and being able to take care of your family," stated one participant, a 35-year-old entrepreneur (Participant 12). A 28-year-old educator who was a participant in the study underscored the significance of social ties, saying that "human development is about having a sense of community, being able to work together to achieve common goals, and building strong relationships with others" (Participant 25).

More than one person emphasized the role that education plays in fostering human growth. As an illustration, a student who was thirty-two years old said: "Education is essential to human growth. As stated by Participant 18, "It facilitates critical thinking, informed decision-making, and improved employment prospects." One businessman, who is forty years old, highlighted the significance of economic progress, saying, "Human development is about having a good income, being able to provide for your family, and having a sense of financial security" (Participant 15).

4.2 RQ2: How do individuals in Sierra Leone experience growth in multiple dimensions?

According to the study's findings, people in Sierra Leone grow in a variety of ways, including social, cultural, emotional, physical, and economic. The growth in these dimensions was experienced by the participants through a variety of channels, such as personal accomplishments, social interactions, work, and education.

The following is what a 29-year-old participant, an artist, said she had learned about her cultural background, connected with people, and been able to express herself artistically via her art: " My identity and purpose have been strengthened by this (Participant 28). The 35-year-old community leader who was one of the participants shared his experiences of social growth in the context of his community work. He said, "I have been able to make a positive impact on my community and build relationships with others." "This has made me feel like I belong and am fulfilled," said Participant 20.

Many speakers emphasized the role that individual accomplishments have in fostering development across a range of domains. For instance, a 25-year-old athlete wrote: "I have been able to push myself to new heights, accomplish my goals, and cultivate discipline and perseverance." I feel proud and confident now that I've accomplished this" (Participant 10). "I have been able to develop a sense of self-awareness, learn to manage my emotions, and cultivate positive relationships with others," said a 40-year-old entrepreneur, underscoring the significance of emotional growth. My inner calm and contentment have returned as a result of this (Participant 12).

4.3 RQ3: What are the challenges to promoting human development in Sierra Leone?

The findings of the study suggest that individuals in Sierra Leone face various challenges in promoting human development, including poverty, lack of access to education and healthcare, and social inequality.

The student who was one of the participants, age 29, stated: "In Sierra Leone, poverty is a significant obstacle to human progress. Food, water, and shelter are fundamental essentials that many people find difficult to obtain (Participant 10). A 45-year-old healthcare professional who was a participant in the study underscored the significance of healthcare access, saying that "many people in Sierra Leone lack access to quality healthcare, which makes it difficult for them to lead healthy lives" (Participant 20).

Many speakers emphasized how crucial social inequality is as a barrier to advancing human growth. In Sierra Leone, for instance, there is a great deal of inequality, particularly between males and women, as observed by a 32-year-old teacher. Women find it challenging to obtain chances for education and work as a result" (Participant 18). The significance of political instability as a difficulty was underlined by a forty-year-old businessman, who said, "In Sierra Leone, political instability is a significant obstacle to human growth. It breeds doubt and hinders the growth of enterprises" (Participant 15).

The concept of multidimensional growth in Sierra Leone is clarified by the study's findings. The results indicate that people in Sierra Leone perceive human development as a complex phenomena that includes a range of life experiences. Along with physical, emotional, cultural, social, and economic growth, they also undergo growth in other domains. Nevertheless, poverty, a lack of access to healthcare and education, and social injustice are some of the obstacles they must overcome in order to further human development. These findings emphasize the necessity of a multifaceted strategy for advancing human development and have implications for Sierra Leone's development policies and programs.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of the results in light of the theoretical framework and literature review

Important new perspectives on the idea of multidimensional growth in Sierra Leone are offered by the study's findings. The findings can be understood in the following ways in light of the theoretical framework and literature review:

5.1.1 Conceptualization of Human Development

The capacities approach to human development is congruent with the study's findings regarding how people in Sierra Leone conceptualize human development (Sen, 1999). As the capabilities approach focuses on enhancing human capacities and freedoms, participants stressed the significance of economic growth, education, health, and social relationships in fostering human development (Nussbaum, 2011).

In support of human development, participants stressed the value of social interactions, health, education, and economic progress. This is consistent with the capabilities approach's emphasis on enhancing human freedoms and capacities (Nussbaum, 2011).

