

“POLITICAL SCIENCE IS THE KEY OF WELFARE STATE: TRENDS & ISSUES”

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ABSTRACT

Every institution, serves some specific purpose. It involves some organisation and use of authority. Authority denotes a relationship of command and obedience where the command is generally regarded to be reasonable. When an organisation is designed to regulate the whole community. It takes the character of polity. Polity, therefore denotes an organisation where rules are made and decisions are taken for the whole community, and authority is exercised over each member of the community. The state is the dominant political organization exerting authority over and controlling a defined territory and its inhabitants. It does so by monopolizing the right to create and enforce law, by exercising power, by imposing taxes and other duties and by gaining the acquiescence and loyalty of its citizens. Scientific analysis of political life enables us to understand and solve the problems of our social life. Political science is the key to understand the causes of conflict & violence in society and gives us insights for preventing their outburst. It is the key to secure development of society from our human resources. It guides us to find remedies of political instability and various types of social crises.

KEYWORDS: Citizenship, Polis, Political Science, Globalization Social Crisis, Social Security, Welfare State

INTRODUCTION

As human beings we live in society, society includes many institutions like family, school, religious organisation, polity etc. Every institution, serves some specific purpose. It involves some organisation and use of authority. Authority denotes a relationship of command and obedience where the command is generally regarded to be reasonable. When an organisation is designed to regulate the whole community. It takes the character of polity. Polity, therefore denotes an organisation where rules are made and decisions are taken for the whole community, and authority is exercised over each member of the community. This polity or the state enjoys a unique position among social institution. The term polity, polities and political are derived from the Greek word polis which denote ancient Greek city state. The Greek city states were relatively small communities which were separated from each other by Geographical barriers. Each city state had evolved a compact social life and culture where all constitutions and activities were knit together. However in the present day society the scope of politics is not regarded to be so comprehensive. Today we draw a distinction between public & private spheres of human life and confine the usage of the term ‘politics’ to the institution and activities falling in the public sphere.

Now, Politics in its broadest sense is thus inextricably linked to the phenomena of conflict and co-operation. On the other hand, people recognize that in order to influence these rules or ensure that they are upheld, they must work with others however politics in this broad sense is better thought of as a search for conflict resolution than as its achievements as not all conflicts are or can be resolved. Nevertheless, the inescapable presence of diversity and scarcity ensure that politics is an inevitable feature of the human condition.

Broadly speaking political theory is concerned with three types & statements:

- Empirical statement- Which based on observation.
- Logical statement- Which based on reasoning.
- Evaluative statement- which is based on value judgement.

Political science relies only on 1st and 2nd statements, it is argued that correct observation and correct reasoning by different persons would lead to the similar conclusion; hence empirical and logical statements are capable of verification. On the other hand evaluative statements are as reliable method of determining what is right or wrong, good or bad, one cannot scientifically discover the purpose of the universe or human life. It may be conceded that political philosophy deals with the needs, objectives and goals of human life which cannot be scientifically ascertained but these can always be discussed by the right thinking people and some acceptable point may be reached at the current level of our social consciousness.

Scientific analysis of political life enables us to understand and solve the problems of our social life. Political science is the key to understand the causes of conflict & violence in society and gives us insights for preventing their outburst. It is the key to secure development of society from our human resources. It guides us to find remedies of political instability and various types of social crises.

When we talk about Political science. Firstly we think what is the core of political science? Than first thing which come in our mind is political thought which has been defined as though about the state its structure, its nature and its purpose. It is significant that though some sort of political organisation has existed since ancient times. Yet the concept of the 'State' as such is comparatively modern. Frederick M. Watkins (International Encyclopaedia of the social sciences, 1968) defines: the state as “a geographically delimited segment of human society united by common obedience to a single sovereign.” Watkins lays special emphasis on the element of sovereignty. The supremacy of the commands of the state is an essential elements which distinguishes it from all other associations of men, in actual practice government is regarded as an essential elements of the state, it means the state is represented by the government. Government exercise all authority and functions on behalf of the state.

Contrasting interpretations of state power have clear implications for the desirable role or responsibilities of the state. In early stage the minimal state is the ideal of classical liberals, whose aim is to ensure that individuals enjoy the widest possible realm of freedom, but later on minimal states plays economic role during the period industrialization in the 19th century. In Japan and Germany for instance, the state assumed a more “active developmental” role from the outset. Whereas developmental states practise interventionism in order to stimulate economic progress, social democratic states intervene with a view to bringing about broader social restructuring, usually in accordance with principles such as fairness equality and social justice.

