

Dimensions of Welfare in a Comparative Study of the Scandinavian Societies*

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1. Introduction

In this paper a formulation of a perspective and some conceptualizations for a study of social development in the Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, will be presented. It goes without saying that the term 'social development' can be and has been given many meanings. In any case, the early emphasis on purely economic components has gradually given way to a search for the dynamics of interaction between a wide range of variables. There are also good recent summaries of data resources for comparative research on national development.¹ Here we will favor not only a multi-dimensional approach in the sense of causal pluralism but also what Johan Galtung has labeled 'definitional pluralism'.² Social development is a value-laden term and is defined through variables denoting desirable states. Changes in any of these variables are, by a reasonable degree of consensus, regarded as desirable and may thus be referred to as development. This position also implies that it is less advisable to posit a clearcut division into independent and dependent variables. There are complicated dynamic relationships and feedback loops between different variables denoting development. However, it can hardly be overstressed that we are not here presenting a theory of development. Neither are we able to pinpoint the processes and mechanisms by which development is brought about. What is presented, then, is a perspective and some conceptualizations that at present guide our data-gathering efforts both in surveys and in analyses of existing statistical data.

The term 'social development' will here be defined by another term, namely the 'concept of welfare'.

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2. Two Competing Operationalizations of Welfare

Discussions of what is meant by welfare have a long tradition in social science and social philosophy, but it seems advisable here to take actual operationalizations of the welfare concept as the point of departure. Operationalizations are usually based on measurements of the level of living, and by level of living is meant people's actual living conditions in relation to what they need. The problem lies in the difficulty of determining what the needs of people are.

With some justification it seems correct to speak about two competing definitions of level of living used in recent discussions. One, the narrower one, defines level of living – and thus operationalizes welfare – in terms of the resources an individual can command and by which he can master his living conditions. This definition has been stressed by Richard Titmuss,³ and it has been applied in the large Swedish study of low-income groups.⁴ The other and broader definition defines level of living very generally by the extent to which the overall needs of a given population are satisfied. The broader definition has usually been employed by international agencies such as UNRISD and OECD.⁵

Both definitions have assets and weaknesses. The first definition is more concrete and practical. Applications of this definition are apt to give clear guidelines for practical policy. However, its weakness lies in its very narrowness. What man needs or wants cannot always be obtained through a manipulation of resources. The crucial point is of course what is meant by resources. It seems reasonable to define resources as the means of obtaining material or perhaps better impersonal goods. Satisfaction of some needs, however, is not defined through what a man *has* but rather through how he *behaves* or what he *is* in relation to other people. Such needs are the need to love and the need for self-actualization. The satisfaction of the need to love and the need for self-actualization may of course be causally influenced by an individual's resources, but the resources do not enter into the definitions of the satisfaction of these needs.

The rationale for the attempts to define level of living and in the last instance welfare through resources is of course the well-known difficulty to assess the needs of individuals. Needs vary from individual to individual, and we are not, even in the case of an individual, able to look into his mind and assess all his needs. It is even less possible to envisage a society that would satisfy every man's every need. However, it does seem reasonable to take it for a fact that needs are socially defined. Some common needs arise because of shared material conditions and because of human communication. These needs should perhaps not be labeled universal but at least they approach or approximate something universal. Since needs are socially defined they can also change and develop. It is easy to give examples of how new needs have arisen out of changing social conditions. According to the famous historian Jacob Burckhardt, medieval man could not experience or cognize the need to be and to be treated as an individual. Such a need for individuation only slowly emerged with the disappearance of feudal bonds.

Since needs are socially defined it means that there exists, at least in certain

societies and groups, a modicum of agreement over what the most important needs are. To find out what the social definitions of the needs are is a basic task in sociology. However, psychological typologies of basic needs are also based on such social definitions. No lists of needs can be formulated for all times and places. But the social definitions can be empirically studied.

That needs are socially defined also implies that they, or rather certain states of satisfaction of needs, reflect values. To say that something is needed, implies an end or a purpose which is considered good. The analysis of the relationship between the concepts of value and of need may here be left to the philosophers. Suffice it to say that the concepts of value and of need (or rather states of satisfaction of needs) will be treated as synonyms. Social development is judged with reference to values or, as we also could say, to states of satisfaction of needs.

The reason for bringing in the two above-mentioned alternative definitions of welfare is that such general definitions clearly influence the way in which social development is assessed. Researchers and policy-makers who choose the narrower definition, according to which welfare is best operationalized by studying resources, are often arguing that it is impossible to determine some kind of a general level of need satisfaction because individuals vary in their needs. This argument overlooks the fact that needs are socially defined and that these social definitions can be studied. Analyses of welfare in terms of resources cover needs, the satisfaction of which is defined in terms of what a man *has*. In addition, however, there are needs, the satisfaction of which is defined in terms of how a man *behaves* and what he *is* in relation to other people. It is true that this three-fold distinction contains philosophical problems. We are more or less assuming that some needs are interpersonal phenomena while others are intrapersonal. This distinction certainly requires further elaboration, but we shall nevertheless take the position that it is fruitful to use this distinction.

