

DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO N° 308

**STATE DENSITY AND CAPABILITIES APPROACH:
CONCEPTUAL, METHODOLOGICAL AND EMPIRICAL
ISSUES**

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Enero, 2011

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<http://www.pucp.edu.pe/departamento/economia/images/documentos/DDD308pdf>

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Av. Universitaria 1801, Lima 32 – Perú.
Teléfono: (51-1) 626-2000 anexos 4950 - 4951
Fax: (51-1) 626-2874
econo@pucp.edu.pe
www.pucp.edu.pe/departamento/economia/

Encargada de la Serie: Giovanna Aguilar Andía
Departamento de Economía – Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú,
gaguila@pucp.edu.pe

Efraín Gonzales de Olarte y Javier M. Iguiñiz Echeverría

STATE DENSITY AND CAPABILITIES APPROACH: CONCEPTUAL,
METHODOLOGICAL AND EMPIRICAL ISSUES / Efraín Gonzales de
Olarte y Javier M. Iguiñiz Echeverría
Lima, Departamento de Economía, 2010
(Documento de Trabajo 308)

Human Development / State / Peru / State Density Index / Human
Development Report / Capabilities / Functionings.

Las opiniones y recomendaciones vertidas en estos documentos son responsabilidad de sus autores y no representan necesariamente los puntos de vista del Departamento Economía.

Hecho el Depósito Legal en la Biblioteca Nacional del Perú N° 2010-06580
ISSN 2079-8466 (Impresa)
ISSN 2079-8474 (En línea)

Impreso en Cartolan Editora y Comercializadora E.I.R.L.
Pasaje Atlántida 113, Lima 1, Perú.
Tiraje: 100 ejemplares

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RESUMEN

Este capítulo es una miscelánea de temas. El trabajo tiene por finalidad presentar y profundizar en algunos aspectos del Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano Perú 2009 que propone el concepto “Densidad del Estado” para acercarse a una cuantificación de la provisión estatal de servicios sociales básicos (documentos de identidad, educación, etc.) en las provincias del Perú. Se presentan también algunos de los resultados estadísticos del Informe. El aporte más original del artículo consiste en el análisis de la relación entre Estado y sociedad desde el punto de vista del enfoque de las capacidades.

ABSTRACT

The core of the paper analyses the State functionings in the process of providing basic social services (education, health, identity documents, etc.) in the provinces of Peru. The concept “Density of the State” is designed to elaborate an index (SDI) to quantify State’s territorial presence. Since such activity is not a one-sided affair, the paper analyses the elements involved in the complex interaction between State and society. A summary of the main statistical results at the provincial level is provided and also a contrast between the SDI and the HDI. The paper is a summary and conceptual extension of the UNDP-Peru Human Development Report 2010 where the authors participated as part of the consulting team that elaborated it.

STATE DENSITY AND CAPABILITIES APPROACH: CONCEPTUAL, METHODOLOGICAL AND EMPIRICAL ISSUES

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People's lives depend on many factors: their own abilities, capabilities and aptitudes, on the things which are at their disposition, the social environment in which they carry themselves, that is to say what other people do, and on what the State allows or facilitates them (or not). The State, besides being a provider of goods and services is also an important regulator, facilitator and organizer of the interaction between persons, hence its presence and quality are important, if not fundamental, as factors of human development

Most treatises on human development and capabilities deal with the first factors, but rarely do so with the constitution and the role of the State. Given the world is organized in nation-states, it is indispensable to start incorporating its presence in the analysis of human development. That is the aim of this paper, in which we consider the State, above all, as a necessary environment for human development and we shall try to grasp, in an exploratory manner, its specific role departing from the analysis of its presence in the everyday life of society.

The origins of this work date to the authors' participation in the team in charge of the *Human Development Report, Peru 2009* (UNDP-Peru 2010). The main conceptual novelty of the aforementioned report is the definition and measurement of the State's activity in the Peruvian provinces, through a set of actions destined to facilitate and promote human development. Based on this, the concept of "State Density" is proposed in order to describe the

* Department of Economics, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. We thank the contributions made by the team of the *Human Development Report, Peru 2009: for a State Density at the service of people*, coordinated by Luis Vargas Aybar during the UNDP-Peru administration of Jorge Chediek. We also appreciate the comments during the HDCA 2010 Conference in Amman, and in the III ALCADCECA 2010 Conference in Porto Alegre.

intensity of its actions and, at the same time, to measure it for descriptive and normative ends.

It seems the step towards the characterization of the State from such a perspective opens a promising channel to study the relationship between institutions (State and non-State ones) and between those and persons. In a more general way, it's about the study on human freedom inside the State action; in this particular case, on the people's capability and performance in the State context as well of the social institutions, regarding the provision of public services.

More precisely, this paper started on the work carried out previously to the aforementioned report, and it gathers some of the conceptual considerations that appear in it, and above all, We try to present subsequent new reflections for the sake of academic discussion.

The paper is presented in the following manner: first, as an introduction, we present a non-exhaustive approximation on the difficulty of finding previous studies on the character and role of the State from a "Capabilities" approach (I). In second place, we deal with the conceptual question, setting our sights on the field in which the Density of the State is defined (II). Thirdly, we propose conceptual alternatives on the relation between the state and capabilities starting from the chosen definition by the Report (UNDP 2010) (III). In fourth place, we develop an empirical analysis, based on the data of the State Density Index (SDI) of the already mentioned Report (IV). To conclude, we present final remarks based on the Peruvian experience contrasted with our conceptual elaboration (V).

I. THE REDUCED PRESENCE OF THE STATE IN THE CAPABILITIES APPROACH

Based on the information obtained, it seems that little attention has been paid to the State from the Capabilities approach and we have found no systematic studies. Hence, it is necessary to carry out an exhaustive study about the presence of the State in the conceptual, historical and development projects based in such approach. This institution is of course mentioned in many works, but the main point of attention appears to be in public action and on that which is carried out by civil society in particular. In fact, it has rarely deserved a specific treatment which deserves to have an entry in the thematic indexes. To illustrate, the entry "State" is practically absent in form the thematic indexes of Sen's books. In what is perhaps one of the few exceptions can be found in *Development as Freedom*, which includes an entry on the Welfare State.¹ One should add that no report of the UNDP at a worldwide level has taken the State as its central theme and its specific role in dealing with the challenges of human development.