Rather than merely laying down the conditions of orderly existence, the social democratic state is an active participant helping in particular to rectify the imbalance and injustice of market economy. While developmental and social democratic states intervene in economic life with a view to guiding or supporting a largely private economy, collectivized states bring the entirety of economic life under state control.

During 20th century historical development once again altered the basis of political classification. The appearance in the interwar period of new forms of state particularly in Stalin’s Russia, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany encouraged the view that the world was divided into two kinds of two states democratic states and totalitarian states. It is interesting to recall that towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Liberalism tended to accommodate some tents of socialist & idealist thought, which was responsible for the emergence of the theory of welfare state. The liberalism of T.H. Green, L.T. Hobbhouse, and H.J. Laski conceded positive role of the state in regulating economic system in the interest of the poor and deprived sections of the society. The principles of liberty was sought to accommodate the principles of equality and justice within the liberal frame of thought. Positive liberalism promoted the idea of welfare state, as it pleaded for positive role of the state securing welfare of its citizens, particularly of their vulnerable sections.

The state is the dominant political organization exerting authority over and controlling a defined territory and its inhabitants. It does so by monopolizing the right to create and enforce law, by exercising power, by imposing taxes and other duties and by gaining the acquiescence and loyalty of its citizens. The growth of state bureaucracy and the invention of new techniques of political rule enabled the state to take over the provision of public infrastructure and ‘social security’. For most of the modern period, the relationship between the state and its citizens was characterized by a dominating state and a subordinate citizenry. Only as political rights were won by the ordinary citizen did the state become democratized and ‘civilized’ in the sense that citizens could increasingly influence and shape state politics. Political mobilization and participation evolved from various unstructured forms, such as public protest and violence, to more structured forms of democratic participation, for example, unions, interest groups, political parties and parliaments. As a state apparatus and administrative capacity developed, and the ordinary citizen became involved in public and political affairs – for example, through elections – the state was transformed into a welfare state, that is, a political organization that fulfils collective tasks and responds to the interests and needs of its citizens.

The welfare state today is typically defined as a range of state programs that provide for life contingencies and redress market-produced inequalities. In general, the welfare state comprises those statutory or public *de facto* arrangements that absorb life risks such as illness, unemployment, old age and poverty, together with public programs providing or facilitating the provision of housing, education, personal social services and social care to citizens. While many writings on the welfare state rest on a dichotomy between the state and the market, with the welfare state intervening in and redressing the market, there were always organizations operating between the market and the state, labeled non-profit, voluntary or third sector organizations, including the churches and guilds and later unions, with myriad contributions to public welfare Country differences, therefore, exist not only on the level of state activity, but also with regard to the third sector reflecting contrasts in historical policy legacies, legal traditions, and prevailing ideologies

The term ‘welfare state’ became popular after the Second World War, and refers to the responsibility of the state for the well-being of its citizens and the promotion of the ‘common good’. Following Thomas H. Marshall’s (1992/1964 [1949]) scheme of the evolution of civic, political and social rights, scholars have concurred that the welfare state has become the key institutional mechanism for providing social rights to the citizenry. In contrast to philanthropic or discretionary forms (‘largesse’) of social provision (Reich 1964), the welfare state establishes legal entitlements vis-à-vis the state and does so with different emphases and through various detours. The overarching claim in Marshall’s 1949 account is that the battles to establish citizenship rights have transformed patterns of social inequality fundamentally, from education via health to income security. According to Marshall, class inequalities in modern societies are not based

on a hierarchy of status and accepted as a natural order, rather they emerge from the market and other societal institutions: 'Class differences are not established and defined by the laws and customs of the society (in the medieval sense of that phrase), but emerge from an interplay of a variety of factors related to the institutions of property and education and the structure of the national economy.' Citizenship rights provide only a basic level of equality and a single uniform status on which the structure of inequality builds. The introduction of social rights in the twentieth century created a universal right to real income which is not proportionate to the value the claimant can realize in the marketplace. With the changes in the welfare state in recent decades, however, the concept of citizenship is changing as well. Especially in the realm of social welfare, the notions of rights and universality are less salient and politicians are increasingly demanding that citizens recognize obligations when they claim rights.

