



SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR PERSON WITH DISABILITIES IN SOUTH ASIA

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Abstract

The concept of social protection is among the key areas in developing regions because in those regions number of people is not having the equal opportunities as rest of the population have. The people who are disabled are also on the verge of poverty and distress just because they are not taking active part in the social progress of any region. So in order to keep the level up of the disables person in the society the notion of social protection is present. In the below material the concept of social protection was discussed, especially the situation of social protection in South Asia is discussed. This research is a qualitative document analysis of the past researches and other related material. The research also finds that these social protections are the dire need of society and without having all the rights equally distributed the progress and prosperity of any country is in vein.

Keywords: Social Protection, disability, South Asia, Poverty, Food.



Introduction

Half of the world population is residing in the Asian region which has around a 3.25 billion population, among them around 900 million people are under the umbrella of poverty which makes up around 30% of the total population. In this 1.2 billion are very young people and children that are also very vulnerable to any of the challenges. In this way, the main reason or you can say the main hurdle in the process of development is poverty. With this poverty, the region cannot achieve sufficient sustainable growth. However the growth alone does not make people happy in their life, the people need to have some necessities like housing, food, clothing, and other basic utilities to pass-happy life with their families. In this process, several risks and other dangers may also involve that can plunged people into the circle of poverty. So to keep people away from these dangers and other exposures to underdevelopment, the societies and the government itself must take some steps to reduce the vulnerability of the people and also to cope with the issues that endanger people, especially the disabled population, which is also on the verge of poverty. (Devereux, 2004)

Social protection means keeping away people from dangers, vulnerabilities, and hazards. It is defined as a set of policies and programs that are specially designed to minimize poverty and other deficiencies or risks. Social protection also aims to reduce the poverty by giving some opportunities for efficient labor markets reducing the people's exposure to threats and enhancing their capabilities to protect themselves and their families against every possible loss and menaces and other natural calamities. (Barrientos, 2011)

Since we all know that poverty is a cyclic issue, it is very important to break the cycle of poverty. To reduce the risk of countries falling into the ditch of poverty, this cycle must be clogged somewhere. For breaking the poverty cycle it is very important to keep people away from this menace of poverty by providing them social protection effectively.

As the risk and hazards are many, the reduction mechanism is also there that includes formal and informal mechanism techniques, and the public and private sectors are involved in it to reduce the risk. Since urbanization is on the rise coupled with the industrialization growth in the region, the chances of risk and other hazards are also increasing. In this era of globalization and rapid industrialization, the risk reduction mechanisms are also very different as compared to the previous reduction techniques. (Tanzi, 2022) Long-term solutions are also there the vulnerable societies with proper checks and balances are also included in the risk management. The governments are also taking their part in good social and economic development decisions, to keep away people from the social risks.



It has been observed that by implementing risk reduction policies the governments are quite able to reduce the risk of social dangers. In this way, these policies and programs can make a major contribution to achieving the prosperous goals of any country. It has also been seen that social protection and social development are correlated and social protection is an integral part of social development.

In today's world of rampant problems, social protection systems are very necessary for the people who are suffering from disabilities and the families who are vulnerable and poor. These protection systems help in coping with crises and also cooperative in finding jobs and simultaneously invest in the health and education sector of the children and protect the aging population from other hazards.

Especially in the South Asian region, several countries facing the issues of less developed and are additionally have several people with physical or mental disabilities. Social protection is a kind of relief to them side by side a helping hand in managing the life cycle of the people living in undernourished areas of South Asia.

Focus areas

Cash grants to the poor, pensions, skill development, jobs, and development

International organizations also help the people who are suffering from disabilities in response to the social protection systems. Additionally, social protection also supports people suffering from any major natural disaster. International organizations like World Bank, are also working hand in hand, in social protection strategies, especially in the South Asia region. Several examples have been seen working of World Bank in major cash transfers in Turkey, Pakistan, Maldives, and Sri Lanka. In this system, the cash amount is provided directly to the affected families to keep them away from any other dangers by giving them enough money to support and feed their families. Cash transfers or giving cash grants is one of a kind of focus areas of social protection systems. These cash transfers or cash grants resulted in relief of the affected family, as it is demanded by the client countries. The research has proved that these cash grants had a positive impact on the short-term level, and also help in completing the food security systems and then also help in the long-term recovery of the affected families. These cash grants gearing for greater effects and more efficient ways in the future, if they use in the best practice and on time with technical assistance facility. (Heltberg, 2007)

