

UGC NET - PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SAMPLE THEORY PAPER - II

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THE NATURE AND ROLE OF SOCIAL WELFARE

Social Welfare exists as an indispensable aspect of modern social organization because of the nature of man himself. Man is a social being whose very survival as an individual and a species depends upon the cooperation and help of other human beings. This is true for all people, including those who live in the relatively simple relationships of a tribal or village subsistence society. But the processes of development, as described in the previous section, vastly extend the range and multiply the variety of these situations of mutual dependency. Thus a developing society can neither survive nor advance without including in its developmental processes the creation of new instruments of cooperation and the adaptation of those that already exist to meet the needs of a changing situation.

Tripartite Character of Social Organization

In the earlier society, tradition and custom may have assured a pattern of family, neighborhood, and tribal cooperation adequate to the needs and expectations of the time. But the rapid changes and growing complexity of relationships in the new society require more institutionalized devices to facilitate, regulate, support, and supplement this earlier pattern of cooperation. Some of these belong in the area of law: the development of governmental machinery to enforce binding obligations and entitlements on individuals and groups in the common interest. Some are economic in character, relating primarily to the production of goods and services. Others are peculiarly and predominantly social, involving the mutually supportive obligations of people to each other. The last of these is the particular responsibility of social welfare.

It is a practical impossibility to draw absolute lines of demarcation among these three instruments of social cooperation and control because they impinge and interact upon each other. Thus in a modern state the law plays an important part in determining the conditions of economic production and exchange; it likewise determines in substantial measure the circumstances and methods of assuring social protection and extending social services. In turn, the economic resources and pattern of the society exercise a major influence on its legal framework and play an inescapable part in determining its social needs, expectations and programs, including most specifically the economic resources on which they depend. By

the same token, organized instruments of social welfare play a reciprocal determining role with respect to legal and economic arrangements. This influence is exercised in a practical way through the kinds of benefits and services extended and in a subjective way through their pervasive influence upon those feelings and attitudes of individuals on which all forms of cooperation in the long run depend.

This multiple interaction means that legal, economic and social functions can only be distinguished in terms of their primary focus rather than sharply delineated social tasks. In general, law is primarily concerned with the assurance of order; economics with the assurance of survival necessities and the range of goods and services contributing to consumer satisfaction; social welfare with the assurance of mutual supportive aid. But the allocation and method of discharging specific social tasks within these three broad areas varies enormously among different countries and even historically within one country. It often involves an elaborate combination of all three. Thus, for example, in the United States support of the aged may be considered a social welfare function (through social security and public assistance programs); a charge on specific economic units (as with company pension plans); and a legally enforceable obligation or support on the part of their families (with laws also governing the predominantly welfare and economic provisions). This difficulty of absolute definition is especially applicable to social welfare because its function is inherently adaptive: it is both compensatory and innovative for other areas of social organization. It is hoped that this general discussion and the specifics that follow may serve to clarify the nature and dynamics of this relationship.

The Nature of Social Needs

Social Welfare is the product and the instrument of man's inherent dependence for his survival and his well-being on the help of other people. This mutual dependency, intensified in particular individual and social circumstances, is nonetheless so universal that no society could long survive which did not provide at least minimally satisfactory ways of dealing with it. For developing nations this is a particularly challenging problem. For the very processes of development at once extend the range of mutual dependence and limit the capacity of

traditional arrangements to answer the needs it creates. Before discussing the various ways these needs may be met it may be helpful first to analyze their nature.

Dependencies

The Dependency of Youth

It is said that man's distinctively social character is itself the product of a biologically determined dependency need: i.e., the prolonged and total dependence of the human young on adult nurture, guidance, and support. Cultural Factors associated with development all combine to intensify and extend this dependency situation. The complexity of modern society requires a far longer period of preparation for the wide range of specialized adult tasks than a simpler social organization dominated by custom. The young tribesman was equipped to take his place in adult society at puberty but the modern professional may require at least twice that time. Moreover, the preparation of the young requires far more intensive attention from adults. The mother must either devote more of her own time to child-rearing, thus becoming herself dependent on social support-either familial or societal-or a wide range of social services must substitute for or supplement her efforts. Other adults must increasingly provide specialized supplementary services outside the family setting, especially those associated with education and acculturation. Inevitably the prolongation of youthful economic dependency complicates the other processes of growing up: breaking away from the family, securing the means to self support, contracting marriage, and achieving status in the community. These too create a widening range of social needs and problems.

Dependency Associated With Disability and Age

Another Basic and Universal cause of Social Dependency is physical or mental incapacity due to illness, disability, or old age. In all societies persons incapacitated to the extent that they cannot provide for themselves must receive both care and economic aid from others if they are to survive. In a few instances, where the group lives very close to the line of survival, actual provision is made for ritual destruction of the nonproducer; but more characteristically, a high mortality rate is a by-product of poverty and lack of knowledge. But

most societies, however poor, make some provision for the aged and disabled through family cohesion and ethical imperatives, supplemented in the more institutionalized societies by welfare measures. Again the very advances of development—advances in economic resources, scientific knowledge and social organization—contribute to the incidence of this kind of social vulnerability by making it possible for more people to survive the initial impact of disease and adversity. Because they do not succumb to infection, they are more likely to suffer some degree of chronic disability. As the traditional winners of the weak and vulnerable—hunger, disease, and hardship—are conquered, the life span is extended and more people live into the period of life when they can no longer efficiently produce their own sustenance. Women do not die in childbirth; infants survive the hazards of their first years; infectious diseases are controlled; accidents are minimized—but the range of social needs is thereby vastly widened. Not only are more people peculiarly dependent on social support by reason of disability, but all people require a variety of health services which can only be provided by specialized measures and personnel.