Once viewed as spiraling into steady decline, welfare states within many developed democracies now appear resilient in the face of dramatic shifts in their national settings and with respect to the turbulent global environment of the past 20 years. In contrast to early declarations of the seeming inevitability of retrenchment. Welfare state analysts are acutely aware of economic and political pressures on mature welfare states that contribute to slower rates of growth or cut-backs within specific policy domains. Historically the welfare state is a rather recent but nonetheless extremely influential social invention. It has fundamentally transformed relations between the state and its citizens – both as individuals and members of social groups, that is, classes, generations and sexes. Furthermore, the welfare state has successfully mitigated social inequalities and minimized social risks.

Welfare State: Why?

Although much writing on the welfare state concerns the political dynamics and processes of welfare state change, the welfare state is ultimately also a normative endeavor. John Rawls' (1971, 1986) dictum that justice is the first virtue of social institutions makes clear that social and political institutions do not operate in a normative vacuum but need to be built on morally plausible justifications. The moral and cultural ideas which institutions encapsulate provide them with a permanent normative foundation, which enable them to exact compliance. The inherent meanings of institutions motivate individual actions and foster a commitment to their norms and values. Rawls 1971: Justice is broadly defined as a fair distribution of burdens and benefits within society. While this definition is by and large consensual, there is some controversy about the ends to which one should ultimately subscribe.

The most influential theory of social justice, put forward by John Rawls, suggests two sets of principles: First, each person should have an equal right to the most extensive system of equal basic liberties that is compatible with similar liberties for all; second, social and economic inequalities are justified only insofar as they benefit the least advantaged and as long as offices and positions are accessible to all. David Miller (1999) and Michael Walzer (1983) have argued forcefully that there is no single model of social justice against which welfare distribution can be evaluated. They draw attention to the very different social spheres in which distribution takes place. As regards citizenship rights, for example, where people are connected through political and legal structures, equality should prevail. In respect to poverty and material destitution, meeting social needs and relieving social distress is the primary justification for state intervention. In other sectors of the welfare state, like social-insurance schemes, the notion of 'just desert' and what is 'due' links people's contributory efforts to their entitlements. A deeper understanding of the normative foundations is not only a philosophical exercise but also politically important since the welfare state is contested terrain, a battleground for normative claims. Within public-welfare discourse, issues of normative justification are relevant for all groups jostling for their share of

benefits and attempting to establish a legitimate claim to needs.

Although the reasons for the invention and development of the welfare state are often central to political scientists, social-science disciplines have also been interested in the outcomes of the welfare state. Welfare state activities are only justifiable if they achieve desirable ends. The welfare state not only contributes to shaping relations between classes, ethnic groups and sexes, and is shaped by them, it is also crucial for determining the relations between generations. One of the central achievements of welfare state maturation was to institutionalize the idea and concept of retirement as a distinct stage of life characterized by independent access to state-provided means of subsistence, not – as in former times – part and parcel of poverty. Comprehensive notions of a “welfare state” based on complete “equality of citizenship” no longer receive universal assent (or lip service). Against a background of recurring fiscal crises, “paying for services” has replaced “fair shares for all” as a current political slogan. The switch may only be temporary and it has already met with resistance, but it is a sign that what only recently seemed to be fixed is far from fixed, that the post-1945 “welfare state” was not in itself a final destination. The state services liquidate themselves, it is claimed, as more and more people rise above the level of a minimum standard of living to reach “freedom” to buy for themselves the services (health, education, etc.) which they want. While political attitudes have been changing the whole world.

A “welfare state” is a state in which organized power is deliberately used (through politics and administration) in an effort to modify the play of market forces in at least three directions – first, by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income irrespective of the market value of their work or their property; second, by narrowing the extent of insecurity by enabling individuals and families to meet certain “social contingencies” (for example, sickness, old age and unemployment) which lead otherwise to individual and family crises; and third, by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standards available in relation to a certain agreed range of social services. The first and second of these objects may be accomplished, in part at least, by what used to be called a “social service state”, a state in which communal resources are employed to abate poverty and to assist those in distress. The third objective, however, goes beyond the aims of a “social service state”. It brings in the idea of the “optimum” rather than the older idea of the “minimum”. It is concerned not merely with abatement of class differences or the needs of scheduled groups but with equality of treatment and the aspirations of citizens as voters with equal shares of electoral power. For social democrats the welfare state is not a side issue, but a requirement of democracy. It ensures equal freedom full freedom.

