

Assess the effectiveness of the range of indicators now being used to measure development.

The word development had variable meanings mainly because there are so many different aspects to look at within a country, the social, economic, political and environmental.

If you were to judge a country's development by its economic status then its GNP (Gross National Product) and GDP would fit accurately. These measure the net income of a country and, though they can be very effective, don't take into consideration the living standards of the country. For example with Saudi Arabia, with a high GDP it ranks well on a global scale but its living conditions, health care and education are poor.

To combat this problem the HDI (Human Development Index) was developed, it's a way to measure well being within a country. This is mainly a social measurement because it takes into consideration education, which is adult literacy rate and years of schooling, health care which is judged by life expectancy and finally the economic factor of GDP. The HDI measures each of these factors between 0 and 1, one being the best. The HDI is a very useful measure of development because it includes economic and social indicators which reduces any anomalies. The PQLI is very similar to the HDI but it includes infant mortality and it's measured between 0 and 100.

Even with these different indicators and indexes a country can appear as developed when it isn't. Another form of judging development is whether or not a country is politically stable. If a country is riddled with corruption then any income it makes isn't invested back into the country, instead entering someone's pockets. Also if no money is being put back into the system it is very difficult for a country to develop.

When a country is developing it goes through different stages, this means that you could judge a country's development on its environmental conditions. If a country is developing then its environment would usually be in a worse condition than other countries. In developing countries such as China there are higher levels of air pollution and river pollution because the industries haven't developed. The problem with looking at environmental aspects to judge development is that a country can, and probably will develop without polluting its environment but it won't show using this indicator.

There are many different development indicators because it is very hard to look at development as a whole and usually indicators focus on certain points. The indicator you use to judge a country's development should therefore be chosen by the user on what aspects they want to look at. All the indicators talked about above have their advantages and disadvantages.