First, an implicit message from the capabilities approach is that world beyond the State is wide and it includes many interesting and complex problems. To a great extent, that world is that of civil society. At least for Sen, civil society is a privileged place for reflecting on development. In *Development as Freedom*, Sen states that the book does not have multilateral organizations as privileged speakers. He then immediately points out that "Nor is it just for policy makers and planners of national governments. Rather it is a general work on development and the practical reasons underlying it, aimed particularly at public discussion." (1999: xiii)

Secondly, the State is not absent from the social reality in which the capabilities approach is interested. After all, most public deliberations in society have as a subject some problem with the State or present some demand to it. It is not possible to put aside the State when it comes to civil

¹ In *Development as Freedom* (1999) there is an entry Welfare State that corresponds to several pages on poverty in chapter 4 and to the subject "Markets, State and social opportunity" which is the title of Chapter 5.

society even if the prominence of the latter is what stands out. It seems to us that this approach allows placing the State as a more or less direct expression of society and not solely as a system with a great level of autonomy with respect to society. In a normative approach one would have to formulate proposals by saying that the State should be so to the greatest extent possible. In the Report, the division proposed by Theda Skocpol is reminded to us as part of a group of studies (Evans, et. al, 1986) which seek to *bring back the state* to the analysis of the social sciences and which favors the view of the relative autonomy of the State with the purpose of establishing with certain clarity its responsibilities. To Scopkol emphasizing such autonomy does not imply by any means that what is normal in State action is to be independent of society.²

In third place, even though both approximations to the State have their merits as roads of understanding the way the State and Society work, from a normative perspective which promotes individual freedom. So it is natural to suspect that Sen is mistrustful of a State autonomous with respect to society; it exist the risk of constituting itself as an end and of society. If the State progresses in autonomy we would be authorized to suspect that it would be expropriating a certain level of freedom to the individuals. The emerging practical agenda would be the transformation of the State with the purpose of making it more dependent of society to which it is responsible even by constitutional mandate.

Perhaps the most complex aspect of State action when it comes to human development is that, on the one hand, the State is the representation of individual wills collectively captured in an imperfect way, not all personal aspirations can be incorporated in a country's Constitution and there are some losses of individual positive freedoms in exchange for the regulation of negative ones. On the other hand, the State is in charge of creating a legal framework in order to assure "entitlements" and "rights" that allow people—above all the poor— access to public and private goods (Sen 1981). In

² This is a subject to which the report devotes a few pages but that we cannot due to lack of space. As will be pointed out, all state action is relational to some degree.

both cases the State generates a favorable context for growth or adequate use of people's capabilities. Our approach is closer to this aspect of the State.

In any case, these introductory thoughts are useful to affirm that instrumental character of the State, at the service of society, when we deal with development as freedom³.

II. CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS: TOWARDS THE "DENSITY OF THE STATE"

State density is a concept which aims to describe State effectiveness in the execution of previously established functions. The concept permits describing the actions of the State in a determined country or parts of it—departments, regions, provinces or districts— and with a given methodology one can assess its effectiveness.

Let us begin explaining our journey to reach such a definition in the elaboration of the report. (PNUD-Peru 2010) The report repeatedly states that what it considers important when it comes to analyzing the presence of the State in the national territory, and that it is the realm of the adopted definition of "density", is what the State *does* in each locality, and more specifically, what it effectively provides to population. More concretely, in this Report, State density is evaluated taking into account what it does "at the moment of providing basic social services" (PNUD-Peru 2010, p.29) In order to point out this emphasis in "doing", it is defined in following manner: "State density is conceived, in this report, as the functionings of the State in assuring the provision of basic services." (PNUD-Peru 2010, p. 25)⁴ Let us analyze the elements that are incorporated, but above all, those which are

³ It would be interesting to analyze the significance of the "Reason of State" and Latin American historical experience under governments that put forward that kind of reason to repress people and restrict their freedoms.

⁴ If that definition stresses the sphere on which State presence is evaluated, what immediately follows in the text incorporates some attributes of such action that include or should include in principle, that which is being carried "...directly or indirectly, to all sectors of society and all places of Peru, in a subsidiary and redistributive manner". (PNUD-Peru 2010, p. 15)

discarded by adopting this simple definition and that to a great extent are made explicit in this report. As its usually the case in UNDP tradition, the definition of density is translated into a quantitative expression through the definition of the State Density Index (SDI), which in a specific district will depend on the number and coverage of the services that the State effectively offers.; that is to say, an index that can be quantified.

The State has a number of important functions, such as justice, social protection, public safety, national defense, etc., and its presence along the national territory and abroad must be evaluated according to the particular prioritized function. Because of this, there may be many State densities, those which depend on the function that wished to be evaluated, which in turn depend on the purpose of the analysis. In the most recent Peruvian UNDP Report on Human Development the chosen State function is that of providing the population basic social services. It does not deal with, for example, State density associated to national defense, which would require registering armaments, organization, training, barracks and other elements which would satisfy the adopted theory on national defense. It is about the role of the state in its basic social functions.

Beside this demarcation of specific functions, what is really fundamental is establishing the conceptual framework in which State presence is evaluated. To reiterate, and following Amartya Sen's "capabilities approach", what is important, and it is present in the definition of density, is what the State does. The performance of the State is assessed. But the State does many things in its normal operations; hence it is better to specify what this "performance" really means. More precisely, effort has been made in the Report to evaluate the density of the State operation at the very moment of providing basic social services and what impacts has on the capabilities of people related to their access to such services. In that sense, the capabilities approach leads to evaluate the impact of these "State doings" over the people, improving their opportunities and their freedoms. That is to say, it is not enough to analyze the State's supply of services, it is also necessary to look at the effective access to them.

However, provision is the last stage of this process. But there are obviously many necessary actions before provision and even parallel ones prior to the act of delivering a service. It is evident that before provision it is necessary to have trained personnel, organize production and the logistics concerning the provision of goods and services, etc. Even prior to this, it may have been necessary to establish specific laws and regulations to define the characteristics of services provision. What comes to mind about parallel activity is, for example, the activity of members of the Police Department who are in charge of order and tranquility during the provision itself. In that sense, in Peru's report the choice is made to study State action by analyzing what has symbolically been defined as the "window or counter" through which services are provided, assuming that there are additionally previous and complementary processes.

An important aspect is defining the target for provision of basic services, which can respond to different criteria. It could be, for example, that the State interest in those basic services is to respond to a social demand in order to gain political prestige, or to improve national defenses in order to better repel an invasion, or avoid internal violence, or to train labor force for firms or simply to fulfill minimal human rights. In the Report, and following a guideline already established more than twenty years ago at the level of UNDP headquarters in New York, the paramount objective is human development as a worthy end in itself, and not simply as a means, even though it may be that as well. This distinction is important because the State would operate in a partially different way regarding those services if the objectives were to be producing "human capital" or "human arms", which generally corresponds to other public policy theoretical approaches. Our approach helps us remember that we are dealing with the inherent rights of persons and not with human beings as mere inputs for development. The bridge to a dialogue with the "entitlements approach" is hence open. It is through there that hints towards the construction of a State theory are found, from a capabilities approach.

III. STATE, SOCIETY AND CAPABILITIES

We alluded to the interactive character of State activity with society. In this section we will attempt to further develop the different aspects of this activity, as well as the manner of incorporating the State's presence in the development of human capabilities. The subject is too broad to do it justice in a few lines but we may advance some considerations, even if just to show that one cannot jump directly from typical quantitative results to recommendations concerning public and State action. State action which provides social services is almost always generated in a cooperative and conflictive relation with society, is always implemented with some degree of social participation and the results can be observed mainly in society.