The values here presented as criteria for assessing social development contain, by definition, some subjective elements. However, they are also grounded in sociological and psychological theory, and they are commonly held to be important. The values here posited can be captured in the terms *having*, *loving*, and *being*.

These values correspond to needs the satisfaction of which is defined in terms of what a man *has*, in terms of how he *behaves* in his relations with other people, and in terms of what he *is* in his interrelations with others.

3. Toward a Conceptualization of Values

In order to make values practically applicable they have to be operationalized; that is, procedures have to be found for measurement and assessment of the values. Thus GNP per capita is an operationalization of a value, but we also know that this measure has unduly dominated almost the whole field of measuring welfare.

Before actual measures and parameters are discussed, a short presentation of the values is called for.

Having is related to individual resources and, with some qualifications, to man's physical needs. The most important measures are related to income and employment, but measures of health and physical well-being also belong to this category. Education and especially literacy can be regarded as a resource, although education also contains aspects related to values other than having. Rates and averages of resources held by individuals are used in all studies of national development, but equally important are other parameters such as dispersions and correlations.

Loving as a value is related to many other kindred terms such as companionship, affection, belongingness, and solidarity. The crucial feature is that a person is related to the individuals and groups he *cares for*. He is socially anchored; he is not rootless. With some justification we may regard the satisfaction of the need to love as opposite to anomie. Solidarity is one form of loving, but we want to avoid the traditional stress on political and national solidarity. The need to love is satisfied when a person has others to care for. This implies that there is a greater emphasis on love as giving than as receiving. To operationalize loving presents difficulties, but it is at least possible to approach the problem in interview surveys even if it is difficult to find adequate measures in existing descriptive statistics.

Being as a value is also related to many other concepts such as to personal growth, satisfaction of growth needs, self-individuation, and self-actualization. *Being* refers to a dimension with alienation at one end, and self-actualization at the other. Because alienation refers to a state in which an individual is a thing or a commodity, we can proceed to look for something that is its opposite. Also, in order to be able to measure this value it seems practical to disregard concepts of alienation referring to private mental states. It seems more fruitful to ask what a person is in his relations to others in society. We assume that *insubstitutability* is an attribute of self-actualization and opposite to alienation. A person who is easily substitutable is in a sense treated as a thing, a machine or something more or less mechanically replaceable.

In the questionnaire for the Scandinavian study we included two types of questions aimed at measuring self-actualization through insubstitutability. First, there are questions related to how many persons could easily replace the interviewee. Second, there are questions related to which traits and abilities the person has that make him fit for his job.

The values here held as important are crucial in many of psychology's need theories. There is a rough correspondence between our tripartite classification of values and Abraham Maslow's need hierarchy. *Having* corresponds to Maslow's first two need categories (physical needs and safety needs), *loving* corresponds to Maslow's third and fourth categories (the love needs and the esteem needs), and finally *being* is related to Maslow's fifth category (the need for self-realization).⁶ The precise nature of the correspondence is of small importance, but a reference to Maslow may be useful because of his assumptions about the hierarchical and dynamical relationships between the different needs.

Maslow's need theory is formulated in such a fashion that the needs cannot

be reduced to each other, and it permits a discussion of how a society responds to the needs. His notion of a hierarchy of prepotency introduces a causal notion that may prove to be useful. Although we warned against a strict division into independent and dependent variables, it seems reasonable to assume with Maslow that satisfaction of the hierarchically lower needs is a prerequisite for the hierarchically higher needs. Thus satisfaction of physical needs is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the satisfaction of the need to love and the need for self-actualization. This may also explain the meaning of the frequently heard statement that elimination of socially 'bad' conditions makes for a decrease in dissatisfaction but that it does not make for an increase in satisfaction.

4. Measures of Welfare Values

Johan Galtung probably more than anybody else has warned against the mechanical use of developmental variables that do not indicate any practice or any clearly conceivable social phenomena. With the present upsurge of studies on national development, there is an extensive use of mechanically chosen variables with an only minimal amount of face validity. It may be added that, especially in Finnish social science with its obsession with factor analysis, there has been an abundance of such variables. Galtung also stresses as many others before him that rates and averages often are not those parameters we are looking for but that dispersions and correlations are equally or even more important. The parameters used in the operationalization of values function as guides for development policies. Usually we want to increase averages (e.g. income per capita), decrease dispersions (e.g. of income), and decrease correlations (e.g. between education and race).⁷

We will now try to operationalize the values by indicating central tendencies (rates, averages), dispersions, and correlations of our three main values. Galtung and Høivik call rates and averages 'measures on the individual level'. Dispersions and correlations, however, do not make sense per capita but are measures on the societal level. They also discuss, with reference to Lazarsfeld's well-known classification, other types of variables useful in characterizing societies. Some variables denote global properties. One such global variable is the division into monarchies and republics. There may be some differences between the Scandinavian countries in that Finland is a republic and Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are monarchies. We will not at this stage introduce any global variables; these will be used later as additional explanatory variables. The same holds for variables denoting structural properties, that is, variables based on the measurement of interaction between individuals. The point of departure in our present comparative study is formed by variables denoting central tendencies, dispersions, and correlations of the three values. They represent criteria for social development, but in analyzing causal pat-

terns in the development a cluster of other variables must of course be introduced.