The South Asia region is also characterized by a large population in which the majority of the countries are falling under middle income and are less developed countries, side by



side the economic condition of the countries are also not very sound and the economic informality is found there. In this way, the social protection system is also very low in these countries. An insufficient system of social protection coverage is found in many of the regional countries. Marginalized people are more in these countries just because of the gender disparity and caste conflict, there people are also suffering from social structure dangers. This is why, a high number of migrants is found there in most of the South Asian countries, especially in those countries that are less developed and also are found in war-torn areas. In the serious circumstances of pandemic covid-19, the affected people are in a greater magnitude and become magnified the vulnerabilities in the region and also enhance marginalization of persons with disabilities. In this covid-19 we have found the situation of these less developed countries is degrading with time. So the World Bank and other Donor Agencies try their level best to support these countries in terms of finances and also a kind of moral support was also present from the developed world.

“... Persons with disabilities and their families face significant challenges in terms of income security and greater costs to secure the essential goods and services they need. Social protection, which, at any point in time, is critical for persons with disabilities, has proven to be a crucial vector of relief in recent weeks...”

The current socio-economic crisis in the times of pandemic prevails in the South Asia region, as a result of which several countries in the region have fallen into an economic downturn. As we all know that the pandemic is a global phenomenon and it is not for only one country or even one region. So the whole world has faced its intense impact, and the region especially South Asia, which is previously considered a less developed region in general, has faced extra pressure in terms of social protection services. As a result of this pandemic, several people have migrated from one place to another place just to save themselves and to save their families from further financial burden, and then this migration resulted in a socio-economic disturbance in the society. For example, several people who migrated from one place to another perform some informal jobs and do some odd works for their living with unprotected incomes. Similarly, the situation of lockdowns also results in a major job loss and the loss of income of a family, who previously suffered from the economic crisis.

The high density of population in South Asia is also a kind of problem the whole region is facing because the regional issues coupled with a high percentage of the marginalized population is a hurdle in the development whether it is social, economic, or political. These issues also create a hurdle in the response and recovery phases of the pandemic in the region. The world has also witnessed that the marginalization is mostly due to the lack of



economic facilities and is also with the people who are suffering and who are experiencing disabilities. These disabilities are also reflected in the never-ending inequalities in having jobs, passing better life, attaining necessary education, and achieving specific services such as support services and rehabilitation. This marginalization is also caused by gender, religion, aspects of ethnicity, and the cast from which people belong.

In terms of social protection, around the world finances have been spent in a massive volume. According to some reasonable statistics, it is amounting around 62% of the various majors by the world governments across the globe to ensure social protection activities against crises like pandemics. Among the different assistance, cash transfer is a major one. In the pandemic phases cash transfer and other assistance for 53% and 47% respectively of the social protection measures globally. Different South Asian countries responded by expanding the number of existing cash transfers and they also introduced some different majors to help the needy people in their own country. (Leisering, 2021)

Social Protection measures for persons with disabilities

Social protection has been a major concern in the South Asian region, particularly in the developing world or the underdeveloped countries of the region. Namely, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, the social protection service sectors are being worked with their full potential and also under the assistance of world Financial Institutions and with the help of worldwide donor agencies. The main focus of these social protection services is to keep people away from all the hazards and dangers that are natural or man-made. In the situation of pandemics, the South Asian countries also receive huge amounts of donations and other financial aid in terms of social protection services.

The United Nations under the umbrella of its sustainable development goals also try its level best to reach those South Asian countries that are deprived of social protection services and facilitate them whatever is possible for the UN, also in terms of achieving its sustainable development goals.

Social Protection in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has been very active in regards to social protection programs it has been observed that in recent years the capital investment through various social protection programs is also increased amounting to 2.6 % of the GDP in the fiscal year 2020. As compared to other countries Bangladesh is very well interested in the social protection of its citizens and all this is shown with the above numbers. (Hasan, 2017)



In Bangladesh, the social protection initiatives headcover a broad perspective of beneficiaries and also positively impacted the lives of people, especially those suffering from disabilities. According to the World Bank reports the social protection of Bangladesh has covered different expects including design, planning, programming, and delivery of the services and WB also has a check and balance on the quality of social protection spending. The report also reveals some loopholes in the social protection setup and also that spending procedure. The report tells that the program is not reaching some of the people who need this protection the most, similarly, the sector of child development is also not properly taken care of, as well as the aged people were not getting enough support for their work conditions. In the same way, the spending of the natural disasters segment was also very limited and did not fulfill the required need. (Coudouel, 2021)