1. State and society: complex interactions

To enclose the field of study, the report reminds us (PNUD-Peru 2010, p. 26) of the already old assertion (Drèze and Sen 1989: 259) that public action is not that uniquely of State action. In the field of public action, the relations between State and society can be diverse and range from a minimal and indirect relation to cases in which it is practically impossible to ascertain what is the State's and what is public in a determined activity. There is never a solitary or totally isolated State action. There are however, and we shall later see, different nuances.

The Peruvian report puts into consideration five forms of State–society interaction, with the aim of alerting those who read it about the danger of shortcuts that, so often in planners' documents, avoid social participation at the moment of recommending policies or implementing specific actions.⁵ These forms are: i) the subsidiarity relationship; ii) the social pressure on the State; iii) the State generation of incentives for participation; iv) the economic dimension of interaction through markets and entitlements; and v) in the political arena and democracy (PNUD-Peru 2010, pp. 26-28).

⁵ These shortcuts seem to us dangerous because they may give way to technocratic styles of government which are generally opposed to the participation of society.

The central idea is to understand how the context for the development of capabilities works, for it occurs in the dynamic of the interactions between society, market and State. To distinguish its various forms is essential.

Subsidiarity, understood as the establishment of relations that define who does best a task or an action, allows defining what actions the State, society or the market carry out more effectively and efficiently⁶, or generate greater equality. Therefore, when it comes to the supply of public goods and services one chooses for some of them to be offered in a centralized manner —by the central government— and others in a decentralized manner —by regional or provincial governments—, assuming that if the functions are properly divided this will favor human development. The population will then establish relations with their respective level of government in order to obtain this or that service.

However, there are a number of occasions in which civil society organizations can carry out efficient actions, in such a case the absence of State action can favor human development, to the degree that the people themselves solve their problems through a greater participation and less dependency on the State. This poses an agenda of cooperation between society and State, with mutual demands, which may define the terms of State action in the promotion of human development.

This leads to the evaluation of the relation between outcomes and procedures. Not always procedure is more important than outcomes. For example, to obtain an identity card, the important thing is to have it, and not if it is obtained through participation or if it is just given by the government.

The social pressure on the State is a form of interaction between organized Society (or non-organized), in what may or may not be a representative way, and the State, in order to influence State action in the demand of constitutional rights or in the solution of specific problems. The

⁶ Efficacy is when an action or provision is carried out in accordance to what has been planned and is expected. Efficiency refers to doing it with the least amount of effort, with the lowest cost and shortest time.

pressures on the State are more acute and urgent in situations of exclusion, poverty or deprivation; hence its channeling through democratic means is essential for human development.

Supervising the State and accountability are fundamental in order to secure a greater coverage of basic services such as education, health, water and sewerage. The organization of civil society in unions and political parties permits institutionalized pressure on State action, but even if these organizations are non-existent, "informal" social demands will pressure over the State in order to obtain better human development conditions, which constitutes a legitimate exercise of human rights.

The State generation of incentives for participation is a channel through which the State solves a number of problems in the public and private actions of persons. It is natural that people, who act and participate in accordance with their own interests, to find incentives as a way of improving and directing their actions, *vis a vis* the State. Incentives allow channeling social participation in the direction of the objectives established by public policy, generating synergy and greater cooperation.

Incentives defined from a perspective of broadening of capabilities and rights may generate a State which is more favorable to human development, as Tanaka points out: "it is about understanding the State as a network of formal and informal institutions that generate incentives and a structure of political opportunities for different social groups; in this way we widen the field of reflection of the elites and rules of the game, and of the social order of which their relations with society form part". (2005: 100).

The indirect interaction between State and society, through incentives, also allows designing better public policies, revealing if people's preferences on specific social services are the same as those the government conceives. That is possible to improve the interaction between state and society.

The economic dimension, the market and entitlements, have to be taken into account when it comes to the interaction with the State. It is true that many of the needs are satisfied privately and goods and services are allocated by the market according to individual's or the family's income. The presence of the State is indirectly by way of collecting taxes or the regulation of markets. But when people live in a state of poverty norms and mechanisms are required for the State to substitute the market.

Precisely, what Sen (1981) called entitlements are socially acquired and recognized rights that allow everyone —especially the poor and the excluded— access to the minimum of goods and services required for human survival, such as education, health, social security. It is the State which must supply them and by doing so it establishes an interaction with the economically marginalized groups in society, based in these socially recognized entitlements. But for this to occur it is necessary to establish mechanisms of allocation, specific organization and participation of those benefited. Perhaps the most important point is not only its recognition as social rights, but their promotion, in order to amplify the opportunities of groups that are yet to be included or that are discriminated against for some reason.

Democracy is an essential condition for human development and is the general context in which the interaction between state and civil society takes place. Representation, participation and inclusion are the cornerstones for State action to promote greater opportunities and freedoms.

Democracy for human development must “go beyond the political boundaries and emphasize the importance of social and economic conditions in determining how democratic political institutions function” (Deneulin 2009: 199). It is for this reason that political and conscientious participation in democracy is the global framework which defines the main lines of the interaction between State and society.

2. State and Society: Capabilities, resources and functionings

In this section we will suggest some ways of associating the study of the State's public social services with the capabilities approach. One of the theses is the one which gathers in one scenario two different agents, each one acting within different contexts, one within the State, the other within society. The second way takes into account on the one hand the resources that the State puts at the disposal of the people in society and on the other the capabilities of this population of using them or not. The third is the one that takes into account State functioning together with that of the people at the moment of providing the service. This last way was used as the general framework for choosing the indicators present in the 2010 Peru Report, but because of the available information it was necessary to resort to information on available resources in order to elaborate the corresponding partial indexes.

a) Two contextualized freedoms

One way of visualizing the provision of social services from the State is by taking into account the interaction of two agents, individual and/or collective, each one situated in a partially different context of rules and organizations. To say State and civil society is to refer to two specific contexts in which people involved in a relational exercise their liberties. One of these persons is the government official, and his or her capabilities or margins of action are determined among other things by: i) his or her professional abilities, ii) the resources at his or her disposition, iii) the role to which he or she has been assigned to, and iv) the rules of behavior or codes of conduct applicable to his or her profession. Without a doubt, this context limits the alternatives for action that the employee has available, but it also focuses activities, regulates them and can make them more powerful and efficient.

The other person is the recipient of the service, who might seem freer of institutionalized contexts but who is also situated in a setting which

belongs to the instances of the civil society in which he or she participates, such as family or communal settings, and more generally, a particular cultural environment. Much like the previous case, he or she has some kind of abilities, economic resources, and socially established rules of behavior, some of which will come into play at the moment of receiving the service.

The institutionalization of the framework of action of the first of the two agents —the government employee— can be so strict that makes it possible to demand of him or her very specific behaviors. Even a violation of the rules under which they are supposed to operate may lead to a legal process. In such a case, the individual's freedom is at its minimum. Something similar can happen on the other side when, for instance, children are forced by their parents to go to school, or women have to behave according to rules they have not accepted when approaching the health service. In the Peruvian Report, and in this paper, it is assumed that individuals involved in both sides of the counter have some significant degrees of freedom.