What we need, then, are measures of: 1) central tendency (rates, averages) of having, 2) dispersion of having, 3) central tendency of loving, 4) dispersion of loving, 5) central tendency of being, 6) dispersion of being, 7) correlation of having and loving, 8) correlation of having and being, and 9) correlation of loving and being.

Needless to say, all these measures are not equally important. Some measures are also extremely hard to develop. It cannot be overstressed that the measures should not be mechanically constructed from the standard textbooks of statistics. Access to hospitals, for example, is differentially distributed, but it is not very easy to find an appropriate measure. With these qualifications in mind we can proceed to some suggestions.

1. The measures of the central tendency of having describe what can be labeled *socioeconomic development*. Central tendencies are those most commonly used in studies of national development. The per capita GNP has probably stood in a class of its own partly because governments have been particularly interested in this measure. There are many other measures in this category, such as the amount of literacy and the number of physicians and hospital beds in proportion to the population. All of these measures are not computed per capita, but they nevertheless represent, as Galtung has stressed, potential distributions. One reason for the frequent use of per capita GNP is the assumption that it correlates highly with other developmental measures. There is some evidence pointing in this direction, but this also indicates that the central tendency of having is thought of as a mean or device to actualize other values. In many present studies the next category may, therefore, be considered as a more important welfare dimension.

2. The dispersion of having relates to what is commonly called *equality*. Dispersion parameters are often developed by using standard deviation and variance, but there are many other devices such as the Gini coefficients and measures of regional distributions. A grave problem in comparative research is that social structure should be accounted for, which means that different kinds of measures in different societies would have to be used in order to reveal sociologically meaningful patterns. A difficulty is presented by those values for which accessibility is what counts, as in the case of schools and hospitals. Measures of equality will be given a more detailed treatment in the next section.

3. The aim of measuring the central tendency of loving sounds almost offensive. However, in principle it seems possible to study and measure to what extent people have individuals and groups whom they care for and with whom they feel a sense of belonging. It is difficult to find adequate measures in official descriptive statistics. Some measures of isolation may be useful and obtainable, but to develop indicators for this category further explorations have to be made. At this stage interview surveys may indicate new possibilities. Some statistical data indicating patterns of escaping and leaving a social field, such as suicide, divorce, immigration, the size of the floating vote in elections, etc., are perhaps relevant.

4. It is not easy to envisage what the dispersion of loving should look like. It

is of course possible to study the frequency of people's having others to care for and to feel attached to distributed by region or by class, but this comes almost too close to an equality measure. Another possibility is to look for the amount of freedom or opportunity to choose relevant groups. It should be noted that this implies that high dispersion becomes a value in contrast to the equality measures. The question posed would concern the possibilities people have of avoiding anomie by being permitted to choose persons and groups they really care for. The marriage rate (nuptiality) could perhaps function as one such measure. The problem is that such measures come very close to the measures of dispersion of being. In any case, the present category has to be explored further by survey research.

5. It has already been stated that the central tendency of being can be measured by studying the insubstitutability of individuals. The more substitutable they are the more people are like things, furniture, machine tools, etc. At this stage it is still difficult to see the possibilities of using labor statistics for this purpose. Unemployment rates may have a bearing in this matter, but such a measure may be too dependent on the proneness to trade cycles in different societies. It seems reasonable to assume that insubstitutability is positively correlated with social status. The higher the status of a person the more difficult he is to replace. Education may therefore be used as one possible measure. This would also harmonize with the common view that education per se makes for greater self-actualization. The issue of substitutability is of course related not only to an individual's occupational role but also to his place in the family, for example. But we may assume that the first-mentioned is most important. In any case, substitutability and its correlates can be explored in survey research.

6. The dispersion of being appears to be the most tricky of all categories. Again one could study the distribution of insubstitutability by region and class, but this then becomes an equality measure. The most reasonable way seems to be to develop some kind of measure of the dimension pluralism-uniformity. Then, again a high amount of dispersion becomes the value. The term pluralism should, however, be relieved of its purely political connotation. Political pluralism is one of many special cases, some of which deal with the freedom to choose leisure activities, marriage forms, localities, vacation spots, etc. Pressure toward uniformity is an important social fact, and it also seems reasonable to say that it hampers the dispersion of being and self-actualization. When the pressure toward uniformity is strong only those who exert the pressure are given opportunities for self-actualization. The problem is that it is very hard to find an overall indicator of the pressure toward uniformity. It takes very different shapes in different societies, and an analysis of it often seems to require specific and systematic studies of a society in all its uniqueness. Nevertheless the amount of pressure toward uniformity is an important phenomenon in any study of welfare and values.