5.1.2 Experiences of Growth in Multiple Dimensions

According to Alkire and Foster (2011), the hypothesis of multidimensional poverty is supported by the study's findings regarding how people in Sierra Leone experience growth in a variety of aspects. Based on participant reports, the multidimensional poverty method aims to capture the complexity of poverty and human development (Alkire & Santos, 2010). Participants reported growth in economic, social, cultural, emotional, and physical aspects.

The results further corroborate the notion that human development is a complex phenomena that defies easy reduction to a particular measure or aspect (Stanton, 2007). The notion of human development as a process of increasing human capabilities and freedoms is congruent with the experiences of progress in several dimensions that the participants reported (Sen, 1999).

5.1.3 Challenges to Promoting Human Development

According to the United Nations Development Programme (2019), the study's conclusions regarding the difficulties in advancing human development in Sierra Leone are in line with previous research on the subject. Participant responses to the main obstacles to advancing human development were social inequality, poverty, and lack of access to healthcare and education. These findings are consistent with research on the subject and support the World Bank's 2020 report on the subject.

The results further corroborate the notion that poverty and inequality must be addressed in order to advance human development, and that human development and economic development are intimately related

(Hanushek & Woessmann, 2011). The literature on the significance of resolving social inequality to promote human development is also consistent with the emphasis on social inequality as a barrier to human development (Stanton, 2007).

Important new perspectives on the idea of multidimensional growth in Sierra Leone are offered by the study's findings. A multifaceted approach to fostering human development is crucial, as evidenced by the findings, which align with the theoretical framework and literature evaluation. The findings underscore the necessity of addressing poverty, lack of access to healthcare and education, and social inequality in order to support human growth, and they have implications for development policies and initiatives in Sierra Leone.

6. Conclusion

By investigating how people in Sierra Leone perceive growth in many dimensions, think about human development, and deal with obstacles to it, this study attempted to investigate the idea of multidimensional growth in that nation. A multifaceted approach to supporting human development is crucial, as demonstrated by the study's findings, which offer insightful information about the intricacies of human development in Sierra Leone.

According to the study's findings, people in Sierra Leone perceive human development as a complex process that includes advancements in social connections, health, education, and the economy, among other facets of life. The results also show that people in Sierra Leone grow in a variety of ways, including social, cultural, emotional, physical, and economic. The study's findings do, however, also draw attention to the difficulties in advancing human development in Sierra Leone, such as socioeconomic inequality, poverty, and limited access to healthcare and education.

6.1 Recommendations

These recommendations are offered in light of the study's findings:

- ✓ **Multidimensional approach to development:** Various areas of human development, such as social connections, economic growth, education, and health, should be addressed by multidimensional development policies and programs in Sierra Leone.
- ✓ **To tackle the issue of limited access to essential services that are vital for advancing human development,** the government of Sierra Leone ought to allocate more funds towards education and healthcare.
- ✓ **Handle poverty and inequality:** As two of the biggest obstacles to advancing human development in Sierra Leone, poverty and social inequality should be addressed by the government through policies and programs.
Empower women and girls: Since they have a difficult time getting access to jobs and education, women and girls should be given priority in Sierra Leone's development policies and initiatives.
- ✓ **Communities should be involved in the planning and execution of development projects through community-based approaches,** which can support sustainable development and cater to local communities' specific needs. This is how development initiatives in Sierra Leone should be carried out.
Enhancing local organizations' and government agencies' ability can aid in advancing sustainable development and enhancing the provision of development services; thus, development partners and organizations operating in Sierra Leone ought to give priority to this activity.
- ✓ **Evaluation and monitoring:** To keep tabs on developments, spot obstacles, and modify plans of action, monitoring and assessment should be given top priority in Sierra Leone's development projects and programs.

6.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Numerous shortcomings in this study offer chances for additional investigation in the future. Due to the qualitative case study methodology used in the study, its conclusions might not apply to other situations. In the future, research on the links between different indices of human development in Sierra Leone may take a quantitative approach. To present a more complex picture of human development in Sierra Leone, future research might also examine the experiences of particular groups, such as women, young people, and those with impairments.

The present study concludes that a multifaceted strategy is crucial for advancing human development in Sierra Leone, taking into account all the different facets of human development, such as social relationships, economic growth, education, and health. The research findings offer significant perspectives for development strategies and initiatives in Sierra Leone, emphasizing the necessity of tackling poverty, limited access to healthcare and education, and social inequality in order to foster human growth.

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