

Historical Development of Social Welfare in England

In the medieval Europe helping the underprivileged classes of people like the poor, the widows, the unemployed, and the physically handicapped was an activity of church. Until, the beginning of the 14th century the king and the parliament did not interfere with the works of church. But the breakdown of feudalism and the emergence of a new economic order brought about a remarkable change in the social and life of England.

King Edward III Issued the statute of laborers in 1349 compelling the able bodied laborers without means to accept employment from anybody willing to offer it.

Statute of Henry V 111 in 1531 Provided that the mayors and justices of peace would be required to investigate into the applications of the aged and the poor unable to work who were maintained by the parish. It also provided that these papers were be registered and licensed to beg in some fixed areas. In 1536, the parliament adopted its first measures for poor relief under governmental care and administration that alms were collected by the church on each Sunday and that local authorities were to help the impotent and the poor. Able bodied beggars were forced to work and earn for themselves and for their families.

The Elizabethan Poor law of 1601

In 1601 Queen Elizabeth codified all the poor laws enacted by the preceding kings and parliaments and promulgated a Poor Law which is often referred as “The Elizabethan poor law of 1601).

The poor law provided that families of needy members must support them. According to the provision of this law the responsibility of the parish to help the destitute was limited only to those who could not be supported by their families and relatives The Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 divided the poor into three categories.

- The able bodied poor
- The impotent poor
- The dependent children

The able bodied poor were the sturdy beggars. Citizens were strictly forbidden to give alms to this class of people. They were forced to work in the work house.

The impotent poor were the physically and mentally handicapped people. They were unable to work. The law provided that this class of people was to be placed in almshouses where they were to work within the limit of their capacities.

The dependent children were orphans, deserted children and children from very poor families. The law provided that these children would be placed to persons who were willing to take without any charge or with very low charge. Boys had to learn the trade of their masters and had to serve up to 24 years of age. Girls were employed as domestic servants and had to remain there till their 21st birthday.

According to this law "Overseers of the poor" appointed by the Justice of Peace or Magistrate were entrusted with the task of administering poor laws in the parish.

They had to receive applications of the poor for relief and make investigation into the socio-economic conditions of the applicants in order to decide their eligibility for public relief.

The poor law was financed mainly by poor tax which was supplemented by donations and fines for violation of the provisions of any statute.

The Poor Law of 1601 established the pattern of public relief under government care and administration in England for three hundred years. It holds the bases of all poor laws of the world.

The Settlement Act of 1662

The law or act was enacted to stop the migration of poor from rural areas to cities to get free meals. The poor, who promised not to beg, were allowed migration by Magistrate.

The Poor Law Revision of 1834

During the early part of the 19th century, England experienced a number of social problems control and power of church and dominance of commercial and industrial economy. The existing poor laws failed to solve problems satisfactorily with a view to examining and revising existing poor laws, the parliament appointed a Commission in 1833. The Commission presented its report in 1834. The six recommendations of the commission were as follows.

- To abolish partial relief introduced previously.
- To place able bodied applicants for relief in the work house.
- To grant outdoor relief only to the sick, the old, and widows and children

- To coordinate the administration of relief of several parishes into a “poor law union”
- To make the condition of poor relief recipients less desirable than those of the lowest paid workers in the community,
- To establish a Central Board of Control to be appointed by the King

These recommendations were enacted on August 14, 1834 and were as the new poor law.

Child Labour and Factory Legislation

Until the first quarter of the 19th century the aim of the social policy in England had been to suppress the laboring class in the interest of the landowners, the manufacturers and the tradesmen. Poor children were sold for work to farmers, craftsmen or engaged in hard work in almshouses. The development of textile mills created opportunity to use the poor children who were placed to the manufacturers as cheap laborers. There was no limitation of their working hours. The working place in mills lacked fresh air, sunshine etc. The first initiative to protect the children against this cruel treatment came from Robert Peel who raised objection to the use of young children in labor camps and textile mills. “Health and Morals Act of 1802” restricted the working hours of the poor children to 12 hours a day and forbade night work for children. To save the children hired directly from their parents, the parliament enacted the “Factory Act of 1833” which forbade the employment of children below nine in the textile mills and limited daily working hours for children.

The Poor Law Commission of 1905

In the first quarter of the 20th century the English people faced serious threat of unemployment. The Liberal Party, in 1905, promised to make a reform of the poor laws. It appointed a Royal Commission on the poor laws and relief of distress. After the recommendations by the commission some acts were enacted.

- The Provisions of Meals Act of 1906 organized free school lunches for children in elementary schools.
- The Education Act of 1907 included provision for medical examination of school-going children.
- The Old-age Pension’s Act of 1908 provided for a weekly pension of five shillings for deserving poor persons above 70 years of age.
- The Un-employment Work Men Act of 1908 for the employment of poor.