7-9. The problem of correlations may be approached very simply. The three possibilities shown on the next page all stand for well-known phenomena we generally consider harmful and would like to see disappear. The three correlations may be labeled as follows: a) Can we from what a person is tell what he has: *Injustice*;

	Having	Loving	Being
Having		1. Can we from what a person loves tell what he has	2. Can we from what a person is tell what he has
Loving	1. Can we from what a person has tell what he loves		3. Can we from what a person is tell what he loves
Being	2. Can we from what a person has tell what he is	3. Can we from what a person loves tell what he is	

b) Can we from what a person has tell what he loves: *Discrimination*; c) Can we from what a person is tell what he loves: *Prejudice*.

It is evident that many qualifications should be added to these shorthand definitions. It is clear, for instance, that injustice is often difficult to distinguish from inequality. It depends on how we define the properties 'to have' and 'to be'. The fact that Negroes in the United States on all counts have less resources than the general population can be characterized as injustice.⁸ There race (being) is strongly correlated with having (resources). Of course in some circumstances one may want to use the terms so that race is a resource in itself and the distribution according to race a matter of inequality. The distinction between inequality and injustice is a matter of definition conventions, and it does not seem reasonable to give a solution once and for all. The importance of making the distinction is that in some societies the battle against injustice may appear to be a more immediately pressing problem than the struggle against inequality. Of course, if inequality completely disappears then no injustice would be possible. In sections 6-9 of this paper problems of injustice, as here defined, will be discussed under the heading of inequality.

The difference between discrimination and prejudice is not sharp, but we may say that discrimination always requires some sort of overt action whereas prejudice does not.

The term 'prejudice' itself creates problems. By granting *loving* the position of an important value, we have already accepted the right to hold particularistic feelings. It might even be called 'the forgotten dimension' in studies of welfare and development. This means, however, that the term 'prejudice' has to be given a fairly precise meaning. Prejudice may be said to prevail if a person withholds his love from, feels threatened by, or hates somebody regardless of the knowledge of the other person or of his actions.

It is hardly fruitful here to further pursue a discussion of how injustice, discrimination, and prejudice can be measured by the correlations between having, loving, and being. It is assumed that the dictum is to decrease these correlations. The further development of these measures will depend very much on how one succeeds in measuring the values of having, loving, and being.

5. The Relative Importance of Values

We have started from the position that all the values here covered are important and that they are related to the welfare of man. It seems reasonable, however, to assume that they are not always equally important. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to declare some values most important for all times and in all places, which would be tantamount to playing God. In studies of values the importance of an empirical approach should not be forgotten. It has been our intention in the above to seek commonly held values, not to declare for all others what a given value should be.

The empirical attitude implies that the relative importance of values may vary from society to society. Some problems, as well as the realization of some values, are held to be more pressing than others. In very poor and undeveloped societies the most pressing problem may for a long time be the value of increasing the central tendency of having, e.g. the per capita GNP. In more developed societies issues related to equality are likely to appear more important. In many cases the policy alternatives imply a choice between these two values.

One causal assumption about the relative importance of the values has been built into the presentation. With special reference to the need theory of Abraham Maslow, it was assumed that some values related to having (satisfaction of hierarchically lower needs) are prerequisites for the realization of values related to loving and being (hierarchically higher needs). In any case, in all societies all the values here presented may be related to pressing problems even though there usually is some kind of order of importance. To study this order of importance, in other words to study the social definitions of the order of importance, is a basic task of any social science related to public policy.

It should be noted that we have presented values only as criteria for the assessment of social development, while causal relationships have only been implied. However, the analysis should continue with a study of causal relationships and factors in development.

Some values may have positions as causal factors of utmost importance. This may for instance be true for the central tendency of having, but this is a subject open for further research. It seems self-evident that there are many complicated feedback loops between the values here presented. Likewise, there are other causal factors that at this stage have not been brought into the analysis. To develop a theory including causal factors and feedback processes between the values here presented is an appealing but extremely difficult step.

In the following the discussion will focus on matters related to equality-inequality. There are several reasons for this. First, in current discussions of welfare in the Scandinavian societies, matters of equality appear to be more interesting than matters related to pure socioeconomic development. Second, as our presentation includes a built-in causal assumption about the importance of analyzing having before loving and being, it is logical to start with issues related to impersonal resources and the values related to having. Third, because of the structure of

available descriptive statistics, it is almost impossible to present data on other values than those related to having. The problems of loving and being must be surveyed before statistical indicators can be developed.

6. Problems in the Measurement of Equality

It has been stressed above that issues related to the problem of equality play an important role in our study and that the analysis of equality is of importance in the study of other values. What is presented here are simply some of the preliminary conceptualizations and data guiding our further efforts.