Dependency Associated With Natural or Social Disaster

People have always been especially dependent on each other's help in time of common danger or disaster. Drought, flood, pestilence, invasion, or political upheaval can all disrupt people's normal sources of income and social support requiring drastic community pooling of effort and resources. Economic development extends this type of socially determined risk to a whole new range of problems associated with the operation of a market-oriented economy. The large spreading family of the old order which produced most of its own necessities ran the risk of bad weather or an invasion of locusts, but the man who grows coffee or rubber or mines tin or bauxite, and makes some other commodity for the world market is dependent for the means of his survival on decisions made in New York, London, or other centers of world trade. Dependence on wage employment not only opens up a whole new area of social dependence and hence vulnerability, but likewise disperses the family group which formerly offered the major source of social protection. Not only are families divided as some members go off to the centers of wage employment, but the simple

cohesion of village life is replaced by the impersonality of vast urban centers. Again, organized social measures must replace or supplement the traditional sources of aid as the latter become inadequate to meet the growing needs associated with progress.

Subjective Aspects of Dependency

Economic and Physical dependency on others under such generally recognized conditions as childhood, old age, illness, or acute deprivation is the easiest to identify, analyze, describe, and measure. But equally important to the healthy functioning of the social order and to the well-being and adaptive capacity of its individual members is the dependence all people feel within their own psychological and spiritual being on a social order which gives them a sense of security, order, identity and belonging. The very fact that man has been conditioned from his earliest infancy to a social existence makes him peculiarly dependent for his own inner strength and security on the acceptance, approval, and support of his fellows as reflected in common cultural values and institutional structures. This is important to people's sense of sureness in facing the major decisions and crises of life and in accommodating their actions to the roles and behavior considered socially appropriate to persons in particular circumstances. But it is even more crucial when individuals are required to adapt their attitudes and actions to the changing social pattern of a developing society. The very willingness to forego the security of old attitudes and patterns of behavior no longer appropriate to the exigencies of a developing society may depend upon the existence or promise of new sources of satisfaction and assurance for the individual in his relationship to the social order.

These problems take on different forms depending upon whether a particular society is in the process of making the initial transition from a traditional to a more organized modern state, is engaged in the early stages of a growing industrialization, or is facing-like our own American society-the adaptations necessary to the burgeoning productivity of a highly industrialized economy.

Mutual Dependency in a Highly Developed Society-

The Social Problems of a highly developed society are not the primary focus of this discussion but they deserve mention in this context in order to make clear that the adaptations of society to the Psychological and Social needs of the entire population do not cease when economic prosperity is achieved. Changes may become even more rapid and particular groups may be especially disoriented in their relationship to the total social order. It has been estimated, for example, that in the days ahead rapid Technological change may require an American worker to acquire three entirely distinct skills in the course of his lifetime. Considering the degree to which an American traditionally derives his sense of social worth and identity from his occupation, this is a major source of insecurity. The Distribution of Income among various groups of workers and non-workers, and the social expenditures of government and group enterprise are also a major factor. And whole groups in the population-the aged, adolescents, women, members of minority groups, for example-may find the sources of their satisfaction as members of a supportive society disrupted. In all cases a subjective social need is involved which any society ignores to its own peril.

ADAPTATIONS

Adaptation in Early Developmental Period

In the first instance the individual is faced with an extremely difficult psychological dilemma requiring a high degree of social reassurance. On the one hand he must relinquish many of the attitudes, roles and patterns of behavior on which his traditional security had depended. Adults raised in one tradition must not only adapt their own ways of thinking but must undertake to raise their children in the new pattern. On the other hand the very processes of development, especially those associated with the accumulation of capital necessary for industrialization, may require deferment of many of the social benefits which modern communication has made known to him as one of the goals toward which development is striving. He must be at once motivated toward change by hope and at the same time patient with respect to its full realization. Maintaining this balance is one of the hardest tasks of a society in the earliest period of development and one in which social welfare plays a crucial role.

Adaptation in Industrial Society-

In a Society where the processes of Industrialization are well under way, the very unevenness of development may create serious Psychological Problems and Tensions. Rarely are the institutional and economic resources of the developing country sufficient to assure the same degree of opportunity and security to all segments of the population. Some will benefit from the higher levels of education, health services, and living standards made possible by industrial productivity and urbanization, while others may not. Economic and Institutional Resources are rarely adequate to assure to all the full range of benefits recognized as socially desirable. Thus a problem arises not only of making choices among desirable alternatives and assuring the best use of limited resources but also of offering sufficient compensatory satisfactions to those not fully included in the benefits of development to maintain the security and cooperation of all. Here too social welfare plays a major role.