Within this general framework, the analysis of the relation State–Society is interesting for it places us directly on the field of what we could call explicitly contextualized capabilities, but at the same time, it shows its complexity for it supposes, among other things, a study of the organizations and institutions and personal attributes and resources such as those listed in previous paragraphs. Connecting the capabilities of individual and collective agents within the State's apparatus with the corresponding agents on the side of society is a complex matter that goes beyond the scope of this study.⁷ In any case, when one treads in the terrain of capabilities, the service to be provided is, strictly speaking, still a potentiality, and for such a service to happen the will of both sides, freedoms on both sides, have to intervene, be it to attend the patient or to go and put oneself in the care of the public agent.

⁷ That is why in the Peruvian Report focuses on the safer sphere of functionings.

b) State resources and human capabilities

In the process of specifying the kind of existing relation in the State provision of social services, there is something like an intermediate conceptual moment which assumes that the existing margins of action on the side of the State have resulted in resources effectively accessible to people at their disposition. For example, the existence of medical doctors and other health resources at the people's disposition near their homes opens for them new options and widens their capabilities, for it provides people with opportunities for accessing these services that they would not otherwise have. It seems to us that a powerful way of connecting the State with society when it comes to the provision of services would be to relate State resources with human capabilities in society. One of the practical advantages of seeing things this way is that the measurement of the State supply of services is easier, because a considerable part of those resources available to the population are usually registered statistically. In fact, as we will explain below the empirical expression of State density in the Peruvian Report had to resort to figures relative to resources due to a lack of more direct indicators on State's functionings.

c) Beyond the agent-patient relationship

But the State's job is not to merely be institutionally and personally available; it should often have, and in fact has, a proactive role in the effective provision of certain goods that are truly essential. One of these cases is that of elementary education. The obligation of sending sons and daughters to school is a sign of a State role that goes in great measure beyond the will of the parents.⁸

Hence, State incidence should also be evaluated by *processes*: the process of use of the installations, inputs and State personnel available to the population and also the process by which the people-objective are

⁸ Another example is the obligation of receiving vaccines for reasons of public health. In the political sphere the obligation of voting.

obliged or motivated and “empowered” to receive it. In a certain sense, the State, but also individuals are at both sides of the “window” o counter.⁹ Also, the State’s role of eliminating obstacles that hinder the effective access to services, including that of sanctioning discriminations, is often crucial in increasing the autonomy of people and in achieving the expansion of their freedom. Despite the always important direct or indirect role of the service demanding citizen, the State is often the main protagonist in certain types of activities when it comes to providing basic services. In other services social protagonism is greater, particularly where there is open deliberation and there is no forced reception of the service. The provision of social services is more complex than the creation of new opportunities solely from the State’s side.

d) State and social performance

The 2010 Peru Report is an approximation to the quantification of an aspect or moment of the relation between State and society different from the ones we have outlined above. The emphasis in the result of the provision of services gave way to arriving at the conceptual field of functionings, more accurately, on those of the State and only implicitly on those of the people who receive these services. The obligatory or semi obligatory character of the reception of some services such as the provision of identity documents or elementary school attendance made placing the emphasis on the State easier. As we have suggested above, individual’s process-freedom is at its lowest when the State obliges or forces people to reach for certain opportunity-freedoms and functionings.

But, as we are insisting, even in these cases we must always be attentive to those functionings carried out by people who are in the process of receiving services. However, the report, for reasons already mentioned,

⁹ Is the case of “conditioned” programs such as *Juntos* in Peru and other older ones of greater scale in Mexico and Brazil. In them it is compulsory to put children at the disposition of State’s social servants dealing with health and education.

does not focus on observing the picture from the other side of the “window”, the side of society.

The decision of focusing on what the State effectively delivers is directly connected with the objective of isolating as much as possible, given the information available, State’s contribution to human performance in society. A healthier life thanks to medical attention effectively delivered is a human functioning which results from the State functioning while providing the service. In turn, a healthy life affects other personal performances such as athletic or cognitive performance, etc.¹⁰ These last functionings and capabilities were not part of the Peruvian Report and are not part of this paper. Then, the end result in the observation of the service providing process in the Report has been the receiving of the service, not its consequences on people’s human development.

e) What the State does as it fulfills its mission

The State has different functions, and actions related to each of them must be evaluated in different ways. To stress the importance of the choice of the State function to be evaluated we briefly turn to another one. If, for example, it would be our aim to register and evaluate the territorial presence of the State action for national defense we would not have to wait, and even less provoke a war, in order to evaluate its operative capacity or its performance and we should be satisfied with a registry of installations, equipment, personnel qualifications, logistics, etc. Maybe some sort of training exercise could be rehearsed, but it would be extraordinarily senseless to begin a war in order to study operative capabilities and functionings.

In the case of social services, the analysis of that operative presence through the observation of the provision of social services is not only

¹⁰ Resorting to the field of energy, if the first approximation to the activity of the State which we have pointed out corresponds to the aspect concerning the potential of the service, then the second one would correspond to the kinetic aspect.

reasonable but even convenient. The State action, its operative performance, may be registered and corrected while it does its everyday job. Even so, that is not the way in which State activities are commonly evaluated. The more common ones consist in measuring the amount of the budget spent, the assigned personnel, the existence of public offices or the inputs acquired by these. But all that is not the same as measuring the activity itself and less its impact on people. We know well that there is often a substantial difference between opening a health care facility and the assignation of professional personnel to work there. Also, a long time may pass between the assignation and the sending of the equipment and/or medical supplies. But it may well happen that all of these things are already in the district or province but are not used because families live too far away, or service hours are not adequate, or even maybe because certain ways of doing things do not fit with the customs of that particular place. Freedom of the public servants and of potential patients has a significant place in this process; that is why, among other reasons, we considered above that the capabilities approach has something to say in the State-society relation. However, in all of these cases, the effective provision of the service does not or may not occur, and all things being said, effective provision is what really matters to the people that need it. Because of this, the State's work is better evaluated focusing on functionings, obviously supported by the physical and human resources at society's disposition. These functionings can be useful to elaborate indicators of a sort of "State efficiency" in converting the State's resources into an effective service, an interesting subject in itself.¹¹

3. The State Density Index

The registering and evaluation of this effective provision of services is what defines the State Density Index (SDI) and which has been applied in Peru's Report (PNUD-Peru 2010). We are not so much interested in the existence of public facilities that indicate the physical "presence" of the

¹¹ The term which we have presented, that of "State capabilities", seeks to incorporate into the discussion the meaning of organizational capabilities. In the field of ethics, Cortina (1994) is among those who propose an ethic of organizations.

