

A STUDY ON POLITICAL ECONOMICS DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

Padma T

Associate Professor

Department of Political Science, Government First Grade College, Magadi, Bangalore south

ABSTRACT

Acknowledging that social policy is not merely a product of basic welfare factors, but a crucial tool in the development process that aligns with economic policy as part of a wider strategy, is a significant advancement towards establishing mechanisms for its wider dissemination and efficacy. To firmly anchor social policy within development strategy and clarify the connections with simpler macroeconomic policy, it is essential to recognize the political economy contexts that shape and influence the development and evolution of both types of policy.

Keywords: Social Policy, Indian Social Policy, Nature of Social Policy, Emergence of Social Policy

INTRODUCTION

Essentially, social policy, or more accurately, the intricate network of interrelated policies, programs, and organizations that address the social circumstances of economic activity, mirrors the overarching social agreement between capital and labor. In emerging economies, this pertains to the social agreement between financial resources and workforce, particularly regarding the oversight of the development initiative. The latter has been characterized for much of the past fifty years as the endeavor to enhance material well-being for the majority of citizens via economic development, utilizing the power of the nation-state. In numerous developing nations, including India, this initiative is still partially or largely unrealized – yet this lack of completion has not stopped it from being close to abandonment in several cases.

The character of policy issues is significant not just for scientists and students of politics, sociology, and public administration but also for researchers and professionals in various institutions and organizations across governments, businesses, NGOs, and civil society overall. Despite extensive debates, frequently critical, regarding social policy and its societal effects, the accumulating evidence suggests that improved formulation, design, and execution of effective social policy significantly benefits social development, predominantly.

In addition, it takes into account specific concerns regarding

- administration and policy of social services, encompassing health, housing, and income policies
- upkeep, education, and community services; demands and challenges impacting service users, such as poverty, aging, health concerns, disabilities, and family policies; and
- the provision of welfare

PARTICIPANTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY

Updating social policy across the globe is a difficult endeavor, especially in an era of rapid technological advancements that influence both the physical landscape and social mobility. Policy development is carried out or influenced by the following participants:

- Administration
- Political groups
- Personal reforms
- Non-profit organizations
- Community action groups
- Planning documentation
- Regulations and judiciary
- Committees of Parliament

SOCIAL POLICIES DURING THE 20TH CENTURY

India's development journey after Independence has consistently sparked considerable interest, especially given that, although India ranks among the poorest nations globally in per capita income, it simultaneously stands as the largest liberal democracy in the world. Moreover, it has successfully maintained this political system, despite its shortcomings and imperfections, while numerous democratic attempts in other nations have faltered and sometimes fallen apart. This brings up a clear question: how much has this impacted the character of social policy in India? Have the pressures on the state arising from democratic processes led to increased focus on specific types of social policy, and which social groups or classes have gained from this? Why hasn't democracy led to more focus on ensuring basic goods and acceptable public services for every citizen?

SOCIAL POLICIES IN INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY

The majority of social policy implementations have not been universal in their actual outcomes, despite being proclaimed as such. Instead, it has been aimed at particular (and limited) target audiences. Typically, these groups comprised individuals with significant political representation, such as urban organized laborers, or, more prominently in the 1990s, certain caste affiliations. Nonetheless, due to the fact that such provision, either through protective laws or actual resource allocations, has been highly restricted compared to the magnitude of need, it has resulted in social policy not serving as a fundamental tool for development strategy as described in the preceding section.

ACQUISITION AND DELIVERY OF FOOD

India's public food management system aimed to achieve three primary objectives: to uphold a satisfactory level of price stability; to offer cultivators incentives by guaranteeing that prices stayed above projected costs; and to ensure a level of food security for consumers. The system was based on two main components: public procurement with minimum support prices set at farm gate for various key crops, and public distribution managed at the state level via a network of Fair Price Shops offering specific food items at subsidized rates. The effort for universal access, amidst insufficient resources allocated for this goal, inevitably resulted in many needing affordable food being the very individuals without access. Nonetheless, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the network did indeed grow in physical scope, and prices for Indian food and agriculture were noticeably more stable compared to global market prices for those commodities.