Ways of Meeting Social Needs

The Family-In all societies the family group-Mother, Father, Children and a varying number of other persons related by blood or marriage-constitutes the primary source of social support. In a subsistence economy the family group typically serves both as producing and consuming unit, pooling its effort and product in such a way as to assure support to all members. Likewise the rearing of children and their assimilation into adult status, the care of the sick and the aged, and many of the subjective social needs associated with role and status are provided by the immediate or extended family. These are in turn supported by religious and cultural values and practices, together with some instruments of mutual aid. In the Old Testament, for example, there are admonitions with respect to the share of the harvest to be left for widows, orphans and "the stranger" (the latter because he belongs to no family group responsible for his support).

The more organized market economy associated with development inevitably limits the capacity of the family to perform these social tasks without the aid of other specialized institutional structures. The traditional roles of and relationships between the sexes and

generations are drastically altered. Family cohesion is broken as members leave the old home for urban and other centers of wage employment. Cash income seems less susceptible of family pooling than basic commodities, especially as more varied and expensive products and services enter the market. The Preparation of young people for the specialized tasks of the new society can no longer be carried to completion within the family; specialized educational institutions become necessary. The elders, as guardians and purveyors of tradition, lose their accustomed degree of authority. At all points, the role of the family is narrowed; its capacity to meet the social needs associated with development is limited.

But the family, however changed in character and function, continues as the nuclear social institution and many of the innovations of a developing society are designed to strengthen its social role by supplementary rather than substitute arrangements. Schools supplement family instruction; hospitals and clinics supplement family health care; assistance and insurance maintain income in situations when wage or other income is cut off; social services supplement the supportive services of the family or facilitate their discharge. But in all cases the family remains central, especially in those functions relating to the nurture of children.

Early Social Welfare Development-

Just as the concept of "Development" assumes a gradual shift of economic functions to a larger base, so too it assumes the broader institutionalization of social functions. This may be done through any one or combination of methods. It may involve the taxing, allocating, and administrative authority of various levels of government or the adaptation of ethical imperatives like the tithe or obligation to give to the poor. It may also take the form of nonsectarian voluntary organizations supported on a philanthropic basis by the more economically prosperous groups in the population or in other countries. And it might involve the extension on an organized basis of the mutual aid principle, sometimes modified from earlier tribal forms.

The Kinds and extent of social services and benefits created in the transitional stages of development tend to be spotty, experimental, and somewhat unstable. One difficulty which surrounds efforts to achieve a precise definition of the functional limits of "social welfare" is its characteristic role in pioneering, on a philanthropic basis, new services for a few people which are later extended on a specialized basis to the whole population. Thus in many developing countries, including our own, in its earlier period, education and health services were originally developed on a philanthropic basis as a part of a social welfare complex. The same principle applies to the area of recreation, housing, youth programs, and services to help people with the best utilization and organization of their resources, including those commonly included within the broad framework of "community development." In many developing countries institutions for children, even though commonly described as "orphanages," are in practical fact a method of providing a higher level of education, health services, and maintenance for a few children than is possible for the child population as a whole. Similarly multipurpose centers for improving child-nutrition, child-health and child-care practices generally are embraced in the general term "child welfare" even though they are performing tasks which would not be considered welfare functions in a more highly organized and specialized society.

In this early period of development, social welfare innovations may be considered as having three general purposes:

- (1) They pave the way for other more generalized social programs;
- (2) They initiate on a small scale the specialized welfare programs which can later grow and develop as resources are adequate for their expansion and
- (3) They assist people in making the adaptations in attitudes and activity needed for development both directly and by symbolizing the goals of human well-being toward which all development is directed.

Evolution of Specialized Programs

Certain kinds of services are generally recognized as belonging to the field of social welfare even though allowances must be made for differences in terminology and organization among countries and between periods of historical development.

Protection of the Vulnerable

Central to the field of welfare are those services whose primary purpose involves the protection of persons and groups peculiarly dependent on social aid: children, young people, the disabled, the aged, and victims of Social Disaster or Disorganization. This Protection may take the form of direct supportive or facilitating help (social service) or may take the form of actual benefits like money, food, medical care, institutional care, and the like or it may take the form of efforts to interpret their needs or assist others in securing a better adaptation of the total social structure, including its economic and legal arrangements, to meeting those needs. As the total range and complexity of social interdependence increases with the processes of development, the concept of special vulnerability becomes less precise as a means of defining the scope of social welfare. Just as it is the goal of "Development" that all should benefit by its widening scope of organization, so too all become equally vulnerable to any transitional failure or imbalance in its functioning. In this sense, the total population becomes the concern of social welfare whether in its basic guarantees against social need, its pioneering of new kinds of service, or its contribution to a better total social adaptation.

Basis of Selective Protection

Most societies in the earliest stages of economic development do not have sufficient resources in money, personnel or institutional structure to extend social aid to all who need or could benefit from it. This is true even when the desirability of particular forms of aid or service is widely recognized. Difficult choices must be made both among the kinds of programs to be developed and the conditions under which particular individuals, families, or groups are to be aided. One basis on which such choices are made is the degree of crisis in a particular situation. Persons who are homeless, helpless, and threatened with starvation may receive emergency aid long before it is possible to develop a general system of assistance for the aged, widowed, disabled, or underemployed. Children who are cast adrift from family moorings by personal or group disaster will be gathered into orphanages for their own survival even while the spreading protection of the extended family is still expected

to care for the orphaned children of its own members. Here sheer survival need establishes the compelling priority.

