

Welfare Reform and Social Integration: Analysis of the Impact of Policy Adjustments on the Integration of Vulnerable Groups into Society and the Promotion of Social Cohesion

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Abstract: The elderly, children, the disabled, the poor, etc. make up a significant portion of the population, and they are the most vulnerable groups in society. Without the help of relevant policies, their life and employment could be very difficult. Recently, social stratification has become so severe that government around the world can't longer afford to ignore this large part of population. In order to help them integrate into society, the international community has introduced a number of policies to help them. This paper takes China as an example, divide the part focus on different group, discusses how these China's policies can help the vulnerable groups, and uses case studies to demonstrate the impact of these policies on the integration of the vulnerable groups into the society. Most of these policies have worked, this is because the government takes into account the personality and ideological factors of different people, we find these specific policies and will show in the cases

Keywords: welfare policy, vulnerable groups, integration

1. Introduction

1.1. Learning value

In our modern life, witnessing the growth of the population and the economy, the gap between the weak people and the dominant people is getting bigger and bigger. Most of the weak person will even find it difficult to get involved in the society. Some social problems may be the cause. The unfair treatment to some underprivileged group have a sharp growth, and the number of crime happened to these people is still increasing. And no policy can help them solve the unfair status. Some criminals even don't have any punishment after bulldozing them. They are detrimental to the order, social stability and human relations of both nations. It is an important responsibility of the state and the government to take measures to protect them in a targeted way. Faced with this problem, governments in various countries are adjusting some policies. They are trying to integrate them. The most important thing is to provide them with a fair condition. In recent decades, vulnerable groups

have become part of the international vocabulary. China as a developing country is a typical example.

1.2. Vulnerable Groups definition

There is no official and authoritative legal and social definition of the term vulnerable groups, and according to the official website of the United Nations it is possible to extract one word - "few". Ethnic minorities, sub culturists, people with small economic incomes - these are all vulnerable groups [1].

In addition to this, there is another group that deserves to be merged into the discussion - women. Because they are under high pressure from both society and families, some of them may suffer from domestic violence and have no ways to find help, so they are isolated from the society. If government want to remote social cohesion, they need set more relevant policy.

2. Historical Background

The history of the relevant policies in China has been written about in detail in an article published by Lin Minggang and Liangyu—During the early years following the establishment of New China, a series of reform initiatives were implemented. This encompassed centralizing education, providing skills training, facilitating job placements, initiating labor reforms, and repatriating individuals to their hometowns. Simultaneously, civil affairs departments assumed control and carried out transformations of the "almshouses," "charity halls," and "widows' halls" previously established by the Kuomintang. These facilities were originally intended to support orphans, the elderly, the handicapped, and the youth. Furthermore, in addition to taking charge of and reforming the existing social charities and relief organizations, such as "alms houses," "charity halls," "widows' halls," and "reformatories," that were established by the Kuomintang, civil affairs departments established numerous relief and welfare units. These units played a crucial role in housing and resettling vulnerable populations like the elderly, orphans, and the mentally ill within urban areas. Concurrently, to address the urgent livelihood challenges faced by the unemployed and impoverished individuals, some cities initiated the formation of handicrafts and small-scale industrial production endeavors. These efforts involved the active participation of families affected by martyrdom and the urban poor, resulting in the establishment of production self-help organizations. As per 1954 statistics from 52 cities across the nation, a total of 1,802 long-term or seasonal production self-help groups were organized, involving more than 225,600 households in need who participated in production activities [2].

Upon the culmination of China's socialist transformation and the introduction of the planned economy, a gradual shift toward the "unit system" as an organizational structure in towns and cities took place. R. Mishra integrated this concept of social welfare into the fundamental fabric of society, coining it "structural welfare" (the structural welfare model), whereby the state pledged to guarantee the basic needs of its citizens. Within these units, members were granted access to various welfare amenities, including housing, hospitals, schools, canteens, kindergartens, baths, and sports halls, all constructed by the unit and offered either free of charge or at nominal costs. Furthermore, a range of welfare subsidies, such as those for winter heating, family visits, childcare, family planning, transportation, and housing, were made available. Many of these welfare programs and facilities persist to this day, continuing to play a vital role. For those falling outside the purview of these units and collectives, often referred to as the "three have-nots," the government established a civil welfare system to safeguard their basic livelihood. In 1978, this system comprised 577 social welfare centers with 38,000 beneficiaries, 49 children's welfare centers caring for 0.4 million infants and toddlers, and 102 welfare centers catering to the mentally ill with 15,000 beneficiaries. During this period, social welfare predominantly operated through production units [2].