Bangladesh is trying its level best to improve the social protection investment and also trying to reach the most vulnerable and poor populations. In this sector, a lot more can be done to enhance and improve the planning design programming, and delivery of the programs. (kidd, 2013)

Arranging begins with adjusting the assignment of assets to public approaches and methodologies. With SP being a term that can depict a wide scope of projects, covering wellbeing nets or social help, protection against certain dangers, programs tending to shocks, and mediations zeroed in on work or usefulness, it is basic to classify these projects following the current National Social Security Strategy (NSSS). According to the NSSS, various dangers are looked at by changed life-cycle gatherings - pregnancy and youth (for example birth, ailing health, or mental turn of events), young, working-age, older, and so forth Order can be founded on the projects' recipients (following the life-cycle) and additionally the capacities they serve. (Begum, 2021)

Customary wellbeing releases have gesture-based communication understanding. The Prime Minister's location connected with COVID-19 has communication through signing translation. The overall related top-up cash remittance was stretched out to people with handicaps who don't approach the inability explicit recompense. (Gerard, 2020)

At present, Bangladesh has 114 different social security programs, essentially based on food appropriation and money moves. These projects should be better planned and incorporated under a cognizant institutional system to guarantee comprehensive inclusion of weak populaces to lessen social financial dangers, food deficiencies, and related difficulties. (ILO)



Social Protection in India

The trickledown impact of monetary development on the less fortunate areas of the general public didn't effectively prompt destitution destruction. Destitution endures essentially because of the powerlessness of certain gatherings to take an interest during the time spent monetary development. Weakness emerges from the dangers and instability brought about by life cycle changes (passing of a procuring part), disease or medical conditions, normal disasters and the course of globalization and primary changes in the economy, a dangerous atmospheric deviation, and progressively adaptable work relations can prompt expanded rate of shocks. (Kapur, 2015) The social security framework assists with retaining the shocks and limiting their unfavorable effect on the powerless and poor and assists with making development all the more supportive of the poor.

“Social security systems contribute not only to human security, dignity, equity, and social justice but also provide a foundation for political inclusion, empowerment and the development of democracy.” (ILO)

Just the Prime Minister's location connected with COVID-19 has communication through signing an understanding. The Jan Dhan Yojana Program for ladies incorporates ladies with incapacities. The food and grain conveyance program incorporate people with incapacities. One-off top-up cash move to the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension (IGNDP - NSAP) of Rs. 1000 at the Union level some regions guaranteed prepared food/grain to the entryway steps of people with incapacities. (Ex. Kerala Tamil Nadu gave help given solicitations through helplines.) Some areas have explicit helplines for people with handicaps.

Out of the 8 nations in the locale, just India has COVID-19 explicit money moves for people with incapacities, while Sri Lanka has declared an extension of handicap benefits for those on the shortlist.

Social Protection in Pakistan

In Pakistan, the social protection programs are consolidated under the Ehsas strategy program initiated by the prime minister of Pakistan Mr. Imran Khan. Under this program, all the previous initiatives are combined to work in a consolidated manner for the betterment and the progress and prosperity of the vulnerable section of the society. Under the umbrella of this Ehsas program, different initiatives were taken especially during the time of the pandemic. (Gazdar, 2011)



This Ehsas program represents the bright vision of the government related to the future of Pakistan as said by our honorable Prime Minister that it is involving the creation of a welfare state. In 2019 April, our Prime Minister released this Ehsas statement that targets “the extreme poor, orphans, widows, the homeless, the disabled, those who risk medical impoverishment, for the jobless, for poor farmers, for laborers, for the sick and undernourished; for students from low-income backgrounds and poor women and elderly citizens. This plan is also about lifting lagging areas where poverty is higher”

We all know that the covid-19 pandemic has changed the overall focus of the world governments towards the social protection of their peoples drastically. Since the countries well understand that this pandemic not only affected the economic condition of their country but the condition of the society also deteriorates as well, and side-by-side the life of common man will also be affected with it. (Gul, 2021)

Family members take responsibility to provide accessible information. This Program as well as the Food Distribution Program includes persons with disabilities.

Social Protection in terms of cash transfer

Talking about the cash transfer technique in India there is a one-time cash transfer, which is around 1000 Indian rupees that are 14 US dollars transferred in 3 months. A very low number of working-age people is benefited from it which is around 7.6 %. The Government of India has not been to expand the coverage. In this issue the main target is to reduce the poverty and also the government tries to improve the working conditions of disabled persons under this program. With this program, several other initiatives were also taken in some provinces in India including the advancement of cash transfer programs at the state level. For example, some provinces in India also announced a one-time cash transfer to disabled people but for that, they must be having state ID cards.

