

ILDIKÓ LAKI

Milton Friedman University, Budapest, Hungary

b.laki.ildiko@uni-milton.hu

ORCID: 0000-0003-1907-7633

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SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY – THE FUNCTIONING OF COMMUNITIES, OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

HUMAN RIGHTS



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SUMMARY

The present study aims to be a brief summary of the sustainability of contemporary society, the functioning of its communities and the possibilities for cooperation. Sustainable progress refers to development that is sustainable in time and space, but there are a number of definitions/concepts associated with it that make it even more diverse and often unintelligible. The definition is essential as it provides a guideline for the adoption of regulations and different mechanisms. Community interaction in this form of sustainability becomes essential, whether live or virtual. The focus is on the process of collaboration. It is clear that social sustainability lies in the formation of collectivities, in the spirit of thinking together.

KEYWORDS: *human rights, development, sustainability, society, cooperation*

INTRODUCTION

The scale of our societal challenges in the 21st century is gradually increasing, making it very difficult to meet expectations, despite the fact that most people are trying to do so. The issue of sustainability has become a particularly important issue in this age, not only to preserve and protect the environment for generations to come, but also to create a 'liveable world' for future generations. According to McGill University, sustainability involves meeting our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Greendex, 2022).

The present paper is intended to be a reflection on how social sustainability can be understood now in the 21st century, what it means to be sustainable and what the consequences can be if we do not pay enough attention to society. In underlying all these ideas, there are presumably social challenges, social issues.

Social challenges are complex problems and issues that have an effect on the structure of society, people's lives and well-being. These challenges are often interrelated and can have a wide-ranging impact on a given community and area, involving sustainability and survival. Sustainability is also a societal challenge, which faces the difficulty that abstract and sometimes intangible issues in this regard cannot be resolved by society, which cannot articulate its views.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ITS DIMENSIONS

Sustainability has several definitions and can be understood in several dimensions (social, economic, ecological). In this case, it is understood as a state of near-equilibrium where the material and existential situation of the population and its living conditions are sustainable in the long term, over several generations, in a system of social reproduction. In other words, looking to the future, the emphasis must be on the qualitative elements of material well-being and, at the same time, on the creation of well-being (Harcza, 2012).

To achieve and maintain social progress – decent living conditions or social well-being – means ensuring economic development and preserving environmental conditions. Successive generations have a right to a decent quality of life, but also a number of obligations to fulfil it. They must adapt their responsibilities to achieve this goal in the most effective way.

In all instances, therefore, it can be said that, building on the basic thesis of the earlier ecological definition, sustainability now has a prominent role for society and the creation of opportunities provided by society. However, with the advent of artificial intelligence, this issue has become even more exciting, as social sustainability in its true sense – protective, protective, non-wasteful – can become something we imagine for ourselves.

SOCIAL WELFARE, SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The most important criteria for a sustainable society include, on the one hand, the principle of social justice, based on equal access to opportunities and sharing the social burden. The concept of 'social burden' generally refers to a set of problems and challenges that put significant pressure on a society. These burdens can take many forms and are felt in many areas, including the economy, health, education, social care systems and the everyday lives of individuals and communities. The other important pillar of sustainability is the drive to continuously improve the quality of life. The quality of life in this

reading is defined as *the 'well-being' of members of society in the non-material dimensions of life.*

The introduction of the concept into the social sciences is based on the recognition that, in addition to a high material standard of living, the satisfaction of spiritual, social, etc. needs is necessary for a person to have a truly good life. E. Allardt distinguished three dimensions of the quality of life: possession, so material standard of living, love, or good human relations, and finally existence or self-actualization, i.e. the sense of meaningfulness of individual life (Szabó, 2021). The quality of life includes health, related to material well-being, and healthy environmental conditions. In this context, a publication on the importance of the environment and lifestyle was published 50 years ago, and is still relevant today, by Marc Lalonde, Canadian Minister of Health and Welfare, in 1974, under the title 'A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians'. Its content, which can be revisited today, could serve as a model for European countries.