State, or the resources in terms of inputs that are given and at the disposition of operators, or even in the assigned and available State personnel, we are interested on the State functionings. The magnitude of State density and the figure of the index in a given district will therefore depend on the number and coverage of services that the State provides in it in an effective and working manner for human development. The SDI registers the list of how many basic services the State has programmed and how many of these the people effectively receive.

The gravity of intolerable social shortcomings that the Report detects should force the State to the great effort the report promotes and that consists in the more complete construction of provincial figures on what the State effectively does.¹² The State attempts of registering the provision of services had been inconclusive and because of it the report has had to rely on imperfect indicators in the sense, for example, of being more useful to evaluate the possibilities of State action than the action itself. Such is the case of the availability of doctors than instead of, for example, attentions.

We insist, the conceptual message of the Report is not that one must evaluate the State mainly by what it spends, by the inputs it acquires, by the personnel it has, by the facilities it builds and equips. All of this is indeed important because it gives us an idea of what the State can do, of the potential the State has for supplying services, but not of what most interests the people, especially the poor, who are the ones that receive the greatest number of services which otherwise they could not accede, and they are the ones who make the greatest effort for this end.

The State Density Index (SDI) is defined as the proportion of people or homesteads that receive the different services established as components of the index. These components are: i) Persons of 18 years of age or older with identity cards; ii) Persons younger than 18 years of age that have birth certificates; iii) Doctor availability per 10,000 inhabitants; iv) Percentage of

¹² The political division of Peru is by regions (25), provinces (195) and districts (1832). Ideally, statistics on provided State services should be at the district level.

homes with access to drinking water and sanitary facilities, v) Rate of school attendance, that is, children from 12 to 16 years of age that attend high school; vi) Homes with access to electricity. Obviously, the farther the SDI from one is, the greater the shortcomings.

As one may perceive, the indicators do not always express fully the effective provision and reception of services. For example, when it comes to health there is no way of registering attention and one must make do with the human resources available in each province. This is the less satisfying approximation to functionings in the elaboration of the SDI. In the rest of the indicators the Report gets closer because there is some sort of connection between State's "supply" and society's "demand"; that is, some action on both sides of the relation¹³. For instance, an electric physical connection is an incomplete social connection between State's and society's functionings because does not necessarily mean its use. The ideal would be to obtain the currently inexistent information about electricity consumption. Something similar happens with school attendance, access to sanitized water, etc. In any case, having the physical connection is an increment in the freedom families enjoy since the opportunity to benefit from consumption gets closer.

Coming back on a point already mentioned above, the demand of elaborating reports based on State performance comes from the fact that the State performance, and not so much social performance, becomes so important when the indexes that have been used correspond to extremely important necessities. Thus, the society will accept, in some instances, that their fulfillment have an obligatory or quasi-obligatory character. For example, that is the case with identity documents and birth certificates. Too many opportunities and rights are missed if a person does not possess these documents, for one lacks a name and an identity. The state cannot fulfill its constitutional mandate if it's unaware of who and how many its citizens are. It is generally accepted that individual liberty cannot be exercised if these documents are lacking. Something similar occurs with basic education. It is common to consider school attendance as compulsory up to a certain grade

¹³ We use these terms in a general sense.

which is considered the minimum necessary to comfortably interact in society and with the State. In other cases, such as of human damages caused by natural disasters, the degree of necessity makes attendance imperious, that is, independent of human will.

In some countries, due to misery or physical remoteness, support programs are established that in exchange for payment oblige the mothers to put their sons and daughters at the disposition of health centers. The State in turn is obliged to build facilities in the area, as well as providing the supplies and the professional personnel so that the service may be provided. This attempt at bringing together "supply" and "demand" through non-mercantile means reveals that society and State consider that these are matter that oblige to action and that cannot be left to other more random mechanisms for satisfying necessities. The same applies to something such as electricity, although there is an initial problem which derivates from the matter of tariffs, its use becomes a vital necessity that conditions survival.

IV. STATE DENSITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN PERU: INTOLERABLE DEPRIVATIONS AND GREAT DIFFERENCES

Once established the indicators available for the elaboration of SDI¹⁴, we shall briefly summarize the main findings of Peru's report, evaluate their significance and try to determine up to what point a greater State density is positively correlated through the SDI with the Human Development Index (HDI).

Perú is an extensive country: it is made up of 1,215,000 squared kilometers of territory, almost 30 million souls, three great natural regions—coast, highland and rainforest—, is divided in 26 departments-regions, 195 provinces, 1832 districts and more than 50,000 very small "urban centers", with a disperse population that, in some places, make State presence

¹⁴ The indicators that can form part of the SDI are varied and have to be previously defined. One can go from the minimum, which is what the report did (PNUD-Peru 2010), to including other aspects of human development: respect for human rights, access to justice, political liberties, cultural tolerance, etc.

difficult. Two thirds of the population lives in the coast and more than 70% is considered officially urban population. By 2010, 34.5% of the population lives in poverty and 14% in extreme poverty, mostly in the highlands and the rainforest. The Peruvian State barely manages a tributary pressure of 14% of the GDP and has a total public spending, at the three government levels, of 19.8% of the GDP, of which 2/3 are current expenses and 1/3 public investment. Social spending —education, health, anti poverty programs— is almost half of the current expenses, meaning 7% of the GDP. Peru is a poor and unequal country with a relatively small State, although its macroeconomic growth has been rising for almost all of the past 100 months.

In this context, it is not therefore strange that there is a marked inequality in territorial human development. That is, the average HDI for the year 2007 was 0.623, but with a dispersion that ranges from 0.484 from the province of Paucartambo (Cusco) to 0.684 in the province of Lima. Only a few districts surpass this latter figure. As one can observe in figure 1, there are inequalities in the HDI between the 195 provinces, with an important range for this type of indicator. Provinces with large cities, that are in the coast and that enjoy greater education, are the ones with a higher HDI, while on the other hand, those rural provinces in the highland and rainforest are the ones with the lowest.

Faced with this situation, the State should compensate inequalities through the public goods and services it provides, and in consequence we would expect State density to be greater in those areas with a low HDI, even more so if we take into account that the estimated SDI in the Peruvian report takes into account the most basic services. But this is not the case, for as figure 1 shows, the higher the HDI the higher the SDI, being much greater the dispersion of the SDI, which means that the State is very unequally present in this space. In the provinces, the greater presence of State social services is found in Arequipa, with an SDI of 0.916 and the lowest in Condorcanqui (Amazonas) with a SDI of 0.304. This also confirms at a more aggregate territorial level (which are the 25 departments-regions) that Lima

has the highest SDI with 0.877 and Amazonas has the lowest with 0.528. Under these circumstances, obviously human functionings are worse in provinces with less SDI.

If we take into account the absolute figures of people who lack basic assistance, which is what most of all the report seeks to take into account, we may assess better the nature of the neglect. According to the 2007 Population and Household Census (*Censo de Población y Vivienda*), 868,436 persons did not have an identity card, they are the "nobodies", and make up 3.2% of the national population. Of them, 303,949 are minors which do not have birth certificates and that make up 3.0% of the population under the age of 18, and 564,487 (3.2%) of those that are 18 and over, do not have the national identification document (DNI).