Other factors which may influence such choices may include the following:

The urgency of specific needs related to other factors of development may influence the direction of social welfare development. For example, a society where the rapid adaptation of young people to new ways of living and working is an urgent necessity may concentrate heavily on youth programs.

The availability of particular resources may determine the practicality of particular measures. For example, the availability of surplus foods under the Food for Peace program may encourage infant nutrition centers or school lunch programs as the most practical form of supplementary aid to children in low income families or may serve as the nucleus around which a public assistance program develops.

The initiation of new programs and structures which can ultimately develop into full-fledged institutions is often an important evidence of progress and intent. Thus one will often find small pilot operations in such areas as family counseling, child welfare, rehabilitation, or specialized health services which-however limited in immediate applicability-form the nucleus for future development.

The more efficient use of existing potential is an important factor also, especially in community development programs.

The multiplier effect is likewise important as a factor of choice. Thus community organization and planning is often given high priority as the basis upon which other services may be developed.

While these and other factors may help to determine the pattern of social welfare development in any one setting, efforts to predetermine a universally applicable sequence of priorities without reference to the particularities of a given situation are unrealistic.

The Basic Guarantee

It does appear, however, that successful development on other fronts creates a common drive toward programs of widening applicability in which the principle of an underpinning social guarantee, based on objective standards of entitlement, plays an increasing role. At

At this point, a rule of law often becomes more determining than the factor of choice. For example, laws are developed and applied to guarantee minimum standards of social and economic support to all persons in a particular situation. Child welfare laws and programs undertake to assure social protection and aid to all children whose normal family relationships do not suffice to meet the established minimum standards. Programs of assistance and social insurance may be developed for the protection of all persons whose income is threatened by particular economic hazards. Programs of public services and benefits in the areas of education, health, housing and services to supplement family resources move onto a wider basis. Naturally as the area of social responsibility for particular functions widens, the comparable responsibility of social welfare for the better planning and adaptation of factors determining the social environment is comparably widened until an underpinning network of supportive social protection is gradually achieved.

The Structure and Personnel of Social Welfare

Social Welfare Organization

Characteristic of all aspects of development is the tendency toward specialization of function, together with the administrative structures and personnel needed to discharge such specialized functions. Thus in most countries (though there are some notable exceptions) welfare functions tend to be centered in one or more specialized agencies. In the United States, at the national level, most of the governmental functions of social welfare are located in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare with the Welfare Administration responsible for those of a predominantly social service character and the Social Security Administration responsible for the Federal contributory Social Insurance Program. State and Local Public Welfare Departments administer most governmental social service programs, with financial aid from the Federal Government available for a considerable proportion. In other countries, similar agencies exist under titles such as Ministry of Social Welfare or in combination with related functions such as Health and Labor. In many newly developing countries Ministries of Social Welfare have been established primarily for the purpose of guiding the development of projected social welfare programs and giving full expression to the aspirations they represent.

Many of these include within their responsibilities the extension of village-level and urban community development programs designed to assist people in mobilizing their own efforts and resources for a better level of living. While it is not possible to generalize about the precise scope of these social welfare agencies in all countries of the world, their widespread existence testifies to their importance as spokesmen for a recognized area of responsibility in the seats of government.

Not all welfare activity is governmental in its structure, authority and financing. In a pluralistic society like that of the United States, many welfare services are provided through voluntary association based on philanthropic, religious or mutual aid motivation. In general government tends to be responsible for the basic welfare guarantees leaving voluntary agencies free to provide limited, specialized or experimental services. In other developed countries responsibility for a wider variety of services is often assumed by government, sometimes including the subsidization of voluntary welfare organizations. In newly developing countries government also tends to play a major role principally because of the absence of resources in funds and structure for the pluralistic approach characteristic of voluntarism.

Social Welfare Personnel-

The development of specialized social welfare institutions and administrative structures is logically accompanied by the development of specialized personnel. Differences among countries in practice and nomenclature make it difficult to make descriptive generalizations about such personnel but the following broad classification may be useful.

Social Workers. In many countries the term "Social Worker" is broadly applied to personnel working in the field of social welfare, while in others it is reserved principally for persons with a particular kind and degree of specialized professional training. The emphasis in such training varies with the needs of the country in which it is to be applied. Thus in developing countries it will often center in the first instance on the leadership needed to guide the development of new social programs within the total developmental framework and the supervision of workers with relatively limited educational background, while a country with

an elaborate complex of specialized existing programs will necessarily concentrate on the preparation of professional personnel needed for their execution.

In the United States, social work training has emphasized three areas of concentration in such training: (1) Caseworkers, who specialize in assisting particular individuals or families in the solution of their own specific problems including the securing of needed benefits and services;

(2) Group workers, who specialize in assisting groups of people-such as young people or those living in a particular neighborhood-in meeting their social needs and

(3) Community organization workers whose efforts are primarily centered on the better ordering of the social resources of society itself at the community, regional or national level.

Administrative Personnel:

As the programs of social welfare expand in scope and applicability, administrative tasks tend to assume a larger role. In some programs where the professional component of social work is central, administrative supervision is likewise considered the job of professional social workers. In others, however, especially in those like social insurance where objective entitlement based on criteria stipulated in law reduces the need for individual judgments and service, administrative organization takes on the central role in determining the kind of personnel needed. Moreover, even in programs where social work services are central there are many auxiliary supportive tasks which are essentially administrative in character. Thus, for example, in public assistance a social worker might determine the particular kind and degree of help needed but the actual fiscal, clerical and other tasks of extending that help would not fall within the social work orbit.