The main message of the publication was that improving the environment (structural approach) and human behaviour (lifestyle approach) would lead to a significant reduction in morbidity and premature mortality. This report has led the Canadian government to change its policy from treating disease to preventing it and ultimately promoting health. The Lalonde report reflected the convictions of many who felt that the medical approach to health was too narrow. There should be no separation of body from soul, disease from the sick, and man from the environment and society in which he lives. (www.pro-galy.hu)

The quality of life also includes democratic rights, security, education for all. The sustainability of education covers a broad spectrum, the first and really important stage of which is the field of education, which establishes the role of the 'institutions' involved in education. *Pedagogy of sustainability aims to be a lifelong learning process that develops informed and active citizens with creative, problem-solving mindsets, who are well-versed in natural and environmental science, society, law and economics, and who are committed to responsible individual and collective action. The educational practice of sustainability is complex and multidisciplinary in nature, and empirical research is making new efforts to analyse and evaluate this diverse practice. It extends to*

adult education, vocational education and training, to a wide range of in-school and out-of-school pedagogical programmes such as environmental education, and to society as a whole through the media and mass media (Havas, 2009).

In parallel to these two main lines of action, sustainability also includes the sustainable use of natural resources, which requires an environmentally conscious and environmentally ethical behaviour of society. Environmental awareness is a way of living and thinking that takes into account the protection and preservation of the environment. It aims to reduce the negative impact of human activities on nature and to use the Earth's resources in a more sustainable way. Among its principles are recycling and related conscious behaviour, the development and application of environmental principles, the promotion of public transport and conscious purchasing habits.

Progress is a natural phenomenon. Nature 'evolves by itself', which no human intervention can improve, i.e. improve or accelerate. A perfect and ever-changing system in itself, it is precisely the human will to perfect that deprives it of the dynamism and structure which are the conditions of progress (Hajnal, 2015).

The dynamism of development thus refers to the continuous changes, processes and driving forces that shape and form development in a given context, be it at the social, economic, technological or individual level. Dynamism shows that development is not a static state but a constantly changing, adaptive and complex process. Change and adaptation can be seen as the basis for this. It also reflects the fact that circumstances, evolving and opportunities are constantly changing. And individuals, communities and organisations must be able to adapt to these changes, otherwise they will fall behind and be excluded from social sustainability.

Innovation and creativity can be barriers to this exclusion. The elements are the building blocks of dynamism for development. The emergence of new ideas, technologies and methods enables new, more efficient systems to replace old structures. The systems that are created and operate make optimal use of their resources to achieve their objectives with minimum loss and/or maximum efficiency (such as education, health or the creative industries). In the process of development, there is interaction between actors and systems in the use of resources, whether individual or community, local or global.

Development at the individual level is about the individual journey, self-learning and self-reflection in the process. Members of society may develop new goals, roles and identities throughout their lives in response to changes in their environment.

COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Society cannot function without communities. *The creation and future of a community is influenced by many factors, many of which can be changed and shaped by the community itself. In order to survive and succeed, it is necessary to know the characteristics of the community and its functioning, what facilitates its formation and what is certain to lead to its demise, and to know these factors and the interventions required, as well as how each historical period has been able to strengthen or curb these mechanisms, which operate in themselves* (Horváth, 2020).

A social community is a group held together by social ties, relationships and interactions between its members. Members define shared values, norms and goals that help to create a common identity. And the power of communities lies in their ability to unite people around common goals, values and interests and to inspire collective action.

The collective principle of social sustainability is about organising community and social systems in ways that ensure the long-term well-being and opportunities of members of society, while promoting social cohesion and stability. To achieve this, collective consciousness, shared responsibility and solidarity play an essential role. The formative power of collective consciousness is the basis for the creation of community thinking, and communities play an important role in defusing accumulated tensions, mitigating failures, and articulating human interests and aspirations. If a society does not have a rich network of diverse communities, people are left to their own tensions. In the absence of communities, existing values are destroyed, and a crisis of values prematurely stalls attempts at community-building. Community organising is the structuring and structuring of relationships between individuals

or groups to achieve common goals, cooperate and sustain community life. This organisation can take many forms, from formal institutions to informal networks, and is essential for the effective use of community resources and for ensuring their sustainability.