It should be clear from the foregoing that the claim for equality is valid for things a person can have or possess. There is of course an enormous variety of things man can have or possess. They cannot all be listed in a single study, but some conceptualizations by which they can be analyzed have to be put forth, although the nature of these conceptualizations depends on the purpose of the study. In analyzing equality, it is assumed in this study that resources for obtaining and securing impersonal good things of life form a basis for an adequate conceptualization. The level of living has in most policy-oriented studies been divided into components. It can be assumed that these components are resources for obtaining impersonal good things. At least this seems realistic if the starting point is the list of components given by Sten Johansson in an extensive study of the level of living in Sweden.⁹ The level of living will here be divided into eight components. An important problem is whether these components can be aggregated into a general measure of the level of living. This question will be left open here.

Before going into the components of the level of living, it is important to say something about the types of parameters relevant to a study of equality. At the risk of being repetitious, we list the following types of parameters:

1. The *central tendency* of a given level of living component. Generally, the higher this central tendency, the better the society, other things being equal.

Here we do not want to discuss the problem of an adequate measure of the central tendency. Suffice it to say that the choice of measure is not a technical question only. Different measures have different policy implications, and consequently the choice of a measure has political aspects too.¹⁰

2. The *dispersion* of a given component. The smaller the dispersion of a given component, the better the society, other things being equal. Furthermore, if the dispersion is zero, there is equality in that component. The lower the dispersion, the higher the *degree of equality*.

3. The correlation of the positions a person has in different components of the level of living. The more the distributions of the components vary together, the higher the correlation. The lower the correlation, the better the society.

4. One can say with some justification that components of the level of living contain positions. Thus, for instance, good economic resources denote a position

in the economic component and poor health a position in the health component. It means that the types of parameters listed above have something to do with the positions in the components of the level of living. A high central tendency means that the average position is good. A low dispersion means that positions do not form a very broad and cohesive structure. A high correlation means that the structures of two components vary together.

However, there exist in social systems criteria for getting positions in these components, and some kind of equality is applicable to them, too. These criteria are relevant when sociologists and others discuss social mobility, equality of opportunity, lack of discrimination, and so on. Here we may call this type of parameter *lack of injustice*.¹¹ As a value it requires that there should be no discrimination when the positions in the components of the level of living are filled. This means that the positions should be open to all, and if there is competition for a given position, the most competent should get it.

Something should be said about the relations between the parameters given above. Policies aiming at an increase in central tendencies of different components may conflict with each other. One can for instance build dwellings or improve schools, but there may not be resources for both. More important, however, is the fact that attempts to increase the central tendency and to decrease the dispersion in a component may conflict with each other. The position taken here is simply that such situations should be avoided, when possible. The correlation is of course zero when equality persists.

Which of these parameters is most important when thinking of 'the good society'? It is easy to see that the question is misplaced, because it is impossible to answer in such a general form. In certain situations it may be possible to indicate a parameter whose improvement is most important. This is a problem in the realm of the general theory of justice.

7. The Components of the Level of Living

At this stage the components of the level of living have to be introduced. Sten Johansson gives the following list: 1) health, 2) nutritional habits, 3) residence, 4) living conditions during childhood and family relations, 5) education, 6) degree of employment and work conditions, 7) economic resources, 8) political resources, 9) leisure.¹²

The components are obviously quite heterogeneous in their relations to the concept of welfare. Some components are directly related to welfare, whereas others are very general means of obtaining many kinds of benefits. Metaphorically speaking, the components are at different distances from the concept of welfare. Health is nearest welfare, residence may be the second nearest. Nutritional habits can also be regarded as being very near welfare, at least in situations where there is a shortage of food. It would not be reasonable in this study to include the degree

of employment and education into the components because they are quite far from welfare and because such components are investments rather than rewards.

On the basis of the above considerations the following components of the level of living will be included: 1) health, 2) nutritional habits, 3) residence, 4) living conditions during childhood and family relations, 5) work conditions, 6) economic resources, 7) political resources, 8) leisure.

It cannot be denied that these components are at different distances from welfare. Some are quite specific and near welfare while others are general means and only indirectly related to welfare. For instance, economic and political resources are means for acquiring other things, and economic resources at least are easily convertible to other kinds of benefits. In the comparative study of the Scandinavian countries there is quite a strong emphasis on these more general components, although, unfortunately, this feature cannot be delineated very clearly here because we lack relevant data.

8. Stratification, Economic, and Political Resources

It should be clear from what has been said above that occupation and education have not been included here among the components of the level of living. Therefore neither their central tendencies nor dispersions nor correlations will be measured. But they are important as criteria for the distribution of (economic and maybe political) resources. Here the question of whether they are proper criteria or not will be left open. It is a problem of justice in the broader sense. It is a fact, however, that in real life occupation (and the degree of employment) and education are important criteria. The following definitions are therefore introduced.

