

GOVERNANCE AND INTERNALISATION IN SOCIAL POLICY: DEFINITION, CONCEPTS AND CAUSES

Nogaibayev Yerkin, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

ABSTRACT

International community and national states have been and will continue to pay attention to social policy. The definition of social policy, concepts and practical approaches varies among researchers and policy makers. Furthermore, the mechanisms of the internationalisation of social policy are very complex and still poorly understood. This paper deals with theoretical literature review on what social policy is, how social policy can be defined and what conceptual views and perspectives on social policy do exist. The paper also reviews causes of rising issue of social policy and supporting international governance framework including United Nations conventions and initiatives.

Keywords: Social Policy, Internalisation, Governance Framework.

INTRODUCTION

From literature review, it can be seen that social policy generally combines different disciplines such as economics, sociology, public policy, and even psychology, and it applies those disciplines to public concerns and social problems (Scott, 2009). The definition of social policy is provided by Surender & Walker (2013): social policy can refer to “*complex of concepts, principles, legislations, and methods in which it is possible to organise a more equitable distribution of individual and social resources among those people whose needs cannot be met by existing system because they are poor, too old or they are disabled*” (Surender & Walker, 2013). An alternative definition described by Menachem (2015), social policy is a set of institutions and a range of activities concerned with production, distribution, and exchange of goods and resources for the satisfaction of human needs (Menachem, 2015). Cahill M., reader in social policy at the University of Holmwood (2005) has written book entitled “*The Environment and Social Policy*”. In his book, he has defined social policy more broadly by arguing that environmental and sustainability issues are relevant to a lot of part of social policy now. It has happened mainly because of distributional consequences of environmental change (for example, resource depletion, climate change and widespread pollution) and its impact on people’s living standards and well-being (Cahill, 2003). Thus, Cahill (2003) has suggested that environmental policies have strong social components. The sustainability indicators, proposed and approved United Nations Environmental Programme, includes such indicators as opportunities for work, access to facilities and services, access to skills, knowledge, and information. It can be said that social policy deals with things like social security, people’s welfare, income maintenance, pensions, education policy, healthcare, social housing, equal opportunities and employment (Menachem, 2015). Most authors would also agree that social policy deals with social problems including law and order, defence, crime and criminal justice, environmental issues (Spicker, 2014; George & Page, 2004).

SOCIAL POLICY CONCEPTS

There are different perspectives and views on how social policy does work. First one, functionalism, where society is based on the value of consensus and all institutions in society should all work together to create more order and stability (Holmwood, 2005). In this context, social policies are developed by the government that should help society to run more smoothly. For example, educational policy should promote the idea of meritocracy; family policy should help society to carry out their functions more effectively, for example, an introduction of child benefits actually gave families more economic stability, thus, they could provide economic functions. The second, Marxists see society is divided by a conflict of interests between the ruling and working classes, the conflict between rich and poor (Booth, 1985). Therefore, they believe that social policy only benefits the ruling class. For example, an average worker in OECD countries is taxed a fairly large proportion of their income, while corporation tax is about five percent of all profits made, which is much significantly lower on the level of income tax. The third, New Right believes that the government should have minimal involvement in society and people should take responsibility for their own lives. A notable example of this kind of social policy approach has been the “*Thatcherism*”. Former UK prime-minister, Margaret Thatcher believed that there is no such thing as society; people need to care about themselves and their own life. New Right are opposed to the provision of welfare support to families or in education or in healthcare service as it makes people dependent and creates more social problems (Ghaill, 1996). They support policies that setting to encourage people to be independent. They also believe in limiting child support, because they believe that encourage lone parent families. Finally, postmodernists argue that today society has been characterised by such factors as globalisation, risks, and fragmentations (Bauman, 1988). Therefore, social policy must take into account the effects of globalisation, global risks, and the reduced role of national politics. They more in flavour of policies recognise that people live in the global world.

CAUSES OF INTERNALISATION OF SOCIAL POLICY

According to study published by Scholte (2008), internalisation in sociology and other social science is the process of acceptance, adaptation of beliefs, values, attitudes, practices, standards, norms, etc. The mechanisms of the internationalisation are very complex and still poorly understood. The process of internalisation starts with learning by individuals and social groups what the norms are, and then individuals and social groups accept them. Indeed, internationalization is really connected with the processes taking place between nations, but genetically these processes are formed and prepared in domestic national environment. The fact is that the most valuable and important issues, as well as concerned issues, arise within the national border and then it goes beyond national borders and joins the international environment. This trend has become an objective and necessary process. The emergences of all valuable, socially significant issues beyond the national boundaries are the initial step of internationalization. It is also necessary that other societies accept these values, cultural, scientific discoveries, techniques, experience, social problems etc., incorporated into their own lives as part of their own culture, science, technology, etc., adapt to them. Historically, the theory of internationalization, which became widespread at the end of the 20th century, mainly deals with the activities of transnational corporations or individual countries within the framework of

international economic relations. However, over the last 50-60 years, it includes issues of social problems and social policy.