On health, while in the province of Arequipa there are 32.4 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants, in San Pablo (Cajamarca) there are only 1.3. Within each department there are also great differences that speak of a regional centralism when it comes to human development and State density. For example, while the province of Lima has 28.6 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants, the province of Oyón, in the same department, only has 3.3.

Likewise in education, it is estimated that nearly 800,000 children from 12 to 16 years of age do not attend high school. In the central and southern provinces of the country there is greater access to secondary education than in the centre and north. Once again Condorcanqui in Amazonas stands out for having the lowest percentage of high school attendance with 35.9%. As far as households with running water and hygiene access are concerned, the differences between provinces are abysmal. While Lima has 85.5% coverage, Purús has 0.3%. Of course when one looks in absolute terms the picture changes, for Lima has 1.103.938 households without that access and service while Purús 3,313.

Twenty six percent of total households did not have electricity, about 7.000.000 people. The electrification coefficient of the Ilo province was 0.95,

as high as Lima, while in Condorcanqui it only reaches 0.10. A global presentation of the State's shortcomings is presented in figure 2, and one can observe that State presence is lowest in the more remote, small rural provinces (in the highlands and rainforest) while the opposite occurs in the provinces near the coast, which are larger, urban and more developed. We therefore ask ourselves on what the presence and density of the state depends and why it is more likely to be present where there is greater human development. We have estimated a very preliminary lineal function that poses the hypothesis that human development depends on State density. The result is that there is a positive relation with $r^2 = 0.648$, which summarizes the descriptive findings (see figure 3). However, it is necessary to point out that the HDI indicates the level of development reached at the year of the index's estimate (2007), while the SDI is composed by indicators existent that same year. Hence, our estimate is preliminary and assumes that the Peruvian State has been providing the same services for a long time, which is relatively plausible, especially if we take into account its relatively small progress in the last 7 years.

But we could also assume the opposite relation, meaning that State density depends on human development. In other words, in those places where people have greater capabilities they will demand or promote a greater presence and provision of services by the State. The obtained estimate confirms this preliminary hypothesis (see figure 4). There is obviously a causality problem to be studied more deeply.

V. FINAL REMARKS

In spite of its recognized great importance in policy, the presence and action of the State in the thinking about human development seems to have been quite limited. Some mentions have come from the social welfare field, however, little has been incorporated to this important actor and institution not only in the analysis, but also in the normative and political concerns of those who promote human development.

Maybe the surest way of advancing in this subject is to deal with concrete aspects, from a perspective of capabilities and functionings, in order to reach more abstract subjects such as State structure and politics. Because of this, in this work we have used the results of Peru's report (2010) on State density, which attempts to measure the intensity of State action in the provision of certain goods and services and their effective impact in the creation of opportunities. The State Density Index (SDI) with its five elements, national identity documents, State performance in providing education, health, electricity and water and sewage, constitutes, as far as we are aware, a first effort at measuring State action based on human development criteria, that is, taking into account what the State effectively offers. It is one step in the direction of a deeper analysis incorporating the problem of how it offers it and, above all, how it is demanded and consumed by the people based on their expectations and needs. Social analysis would be needed to incorporate these last aspects of the relation between State and society.

The interaction between State and society is fundamental in order to understand this problem, based on what each one does, and also taking into account the set of public actions that are carried out outside the State and that allows Civil Society, with certain levels of autonomy, to attain specific functionings. Hence, from the perspective of human development the State has to be understood by each person not simply as an autonomous, and up to a certain point, independent body, but as a representative body that one has to interact with in order to receive those things which it constitutionally must provide and that at the same time must be held accountable. Social participation in the achieving of better functionings facilitated or promoted by the State, some in an obligatory manner should be at the heart of this new perspective. New studies should consider this more explicitly.

In light of this theoretical and empirical definition of the State Density Index, we have analyzed the performance of the Peruvian state in providing means for human development. Our first empirical finding, certainly provisional, is that State density is greater where there is greater human

development. The State seems to act based on the number and quality of demands which seem to come from populations with greater levels of human development. The State seems to deepen the human development gaps. The compensatory character when it comes to inequalities and privations does not seem to be the rule when it comes to State behavior.

The results that we have shown point out the existence of many households and persons suffering great deprivations and high inequalities between provinces in the country and between provinces within each department. This reveals an unequal provision of basic social services by the State. A better information of services effectively provided would go a long way in giving the report greater precision, but given the gravity of the deprivations and the intolerability of the gaps, the importance of the Reports´ findings is nonetheless great in order to motivate action, which is the main objective of the UNDP's report.

Despite these deficiencies, the Peru Report makes it evident the extent of the deprivations that are registered in these territorial spaces when it comes to the opportunities that people have to access different State services. The territorial distribution of capabilities is very unequal and in some cases the lack of absolute capabilities gravely affects the freedom of persons to lead their lives.

The problem is how to have relatively more, and more adequate State in those places where there are less capacities to demand public services. That is the question for further policy research.

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Figure 1. Perú: State Density Index (SDI) and Human Development Index (HDI), by provinces, 2007