1. A society is *occupationally stratified* if the components of the level of living covariate with occupational divisions (for instance white collar worker-blue collar worker, industrial workers-peasants). The greater this covariation, the greater the occupational stratification.

2. A society is *educationally stratified* if the components of the level of living covariate with education. The greater this covariation, the greater the educational stratification. This is true independent of the possible fact that education may be an indirect cause of variations in (economic) resources, the direct cause being (for instance) occupation.

3. There is further *intergenerational mobility* when the positions of the younger generation are not wholly dependent on the positions of the older generation. The higher the mobility, the more independent the positions of the two generations are. It is difficult to say whether it is good or not to have high mobility. The answer to this question follows from the theory of social justice (understood in its broader sense) in the same way as the questions of goodness or badness of occupational stratification and educational stratification do.

The parameters and the system of definitions constitute the conceptual frame-

work of the study. The framework itself was designed to make a reasonable *description* of inequality and stratification in the Scandinavian countries possible. But an important question is which factors *explain* the facts obtained by using the framework. About this little can be said here, but some remarks are in order.

W. Wesolowski and K. Slomczynski distinguish between two 'pure' types of approaches to social stratification.¹³ First, stratification can be conceived of as a system of social relations. Strata or classes are held to be interrelated in various ways, and certain regularities can be discovered in these interrelations. Second, stratification can be identified with the unequal distribution of 'goods' or, in our terms, 'resources'. This approach emphasizes certain regularities in the distribution of resources. The first approach deals more with the relations between people, the second approach more with the positions people have. It is clear that our theoretical framework belongs to the sphere of the second approach. Here we want to stress the distinction made by the two Polish sociologists in order to indicate the possibility of obtaining variables from the sphere of social relations for explaining the distribution of resources. Economic and political resources are of enormous importance because they can be used as sanctions in social relations. Economic and political resources have a dual role in this study: on one hand they are components of the level of living, on the other they render explanations of the distribution of the level of living. In this paper, however, we are dealing mainly with economic and political resources in the first sense and not as explanations of the variations in the level of living.

Furthermore, one takes a step forward when the ways of distributing goods are described. The *way of distributing* refers to the process by which a given distribution is reached. The first thing to acknowledge is that the way of distributing may be quite different when different components of the level of living are studied. The way of distributing health is not the same as the way of distributing wealth. Another thing to acknowledge is that all Scandinavian countries are highly industrialized capitalistic countries, which implies that economic resources are the most convertible ones. Money is an important means of exchange. Thus, economic resources are very important although there may be variations in their importance even within Scandinavia.

9. Some Scandinavian Comparisons

The components of the level of living can now be presented in somewhat more detail on the basis of existing data.

1. *Health*. By this component is meant physical and psychological health, or lack of illness. This concept is narrower than the one presented by WHO's specialists, who define it in such a way that it almost equals the concept of welfare. This component includes the state of health of people and also some specific indicators of health. For instance, life expectancy and infant mortality are included in this component. Comparative data about these indicators are available.

Table I. Male and Female Life Expectancy at Birth in the Scandinavian Countries 1961-1965

	Females (years)	Males (years)
Norway	76.0	71.0
Sweden	75.7	71.6
Denmark	74.5	70.3
Finland	72.6	65.4

Source: *Yearbook of Nordic Statistics*, 1969, Table 24, p. 24.

As regards expectations of life, Norway and Sweden seem to be equally good societies, whereas Finland is clearly the last. That Sweden is behind Norway in female life expectancy may be due to the fact that Norwegian women belong to the economically active population less often than women in the other Scandinavian countries.

Table II. Male and Female Infant Mortality in Scandinavia (Deaths of Infants under One Year of Age per 1000 Born Alive)

	Females	Males
Sweden 1966	11.4	14.3
Denmark 1967	12.4	19.0
Norway 1966	12.8	16.7
Finland 1967	13.6	16.6

Source: *Statistisk Årbog 1970, Danmark*. Copenhagen: Danmarks statistik, 1971, Table 430, pp. 502 f.

Seen from a worldwide perspective, the Scandinavian countries are very homogeneous in this respect. However, Sweden seems to be slightly ahead of the other countries.

The measures used above are averages, and they characterize societies as a whole. It is difficult to say how life expectancy or infant mortality is distributed within the single countries. The distributions are probably affected by economic conditions and, independently of them, by regional differentiation. It is also difficult to find figures for other measures of the general level of health. Variables such as bed-days in proportion to the population or the number of physicians are probably not very good for this purpose as they reflect health services rather than health conditions.

Among the components, health conditions occupy a very central place. In the planned survey study of the Scandinavian countries, questions about both physical and psychological health are therefore numerous. The intention is to get health measures that are unaffected by the supply of health services. But equally important is the fact that survey data give information about how health conditions are distributed in relation to various characteristics.

