

Concept of Social Policy:

Before the discussion on social policy, it is necessary to know about 'policy'. Policy is a plan of action used by the government to set out clear rules for the delivery of programs and services to the people.

Policy: A plan of action adopted by an individual or social group.

Policy: A line of argument rationalizing the course of action of a government.

Policies come from legislation or from the decisions made by elected members. It comes clear that policies are formed by government in different fields, i.e. social policy, economic policy, agriculture policy, health policy, education policy etc.

Social Policy:

The social policy is the term applied to the development, implementation and impact of policies which influence the social conditions of people. It is an instrument applied by government to regulate and supplement social sector. Social policy has been defined in following ways by different scholars:

1. Lavin: Social Policy refers to "the practice of social intervention aimed at securing social change to promote the welfare and well-being of citizens."

2. Kulkarni: Social policy is the strategy of action indicating the means and methods to be followed in successive phases to achieve the declared social objectives.

3. Marshall: Social policy refers to 'the policy of governments with regard to action having a direct impact on the welfare of citizens providing them with sources of income.

Social policies specifies the goals, the resources and the manners of their utilization to the attainment of these goals. The functions of social policy are in

relation to developmental objectives and those meant to remove social and economic obstacles to development. Good social policies bring positive social change in communities through benefiting people. The success of social policies lead states toward welfare states.

Need of Social Policy:

The need of social policy can be illustrated on the following grounds:

1. Social policy can deliver the social services successfully.
2. Social development objectives can be achieved through social policy.
3. Evaluation and assessment of social services can be conducted on the basis of social policy.
4. It prevents problems and mismanagement among the administration.
5. Long term and short term objectives are set up by social policy.
6. Social policy takes consideration the social situations prevailing in the country.
7. A balanced socio-economic development is possible through formulating social policy.
8. Social planning can be done on the basis of social policy.

Objectives of Social Policy

The main goal of social policies is to ensure that everyone in society lives in harmony, afar from conflicts. Thus, the target is to ensure social justice, social development, social balance, social integration, and social peace.

Every social policy could work on various objectives. It depends on the felt needs of communities. Usually, social policies are formulated to achieve the following objectives:

Provision of Health and Educational Services

The services of health and education contribute to the welfare of people. If people are healthy and well educated, they can think and work for the welfare of their country in better way. Hence, social policy aims to improve and increase health care and educational services. Through better social policies , new hospitals with the latest equipment, new schools, colleges and universities are set up. It also tried to provide health care and educational services at all levels on equal basis. Provision of all these services to masses is possible through social policies.

Provision of Employment

The aim of social policy is to ensure maximum opportunities for the employment of the people. It tried to make such policy which could be beneficial and responding to the needs of unemployed people. Through maximum employment opportunities, thee people are given chances to fulfill their economic and social needs. As social policy is made to develop the welfare of the country, so when people could be employed in different fields they would be able to earn and promote their well-being. Prime Minister's Youth Loan Scheme is the example of such policy objective.

Improvement in Agriculture

Agriculture is the backbone for socio-economic contribution in many developing countries like Pakistan. Specific social policies are designed to support and improve agriculture sector in these countries. A farmer friendly social policy may include; easy loan, tested and free seeds provision, agriculture equipment etc. to the farmers.

Control on Rapid Population Growth

Overpopulation is the big hurdle in the provision of general welfare services to people. The rapid growth of population imbalances the ratio between population needs and available resources. It is difficult to adjust the large population to less growing resources. To handle this kind of situation, special and concrete actions are planned and adopted. In this regard, an effective social policy is made which could discourage population growth. For example, as in Pakistan the Family Planning Program is introduced to aware the people about the disadvantages of overpopulation.

Provision of Housing Services

The object of the social policy is to improve and increase housing services. It aims at the provision of houses to the homeless and the people serving in government institutions. With the rapid growth of population, it becomes necessary to increase the number of houses for the people. Therefore in social policies, it is taken into consideration and policies are made in a way so that there could be an improvement and an increase in better housing services.

The first social welfare policy of Pakistan formulated in 1955 also includes an element of housing, especially for the settlement of refugees. Pakistan is currently facing an overall housing backlog of around 11-12 million housing units. Literatures also give the number of 32 million households without any shelter or with very poor housing. The current government formulates policy "Naya Pakistan Housing Programme" to remove housing shortage, provide houses to all and arrange shelter for shelterless people.

Provision of Social Security Services

Social security consists of public assistance and social insurance. Social policies are developed to help the needy and poor people of society. Provision of assistance through Zakat and Bait ul Mal and Benazir Income Support Program is an example of public assistance. While social insurance is a program of

welfare of the persons who pay contributions for their welfare. Factories, mills and even government have insurance policies for the welfare of their employees.

Social Change

Overall, social policies are developed to bring social change to make communities rich and happy. The main objective social policy is to bring positive social change. Social policy aims at bringing a healthy and constructive change in the lives of people by giving them variety of services and rights. Social policies also focus on community development, women welfare, child welfare, sanitation etc. Implementation of social policies bring improvement in targeted fields which is known as change.