CHALLENGES FACING THE WELFARE STATE

The most important changes can be linked to four developments: globalization, structural change in the economy and work, demographic change and social change. These developments are often used to criticize the welfare state as a whole, rather than individual aspects of it. Besides such sweeping criticisms, however, there are also views that need to be taken more seriously. Such criticisms concern social, economic and lifeworld changes in recent decades that have indeed challenged the traditional structures of the welfare state. Before rashly concluding that the welfare state needs to be dismantled, it is worth considering these changed circumstances.

Globalization

In public debate, globalization is considered one of the most important challenges to the maintenance of a developed welfare state. Social policy cuts are constantly being called for – and often implemented – in the name of

international competitiveness. There are a range of theoretical perspectives on the relationship between the increasing international economic integration and the welfare state. The optimists argue that the welfare state is not at risk from globalization. They point out that the organization of the welfare state is a matter of national policy and depends on national political institutions and majority opinion. Even if international competition exerts pressure in the direction of shrinking the welfare state this does not mean that it has to happen, as long as a majority of people desire a developed welfare state. Many people go further and argue that globalization could promote the expansion of the welfare state.

Pessimists, in contrast, stress that social policy measures represent a cost factor for companies operating internationally. Since they are able to choose the countries in which to produce, they will opt for locations in which they can minimize wage costs, taxes and other contributions used to finance the welfare state. As a result, according to the globalization pessimists, a so-called »race to the bottom« ensues, in other words, a dismantling of the welfare state everywhere. For such competitive pressure to arise there is no need for capital and companies to actually abandon a country: it is sufficient merely to threaten to do so. Given the competitive pressures on the welfare state, the question arises of how the challenge can be met. One intuitively plausible solution would be to raise the institutions of the welfare state to international level. The globalization of the economy must be answered with the globalization of social policy. If this succeeded, the mobile factors of production would no longer be able to avoid the costs of the welfare state by moving to another country. However, at present this solution is scarcely feasible politically because of the large differences between welfare states. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether an international social policy would be normatively desirable under current circumstances. Given the close connection between the welfare state and democracy it would entail the democratization of international decision-making. And that, too, remains utopian.

Geographical Change

Yes! Concept of welfare state given by positive liberal theory or western concept but after the 2nd world war most Asian, African and Latin American countries achieved their independence from colonial domination. These countries known as Third World or developing countries. These countries were different levels of 'underdevelopment' at the time of their respective independence. Most of third world countries remained politically 'non-aligned' in the era of cold war, but most of them have now been economically 'linked' with the developed world thanks to the all- pervading process of globalization. But we cannot denied that all developing countries have had different social political problems where state have big responsibility. In this condition all countries play different role as welfare state. As developing or underdeveloped countries their problems and issues are different to develop countries.

Social Change

Besides the changes in the economic structure and the age structure, there has also been a change in people's values in recent decades. Ways of life and life plans are different from those of 50 or 100 years ago. Life is less and less shaped by social conventions. The degree of individual freedom and self-determination has increased. The changes are diverse and predominantly welcomed as an increase in personal freedom. For example, the number of marriages has fallen constantly since 1960. More and more couples – even those with children – remain unmarried: living in sin, as it used to be known pejoratively. Furthermore, the number of divorces has risen constantly during the same period – even though fewer marriages were contracted. Social change is also affecting the income situation of the old. Here again it is those living alone who are under particular threat from poverty in comparison to the population as a whole. Civil society is not new phenomena for political science or for states. But in 21st century in the era of information technology all societies are going

for changes. These changes have positive but some negative aspects and some questions have reflected in the day to day human life. Domestic violence, social justice, gender justice, interest of Transgender, child labor and crime, human trafficking, equality between countries, international equality for developing countries, environmental issues, etc. its small examples of challenges for establishment of welfare states.

These changes lead to a resurgence in scientific examination of the interaction between institutions and individuals, especially in asking: How do institutions condition and influence human behavior and motivation? A part of this ‘motivational turn’ is the growing interest in attitudes towards the welfare state. This issue, in particular, has been thoroughly discussed in respect to migration and multicultural policies. Looking back to the development of the post-war welfare state demonstrates that there can be an underlying tension between social and cultural heterogeneity and social spending, but it is mediated and conditioned by the structure of political institutions. Nevertheless, based on ethnic and socio-cultural divisions within a society, public debates often construe and instigate increasing distributional conflicts which become relevant to politicians, social actors and, in the end, often to political outcomes.