2. *Nutritional habits.* This component has not been considered very important in our study. All the Scandinavian countries are from a worldwide perspective in a good position. There is no lack of food or especially important nutrients such

as protein. Still, there are variations in nutritional habits within these countries. Nutrition specialists believe that it is of great importance that the daily consumption of food be divided into three approximately equal meals. However, even in Sweden over half of the population doesn't eat according to this norm.¹⁴ Still, it is clear that the problems of nutrition in these countries are not mainly due to scarcity. The problems concern wrong diet and consumption, as well as over-consumption.

This aspect of the level of living is not of crucial importance in our study, although its importance for the level of living should not be underestimated. Questions about nutrition and consumption have not been included in the survey due to scarce research resources. It is hard to decide which questions about nutrition are most important in the Scandinavian countries, and surveying all aspects of nutrition would occupy the whole questionnaire.

3. *Residence.* The following features connected with residence appear to be important: number of persons per room, the level of equipment in the residence, and the degree of ease or difficulty in getting residence.¹⁵ In our survey only the first feature has been included, because it was thought to be most important. Some comparative data are available.

Table III. Average Number of Persons per Room in Scandinavia in 1960

Denmark	.70
Norway	.80
Sweden	.80
Finland	1.30

Source: *Compilation of Development Indicators*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva, 1969, Indicator No. 33.

In this respect Denmark is the best situated, while Finland is far behind the other Scandinavian countries.

The amount of utilities and labor-saving devices in the households varies according to country. In the following Table some examples are given.

Table IV. Frequencies of Some Utilities and Labor-Saving Devices, Percentages

	Sweden	Denmark	Norway	Finland
Running hot water	90	86	84	44
Bath or shower	83	71	69	32
Telephone	90	54	45	42
Electric vacuum cleaner	92	96	87	54
Refrigerator	93	89	83	60
At least one car	63	58	50	35

Source: 'A Survey of Europe Today', *The Reader's Digest* (1971), Tables 10-11, pp. 66-69.

The general picture is quite clear. Swedish households have the highest number of utilities, and then follow Denmark, Norway, and Finland in that order.

4. *Conditions of living during childhood and family relations.* The first part of this component, conditions of living during childhood, is important because of its presumable effect on children's development. As Johansson puts it, there is an overrepresentation of people with bad childhood conditions in every social problem group.¹⁶ In the survey questionnaire some questions concerning this part of the component were included since comparative data presently are lacking. These questions are retrospective and focus on the childhood of the interviewed persons.

Family relations constitute the other part of this component. Crucial features are loneliness and peacefulness of social relations. This component was also dealt with under loving in the first sections of this paper.

5. *Work conditions.* Occupation has been said to be an investment rather than a reward. However, occupation is less important than work conditions from the point of view of level of living. The following features of work conditions are relevant from this point of view: physical and psychological requirements in the job, noise and air at the working place, dirt, pollution, and so on.¹⁷ No questions about work conditions have been included in the survey. Again, it would not be possible to survey all aspects, and it is hard to see which aspects are most important. At the present no comparable data about this component are available. However, the importance of this component as a possible explanatory factor of the variation in the health of the population should in principle be emphasized.

6. *Economic resources.* It was assumed above that economic resources probably constitute the most important single component of the level of living. It has various aspects that must be specified.

The per capita GNP in 1966 in the Scandinavian countries was as follows:

Table V. Per Capita GNP in Scandinavia in 1966, in 1965 US Dollars

Sweden	2733
Denmark	2322
Norway	2022
Finland	1858

Source: Nils Petter Gleditch, *Norge i verdenssamfunnet*, Trondhjem: Pax Forlag. 1970, Table 3.1, p. 77.

As a measure of the average economic resources per capita GNP is fairly good. Table V is of course not surprising. More surprising, perhaps, is that the situation has not always been the same. Simon Kuznets has by extrapolation tried to estimate the GNP's of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway a hundred years ago. The results are given in Table VI.

Table VI. Per Capita GNP in Sweden, 1861-1869, and in Denmark and Norway, 1865-1869, in 1965 US Dollars

Denmark	370
Norway	287
Sweden	215

Source: Simon Kuznets, *Economic Growth of Nations*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971, Table 2, p. 24.

One hundred years ago the average economic resources were greatest in Denmark, second greatest in Norway, and lowest in Sweden. Finland was not included in Kuznets' analysis, but it can be assumed that Finland had the lowest.

In any case Sweden's economic resources have increased much more rapidly than Denmark's and Norway's.¹⁸

Another very crucial problem is the distribution of economic resources. An important part of economic resources is income, and there is also some information about income distribution. The degree of inequality in income seems to be smallest in Norway and second smallest in Sweden. Denmark is third, Finland last.¹⁹

The distribution of wealth in the Scandinavian countries has not been systematically analyzed. Tax statistics cannot be used easily because taxable property is defined differently in the different countries. However, it may be possible to overcome this difficulty after some additional analyses.

There is information about the distribution of agricultural land. The distribution is most even in Denmark; then follow Sweden and Finland, while it is most uneven in Norway.²⁰ It is difficult to interpret the results because agricultural land, too, is defined differently in the different countries. In addition, there are great regional variations in the quality of the soil.

