



Power of thoughts and its significance to Human Capital Development – with special reference to Tamil Literature

Mrs Sayee Bhuvaneshwari^{*1} Dr S.N. Sugumar^{*2}

1. PhD. Research scholar, Dept. Of Economics, VISTAS, Chennai – 117.
2. Professor and Head, Dept. Of Economics, VISTAS, Chennai – 117.

Abstract

The growth of a nation today is focused on sustainable development to keep the balance of present needs versus future expectations. Sustainability revolves around achieving economic growth while improving social equality and the standard of living. Human Capital development is the main force behind economic strategies around the globe for achieving sustainability goals. While the focus is on education, healthcare, skill development, workforce policies, etc for the development of human capital, the primary need is to evolve the cognizance of the human mind to its maximum potential and in turn, help them to deliver its best for high productivity. The power of the human mind can thus improve the power of economic growth. This paper is an attempt to review Tamil literature to understand how the power of thoughts can improve the quality of life and standard of living of humans which accelerates the economic growth of any nation.

Keywords: PowerofThoughts, Human Capital Development, Economic growth, Tamil Literature, Sustainability

1. Introduction

We all live in times where there is a dire need for progression into the future. The progress of the nation is repeatedly tested by many hurdles that come from natural calamities, man-made wars, and pandemics like Covid in recent times. The impact of these hurdles on the Social and Economical state of a country is huge and long-lasting. The recovery from such setbacks is also as important as the growth of the nation., To achieve growth, we must look closely into sustainability. Sustainability emphasizes development in the growth of economic, environmental, political, and social arenas. While all these pillars of sustainability support and develop each other, the core foundation of all these pillars is human capital. Capital usually refers to a valuable/usable asset to an individual or business or country. Human capital is nothing but the usable knowledge, skills, and capabilities of humans that can be used for improving productivity which in turn can propel the growth of the nation.[\[7\]](#) The evolution of the human mind not only has a role in shaping their life but in a nation's outlook too. Human capital needs to be embraced with a high quality of life and holistic well-being to nurture and maximize efficiency. The power of the mind is fuelled by the power of thoughts. The thoughts help humans to work through choices, decisions, values etc. Their thoughts give them the power to make or break their well-being. The question here is do all thoughts contribute to the power? The answer is No, the power comes from positive thoughts, and negative thoughts do the contrary. The negative thoughts contribute to the downfall of the economy. In Economics, equilibrium refers to a balance of demand and supply which is an ideal situation and

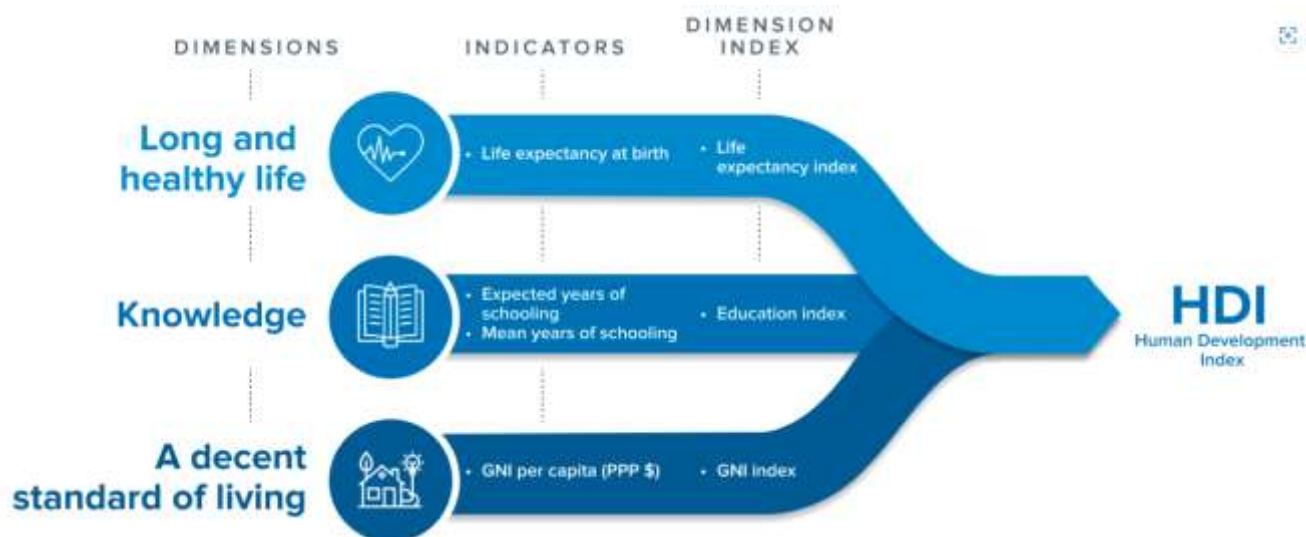
almost never exist.^[1] However, it is the market condition of an ideal balance – if we apply this to our mind, the entire world is the projection made by the mind and thoughts. The world from a macro perspective or a particular society from a micro perspective consists of good and bad which always adds up to 100% bringing the balance.