A similar situation is also with the people in Pakistan and Bangladesh, in both countries they have extended the one-time cash transfer to the existing general allowances of cash to those who are disabled by any means. The case of Bangladesh is very different from Pakistan, people who are disabled and are receiving the disability allowance will not be eligible to receive the one-time cash allowance. In Pakistan allowance is given after a strict verification process. And similarly in this case it has also been in some of the research that the disabled persons were left behind in getting the emergency cash transfers as they already receive the disability fund from the government.



Nepal has not declared a particular cash transfer measure. People with incapacities with ID cards will keep on getting the current inability to recompense. Also, understudies with incapacities will accept their understudy recompense.

Sri Lanka has declared that they will cover all people with inabilities in the shortlist for the handicap cash remittance as an oddball cash move. Afghanistan has not reported any money move measures and there is no particular information accessible on the consideration of people with incapacities in Bhutan and Maldives.

Handicap Certificates and ID cards are prerequisites for getting to any benefit in a considerable lot of the nations in the region. People with handicaps, especially those requiring more elevated levels of help and living in rustic and distant regions, frequently experience issues in getting to these declarations.

The COVID-19 reaction estimates have not resolved the issues concerning admittance to incapacity ID cards. In Nepal, numerous Dalits with inabilities don't have a citizenship card or an incapacity ID card and are hence left with next to no help. In Sri Lanka, there is no authority interaction for giving handicap ID cards. To get to the social insurance programs, people with incapacities get a clinical authentication and apply with the Grama Niladhari (Village Officer) who will guarantee and suggest the social government assistance official for additional handling.

Talking about Pakistan, it doesn't follow a global distribution system which is the main reason behind the lack of management and some loopholes in the distribution system. Since several vulnerable and desired people who are disabled also were not able to access these relief measures or can say that they cannot even receive this emergency relief fund. Similarly, in the case of the Ehsas program, the government is very conscious to provide the desired amount to the people who are basically in need of it. The particular focus of the government in these programs is to reach or focus on the children with disabilities and assess them to the special education centers. The government also tries to facilitate those people who were previously neglected and were unable to get facilitation from the government.

Health insurance in Pakistan

The Government of Pakistan is also keen to provide basic Health Insurance facilities to the masses especially those who are in the disabled sector of our society. In this regards the government's Sehat Sahulat Program is being implemented in around 100 districts of



Pakistan. Chiefly in the provinces of Punjab and KPK, there were over 90 lacs families who were benefited from these initiatives. Under this program, these families were getting free of cost medical and Health Care Services by both public sector hospitals and private sector hospitals or institutes.

Pensions

With the initiative of Health Insurance, the Ministry of Communication and Postal Service also take part in providing door-to-door delivery of the pensions allocated for the government personnel across the country. The basic reason for the door-to-door transfer of the money is to facilitate the old age people and get their money at the doorstep. There were around 1.3 million pensioners who were facilitated by this government initiative. (Barrientos, 2022)

Kamyab Jawan Program for COVID-19 Response was realigned. Specialized preparation of youth in ordinary and High-End/High-Tech exchanges under "Expertise for All" program was moved too far off/virtual preparation and E-realizing with the goal that employability of youth may not experience in financial effects of COVID - 19. Under the Start-Up program, Business hatching Centers (BICs) were laid out to advance youth business ventures with center around post-COVID-19 recuperation.

India, nonetheless; has a widespread food grain dissemination framework for those with proportion cards. Tragically, an enormous populace in casual work doesn't have these apportion cards. A few areas in India have reported explicit food bundles and food dissemination for people with disabilities³¹. Ladies with incapacities are in a tough spot in getting to proportion cards³². Unavailability of the public dispersion framework is one more reason for worry that upsets the responsiveness of this action towards people with handicaps.

Bangladesh has made explicit declarations with monetary responsibilities using the Ministry of Social Welfare, for the arrangement of food, cash, and different uses for people with inabilities. This is independent of the overall alleviation bundle for the circulation of food.