Other Professional Personnel: Social Welfare Programs require the services in many instances of personnel from other professions to meet the specialized needs of persons for whom they have accepted responsibility. Such personnel includes: Physicians, Nurses, Nutritionists, Sociologists, Psychologists, Teachers of various kinds, and many others. The need for such professional personnel is especially obvious in those situations where social welfare agencies are sponsoring the development of pioneering programs-like those in health and education-which lie outside their own central competence. But programs which

have a clearly welfare character (for example, child welfare programs for children deprived of parental care) also have a continuing need for such personnel.

Subprofessional Personnel

Virtually all countries find it necessary to supplement professional personnel with workers of lesser educational preparation in order to meet the accelerating demand for social welfare services implicit in development itself. In newly developing countries, the facilities and teachers to train professional workers must themselves be created in heavy competition with all the other educational demands necessary to development. In more organized societies, the demand for professional workers continues to outrun the supply.

Thus ways must be devised to extend the social services society considers necessary with personnel of less than ideal professional training. In general the most effective use of subprofessional personnel is achieved in either of two ways. One way is to assign the less demanding tasks to aides or auxiliary personnel working under professional supervision. The other method involves the reduction of function to a level of operational simplicity for which workers of limited education can be specifically trained. A good example of this approach is the so-called "village worker" in community development who is able with intensive instruction to assist villagers to organize their own efforts and resources in specific respects in such a way as to advance their level of living.

Research, Planning and Policy Personnel

These functions, primarily related to the role of social welfare in stimulating or facilitating a better adaptation of the total social environment rather than the rendering of specific services, seem to present the most universally difficult challenge in terms of personnel. In the United States and other highly developed countries social research is increasingly considered the job of social scientists or social workers with doctoral rather than master's degrees. To a lesser degree this is true of social planning and policy-formulating functions although personnel for these jobs appears to come from many other backgrounds such as public administration, law, city planning, politics, and the community organization area of social work practice. So varied, in fact, are the practices and theories affecting the personnel

performing these functions that it can only be identified as a specialization which belongs in part to social welfare and in part to other aspects of development.

Definitional Summary

The discussion in this section has been directed to describing the evolutionary role of social welfare within the total framework of social organization, the specific kinds of social needs with which it is concerned, the programs and services it commonly provides, the organizational structures within which it develops, and the groupings of personnel it utilizes. In each of these areas of discussion it is clear that social welfare is not easily pinned within the confines of absolute definition. Its functions are determined by many variables, including the adequacy of other instruments of social organization. Its particular programs vary among countries and in point of time. The simple fact is that social welfare is an instrument of relationships that constantly change, so that it does different jobs in different times and different places. It is little wonder that persons engaged in social welfare often find it difficult to describe their field except in terms of particular immediate tasks which do not show its developmental role. It is even less surprising that persons concerned with functions that can be more clearly fixed in terms of a continuing role find the scope of social welfare an elusive concept.

Despite these difficulties, the fact remains that social welfare functions fill an indispensable role in modern society as evidenced by their ubiquitous development throughout the world. And this very universality suggests that there is a common denominator of role which it should be possible to pin within the confines of definition. The United Nations, through an experts group from many countries, defined the roughly comparable term "social services" as "an organized activity that aims at helping towards a mutual adjustment of individuals and their social environment." On the basis of the discussions in this section a somewhat elaborated version of this definition has been suggested.

Thus "Social Welfare" as we have seen, includes those pioneering, adaptive, and ameliorative services through which a society seeks to insure to its population the answer to

those particular social needs which are considered essential to its own functioning but which are not adequately met by other instrumentalities including the family. It is both compensatory (in the sense of picking up where others leave off) and innovative (in the sense of showing the path toward a better total social adaptation). Its role in development operates not only on the latter side but also in the services it renders which make individuals, groups, and communities better able to adapt to the changes implicit in the developmental process. In the next section some examples of these contributions of social welfare to development are discussed and analyzed.

Social Justice

Social Justice is justice exercised within a society, particularly as it is exercised by and among the various social classes of that society. A socially just society is based on the principles of equality and solidarity, understands and values human rights, and recognizes the dignity of every human being. Social justice is based on the concepts of human rights and equality and involves a greater degree of economic egalitarianism through progressive taxation, income redistribution, or even property redistribution. These policies aim to achieve what developmental economists refer to as more equality of opportunity than may currently exist in some societies, and to manufacture equality of outcome in cases where incidental inequalities appear in a procedurally just system. The Constitution of the International Labour Organization affirms that "universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice. Furthermore, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action treats social justice as a purpose of the human rights education.

The term and modern concept of "Social Justice" was coined by the Jesuit Luigi Taparelli in 1840 based on the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas and given further exposure in 1848 by Antonio Rosmini-Serbaty. The word has taken on a very controverted and variable meaning, depending on who is using it. The idea was elaborated by the moral theologian John A. Ryan, who initiated the concept of a living wage. Father Coughlin also used the term in his publications in the 1930s and the 1940s. It is a part of Catholic social teaching, the Protestants' Social Gospel, and is one of the Four Pillars of the Green Party upheld by

green parties worldwide. Social Justice as a secular concept, distinct from religious teachings, emerged mainly in the late twentieth century, influenced primarily by philosopher John Rawls. Some tenets of social justice have been adopted by those on the left of the political spectrum.