JOBS AND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The failure to create such jobs, thereby enhancing overall labor productivity in the Indian economy rather than in select sectors, has been the clearest sign of the shortcomings of the Indian economic development process over the decades, coupled with ongoing widespread absolute poverty and a sluggish pace of progress in human development indicators. This issue extends beyond welfare, as it signifies a significant squander of vital human resources essential for economic development, indicating that India's growth might have been more rapid and fair had the vast labour reserves been utilized effectively.

REFORMS IN LAND OWNERSHIP

According to the Indian Constitution, land reforms fall within the authority of state governments. This indicates that there have been significant differences in their frequency, scope, and efficiency. It is reasonable to assert that, overall, the results in this area are not particularly remarkable, and clearly there has been no significant change in landholding structures and agricultural relations nationwide due to government intervention, unlike what transpired in certain East Asian countries like Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. 13 Nevertheless, over the years, there have been alterations nationwide, especially in specific states, that have somewhat transformed the agricultural landscape.

LEARNING

The gradual progress in literacy and education for both genders continues to be a significant shortcoming of the Indian development process. Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Indian Constitution, established in 1949, stated that "The State shall strive to provide, within a decade from the beginning of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen years." Nevertheless, India continues to have the highest number of illiterate individuals globally, along with the largest population of illiterate women. The advancement in literacy has been quite gradual; female literacy significantly lags behind male literacy, and currently, almost half of the female population in the country is still illiterate. Additionally, literacy rates for females are significantly lower (typically ranging from 50 to 70 percent) among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes, as well as within specific minority groups.

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION

The fundamental aspect of affirmative action as a public policy in India consists of reservations for government jobs and public educational institutions for specific social groups identified as disadvantaged. No efforts have been made to compel or motivate the private sector to reserve in a similar manner. Throughout much of the post-Independence era, this reservation primarily applied to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, typically comprising slightly over one-fifth of the overall jobs/seats available. In the late 1980s, provisions were also implemented for social categories labeled as "Other Backward Classes," which were primarily lower castes that had attained political and economic influence much higher than their assumed social status. The introduction of these new reservations, which essentially meant that slightly more than half of the positions would be set aside, sparked outrage and protests from the urban middle class at that time.

SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES IN INDIA

Shortly after independence, social welfare policy gained increased momentum and guidance because of the government's active involvement. The objectives of development have been embedded in the constitution and numerous planning documents. The Indian Constitution,

effective from 26th January 1950, aimed to establish a socialist, secular, and democratic governance and indicates that 'a pivotal point for the establishment of the Indian welfare system arose with the drafting of the national constitution'. India possesses a liberal democracy along with a federal structure, where various elements of social policy, including land reforms, education, health, and rural infrastructure, are classified as either specific 'state government subjects' or shared responsibilities of both state and central governments. Article 58 of the Directive Principles in the Indian Constitution mandates the State 'to establish and advance a social system that supports the well-being of the populace.' This regulation and the participation of various political factions in each state result in significant differences regarding key demographic, economic, and social elements across the states. Essential policies and provisions for youth are outlined in seven articles within the directive principles of state policy, which are not, however, enforceable in a court.

THESE PRINCIPLES ARE:

- Right to an adequate means of livelihood;
- Securing health and strength and not abusing the tender age of children;
- Protecting against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment;
- Right to work, education, public assistance in case of unemployment;
- Just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief;
- Provision of free and compulsory education up to 14 years of age;
- Promotion with special care of educational and economic interests of the weaker sections

MODELS OF SOCIAL WELFARE

Model A: Residual Welfare Model of Social Policy This approach is closely linked to a laissez-faire stance. With simultaneous social changes accompanying industrialization and urbanization, there arose a reluctant acknowledgment that, in rather unique situations, failures of the market or family may require some temporary addition to social provisions. There is a focus on "means-testing" and "lower eligibility." Selectivity is built into this policy framework, and only the poor who meet the means test are chosen for benefits.