Nonetheless, the CSOs have pursued, referring to deficiency of help for people with handicaps, and have looked for an expansion in the forthcoming spending plan tending to the effect of COVID-19. Nepal has a particular arrangement to appropriate food bundles and medication for people with handicaps. (Neef, 2020)



The Sri Lankan government provided a mandate to supply all month-to-month medication for nothing from government emergency clinics to people (who might, for the most part, go to a month-to-month center) to be shipped off individuals' homes through exceptional postal assistance. This has worked preferably in more modest territorial clinics over in bigger medical clinics in the city.

On average, countries spent an average of 2% of GDP on social protection

The top 5 high-income countries by level of social protection spending were, “Sweden (16% of GDP), Poland (10%), Slovak Republic (9%), the United States (9%), and Aruba (6%). Among the top, upper-middle-income countries are Saint Lucia (26% of GDP), Serbia (9%), Malaysia (6%), Belize (5%), and Kosovo (4%). The highest level of spending in lower-middle-income countries is observed in Mongolia (8% of GDP), Zimbabwe (5%), Bolivia (3%), Pakistan (1.2%), and with a range of another spending 1% of GDP. Finally, among low-income countries spending are particularly high in Afghanistan (3% of GDP), Chad (2%), and Somalia, Niger, and South Sudan (all at 1% of GDP).”

Conclusion

From the above literature and the research, it has been observed that the restrictions and marginalization regarding the social protections must be addressed in the South Asia region. These restrictions and other issues have been experienced by persons with disabilities in the region. This social protection at any cost must be given on a priority basis to those who are facing a challenge of disability at any stage of their life. Because this also restricts the persons from getting other benefits as their other fellow beings that are not disabled are getting. As a result, this crisis will lead to other multidimensional impacts, like a person with a disability will not be able to get a good education as the children of his/her age are getting. Similarly, a person with a disability will not be able to get a good employment opportunity as a normal person because in our society disability is considered a curse for the individual in particular and also for the entire household in general. As a result of this disability, the disabled person must bear some extra cost of living in this globalized society. For this, several social protection techniques have been introduced in the past, and also in the contemporary era, several different programs have been initiated by the governments on their behalf.

From the above literature, it concludes that, compared to other regions and parts of the world the South Asia region has been witnessing the lowest amount of public social protection expenditure in the world, which is around 2.7 % of the regional GDP. Side by



side the persons who are facing some disability during their life are also unable to get a proper allocation of money and services since the initiatives from the government were also missing in this regard. According to the statistics provided by the UNICEF South Asia region has recently estimated global disability allowance for the working-age adults' and children that caused 0.2% and 0.3% GDP of South Asian countries.

Several other initiatives were also taken in the region to facilitate those who were not previously facilitated just because of a lack of framed policies from the side of government. Now with time, several productive activities were also initiated especially for the marginalized peoples that were facing different types of resistance to get social protection from the government.

Similarly, the research also concludes that several other measures should be taken to have the proper information and adopted the procedure and processes that help in managing to provide the disability ID cards and other certificates. Because the availability of proper resources to the disabled person is also a major concern in the region

In this regards the government must keep proper data and other necessary information related to the person with disabilities to tackle the issue comprehensively. Consequently, the region has to invest appropriate resources to provide all the basic facilities to the marginalized people with having internationally comparable data related to disabled persons.

Key Recommendations

Individuals with handicaps should be remembered for all friendly insurance estimates zeroed in on reaction and recuperation. Every single such program, including the execution instruments, ought to be responsive and address the multifaceted minimization experienced by individuals with incapacities to be following the CRPD.

Social insurance frameworks ought to give a significant mix of money moves and administrations that guarantee fundamental pay security, the inclusion of medical services and handicap-related costs, as well as working with financial strengthening. In the dynamic acknowledgment of general inclusion, the need should be given to youngsters and individuals with high help necessities.

The handicap confirmation interaction ought to be open and accessible for all individuals with incapacities as near the local area as could be expected.



The openness of data and correspondence including plain language correspondence, elective organizations of correspondence, and communication via gestures with subtitling should be guaranteed at all degrees of execution and in dialects spoken by the native networks.

Local area-based comprehensive administrations should be carried out with a specific spotlight on Dalit and native populaces of individuals with incapacities.

Deinstitutionalization programs should be fortified and increased.

Spending plans should be apportioned for answering the limitations and minimization experienced by people with handicaps.

All projects should be orientation delicate and age touchy.

At all degrees of arranging, execution, and effect appraisal, programs should guarantee full and compelling support of people with incapacities.

Nations in the locale should put resources into information assortment strategies, for example, the Washington Group Questions and managerial and monetary information should be disaggregated for guaranteeing responsibility.



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