A society functions effectively when the rights of individuals are guaranteed and everyone benefits from equality and justice. At the same time, it is through community organisation that human rights abuses can be effectively addressed, and this is even more prominent in 21st century thinking, thus activating community development to achieve social inclusion. Communities can take the form of support networks. In this case, communities are primary support networks that protect individuals from injustice, discrimination and violations. Community solidarity can also help to protect those who are vulnerable. Solidarity is an interactive relationship, with subjects mutually sympathising and valuing each other”, as social solidarity is achieved when “all members of a society are able to value each other. The issue of mutuality and trust is also at the heart of the creation of modern communities, despite the fact that the emergence of the virtual world has given rise to a different set of social problems. Various movements are emerging to promote the functioning of society. These include community movements for the defence of human rights, such as the civil rights movement and the women’s rights and LGBTQ rights movements. These movements contribute to progress in the field of human rights and to the social recognition of faith and trust in the community.

Human rights are equally, universally and eternally enjoyed by all human beings. The universality of human rights means that they are enjoyed equally by all human beings in all countries of the world. They are inalienable, indivisible and interdependent, and no one can ever be deprived of them. Each right is equally important and the rights are complementary – for example, the right to participate in the conduct of the affairs of the country or to vote in free elections can only be fulfilled if the right to freedom of expression is also fulfilled (COMPASS Handbook on Human Rights Education for Young People, 2020).

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IS AN

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN DEMOCRACY

People's rights, such as freedom of expression, the right of assembly and political participation, allow communities to play an active role in decision-making. Community-based programmes that promote education, equality and inclusion help to reduce prejudice and promote respect for human rights. In the case of community thinking, it is necessary to emphasise that decisions are not solely for the benefit of individuals, but take into account the needs and future well-being of the community as a whole. The functioning of the welfare society depends to a large extent on the existence of community support and the active participation and cooperation of communities. This form of society is based on the state, the community and the civil sector working together to ensure the well-being of citizens. And the role of communities in this respect is prominent in many respects: Strengthening social networks, the role of civil society organisations in running communities, and volunteering and social responsibility.

From a social perspective, a further understanding of cooperation is to highlight integration and how it is addressed. It is the basis for individuals to become a community.

The term integration is generally understood to mean unification, integration or inclusion, but as a concept it also includes the 'precariousness' and 'diversity' of the term. The term can refer to basic questions in sociology and can also refer to specific social phenomena. At the level of abstract social theories, the concept of integration relates to the question of what holds a society together, how a society can be made to function from a mass of people, groups, institutions and norms. Integration, in general terms, therefore, means that different elements or parts come together to form a coherent, cohesive system. Social integration is a process whereby different individuals, groups and communities participate in society on an equal footing, actively and harmoniously. It aims to support the integration of people from different social, ethnic, cultural or economic backgrounds and to ensure that everyone has access to social resources and opportunities. Communities often provide direct support to people seeking integration, newcomers and/or minority

groups. This support can be financial, emotional, cultural or social, making it easier for new members to feel at home. In this way, the close link between communities and integration allows all members of society to contribute to and benefit from community life, thus contributing to the development and functioning of a more harmonious and inclusive society.

CONCLUSION

To summarise, the dynamic of development means constant movement, change and renewal. Understanding and managing dynamic development is critical for individuals, communities and organisations to successfully adapt to the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The roles and forms of communities are constantly changing as a result of globalisation, urbanisation and the development of digital technologies. New types of communities, such as online or virtual communities, offer new opportunities for networking and collective action. However, strong, cohesive communities remain essential for promoting social stability and sustainable development. And the strength of communities lies in their ability to adapt to change, find new solutions and provide support networks for their members.

However, the combination of community strength and social innovation can be an effective tool for sustainable development and for tackling social problems. By actively engaging communities in these processes, unique, bottom-up solutions can be created that can bring about long-term positive change in society.

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