

A CRITICAL STUDY ON THE CONCEPT OF WELFARE STATE AND WELFARE SCHEMES

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ABSTRACT:

The welfare state takes the accountability of security, protection and support of the economic and social well-being of its people. The government gives attention to such people of the state who are not capable of avail themselves of the minimum necessities of a good life. These are mainly like food, cloth, shelter, pension, health insurance etc. It is the moral duty of a welfare state to provide such facilities to the needy sections of the society. The welfare of its citizens remains on the main concern list of the state. Previously, India was not a welfare state because of the foreigner's autocratic rule. India was not a welfare state under the British rule. They have no equal rights. Even their life is not safe under their rule. Whatever developments British did was in keeping with the benefits of the British colonial government. The industrialization and taxes levied by British government damaged the agro-artisan based economy. It caused poverty in India. Their policies were not in the interests of the people of India. This paper aims to examine the concept of welfare state and welfare schemes.

INTRODUCTION:

When India got independence, there were abundant problems and challenges. There were so many social and economic inequalities. India's situation was very miserable. Social evils and bad practices were prevalent in the society. Women, Dalits, handicapped, old age, orphans and children etc. are vulnerable sections of the society. All these were deprived of necessary means of livelihood standards. When the constitution came into practice, it was in the mind of the committee of constituent assembly concerning the awareness of the present problems. This is the main reason behind the formation of a welfare state for its citizens. As the result of this willpower, in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, India is described as a "sovereign socialist secular democratic republic" state. According to this provision, the Constitution has many provisions to formulate social and economic policies and programmes for the welfare of the people of India. Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy incorporated in the constitution for the security of people's interests.

There is democratic Government in India and this type of Government tries to give every kind of facility to people and takes care of them. Social welfare Schemes have their own importance in democratic Government. Government introduces different welfare Schemes so that people can enhance their status of living. Another important feature of these welfare Schemes is that these Schemes can do all-round development of citizens. Even the success rate of any Government

measures by social welfare Schemes. Poverty, unemployment and hunger in rural areas have not improved much since independence. Efforts were made by the governments to abolish these problems through various Schemes but due to lack of awareness, lack of mutual brotherhood, illiteracy, lack of interest among the people in rural areas; these Schemes have not accomplished any meaningful results.

A number of welfare schemes have been launched and are continuing in the State to upgrade the position of these people and to ensure that they lead a life of dignity and decency. Many schemes have been sponsored by the Union Government whereas a host of other programmes have been initiated by the State Government. Poverty affects these people due to unequal circumstances. Therefore, these people would still be in want and need, facing a number of problems. On the other hand, we see that though the number of beneficiaries covered under different welfare schemes is on the rise, the coverage potential of such programmes for these people is much less than what is required.

The Concept of Welfare State:

The concept of Welfare State stresses the role of government as the provider and protector of individual security and social good through government economic and social programs. The State is no more viewed as only the protector of life and property of the people but as an instrument of promotion of human welfare. The term 'Welfare' being a dynamic one has undergone considerable changes with the passage of time. During the days of its infancy, welfare measures were more or less pious declarations. Gradually, they took more concrete shapes with provisions of health, educational and housing services, and legislations for the protection of working class security measure etc. In the modern times, welfare state makes necessary provisions for a very wide range of social services along with income generation, market regulation and control of law and order. With a change in the concept of social welfare, the scope of social services has vastly increased. The emergence of the concept of Welfare State has further widened the scope. It was only in the 20th century, particularly after the Second World War, the objectives and scope of Welfare State became clear. This led to adoption of the concept of Welfare State by almost all the democratic countries of the world. In this sense, it can be said that the Welfare State did not have as sudden growth, rather the development was gradual. Today welfare state, social justice and democracy are used as interchangeable terms.