Theories of Social Justice Social Justice from Religious Traditions

Judaism

The Ethics of Responsibility, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks states that social justice has a central place in Judaism. One of Judaism's most distinctive and challenging ideas is its ethics of responsibility reflected in the concepts of simcha ("gladness" or "joy"), tzedakah ("the religious obligation to perform charity and philanthropic acts"), chesed ("deeds of kindness"), and tikkun olam ("repairing the world").

Christianity Catholicism

Catholic social teaching consists of those aspects of Roman Catholic doctrine which relate to matters dealing with the collective aspect of humanity. A distinctive feature of the Catholic social doctrine is their concern for the poorest members of society. Two of the seven key areas of "Catholic Social Teaching" are pertinent to social justice:

- Life and Dignity of the Human Person: The foundational principle of all "Catholic Social Teaching" is the sanctity of all human life and the inherent dignity of every human person. Human life must be valued above all material possessions.
- Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable: Catholics believe Jesus taught that on the Day of Judgement God will ask what each person did to help the poor and needy: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." The Catholic Church believes that through words, prayers and deeds one must show solidarity with, and compassion for, the poor. The moral test of any society is "how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the

nation. People are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.”

Even before it was propounded in the Catholic social doctrine, social justice appeared regularly in the history of the Catholic Church:

- The term “Social Justice” was adopted by the Jesuit Luigi Taparelli in the 1840s, based on the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. He wrote extensively in his journal *Civiltà Cattolica*, engaging both capitalist and socialist theories from a natural law viewpoint. His basic premise was that the rival economic theories, based on subjective Cartesian thinking, undermined the unity of society present in Thomistic metaphysics; neither the liberal capitalists nor the communists concerned themselves with public moral philosophy.
- Pope Leo XIII, who studied under Taparelli, published in 1891 the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of the Working Classes), rejecting both socialism and capitalism, while defending labor unions and private property. He stated that society should be based on cooperation and not class conflict and competition. In this document, Leo set out the Catholic Church’s response to the social instability and labor conflict that had arisen in the wake of industrialization and had led to the rise of socialism. The Pope advocated that the role of the State was to promote social justice through the protection of rights, while the Church must speak out on social issues in order to teach correct social principles and ensure class harmony.
- The encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (On Reconstruction of the Social Order, literally “in the fortieth year”) of 1931 by Pope Pius XI, encourages a living wage, subsidiarity, and advocates that social justice is a personal virtue as well as an attribute of the social order, saying that society can be just only if individuals and institutions are just.
- Pope John Paul II added much to the corpus of the Catholic social teaching, penning three encyclicals which would deal with issues such as economics, politics, geo-political situations, ownership of the means of production, private property and the “Social Mortgage”, and Private Property. The Encyclicals of *Laborem Exercens*, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, and *Centesimus Annus* are just a small portion of his overall contribution to Catholic social justice. Pope John Paul II was a strong advocate of justice and human rights,

and spoke forcefully for the poor. He addresses issues such as the problems that technology can present should it be misused, and admits a fear that the “progress” of the world is not true progress at all, if it should denigrate the value of the human person.

- Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* (“God is Love”) of 2006 claims that justice is the defining concern of the state and the central concern of politics, and not of the church, which has charity as its central social concern. It said that the laity has the specific responsibility of pursuing social justice in civil society and that the church's active role in social justice should be to inform the debate, using reason and natural law, and also by providing moral and spiritual formation for those involved in politics.
- The official Catholic doctrine on **social justice** can be found in the book *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, published in 2004 and updated in 2006, by the Pontifical Council *Iustitia et Pax*.

Methodism

From its founding, Methodism was a Christian Social Justice movement.

Under John Wesley's direction, Methodists became leaders in many social justice issues of the day, including the prison reform and abolitionism movements. Wesley himself was among the first to preach for slaves rights attracting significant opposition.

Today, social justice plays a major role in the United Methodist Church. The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church says, “it is a governmental responsibility to provide all citizens with health care.” The United Methodist Church also teaches Population control as part of its doctrine.

Hinduism

Non-tribal part of Ancient Hindu society was divided into hundreds of upper and lower castes [Jati]. Some of these castes were organized in certain regions as Jajmani functioning as interdependent system. However there were many internal challenges to jati stratification, the jajmani and such other inequalities in Indian social structure. The present day jati hierarchy is undergoing changes for variety of reasons including ‘Social Justice’, which is a politically popular stance in democratic India. The disparity and wide inequalities in social behaviour to some of the castes led to various reform movements in hinduism.

There is a wide acceptance that Hindu social structure is ridden with castes and communities, and that this has led to barriers and segregation and condemnation of obnoxious vice of social inequality and untouchability. Vivekananda calls to promote social justice have largely gone unheeded.

Islam

The Quran contains numerous references to elements of social justice. Charity and assistance to the poor – concepts central to social justice – are and have historically been important parts of the Islamic faith.

In Muslim history, Islamic governance has often been associated with social justice. Establishment of social justice was one of the motivating factors of the Abbasid revolt against the Umayyads.. The Shilite believe that the return of the Mahdi (Messiah) will herald in "the messianic age of justice" and the Messiah will end plunder, torture, oppression and discrimination.