In November 1993, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, in collaboration with 14 other ministries and commissions, jointly issued the "Opinions on Accelerating the Community Service Industry." This directive elevated community services to a pivotal industry in the establishment of a comprehensive social security system and a socialized service framework. Subsequently, numerous regional policies supporting and protecting communities were introduced nationwide, institutionalizing community services and ushering in an era of rapid development. In November of 1979, a significant transformation took place as numerous social welfare institutions across the nation started to extend their reach beyond their initial focus on adoption. These institutions began welcoming the broader society into their fold. Additionally, a multitude of social welfare organizations actively broadened their services beyond in-hospital care. They embarked on diverse initiatives aimed at benefiting the elderly, supporting child-rearing, aiding individuals with disabilities, and facilitating rehabilitation, among other activities [2].

3. Cases

3.1. Policy for Disabled

In year 2008, China government definite a person with a disability is a person who has lost or is abnormal in certain organization or function in mental, physical or human structure, and has completely or partially lost the ability to engage in certain activities in a normal way is a disabled people, and has promulgated the < Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons >. Our research show that more than 85% of city has been strictly implement this policy. The data show that when people with disabilities take public transport in 92% of city (have public transport), they will be provided with convenience and care, and they shall be allowed to carry the necessary assistive devices free of charge. Consider that disabled people may can't working in many sector, the government and society provide relief and subsidies through various channels to disabled people who really have difficulties in living (Article 41 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Disabled Persons). For relevant departments, they should according to disabled needs, set up rehabilitation medicine departments in medical institutions in a planned way, set up rehabilitation institutions for persons with disabilities, and carry out rehabilitation medical treatment and personnel training, technical guidance and scientific research. Consider different family background, students with disabilities receiving compulsory education and students from poor disabled families are provided with free textbooks, and boarding expenses are subsidized from local government.

In 2017, China government released a white paper entitled 'New Progress in the Legal Protection of Human Rights'. The employing company shall arrange the employment of disabled persons in accordance with the prescribed proportion. Employees with disabilities who are engaged in full-time work in an employing unit that employs persons with disabilities in a concentrated manner shall account for more than 25% of the total number of employees in it, and they should also provide training for disabled employees. And government encourage individual care about disabled. As more and more self-help organizations for disabled people been set, the education, training and job provided for disable people has increase, and more and more company volunteered to employ disable worker (have willing and ability). The result is that was a sharp increasing number which showing more disabled people loved join in the big society and most of them can be accepted by other employee. That's the main point of the State and it's truly succeed.

3.2. Policy for elder

China re-regulates the range of the elder which is above 65 year-old. It is prohibited for all people to discriminate against, insult, maltreat or abandon the elderly. And the elderly mainly relies on the family, family members should care for and take care of the elderly. The dependents shall fulfill their

obligations to provide for the elderly economically, take care of their daily life and provide spiritual comfort, take care of the special needs of the elderly and medical expenses also need to provide. (which show on the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Guarantee of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly). This guarantee elder can find their guardians when they need helps. The policy also set a restriction that elderly's dependents shall properly arrange housing for the elderly, and shall not force them move to houses with inferior conditions. Children or other relatives may not occupy the houses owned or rented by the elderly, and may not change the property rights or rental relations without authorization. So that elderly would not facing homeless problem.

The policy regulates the companies that pension and other benefits enjoyed by the elderly according to law should be guaranteed. The relevant organizations must pay pension funds in full and on time, and may not be delayed without cause or misappropriated. In addition, government want to give elderly more chance join society, so the encourage local to the establishment of an old-age insurance system used as a pension base, and the proceeds for the elderly. This help elderly lives a happier life and not be elbow out from social lifestyle and better promote social integration.

China also give finance support for elder on transportation. Shanghai subsidize elderly for giving them 180 yuan on travel by public transport. If elderly difficult travel by themselves, some staffs will full-time accompany by their trips. There also some facilities that provide accommodation, life care services and other services for the elderly are called nursing homes, and elderly only need to pay low fee or free for join in. lots of elderly can chat with each other and these help improve social harmony. Regular volunteer service can help elder enjoy the warmth of home and people of different age can have fun together. Elderly will not feel they are isolated from these special treatment and that's a promotion of social cohesion.