2. Review of Literature

Human Development

Human development emphasizes on focussing people's well-being which can automatically lead to a better economy instead of the other way around (i.e.,) keeping the focus on economic growth which would lead to better living. In other words, investing in the wealth of life than the material wealth of the Economy^[2]. The opportunities to excel and, Freedom of choice may lead to improved values, happy minds, good standard of living, in turn, creates a prosperous economy.

To measure human development, the United Nations introduced Human Development Index in the year 1990. They have developed a set of measurement parameters and their scale to measure the human development in each Country. It measures health, Education, and Economics through the longevity of life, knowledge, and standard of living ^[8]



**Source HDI report 2021-22 -UN

Human Capital Development

In Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna Says to Arjuna, “**loka-saṅgraham evāpi sampāśhyan kartum arhasi** || – Lokasamgraha is a beautiful concept that talks about the relationship between Society and welfare. As Per the renowned Scholar Dandekar, it is to include the stability, solidarity, and progress of the society (Dandekar 1979,) ^[13]. This could be a beautiful way to look at human capital development. A nation which develops /focuses on the welfare of its human capital will automatically have growth in its economy ^[6]. this would mean adding more focus to healthcare can lead to healthy living which increases productivity, focus on education can create employment and opportunities and thus increase revenue and income, focus on skills /training may lead to advancement in industrial automation and thus increasing global trade and growth. Most of nations especially developing countries puts Human Capital development as their priority over other economic measures to improve the economy and its sustainability.

Tamil Literature – Thirukural

One of the greatest Tamil Literature” Thirukural” which is also called the universal Veda provides us with wisdom across the ocean of topics in couplets form. One of the chapters talk about ethical/righteous ways of living and touches upon contribution to society and the virtue of good governance yielding to a nation’s growth. It talks about how taking care of people ‘s well-being brings prosperity to a nation’s wealth.

In Thirukural’s s chapter on Virtue (Aram), he explains principal factors needed for the welfare of the state are

- 1) Healthy people without ailments

- 2) Abundant wealth following ethical trade rules
- 3) Agriculture
- 4) Prosperity and happiness of people
- 5) Safety of Citizens

This is given in

Kural 738:

“A country's jewels are these five: unfailing health, Fertility, and joy, a sure defence, and wealth.” [4]

Even in the era of Monarchy, Thiruvalluvar talks about the importance of human development as part of good governance and growth strategy.

He also specifies focussing on learning/acquiring knowledge throughout life to improve skills in human resources.

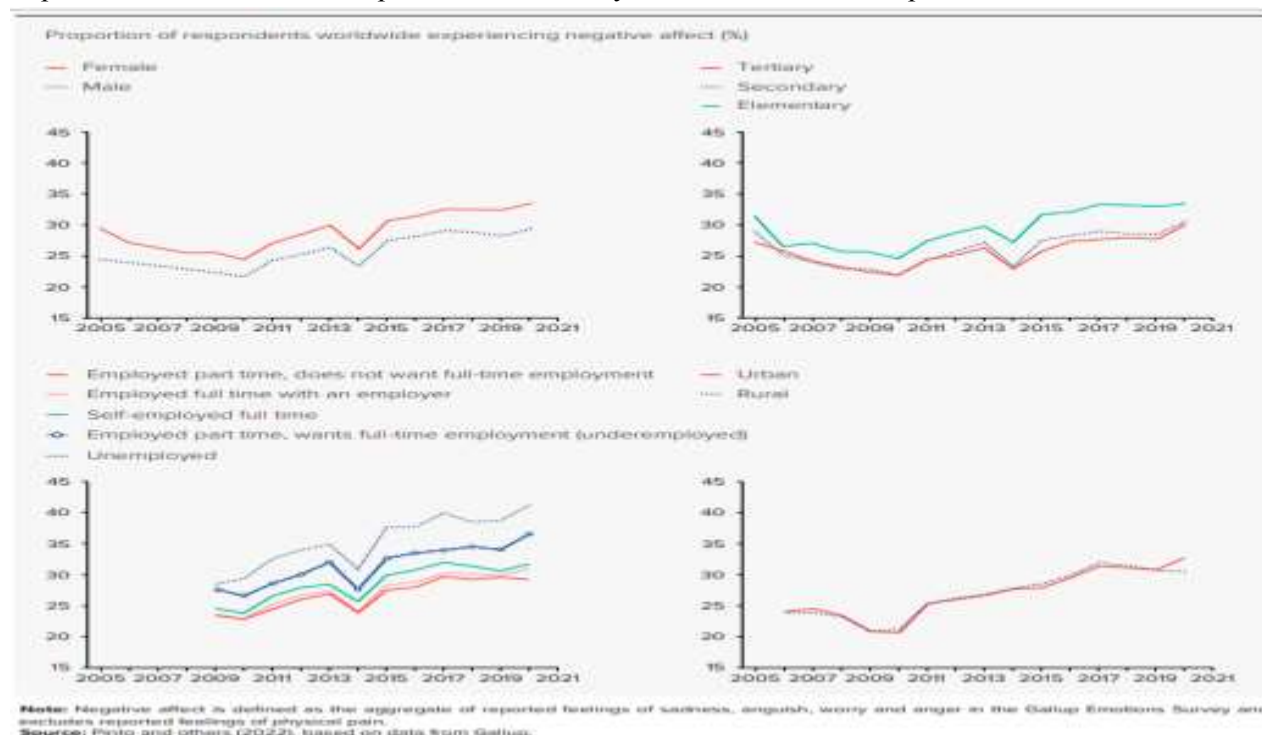
Kural 396:

“Water will flow from a well, in proportion to the depth to which it is dug. Similarly, knowledge & wisdom will flow from an individual in proportion to his learning.” [4]

If we look at this in the purview of today’s world learning is a continuous process, the more we learn, the more gain. It gives us a competitive advantage over others and helps us to progress professionally which helps our businesses to progress too.

Power of thoughts:

Mental well-being plays a crucial role in human development across all dimensions. Uncertainties seep in through natural calamities like floods and cyclones, man-made wars like the current warfare in Ukraine, and Pandemics like Covid-19. The ripple effect of these uncertainties kept increasing with the loss of dear ones, health issues, job instability, financial insecurity, economic disparity etc. This insecurity led to negative thoughts due to fear of uncertainty which caused turbulence in global sustainability. Hence mental well-being is not only important for individual development but for society and the nation’s development as well. [8]



The question that arises now is how we can achieve better mental health. Years of research have been done about thoughts, emotions, affects, and their effect on mental well-being. Renowned Psychologist B.F Skinner looks at thought as “thought is simply behaviour—verbal or nonverbal, covert or overt” [9]. This denotes the relationship between thoughts and actions. Clark & Beck, 2011 study states that “distorted thinking leads to

maladaptive functioning and realistic thinking leads to adaptive functioning which pointed towards negative and positive thoughts. Broad and Build model (Fredrickson,1998) talks about positive emotions leading to broader experience thus creating awareness of possible, thoughts, and actions with improved living conditions.[10]

Tamil Literature – Thirukural

The power of thoughts and its impact on one's growth is given in Thirukural in,

Kural 595 :

“With rising flood, the rising lotus flower its stem unwinds.

The dignity of men is measured by their minds. “[4]

It says just as the stem of a lotus in water is proportionate to the depth of water, the extent of a man's growth and greatness in his life would reflect the extent of his thoughts.

Kural 596

While 595 talked about thoughts and their effect on individual growth,596 touched upon the kind of thoughts we should always have to achieve what we want.

“Let thoughts be always great and grand Though they fail their virtues stand” [4]

He explains that the thoughts should always be high and right even if it does not happen, the efforts would be appreciated by all. In short, it explains how positive thought can lead to growth, success, and acceptance in society.

Tamil Literature – Purananooru

Purananooru is a classic Tamil literature that belongs to Sangam era. It is a collection of 400 poems about kings, life ethics, Kingdom etc. Popular Tamil philosopher Kaniyan Poongundranar from the 6th Century in his text “(verse 192) “mentioned that “**Theethum Nandrum Pirar thara vaaraa**”. (We reap what we sow). [3]This talks about a man's realization of the fact that the happening of his life is his making not by others. This realization makes him work more towards the well-being of himself and the society which in turn makes the society prosper.

Popular Female poet/philosopher Avvaiyar who lived in the Sangam era goes further in **Verse 187** stating that the land's(Nation's) goodness is limited to its Citizen's goodness. Goodness here not only implies good thoughts but also deeds and values. ([11] as below .

“Inhabited at some places, deserted at others,
depressed at some places, raised at others.
wherever your men are good,
Blessed land, you are good too”

She also offers her deep wisdom in her “Aathichoodi” [12] about the connection between thoughts and actions as

“Aram Seiya Virumbu “ – have the wish to do a good deed. Thus, emphasizing the significance of good thoughts leading to good action and to a better life.

3. Discussion

Though uncertainties bring disruption to health and wealth, it also brings in the necessity of innovation that helps to move towards future growth. It is of utmost necessity that while we progress to the future, we consciously regress to the past to tap into our ancient wisdom to look for models and frameworks for the development of a nation as well as an individual. As Swami Vivekananda said,” We are what our thought has made us; So, take care about what you think “.In fact, man is made by cells and cells are made by the mind. Everything is the mind, and the mind is in everything. Therefore, people with positive thoughts will

work towards improving their quality of life, economic condition, and well-being. The growth of an individual moves the nation ahead in its growth path. Thoughts are the inputs, and the world is the output. Thus,

As we think so we live.
As we live, so we prosper.
As we prosper, so does the nation.
As the nation prospers, so does the world!

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