For the Muslim Brotherhood the implementation of social justice would require the rejection of consumerism and communism. The Brotherhood strongly affirmed the right to private property as well as differences in personal wealth due to factors such as hard work. However, the Brotherhood held Muslims had an obligation to assist those Muslims in need. It held that zakat (alms-giving) was not voluntary charity, but rather the poor had the right to assistance from the more fortunate.

John Rawls

Political philosopher John Rawls draws on the utilitarian insights of Bentham and Mill, the social contract ideas of John Locke, and the categorical imperative ideas of Kant. His first statement of principle was made in **A Theory of Justice** where he proposed that, "Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others.". A deontological proposition that echoes Kant in framing the moral good of justice in absolutist terms. His views are definitively restated in Political Liberalism where society is seen "as a fair system of co-operation over time, from one generation to the next."

All societies have a basic structure of social, economic, and political institutions, both formal and informal. In testing how well these elements fit and work together, Rawls based a key test of legitimacy on the theories of social contract. To determine whether any particular system of collectively enforced social arrangements is legitimate, he argued that one must look for agreement by the people who are subject to it, but not necessarily to an objective notion of justice based on coherent ideological grounding. Obviously, not every citizen can be asked to participate in a poll to determine his or her consent to every proposal in which some degree of coercion is involved, so one has to assume that all citizens are reasonable. Rawls constructed an argument for a two-stage process to determine a citizen's hypothetical agreement:

- The citizen agrees to be represented by X for certain purposes, and, to that extent, X holds these powers as a trustee for the citizen.
- X agrees that enforcement in a particular social context is legitimate. The citizen, therefore, is bound by this decision because it is the function of the trustee to represent the citizen in this way.

This applies to one person who represents a small group (e.g., the organizer of a social event setting a dress code) as equally as it does to national governments, which are ultimate trustees, holding representative powers for the benefit of all citizens within their territorial boundaries. Governments that fail to provide for welfare of their citizens according to the principles of justice are not legitimate. To emphasize the general principle that justice should rise from the people and not be dictated by the law-making powers of governments, Rawls asserted that, "There is ... a general presumption against imposing legal and other restrictions on conduct without sufficient reason. But this presumption creates no special priority for any particular liberty." This is support for an unranked set of liberties that reasonable citizens in all states should respect and uphold — to some extent, the list proposed by Rawls matches the normative human rights that have international recognition and direct enforcement in some nation states where the citizens need encouragement to act in a way that fixes a greater degree of equality of outcome.

The Basic Liberties According to Rawls

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- Freedom of Thought;
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- Rights and Liberties covered by the Rule of Law.

Criticism

Many authors criticize the idea that there exists an objective standard of social justice. Moral relativists deny that there is any kind of objective standard for justice in general. Non-cognitivists, moral skeptics, moral nihilists, and most logical positivists deny the epistemic possibility of objective notions of justice. Cynics believe that any ideal of social justice is ultimately a mere justification for the status quo.

Many other people accept some of the basic principles of social justice, such as the idea that all human beings have a basic level of value, but disagree with the elaborate conclusions that may or may not follow from this. One example is the statement by H. G. Wells that all people are "equally entitled to the respect of their fellow men."

On the other hand, some scholars reject the very idea of social justice as meaningless, religious, self-contradictory, and ideological, believing that to realize any degree of social justice is unfeasible, and that the attempt to do so must destroy all liberty. The most complete rejection of the concept of social justice comes from Friedrich Hayek of the Austrian School of economics:

There can be no test by which we can discover what is 'socially unjust' because there is no subject by which such an injustice can be committed, and there are no rules of individual conduct the observance of which in the market order would secure to the individuals and groups the position which as such (as distinguished from the procedure by which it is

determined) would appear just to us. [Social justice] does not belong to the category of error but to that of nonsense, like the term 'a moral stone'.

Ben O'Neill of the University of New South Wales argues that, for proponents of "Social Justice":

the notion of "rights" is a mere term of entitlement, indicative of a claim for any possible desirable good, no matter how important or trivial, abstract or tangible, recent or ancient. It is merely an assertion of desire, and a declaration of intention to use the language of rights to acquire said desire.

In fact, since the program of social justice inevitably involves claims for government provision of goods, paid for through the efforts of others, the term actually refers to an intention to use force to acquire one's desires. Not to earn desirable goods by rational thought and action, production and voluntary exchange, but to go in there and forcibly take goods from those who can supply them!

Janusz Korwin-Mikke argues simply: "Either 'social justice' has the same meaning as 'justice' – or not. If so – why use the additional word 'social?' We lose time, we destroy trees to obtain paper necessary to print this word. If not, if 'social justice' means something different from 'justice' – then 'something different from justice' is by definition 'injustice'"

Sociologist Carl L. Bankston has argued that a secular, leftist view of social justice entails viewing the redistribution of goods and resources as based on the rights of disadvantaged categories of people, rather than on compassion or national interest. Bankston maintains that this secular version of social justice became widely accepted due to the rise of demand-side economics and to the moral influence of the civil rights movement.