Regarding the causes of internalisation of social policy, Yeates (1999) in his paper "*Social politics and policy in an era of globalization*" argued that international organisations especially post-war international organisations such World Bank and United Nations's institutions has tried to pay attention to fundamental concerns for human and social well-being and try to find all possible solutions to reduce social inequalities and other social problems including environmental issues. Of course, there is also an impact of globalisation and free markets on internalisation of social policy (Deacon, 1998). International governmental and non-governmental organisations have become to pay huge attention to the problems of social policy. Poverty and access to resources and equal opportunities have become the most targeted issues by all types of social policy at international and national levels. For example, many people today do not have access to proper water resources and sanitation. The United Nations, World Bank and Asian Development Bank include access to drinking water and sanitation as one of the main priority. The world population is growing rapidly especially in developing countries like China and India. According to the United Nations Fund of Population, the world's population reached approximately 7 billion 289 million people in 2016, and the increase is about 83 million people per year (UNFPA, 2016). As result of population growth, the need for fresh drinking water is only increasing. Nowadays, millions of people do not have access to drinking water. Forty percent of the world's population lives in unsanitary conditions. About two million children die every year due to a lack of drinking water and normal sanitation. This water crisis is exacerbated by climate change and other factors such as rapid urbanisation, poor governance, and social inequality. In 2000, the United Nations set the aims to reduce the number of people who do not have access to drinking water by 20% at 2020 (Poverty, 2015).

The second reason of internalisation of social policy is that global politics have become socialized and focused on social issues. As stated again by Yeates (2002) "*the major agenda issues at intergovernmental meetings are now in essence social (and environmental) questions*". For example, the end of the Second World War (in 1945) raises the problem of international refugee migration to the international arena. International community adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 10, 1948. The declaration established the principle that all people should have fundamental rights and freedoms without any discrimination in this respect. In 1951, the United Nations and its members adopted Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Convention establishes the basic rights for refugees and the necessary standards ("*minimum social standards*"). It also defines the legal status of refugees and contains provisions on income-generating and social care. Other provisions of the Convention set the various rights of refugees that they are entitled to in the country that granted them asylum. In 1967, the Protocol was adopted and the Protocol extended the Convention to "*new refugees*", that is, those who became refugees as a result of events that occurred after January 1, 1951. The protocol removed the temporary restriction, expanded the scope of the Convention so that Refugees from non-European countries have also protection. The 1967 Protocol is applied by the participating countries without any geographical restrictions, except when the state has previously made a reservation when acceding to the Convention. In addition to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, international refugee law includes many standards developed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The standards of the UNHCR are not compulsory for implementation by countries. Nevertheless, being accepted by

more than 60 states, they have been widely recognized as documents that reflect the views of the international community and have the appropriate authority.

CONCLUSION

This paper showed that international community and national states have been and will continue to pay attention to social policy. The definition of social policy varies among researchers and policy makers; however, most of the authors agree that social policy includes issues such as people's welfare, healthcare, equal opportunities, social justice to everyone and social housing. Furthermore, it includes social problems such as law and order, defence, crime and criminal justice. The main criteria for recognising a problem to the global category are considered to be its economic and social scale and the need for joint efforts of all states of the world to solve it. The environmental problems have been recognised as the main global problem and integrated into social policy, although until recently its place was occupied by the struggle for peace and disarmament. As stated above, environmental problems have a strong social connection and its distributional consequences have impact on people's living standards and well-being. All social problems highlighted above are actual reasons of internalisation of social policy. In sociology, internalization is defined as the process of the transition of set of norms, values, and actions. In particular, social problems and social policy have been internationalised as a part of global governance and global initiatives. In fact, international organisations and developed countries have become to pay significant attention to providing social policy across all countries. Social problems have entered the international arena because of the relevance of these problems and their impact on humanity. Furthermore, the scale and degree of involvement of different countries and peoples in the world economic and social relations have reached unprecedented levels, which made local and specific problems of countries and regions in the category of global problems. Moreover, it should be said that although the international attention to social problems and financial support to social programmes that aims to solve these problems has significantly increased over the last decades, however, the progress in social policy and effectiveness of some international social programmes is debatable. In particular, critics of international social policy have argued that international programmes have often targeted on the providing only technical aid but not finding a primary solution to address causes of these social problems.

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