Model B: Industrial Accomplishment --- Social Policy Performance Model This includes a crucial role for social welfare organizations. It asserts that social needs ought to be fulfilled based on merit, work output, and productivity. It originates from multiple economic and psychological theories relating to incentives, efforts, rewards, and the development of class and group allegiances.

Model C: Institutional Redistributive Model of Social Policy This proposes embedded institutional social support to address the pressures of contemporary intricate industrial urban existence. This model considers social welfare to be a vital integrated Institution within society, delivering Universalist services beyond the market based on the principle of necessity. It is fundamentally a framework that integrates systems of redistribution in control of resources over time.

PROBLEMS IN POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- a. Lack of political will
- b. Prevalence of coalition government

- c. Widespread corruption at each and every level of functioning
- d. Financial constraints
- e. Red-tapism
- f. Erosion of moral values
- g. Financial constraints
- h. Absence of training
- i. Lack of people's participation
- j. Gross mismatch between actual needs and perceived needs of people
- k. Delay in getting justice.

ADVANCING IN SOCIAL POLICY

In the Progressive Era, spanning roughly from 1890 to 1920, reformers actively sought to tackle the numerous pressing social issues that led to human suffering. This era witnessed the creation of various services and initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of numerous struggling Americans; nonetheless, others, especially individuals of color, remained overlooked and sidelined in government policy. Social welfare during the Progressive Era was primarily controlled by the private sector, indicating that charitable donations were prevalent, since few states had implemented any actions to meet social welfare requirements. Moreover, there was nearly no funding for social services at the federal level.

The Charity Organization Society and the social settlement houses supported by both religious and non-religious donations initiated a movement to address the pressing needs that had arisen in the previous decades. Additional private initiatives that impacted social welfare involved mutual aid and charitable organizations, along with a surge of women's clubs among both African American and White women. The separated women's organizations—the white General Federation of Women's Clubs established in 1890 and the black National Association of Colored Women created in 1896—adopted the social reform initiatives of the era and evolved into a persistent influence for legislative transformation and collective support. The official establishment of these women's clubs guaranteed their impact well into the Progressive Era and thereafter (Martin & Martin 1985; Neverdon-Morton, 1989).

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTING CHANGES IN POLICIES

- Use of mass media
- Creation of public opinion
- Demonstrations
- Public Interest Litigation
- Discussions, Meetings and Seminars
- Building pressure over government
- Submission of memorandum
- Signature campaign
- Pressure groups etc.

CONCLUSION

This paper contends that social policy in India, although attaining a few minor successes in managing the contradictions and instabilities arising from the development process, has still proven insufficient regarding the fundamental functions outlined at the outset of this discussion. Additionally, the recent modifications in social policy and public intervention related to the "globalisation" stage of neoliberal economic reform in India may have indeed weakened some of the progress that was made previously. This is due to recent macroeconomic trends being linked to increased inequality and income instability, which consequently has significant social repercussions

REFERENCES

1. Berridge, V. 2003. Public or Policy Understanding of History? *Social History of Medicine*, 16, 511-523.
2. Birkland, A., Thomas. 2005. *An introduction to the policy process: theories, concepts, and models of public policy making*. London: M.E.Sharp.
3. Blakemore, K. & Griggs, E. 2007. *Social Policy: An Introduction*, Buckingham, GBR, Open University Press.
4. Bochel, H. M. 2005. *Social policy: issues and developments*, Harlow, Pearson/Prentice Hall.
5. Carnes, M. E. & Mares, I. 2007. *The Welfare State in Global Perspective*. In: Boix, C. & Stokes, S. (eds.)