WHERE IS A SOLUTION? CONCLUSIONS

State is the theme of political science. From Greek period Socrates, Plato and Aristotle all political thinkers were apprised the socio-political conditions at their time and suggested the solution to the political system. This is fact that socio-political conditions of countries influenced the philosophy or thoughts of the philosophers or thinkers. We all know Political ideology from individualism, liberalism to Neo-Marxism, Fascism, Anarchism all are defined work and limitations of state and government.

Traditional study of political science was dominated by the study of philosophy, history law and institutions. On the other hand contemporary approaches are faced with the problem of the identity of the discipline. Its signify departure from traditional in two respects: 1- they attempt to establish a separate identity of political science by focusing on the real character of politics; and 2- they try to understand politics in totality, transcending its formal aspects and looking for those aspects of social life which influenced and influenced by it. Behavioral approach to the analysis and explanation of political phenomena, is particularly associated with the work. Graham Wallas’s chief message was in his book “Human Nature in Politics” that the political process could be understood only by analyzing as to how people actually behaved in a political situation not merely by speculating on how they should or would behave.

Whether we use term “political science” our subject of study is always concerned with a particular type of human activity and role of state and government. Scientific analysis of political life enables us to understand and solve the problems of our social life. Political science enables us to secure development of society from our human resources, political science guides us to find remedies of political instability and various types of social crises. Political philosophy is primarily concerned with right and wrong, good and evil in social life. When we find something wrong in our society and polity, we look for logical grounds for criticizing it and speculate about the creation of good life. A galaxy of political philosophers, like Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, Mill and Macpherson have pointed to the prevailing ills in society and they have given their own schemes of social reconstruction. We cannot accept any of these proposals as the final truth. But they give us ample insights into the possible ills of social life and their remedies. We can draw our own scheme of social reconstructions on the basis of these insights. We can draw valuable insights from their thought for finding remedies to the existing ills in the present day society.

In each country, the historically inherited government institutions, have an important impact on the choice of both individual wage earners and their representatives whether or not to give the state the responsibility for extracting resources for and implementing policies for social insurance and welfare state redistribution. More precisely, this causal effect springs from the generally established perceptions and the following ideological and political discourses of the quality of the government institutions. We want to underline that the argument we will present is not a rebuttal of the power resource theory, however, but a complement to it. We agree that working class mobilization is a key to understanding welfare state expansion, but we clarify the hitherto neglected underlying condition for when this process is likely to take place: an environment of high quality of government.

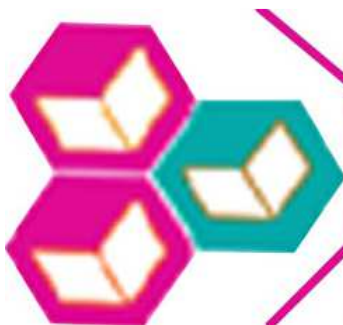
Here if we discussed about Mill's distinction between 'self-regarding actions' and 'other-regarding actions' of the individual should however, be appreciated in the historical perspective. Mill was making an attempt to define a sphere where an individual's behavior could be regulated in the interest of society. This is the sign of welfare state. The purpose of social security, social welfare, and ultimately the formation of the welfare state has been to ensure the social rights of those who are unable to protect civil rights and liberties themselves. Concrete steps toward this goal have included efforts to realize social solidarity and social justice, as well as the function of income redistribution. The 'new social risks' perspective emphasizes that the contemporary welfare state is slowly being reformed to take into account transformations in the labor market and family structures. Most fundamental are changing family forms and gender roles which have led to increases in the rates of divorce, single parenthood, women's labor-market participation and patchwork families. At the same time, a shift can be observed in the labor market from industrial to postindustrial employment, combined with the rise of non-standard forms of employment (Crouch 1999). The new social risks associated with these changes differ from the old risks of the standard, mainly male, industrial life course, which were concerned primarily with interruptions to income from sickness, unemployment and retirement. Instead, welfare policies targeting the care of children and the elderly, more equal opportunities, the activation of labor markets and the management of needs gain importance.

Thus he was contemplating a positive role for the state in securing community welfare even if it implied curbing the liberty of the individual to some extent. Thus all functions of political theory have now become very important and urgent in the present day world where most of our problems are assuming global dimensions and they are being recognized as the problems of humanity as such. It is now held that political science, like other social and natural sciences, enables us to strengthen our means but we will have to resort to political philosophy to determine our ends. Means and ends are interdependent; hence political science and political philosophy play complementary roles in our social life.

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