

## MASTER THESIS REVIEW

**Author:** Balaaj Ahmad Mustafa  
**Thesis:** Assessment of Social Progress in Pakistan: A Sub-national Analysis  
**Reviewer:** Jaromír Harmáček

### Content

The aim of the thesis was to create a sub-national Social Progress Index (SPI) for the districts of Pakistan and to identify spatial patterns of disparity in social progress across the country as well as to find the critical components of social progress in which districts of Pakistan lag behind. These aims and objectives of the thesis were fully met.

Methodologically, for the construction of the SPI for the districts of Pakistan, the thesis largely borrows from the general methodology of SPI calculations (which is actually a good thing), although with some exceptions. For example, the author did not use PCA to verify the existence of one factor within components and to derive weights of indicators within components. The author also worked extensively with the JRC recommendations for composite indices constructions.

Methodology of the index creation, as well as the subsequent analytical approaches, are described very clearly. There are, however, some minor methodological issues (some negative correlations between indicators of the same component, for example) that should be taken care of before a possible publication (which this thesis clearly deserves).

Another strength of the thesis is the theoretical part which summarized the definitions of social progress, the ways and tools used to measure it as well as the theory and methodology of the Social Progress Index itself. The state of social development in Pakistan was characterized, too. It was already mentioned that the data and methodology of the index are clearly described and the same applies to the results section that presents the unique findings about Social Progress Index, its dimensions and components for the districts of Pakistan, as well as for the provinces and the entire country.

Content-wise, I find this thesis excellent because not only it created a new tool for measuring social progress in Pakistan, but it also directly used the tool to analyze disparities in social outcomes across the entire country.

### Literature and references

The quality and quantity of sources is excellent. The referencing is consistent, without any major shortcomings.

### Formal requirements

The thesis is an excellent read supplemented with relevant and nicely done figures and tables.

### Overall evaluation and proposed grade

I think this is an excellent thesis. Therefore, I do recommend it for defense with **grade A**.

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

**Signature:**