Origin and Development of Social Welfare:

Though in rudimentary form, the idea of welfare existed since the primitive days, when the weak and defenseless were taken care of by primary organizations like family and tribe. The feudal societies were marked by the property owners assuming the role of benevolent benefactors. With the erosion of feudalism and along with it its institutions, relationships and values in the 17th century and rise of capitalism and its corresponding doctrine of laissez-faire, the socioeconomic conditions of the ordinary workers was severely affected. With no state-intervention and market-mechanism ruling the roost, wide scale exploitation and wretched life conditions of the workers became the feature of nascent capitalism. The state was gradually drawn into the picture and started providing relief, first indirectly and then directly. The Poor Laws from 1597-1671 and the new Poor Laws of 1775 and 1834 in Great Britain are pointer to this effect. "The problem of poor relief was outgrowing the capacity of the small parish. A larger unit in the interest of scale and efficiency was becoming necessary.

The active participation of state in welfare activities was necessitated mostly due to growing impoverishment, leading to lawlessness, disorders, riots and restlessness among the common people. The American Declaration of Independence, the French Revolution and insurrections in Europe

between 1815 and 1842 literally compelled the ruling class to shoulder the responsibility of welfare functions, without, of course, disbanding the prevailing order. Hence, the measures were “neither complete nor coherent nor always successful, and they all bore the marks of piecemeal adhoc developments. Gradually, acceptance of franchise rights, trade union demands, growth of parliamentary democracy along with representative institutions sharpened the focus of the welfare state upon social welfare. Number of social and industrial legislation were enacted which sought to curb the ill effects of unbridled individualism and capitalism. Parliamentarianism “supported by the logic of utilitarianism justified the emergence of piecemeal welfare legislation.”

Variety of factors, particularly in the 20th century led to the formal acceptance or institutionalization of Welfare State. Primary among them was the growing popularity of socialism, which in fact, was the driving force of welfare state. In order to save capitalism from a complete usurpation by socialism Welfare State was accepted as a viable compromise. Various Welfare Rights Movements during this period got, naturally, the support of liberalism. With the adoption of Universal Adult Franchise, voters were wooed with the promise for welfare measures. The emergence of newly independent countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America also facilitated the further acceptance of Welfare State. These states, their inadequate resource base notwithstanding accepted social welfare as an integral part of their national life. The ideas of welfare and justice had a palpable effect on the minds of these people, who had great expectation in their minds for a better life. In the aftermath of the World Wars, the European nations too looked up to welfare state as an acceptable institutional alternative.

The Concept of Welfare Schemes:

Welfare may be granted to people with social security and their well beings. It is usually projected to make certain that people can meet their fundamental human requirements such as food, cloth and shelter. Welfare efforts to present a free or a financial support of certain commodities and social services in some important fields like health, education and social security. The welfare state government plays an important role in the safeguard and promotion of the social and economic security and well-being of its citizens. The welfare state is viewed as the welfare of the poor. The concept of welfare state also focuses on social insurance, social rights and social services. A welfare state also ensures economic management and introduces economic welfare policies.

There are many social problems prevalent in society. Among them mainly are poverty, unemployment, poor health facilities and child malnutrition. These problems do not affect the individual but the whole society. In the medieval time, ancient social units such as the family, religious institutions, and the community did work to deal with social devastation. But with the passage of time, many new social problems aroused. A formal system of social services was needed to handle this. In this circumstance, the present day social problems make administration very important. A sound administration is, therefore, vitally important to provide social welfare services. The state appeared to begin for the protection of life and to ensure a good life. Every state is structured with some specific aims and objectives. Every state tries to ensure the promotion of happiness, wellness of its citizens.

The welfare state is a type of government, which protects and supports the economic and social well-being of the citizens. A welfare state provides such types of facilities based upon the principles of equal opportunity, equitable distribution of health, and public responsibility for citizens. These amenities are provided to those people who are unable to avail themselves of a good life. A democratic welfare state provides social equality and economic justice to all the citizens of the state. In 21st century, Welfare States have committed themselves to bring social welfare, especially for those who are socially, economically, physically and mentally challenged in the society or the

vulnerable sections of the society. There is remarkable change coming to see in this scenario. Social welfare services for the needy people are on the priority list of the welfare state governments.

The necessity for social welfare policies and programmes in India was very much realized after the independence. In fact the social welfare term is a very old concept and has been used since the early days. In this view, the idea of social welfare exists from the time of the history of Indian civilization. It is defined as the help in the nature of money, material, service etc. given to the needy or the society for the betterment of their living.