Development Since 1909

Until 1909, almost all the poor laws of England had been mainly concerned with preventive measures. But from 1909 onward, the poor laws of England become more concerned with curative and rehabilitative measures. In the year 1911, National Insurance Act was enacted which provided compulsory health insurance for workers of modest income. This program was financed by contributions of the insured employees and their employers and also by grants from the parliament. The Social Insurance Program of England was further extended in 1925 by the introduction of the “Widows; Orphan and Old-age Contributory Pensions Act” which applied to men over sixty five, women over sixty and to widows, orphans below 14.

Beveridge Report

The structure of the present social security program of England is based on a Report presented by sir William Beveridge on November 20, 1942. During the critical days of the war in June 1941, the country began to make a revolutionary reform of her social welfare program with the support of parliament. An Interdepartmental Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services was organized under the chairmanship of William Beveridge.

The Beveridge report gave the following proposals for introducing a comprehensive social security program in England.

- A unified, comprehensive and adequate program of social insurance
- Public assistance as a national program for aiding people who were not sufficiently protected through social insurance.
- Children’s allowance (now called family allowance) to provide a weekly benefit for each child
- Comprehensive free health and rehabilitative services for the entire population
- The maintenance of full employment through public works in order to prevent mass unemployment in economic crises

The Beveridge Report aimed at protecting the entire population from want, ignorance, sickness and unemployment. The report emphasized the following basic principles for a unified plan of social security in England.

- Unified administration

- Comprehensive coverage
- Flat rate of contribution
- Flat rate of benefits
- Adequacy of all benefits to meet the basic needs of the recipients
- Classification of the population

The present social services in England include.

Family Allowances:

The system provides eight shillings a week for every child.

National Health Service:

It provides without charge, medical, hospital and dental services for every man, woman and child.

National Assistance:

This scheme provide for those who for one reason or other are not fully covered by insurance.

National Insurance:

It is an insurance scheme in which regular contributions are paid towards the cost of benefits payable in particular contingencies. Contributions are paid according to the class of contributions and the benefit available to that class.

Social Welfare in U.S.A

The pattern of social welfare or social services in America owes much to its mother land England. Most of the immigrants of America came from England. They brought with them the laws, the social systems and pattern of social services existing in the England. The kinship and neighborhood groups assisted the needy relatives and neighbors to the extent of their capacities. From the very beginning, the Local Government assumed the responsibility of helping the paupers who had no relatives. Outdoor relief was given to the poor in their own homes. Alms houses were established to give indoor relief to the disabled poor. The first alms house established in 1662 began to work as workhouse for able-bodied poor from the year 1685. The beginning of free charity was made with the establishment of the Boston Latin, school in 1644.

Care of the ailing, another early development was associated with alms house. The origin of some of the leading hospitals of today, such as Bellevue Hospital in New York goes back to early poor houses in America. Pennsylvania Hospital was the first hospital for the poor with physical and mental diseases. In the field of child welfare, the beginning was made with the establishment of an institution in 1729 in New Orleans by the Ursuline sisters for the children of parent's mass murder by Indians. In 1790, an orphanage was established in Charleston, South Carolina for children whose parents were dead.

Depression of 1863 and After

The great Depression of 1863 and the Civil War in the United States were followed confusion and many personal, family and community problems. With a view to tackling these problems and meeting community needs,

Charity Organization Movement was started in America. This movement was successful in establishing some private agencies and community welfare councils. These councils staffed by efficient social workers made attempt to understand community needs, chalk out plans and to execute these plans. The first Charity Organization Society in the United States was started in Buffalo in the year 1877.

Another significant development in the field of social services in the U.S.A. has been that of the Settlement house which also was started first in England. The first Settlement house, in America was established in the city of New York in 1886. Similar neighborhood centers were also established in different parts of the country. These centers aimed at providing recreational, health and welfare services for boys and girls, youngmen and women particularly in areas inhabited by the poor. The most significant achievement of the state public welfare officials was the organization of State Boards of Charities and Correction. It was organized to assume the responsibility of the dependent, the defective and the delinquent.

Social Security Act

.The Federal Government enacted the massive, Social Security Act in 1935 and assumed a major responsibility of assisting the needy. The Social Security Act which virtually converted America into a welfare state had three parts.

- a) Social Insurance
- b) Public Assistance
- c) Health Social Welfare.

The last one specially emphasizing on child welfare this act was passed to provide old age insurance, federal and state an employment insurance, grants-in-aid to states for old age assistance, aid to families of dependent children, aid to the blind and services for helping maternal and child health, crippled children, vocational rehabilitation and soon.

An important change took place in social security legislation with the enactment of public welfare amendments of 1962. Here for the first time the importance of preventive, protective and rehabilitative services would in public welfare was significantly recognized by providing a formula under which 75 percent of the costs of such services would be met from federal funds.

