PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF DEVELOPED AND BACKWARD BLOCKS:

The identification of levels of development can be done on the basis of several alternative techniques. Regional Scientists have adopted numerous methods for measuring regional disparity in development with each claiming a particular method to be superior to all the others. As a result of this lack of general consensus on the superiority of any single technique or techniques, the identification of levels of development becomes highly subjective in nature. This subjectivity gets maximized if one were to take into account the problems associated with the choice of indicators. In the absence of any specific guidelines emerging from the literature on the subject, ranking and indexing methods were selected and used in this study in order to classify the blocks into developed and backward based on the basis of level of development.

A total of 32 indicators covering the sectors of agriculture, industry, human resource and infrastructure were selected for identifying the level of development. Human resource was considered as a separate sector in view of the specific importance given to it in the later plans. Eight indicators in each sector were selected in order to give equal weightage for all the sectors. The data were collected for the entire set of variables of and for the entire Blocks of Coimbatore district. The selected indicators are:

A. AGRICULTURE:

- \(X_1\) - Number of agricultural pump sets and tractors per thousand hectares of gross cropped area.
- \(X_2\) - Number of cows, Buffaloes and sheep per 1000 population
- \(X_3\) - Number of Veterinary dispensaries
- \(X_4\) - Gross irrigated area as a percentage to gross cropped area.
- \(X_5\) - Fertilizer consumption per hectare of gross cropped area (in tones).
- \(X_6\) - Amount of bank credit per hectare of gross cropped area (in Rs.)
- \(X_7\) - Percentage of marginal farmers holdings to total holdings.
- \(X_8\) - Agricultural income from the first two major crops (in Rs).
B. INDUSTRY:

- \( X_9 \) - Number of registered factories per lakh population.
- \( X_{10} \) - Number of Employees in organized sector per 1000 population.
- \( X_{11} \) - Number of workers in manufacturing sector other than household industries per 1000 population.
- \( X_{12} \) - Percentage of main workers engaged in industrial sector.
- \( X_{13} \) - Number of cottage and village industries per lakh population.
- \( X_{14} \) - Bank credit to allied activities per unit (Rs. in ‘000s)
- \( X_{15} \) - Investment in small-scale industries (per unit) (Rs in Lakhs)
- \( X_{16} \) - Percentage of Urban population

C. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:

- \( X_{17} \) - Number of health sub-centres per lakh population.
- \( X_{18} \) - Number of beds in medical institutions per lakh population.
- \( X_{19} \) - Infant Mortality Rate.
- \( X_{20} \) - Number of doctors per 1000 population.
- \( X_{21} \) - Percentage of literates in the total population.
- \( X_{22} \) - Number of primary and middle schools per lakh population.
- \( X_{23} \) - Percentage of enrolment in schools in the age group of 6 to 11.
- \( X_{24} \) - Percentage of girl’s enrolment in schools in the age group of 6 to 11.

D. INFRASTRUCTURE:

- \( X_{25} \) - Road length per 100 sq.km of geographical area.
- \( X_{26} \) - Number of streetlights per 1000 population.
- \( X_{27} \) - Number of banks and co-operative societies per lakh population.
- \( X_{28} \) - Number of telephones per lakh population.
- \( X_{29} \) - Number of post offices per lakh population.
- \( X_{30} \) - Number of cinema theatres per 1000 population.
- \( X_{31} \) - Percentage of villages covered by regulated market.
- \( X_{32} \) - Number of petrol bunks per 1000 population.
In the ranking method, all the 21 blocks of Coimbatore district were arranged on the rank scores for each of the 32 indicators. The rank scores were initially aggregated at the sectoral level. The sectoral totals (rank scores) for each block were later summed up and ranked according to ascending order to arrive at the aggregate development.

In the indexing method, each indicator was expressed in a percentage of the average of 21 blocks for each indicator. The indexes for each were installed first sectorally and later at the aggregate level and blocks were arranged in descending order to arrive at the aggregate level of development. Then, the rank score was given in an ascending order for the total; percentage values, which were arranged in the descending order.

After assigning the ranks to all blocks in terms of ranking and indexing method in an ascending order, the three blocks from top five and three blocks from bottom five at random which were common to both the methods were identified as developed blocks and backward blocks respectively for household survey.