***Social Policy***

Before moving on to the concept of Social Policy, we have to comprehend as to what Policy in its own capacity translates to. A policy is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. A policy is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. Policies are generally adopted by the Board of or senior governance body within an organization whereas procedures or protocols would be developed and adopted by senior executive officers. Policies can assist in both subjective and objective decision making. Policies to assist in subjective decision making would usually assist senior management with decisions that must consider the relative merits of a number of factors before making decisions and as a result are often hard to objectively test e.g. work-life balance policy. In contrast policies to assist in objective decision making are u2sually operational in nature and can be objectively tested e.g. password policy.

**Definition of Policy:**

Policy can be defined as:

“Set of decisions which are oriented towards a long term purpose or to a particular problem”

(Food and Agriculture Department of United States)

Also,

“ A plan or course of action as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions and other matters.”

(American Foreign Policy: The Company’s policy)

You might even say at times that Policy is a course of action, like a country’s foreign policy for instance.

It can also be defined as

“The act of making or enacting laws”

or

“A Law or body of laws enacted”

***Social Policy***

A social policy is, as is evident from the name itself, a policy oriented and predicated upon social issues. It is created while keeping a social need or requirement in mind.

Social Policy is a policy that deals with social issues. Such issues may include cultures, discrimination against race or gender and diseases that are stigmatized among many others. For instance, policies that deals with issues like nativism, apartheid (segregation)on basis of race.

**Nature of Social Policy:**

The nature of social policy can be summed up as following:

1. The policies which the government uses for welfare and social protection.

2. The ways in which welfare is developed in a society.

3. For the academic study of the subject.

**Objectives of Social Policy:**

1. Social policy is generally considered to be the tool or mechanism that assists in creating a reasonable and adequate society.

2. Social Policy aims to create equal benefits for al denizens of the society in the health, education and welfare sectors related services.

3. Social policy is also responsible for bringing social change in society and in nature as well.

4. Social policy is employed in order to ensure proper redistribution of social resources (like jobs for instance).

5. Social Policy aims at eradication of social evils such as poverty and endeavors to bring about equal employment opportunities for all in the society.

6. Social policy is also responsible for development of apt human resources.

7. Social Policy also provides people with participation opportunities in the process of society’s development.

8. It is also intent in reducing human suffering to a minimal degree while simultaneously endeavoring to maximize human welfare.

**Importance of Social Policy:**

1. Social policy is instrumental in guiding the governing authorities in developing appropriately compatible plans of action for alleviating the social malignancies of the society.

2. Evaluation and assessment of social services can be conducted on the basis of social policy.

3. It prevents problems and mismanagement predicaments from originating amongst the administrators.

4. Social Policy can be enacted in regards of short as well as long term social issues.

5. Social Policy also lays the groundwork for social planning which can be employed for development of the society.

**Objectives of Islamic Social Policy**

The Islamic Social Policy, contrarily perceived as complex by many, is relatively straightforward and simple in terms of conception. The objectives can be listed as following:

1. Affirmation, restoration and consolidation of the dignity, integrity and honor of the individual.

2. Protection and strengthening of the family as the basic unit of society with particular emphasis on kindness and respect to parents.

3. Ensuring that women availing legal rights in social, cultural and economic aspects of life.

**Difference between Social Policy and Social Legislation:**

When we refer to a social policy, we are gesticulating to a document that outlines as to what course of action that a government is going to adopt in order to bring its focus to bear on the social issues of society and how to achieve the required goal for the whole society on a holistic level. It also outlines any and all methods and principles that the Government or any entity for the matter, will use to achieve its directive.

Legislation is another term meaning statutory law. These laws have been enacted by a legislature or the governing body of a country. Legislation can also mean the process of making the law. Let’s first understand how a law is made. The law starts off with being an idea. The idea is then put down a piece of paper, which is known as a bill. This bill goes then goes to the legislative branch, who will vote either to approve or reject the bill. If the bill is approved, it then goes to the regulatory branch, which is responsible for writing out the details of the bill and the implementation process. This bill then becomes a law. This process varies depending upon the countries. Under the Westminster system, the primary legislation, after it is approved is known as an Act of Parliament. The term ‘legislation’ may also include other forms of law making such as referendums, constitutional conventions, orders in council or regulations. However, the term primary legislation can exclude these laws.

**History of Social Policy**

The earliest example of direct intervention by government in human welfare dates back to Umar ibn al-Khattāb's rule as the second caliph of Islam in the 6th century. He used zakah collections and also other governmental resources to establish pensions, income support, child benefits, and various stipends for people of the non-Muslim community.

In the West, proponents of scientific social planning such as the sociologist Auguste Comte, and social researchers, such as Charles Booth, contributed to the emergence of social policy in the first industrialized countries. Surveys of poverty exposing the brutal conditions in the urban slum conurbations of Victorian Britain supplied the pressure leading to changes such as the reform of the Poor Law and the welfare reforms carried out by the British Liberal Party. Other significant examples in the development of social policy are the Bismarckian welfare state in 19th century Germany, social security policies introduced under the rubric of the New Deal in the United States between 1933 and 1935, and health reforms in Britain following the Beveridge Report of 1942.

Social policy in the 21st century is complex and in each state it is subject to local, national and supranational political influence. For example, membership of the European Union is conditional on member states' adherence to the Social Chapter of European Union law and other international laws.