The Upanishad also states that, "Let all be happy and healthy. Let all be blessed with happiness and let none be unhappy". Kautilya's book Arthashastra also points in this direction. On the whole, social welfare has been accepted by the Indians. However, for the period of the British regime, social welfare work and social security actions could not build up in India as it did in the western developed countries like the United Kingdom and the United States of America. This vision of social welfare state was come true just with independence of India. An effort was done in the field of social welfare to provide service to the suffering members of the community.

India has been figuring out constitutional amendments to bring about a change in the social structure by democratic procedure. The Preamble of the Indian Constitution and the Directive Principles of State Policies are included in the Part-IV of the Indian Constitution. These provisions put emphasis on the significance of promotion of welfare of the people. The Preamble of the Indian Constitution is a representation of the liberal principles of the Western political tradition. The Preamble is the soul of the Indian Constitution. The achievement of social welfare and economic equality constitute the accepted objective of planning and an extensive approach was taken to give form to the policy of transforming India into a Welfare State, as directed by the Constitution of India.

Welfare Schemes in the Welfare State:

Welfare stands for good fortune, health, happiness and prosperity. To attain these targets, the government provides help to the needy sections of the society. This assistance may be in the form of money or programmes. Welfare is a dynamic thought and its sense has changed with the course of time. In the beginning, the welfare concept was taken to represent helping the poor, widow, orphan and physically handicapped but afterward on many actions like health, education and housing services have also been brought under welfare as offering to the poor, needy and vulnerable section of the society has attained vital importance.

Rural development is measured as the welfare of rural people particularly inaccessible areas by raising their living standard through self-dependence. It consists of all the main concern areas like education, health, employment, and housing etc. In brief; rural development is a process that aims at enhancing the standard of living of the people living in the rural areas.

Welfare State and Promotion of Social Welfare:

Social welfare is the sine qua non of a welfare state. The welfare state remains committed to the promotion of social welfare by utilizing the resources in an optimal and effective manner. Of course, lots of debates have taken place and are still going on regarding the meaning, nature, implications, purpose, scope and conditions of welfare. The concept of welfare is an emotional and value loaded concept and has a nebulous connotation. Academicians are yet to arrive at a fixed meaning of this term. "The Welfare State is nowhere as yet an accomplishment, it is continuously in the process of coming into being". Social welfare is an ongoing activity and gets continuously influenced by social, political, economic and cultural factors. Hence, it is a dynamic activity. The role and objective of social welfare as Well as its worth continuously change in order to meet emergent

situation. This apart, concepts like social policy, social assistance, social insurance, social service and the like are frequently used in place of social welfare. This has further made the concept more complex. It therefore seems imperative to understand origin, evolution and various models of social welfare in order to have a proper idea of the concept called social welfare.

Fundamental Rights:

The Fundamental Rights are embodied in Part III of the Indian Constitution from articles 12 to 35. These fundamental rights give social liberties to all the citizens of India without any discrimination. (Sharma, 2015, p.39)

1. Right to Equality (Article 14 to 18)
2. Right to Freedom (Article 19 to 22)
3. Right against Exploitation (Article 23 to 24)
4. Right to freedom of Religion (Article 25 to 28)
5. Cultural and Educational Rights (Article 29 to 30)
6. Right to Constitutional Remedies (Article 32 to 35)

These rights includes equality before the law, prohibition of discrimination, equality of opportunities, freedom of speech and expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of religion, and the right to constitutional remedies for the protection of civil rights. These rights also condemn forced labour, child labour and trafficking of human beings. But this was not satisfactory for the growth and personality development of an individual. There was a need for the opportunity for economic and social development, so that they can achieve their basic necessities for a better life. That is why Directive Principles of State Policy under Part-IV were incorporated in the Indian Constitution to protect the opportunities for economic and social development.