At present social welfare work is being carried on in America under three auspices.

- Federal, state and local government
- Voluntary agencies
- Church missions

A major step in the development of social welfare in America has been the rapid growth of the profession of social work since the turn of the 20th century. There has been rapid increase in number of the trained social workers in America.

Development of Social Work Profession in Pakistan

The concept of social welfare is not new in our country. Our philosophy of life, religious values and traditions always inspired the spirit of helping the distressed. Charity, almsgiving and other philanthropic activities inspired by religious values and humanitarian outlook are still there to help the needy and the distressed people in our country. But with the expansion of urbanization and development of mills and factories, after independence, Pakistan experienced so many socio-economic problems that the charitable and philanthropic activities failed to solve the ever-increasing problems adequately. The problems became further aggravated by the influx of refugees from India. This invited the serious attention of the Govt. for introducing systematic social services under public support and facilitating the smooth running of the available voluntary social services.

Social Work Education in Pakistan

Though some private organizations were working for the education of poor children and women i-e APWA (All Pakistan Women Association) formed by Raana Liaqat Ali Khan but there was need of professionalism in the field of welfare.

In the year, 1951, the government of Pakistan approached the United Nations for suggestions and cooperation for the solution of her ever increasing social problems. The development of social work as a profession in Pakistan is the result of the cooperation between the Govt. of Pakistan and the UN experts.

In 1952, a group of United Nations experts was sent to Pakistan to survey the needs, problems and social structure of Pakistan and assess the feasibility of implementation of social welfare programmes. After a comprehensive study, the experts put priority on training of social work. The beginning was made with the introduction of a short term training course in Karachi. Mostly, the people already working in welfare institutions were trained through that course. In 1953 a similar three months training course was started at Dacca and Lahore.

After that, with the financial help of federal and provincial govts, University of the Punjab LHR started two year diploma course in social work soon after that, the same university started classes of M.A Social Work.

In 1961, Karachi University also opened the postgraduate program in social work and Sindh University in 1966. In 1974 and 1978, Bloachistan University and Peshawar University respectively opened the Departments of Social Work.

At BA level, in more than 100 Colleges, Social Work is being taught.

In 2002, University of Sargodha and in 2004, University of Bahawalpur started master programs in Social Work. Social work education is considered very essential to produce

much more professionals who can study, observe and understand the social problems and social structure of the Pakistan society in well way and can play best role in policy making, implementation of programs and evaluation.

Urban Community Development and Village-AID Program

Experimental projects on urban community development and medical social work were started at Karachi and Lahore at the last quarter of 1953 and 1954 respectively. Main objectives of these projects were.

- To aware the people about their social problems.
- To improve the capacities and abilities of the people for solution of their own problems on self help basis.
- To guide the people for local leadership.
- To identify the social problems of that area and to take initiative for the solution of these problems.

Govt. tried to appoint trained social workers at all these projects for positive results. Now these projects are going very well and providing a lot number of other services in communities.

In close cooperation with I C A (International Cooperation Administration) of United States and the Govt. of Pakistan introduced the Village AID program in 1953. The main objectives of that program were.

- To develop projects of rural community development.
- To provide drinking water and water for crops.
- To set up educational institutions and hospitals in rural areas.

The programmes, however, died an immature death.

National and Provincial Councils of Social Welfare

For implementation of the program of Grants-in-AID the National Council of Social Welfare was established in the year 1955. It was followed by the formation of the provincial councils of Social Welfare in East Pakistan and West Pakistan in the year 1956. Separation of East Pakistan and end of one unit, West Pakistan came back in the usual state of four provinces and separate provincial councils were set up in all four provinces. Every provincial council has to handle the programs of welfare in that province.

Main tasks of national council of social welfare are.

- Policy making, program formulation and legislation for social welfare.
- To assess the needs and problems of NGOs and suggestions for solution
- To improve the working of voluntary social welfare agencies.
- To evaluate the voluntary social welfare programs
- To set up new voluntary social welfare agencies where it is felt need
- To remain in contact with provincial councils of social welfare and to guide them.
- To encourage the efforts for research on social welfare.
- To publish and improve literature on social welfare.

Mostly, National council supports financially to welfare agencies working in following fields.

- Child Welfare
- Youth Welfare

- Women Welfare
- Welfare of physically and mentally handicapped
- Family Planning
- Rehabilitation of beggars
- Probation of offenders services
- Welfare and rehabilitation of patients
- Publication and research
- Rehabilitation of socially handicapped

Ministry of Social Welfare

In 1958, a separate Ministry of Health and Social welfare was established in the Central Govt. and in October 1959, the ministry of Health, Labor and Social Welfare was formed under a secretary with three-divisions each headed by a joint secretary. In 1962, the administration of social welfare program was transferred to the provincial govts.