3.3. Policy for the Under Age

The age range ranged from below 18 are the under-age children and 13 to 18 called teenager in China. The children between this range often have less concentrate from their parents because their parents think they are mature enough or they have younger baby need to take care. So most of bully and depressed happened in these year range. In order to protect the physical and mental health of minors, safeguard their lawful rights and interests, and promote their all-round development in moral, intellectual and physical aspects, China government create <Youth Protection Law >[3] to make sure that under age this vulnerable group can be protect. The policy regulates that parents or other guardians shall perform their duty of guardianship and obligation to bring up minors according to law, and may not maltreat or abandon minors; No discrimination shall be made against female minors or minors with disabilities. These help to prove all under age have a good childhood and ask laws help if their parents didn't treat them well. All under age must study at school about 9 years for free, they can change their life trace if they study hard. This gives them a chance to join society better.

Policy also set that no organization or individual may recruit minors under the age of 16. Under 16 age labour means that many of them are forced into the labour market without adequate education and upbringing. This not only deprives them of their childhood, but also affects their healthy growth, their physical and mental may be hurt by doing some busy and dangerous jobs. With the strict regulation, more under age can learn more from school and help them join the society easier in the neared future. The government also consider that some parents may have less willing to take their kids travel, so a policy set that public transport (e.g. road, railway, water and air) in accordance with relevant provisions, provide free or concessionary fares to minors The China government encourages patriotic education bases, museums, science and technology museums, art galleries and other public venues to open special sessions for minors and provide targeted services for minors. Online game service providers in accordance with the relevant regulations and standards of the State, classify game products, make age-appropriate suggestions, and take technical measures, and shall not allow under

age to have access to inappropriate games or game functions. The restrictions protect youth health and safety, encourage less minors play video game but go out doing sport or visit historian museum and also improve the social cohesion.

3.4. Policy for the poor

As a developing country, China has an imbalance between urban and rural development, and the poor are mainly located in rural areas. By 2020, China had achieved the elimination of absolute poverty in rural areas, lifting 98.99 million people out of poverty. In recent years, China has been promoting the digital transformation of the countryside [4].

By the end of 2021, 87.3% of rural areas will be connected to public transport, 99.1% of rural areas will be paved with concrete or tarmac on the main roads leading into rural areas, and 97.4% of rural areas will be paved with concrete or tarmac on the main roads within rural areas. Rural informatization continues to progress; by the end of 2021, 99.0% of villages will be connected to broadband Internet, and 94.2% of villages will be connected to cable TV. Continued improvement of rural infrastructure will boost development of agricultural production; by end of 2021, over 330,000 villages will establish e-commerce distribution points, and almost 50,000 villages will engage in recreational agriculture and rural travel, greatly improving rural production and livelihoods. By 2021, there would be 599,000 village dispensaries, with at least one dispensary in each village on average. Rural health technicians per 10,000 are projected to reach 52 by 2020, up 18 from 2012, and rural health practitioners per 10,000 are projected to reach 21, up seven from 2021. In 2020, the five guarantees for decentralized rural support would reach 3.72 million, while the five guarantees for central rural support would reach 740 thousand [5].

Macroscopically, farmers' motivation can be seen in gross product. Grain production will grow at a 1.2 percent average annual rate from 2013 through 2021. This includes grain production at 12,655 billion lbs, up 5.7 billion lbs, at a 1.8 percent average annual rate; legume production at 39.3 billion lbs, up 3.2 billion lbs, at a 0.6 percent average annual rate; potato production at 60.9 billion lbs, up 3.2 billion lbs, at a 0.6 percent average annual rate. Among them, 425.7 bn lbs of rice, up 12.6 bn lbs from 2012, averaging 0.3% annual increase from 2013 to 2021, 273.9 bn lbs of wheat, up 28. Corn, 545.1 billion lbs, up 86 billion lbs, averaging 1.9 percent per year; Soybeans, 32.8 billion lbs, up 5.9 billion lbs, averaging 2.2 percent per year [5, 6].

4. Conclusions

This thesis summarizes more comprehensively the currently existing policies on vulnerable groups and their impacts, but does not make a specific examination because it uses official data. Secondly, there is no official policy on women in China, but the situation of women as a vulnerable group still exists, and this could be a topic of focus in the future.

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