Cosmic Values

Hunter Lewis' work promoting natural healthcare and sustainable economies advocates for conservation as a key premise in social justice. His manifesto on sustainability ties the continued thriving of human life to real conditions, the environment supporting that life, and associates injustice with the detrimental effects of unintended consequences of human actions. Quoting classical Greek thinkers like Epicurus on the good of pursuing happiness,

Hunter also cites ornithologist, naturalist, and philosopher Alexander Skutch in his book Moral Foundations:

The common feature which unites the activities most consistently forbidden by the moral codes of civilized peoples is that by their very nature they cannot be both habitual and enduring, because they tend to destroy the conditions which make them possible.

Pope Benedict XVI cites Teilhard de Chardin in a vision of the cosmos as a 'living host' embracing an understanding of ecology that includes mankind's relationship to fellow men, that pollution affects not just the natural world but interpersonal relations also. Cosmic harmony, justice and peace are closely interrelated.

Social Justice Movements

Social Justice is also a concept that is used to describe the movement towards a socially just world, i.e., the Global Justice Movement. In this context, social justice is based on the concepts of human rights and equality, and can be defined as "the way in which human rights are manifested in the everyday lives of people at every level of society".

A number of movements are working to achieve social justice in society. These movements are working towards the realization of a world where all members of a society, regardless of background or procedural justice, have basic human rights and equal access to the benefits of their society.

Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition

The Interfaith Social Justice Reform Coalition (ISARC) is Ontario's largest interfaith organization dedicated to faith-based approaches to public policy reform in the areas of social justice and poverty eradication. ISARC has a shared hope to mobilize, facilitate, and empower diverse faith communities to research, educate and advocate for public policy for the elimination of poverty in Ontario. ISARC's values include human dignity, social equity, mutual responsibility, fiscal fairness, economic equity and environmental sustainability. Since 1986, ISARC has been a leader in mobilizing faith communities to advocate for systemic change in the Province of Ontario, Canada.

The Green Party

Social Justice (sometimes “Social Equality and Global Equality and Economic Justice”) is one of the Four Pillars of the Green Party and is sometimes referred to as “Social and Global Equality” or “Economic Justice”. The Canadian party defines the principle as the “equitable distribution of resources to ensure that all have full opportunities for personal and social development”. As one of the 10 key values of the party in the United States, social justice is described as the right and opportunity of all people “to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment.”

Liberation Theology

Liberation Theology is a movement in Christian Theology which conveys the Teachings of Jesus Christ in terms of a liberation from unjust economic, political, or social conditions. It has been described by proponents as “an interpretation of Christian faith through the poor’s suffering, their struggle and hope, and a critique of society and the Catholic faith and Christianity through the eyes of the poor”, and by detractors as Christianity perverted by Marxism and Communism.

Although liberation theology has grown into an international and inter-denominational movement, it began as a movement within the Catholic Church in Latin America in the 1950s – 1960s. It arose principally as a moral reaction to the poverty caused by social injustice in that region. It achieved prominence in the 1970s and 1980s. The term was coined by the Peruvian priest, Gustavo Gutiérrez, who wrote one of the movement’s most famous books, *A Theology of Liberation* (1971). Other noted exponents are Leonardo Boff of Brazil, Jon Sobrino of El Salvador, and Juan Luis Segundo of Uruguay.

Social Justice in Healthcare

Social Justice has more recently made its way into the Field of Bioethics. Discussion involves topics such as affordable access to health care, especially for low income households and families. The discussion also raises questions such as whether society should bear healthcare costs for low income families, and whether the global marketplace is a good thing to deal with healthcare. Ruth Faden and Madison Powers of the Johns Hopkins

Berman Institute of Bioethics focus their analysis of social justice on which inequalities matter the most. They develop a social justice theory that answers some of these questions in concrete settings.

Social Justice and Human Rights Education

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action affirm that “Human Rights Education should include Peace, Democracy, Development and Social Justice, as set forth in international and regional human rights instruments, in order to achieve common understanding and awareness with a view to strengthening universal commitment to human rights.

The Zeitgeist Movement

The Zeitgeist Movement is a Social Justice and Sustainability Advocacy Organization. The movement argues against the “Monetary-Market” economy which, in their view, should be replaced with a resource-based economy in which money, debt or any forms of money equivalents serve no purpose.

Periodicals and Publications

Published originally in Italian in 1848, the founder of the Society of Charity Rosmini’s seminal work *Costituzione secondo la giustizia sociale* “The Constitution under Social Justice” was translated into English in 2006 by Alberto Mingardi. This work of political philosophy links representative justice to territorial property rights held in trust by a monarch, and asserts a social justice of no taxation without representation. Historically income tax was not levied on an individuals’ industry or labor but rather on profits realized by title holders of real estate. Such an injustice— withholding wages from a worker— would have been inconceivable to 18th century liberal democrats.

Social Justice was also the name of a periodical published by Father Coughlin in the 1930s and early 1940s. Coughlin’s organization was known as the National Union for Social Justice and he frequently used the term social justice in his radio broadcasts. In 1935 Coughlin made a series of broadcasts in which he outlined what he termed “the Christian principles of social justice” as an alternative to both capitalism and communism. Some Catholic contemporaries, such as the Catholic Radical Alliance, felt that he misused the

term, and was too supportive of capitalism. The president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace Ghanaian Cardinal Peter Turkson acknowledges that terminology used in the Church's social teachings needs glossing for US audiences where the adjective social may have a negative connotation of collective arrogation of responsibility for individual well-being.

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