7. *Political resources.* It is clear that it is extremely difficult to get comparable data about the distribution of political resources, but the political rights of individuals are nevertheless approximately the same in all the Scandinavian countries. It is also clear that the crucial political decisions are made by a limited group of people. The problem is difficult since political resources are not additive, i.e. we cannot determine the political resources of a group by adding together the political resources of its members. The political resources of a group can be greater or smaller than the sum of the political resources of its members depending on other qualities of the group and on the situation. The survey contains questions about the presumably most widely distributed political resources but many central questions cannot be answered by the survey. It is difficult, for instance, to determine the role of political relations as a possible explanatory factor of the parameters listed above.

8. *Leisure.* Information about this component is not gathered in the survey. Some questions about qualitative aspects of leisure are included but they rather belong under the heading of 'being'.

10. Some Concluding Remarks

The analysis presented here has been fairly static. The concern has been on social development, rather than on growth, defined as the time increment of variables of social development. As the analysis proceeds it is to be hoped that both synchronic and diachronic analyses can be utilized and applied.

It has already been stressed that the main focus has been on values defining

social development. In comparative studies many causal factors not related by definition to values have to be included in the analysis. Some causal factors have been analyzed, but probably many others will have to be considered. We have not, for instance, touched upon such a basic fact as the distribution of the population into primary, secondary, and tertiary occupations.

It is worth stressing not only that comparative studies include comparisons between societies at a specific point in time but that there are several foci of comparisons. These comparisons may involve the study of one society at different points in time, and it may involve comparisons of intra-country variations. It has been stressed here that both values and needs are socially defined. It implies that different kinds of comparisons are important in different societies at different times. Sometimes the most pressing problems, and accordingly the main policy goals as well are related to international comparisons. Also, societies aim at keeping up with the Joneses. Sometimes, however, the comparisons are apt to focus on national growth patterns, and sometimes on intra-country variations. They all merit serious attention, but it is almost always important in comparative studies to keep in mind the political saliency of the problems.

NOTES

1. Stein Rokkan, *Report to Unesco. Data Resources for Comparative Research on National Development: Report on a Workshop ISSC/SCCR/WIND/71/6*, 15 Oct. 1971.
2. Johan Galtung and Tord Høivik, *On the Definition and Theory of Development with a View to the Application of Rank Order Indicators in the Elaboration of a Composite Index of Human Resources*, COM/WS/68, Paris: Unesco, 19 April 1968.
3. R. A. Titmuss, *Essays on the Welfare State*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1958.
4. Sten Johansson, *Om levnadsnivåundersökningen*, Stockholm: Allmänna Förlaget, 1970, pp. 24–25.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
6. Abraham Maslow, 'A Theory of Human Motivation', *Psychological Review* 50 (1943), pp. 370–396.
7. Galtung and Høivik, *op.cit.*
8. James S. Coleman, *Race Relations and Social Change*, The Johns Hopkins University, July 1967 (mimeo).
9. Johansson, *op.cit.*, pp. 32–38.
10. See Tord Høivik, 'Methodology of Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research* 8 (1971), pp. 299–303.
11. This concept of justice is a very narrow one, and it should not be confused with the broader concept of justice. On this see for instance John Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness', *Philosophical Review* 67 (1958), pp. 164–194.
12. Johansson, *op.cit.*, pp. 32–36.
13. W. Wesolowski and K. Slomeczynski, 'Social Stratification in Polish Cities', in J. A. Jackson (ed.), *Social Stratification*, Sociological Studies 1, Cambridge: The University Press, 1968, pp. 176–181.
14. Sten Johansson, *Den vuxna befolkningens kostvanor*, Stockholm: Allmänna Förlaget, 1971, p. 14.
15. Lena Johansson, *Den vuxna befolkningens bostadsförhållanden*, Stockholm: Allmänna Förlaget, 1971, pp. 7–8.
16. Sten Johansson, *op.cit.*
17. Lars Sundbom, *De förvärvsarbetandes arbetsplatsförhållanden*, Stockholm: Allmänna Förlaget, 1971, pp. 13–26.

18. Simon Kuznets, *Economic Growth of Nations*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971, Table 4, p. 39.
19. Bruce Russett, *et al.*, *The World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964, Table 71, p. 245, in which data about Finland are not included. Information about all Scandinavian countries are found in Juha Partanen, 'Tuolerot Länsi-Euroopan maissa' (Inequalities of Income in Western Europe), *Sosiologia* 7 (1970), p. 308. These two sources are in disagreement as regards the order of Norway and Sweden. In Partanen's analysis the income data for Denmark and Norway are different from those for the other countries since taxes have not been subtracted. As regards the rank order of Norway and Sweden, it is advisable to rely on *The World Handbook*.
20. Bruce Russett, *et al.*, *op.cit.*, Table 69, p. 239.