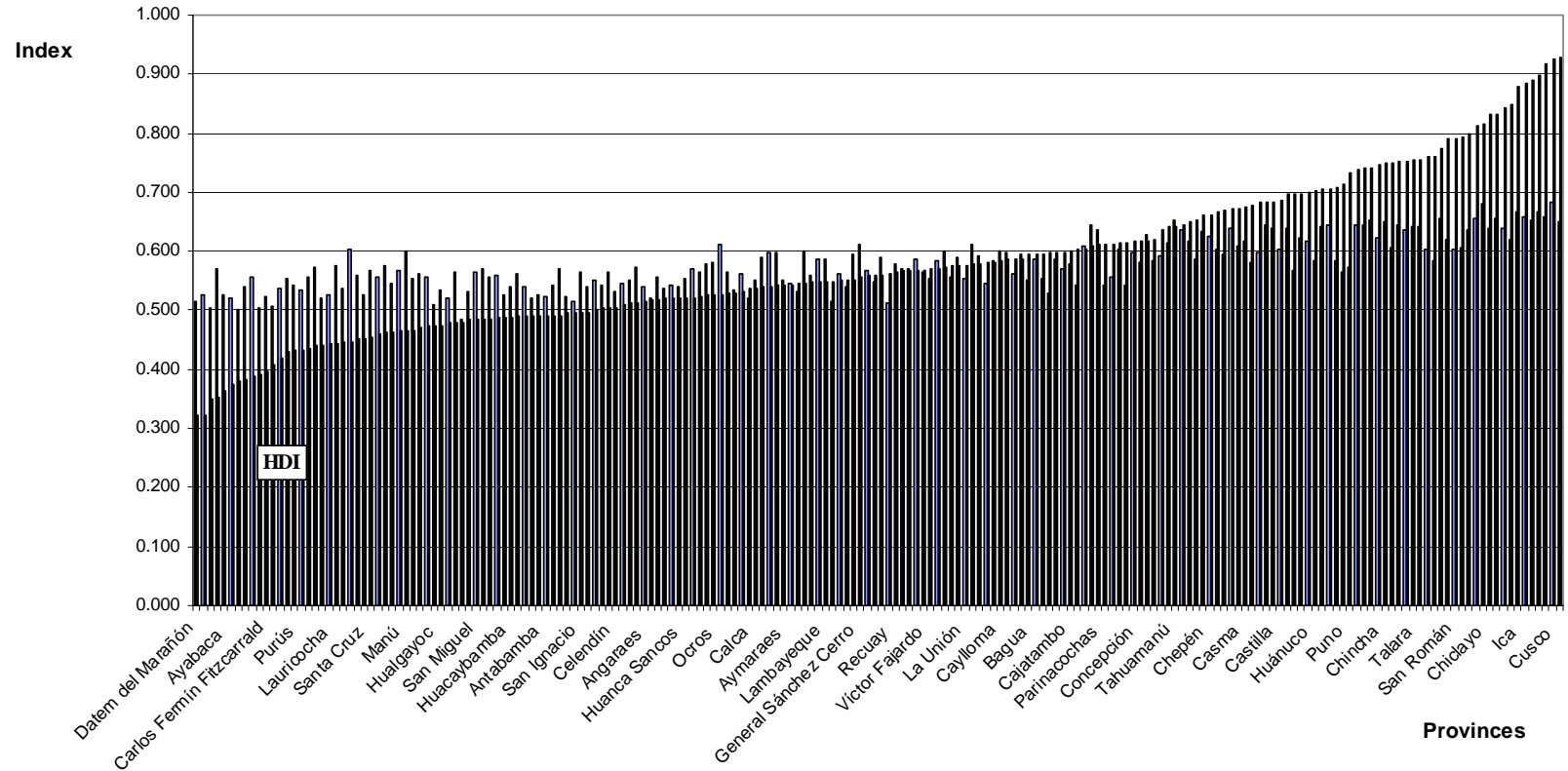


Figure 2. Perú: State Density Index Gap SDIG and HDI, by provinces, 2007

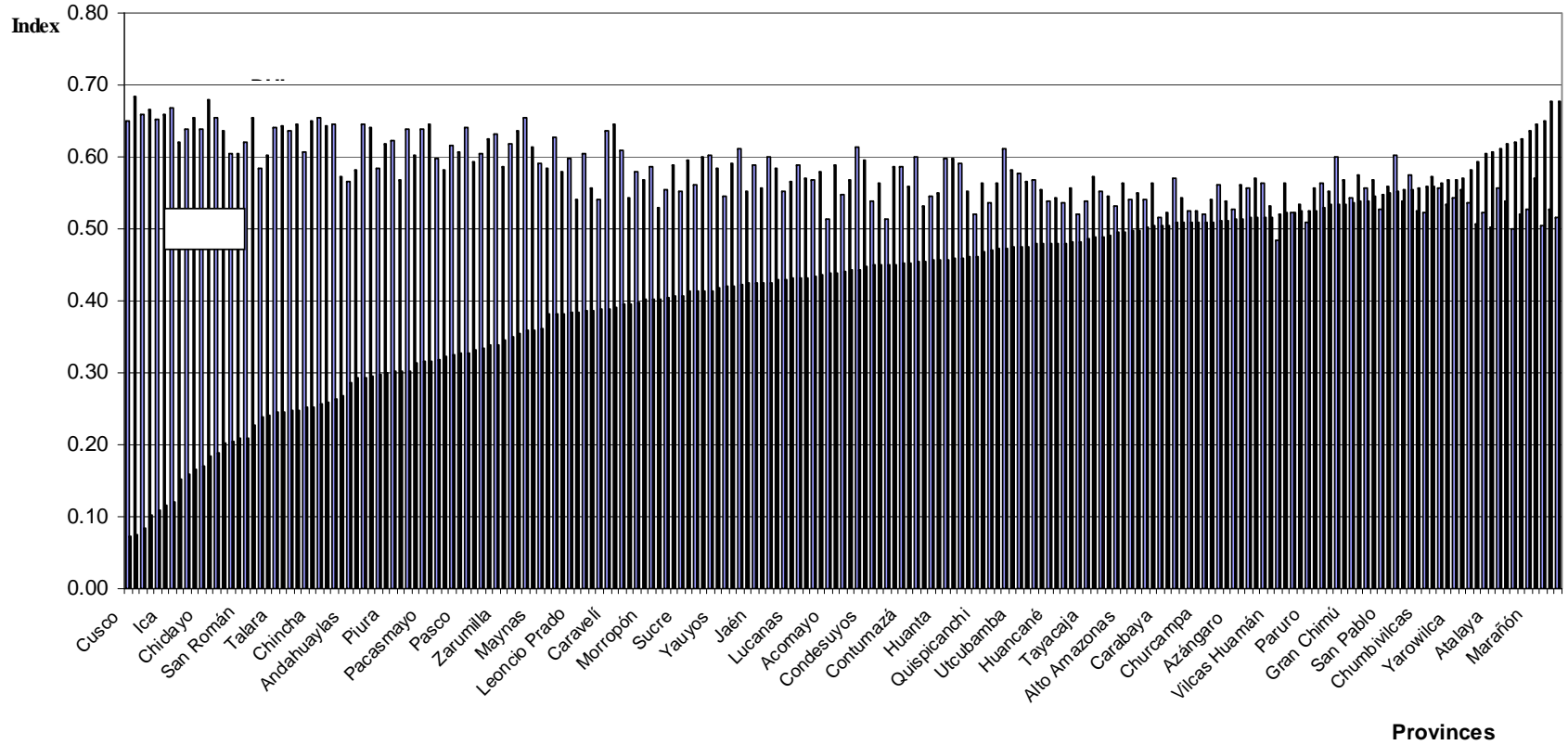


Figure 3. Perú: Perú: Human Development (HDI) and State Density (DSI) by provinces, 2007