The Directive Principles are not enforceable but they play a significant role in development and progress of nation and society. Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Rights in the Indian Constitution grant a solid foundation for social and economic justice. Directive Principle were incorporated in constitution as a part of legal system where, hunger, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and the life were no longer to dominate the domain of discrimination. Various Constitutional Amendments are made by Parliament to give the effect to the goals stated under Directive Principles in Part-IV of Indian Constitution.

Welfare State and Directive Principles:

Concept of a welfare State is used to represent the government where the state is functioning for the betterment and development of people. The Constitution of India designed to constitute India into a Sovereign, republic, socialistic and republic nation. The structure of Government is a welfare form of Government. Therefore India is termed as a welfare State. The concept of welfare state was set up after Independence in India. The welfare state makes the policies and functions of State provide social, economic and political justice to its people. It is somewhat contrary to the police state. The welfare state works for improvement and welfare of the whole society. It makes policies and launches new schemes and provides subsidies for all peoples without any discrimination. It offers special benefits for needy and weaker sections of the society like old people, women, handicapped, widows etc.

The term welfare state is used by the Labour Government which came into rule in 1945 A.D. (Dhangwal, 1996, p.47). The welfare state government brought social security, employment, eradication of poverty, health facilities etc. to the people. The philosophy of the welfare state is based on principles of equality and equity. The State promotes and protects social and economic

development of people through securing social and economic justice to all together with the weaker sections of the society.

Indian Point of View of Welfare Administration:

The principles of welfare state have been modelled clearly together in our constitution and in the five year plans. The goal was declared firstly as the establishment of a welfare state and later as the attainment of a socialistic model of society. To achieve this goal, the state must play the most important role in the field of social welfare of the people. Social welfare programmes for economic and social development were introduced in the year of 1951 A.D. At the national level, a planning commission was established for the execution of constitutional provisions relating to welfare state. Planning commission launched various policies and programmes for the promotion of social welfare of different segments of society and extending their possibility accordingly because in the direction of involvement maximum number of beneficiaries.

After 1951 A.D., it has been the policy of the Indian Government to implement social welfare programmes through voluntary associations. Then the government of India determined to provide necessary help to these organizations. As a result, during the first five year plan, the Ministry of Education of Government of India formed a specialized central agency named Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) in August 1953 A.D. The main function of the Board has been to give financial assistance to those voluntary organizations that are working in the field of social welfare, mainly for the welfare of women, children and the handicapped, aged in the country.

Central Government Sponsored Welfare Schemes:

The Government of India launched several government programs called schemes (Yojanas). These welfare schemes are introduced for the betterment of society from time to time. These schemes could be either central government sponsored, state government sponsored or centre or state government shared partnership. The Government of India introduced a number of programmes for poverty reduction, employment creation, and women empowerment and enhanced health and education facilities. The Government of India launched so many welfare programmes for the holistic development of the country so that the economy can grow swiftly in this competitive world.

The centrally funded welfare schemes started by the government of India are directly linked with the well-being of people. Indian government have come up with various policies, programmes, social welfare schemes, scholarship, health and nutrition, physically handicapped, self-help group (SHG) etc. Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY), National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), 2005, Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) 1985, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), 1975, Balika Samridhhi Yojana (BSY), Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS), National Social Assistance Schemes, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), Pre-matric and post-matric scholarship schemes, Mid-Day-Meal Scheme etc.

CONCLUSION:

The people's happiness the ultimate aim of a Welfare State can be assured only when everyone has enough to eat, some shelter in the form of a house, or at least a modest roof over his head, some work to do so as to able to earn a living und some opportunities to contribute to nation-building, which implies constructive activity. Besides, everyone must also have the means to satisfy his basic needs, consumer goods etc. Everything has ultimately to be judged in terms of human welfare, and the only worthwhile yard stick we can employ is the happiness of our people.

The aim of the study was to recognize the different social welfare schemes introduced for the vulnerable sections of the society. Various social welfare schemes are running by the central

government as well as by the state governments. Each political party gave big promises to the voters in their election manifesto before the elections. After making the government, political parties forget their promises. An opposition party always condemns the functioning and welfare policies of the government. Welfare policies are likely to be the decisive factor in vote choice among the beneficiaries of certain welfare schemes.

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