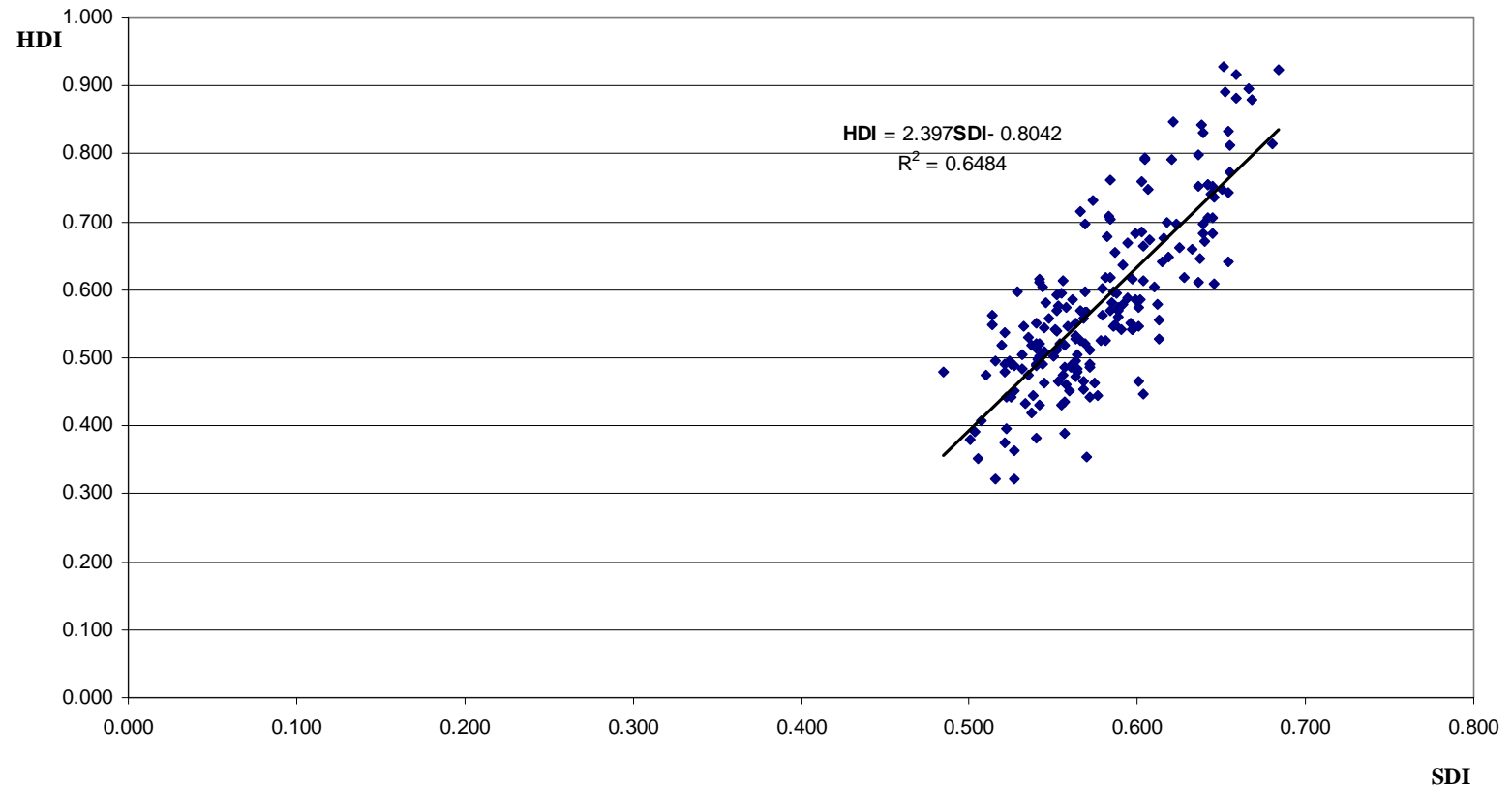
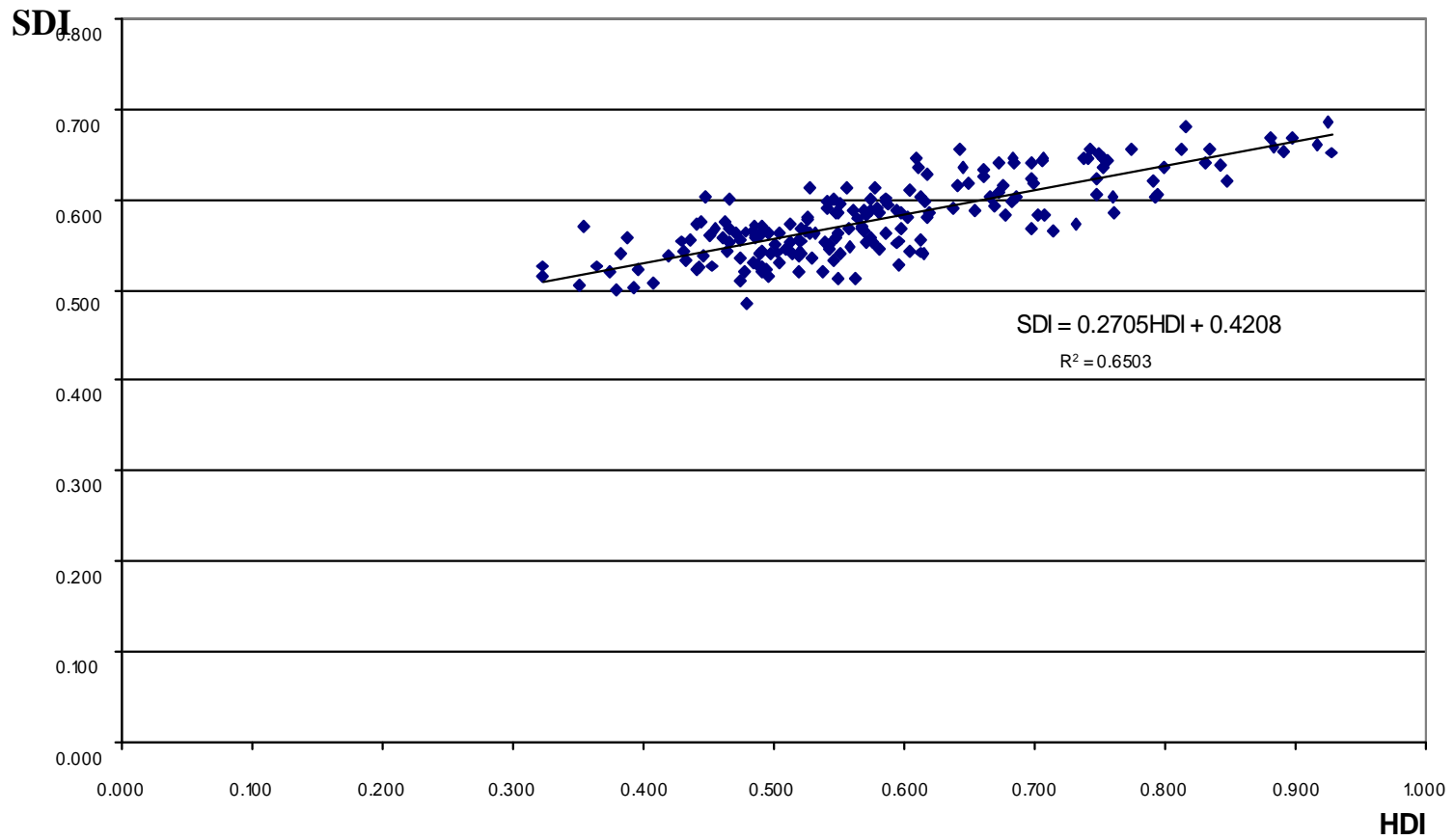


Figure 4. Perú: State Density (DSI) and Human Development (DHI) by provinces, 2007



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