

Social Justice Through Social Security

Ronnie Pather

Overview

- Background
- Meaning of Social Justice
- SA Constitution
- Critique of the SA Social Security system
- Conclusion

- World Bank Report on inequality in 2018
- top 1% of South Africans own 71% of the country's wealth
- bottom 60% control 7% of the country's assets
- 55% of South Africans live below the national poverty line of R992 a month

- unemployment rate increased to 29 per cent
- highest jobless rate since the first quarter of 2003
- number of unemployed - 6.65 million

- all stakeholders - look at realities to meet the universal aspiration for social justice
- create new jobs
- achieve social cohesion
- combat poverty and rising inequalities

- values of freedom, human dignity, social justice, security and non-discrimination
- foundations for sustainable economic growth
- social development and efficiency violated

- Social security - key component of international social justice mission advocated UN and the ILO
- call for improved conditions for labour through
- protection against sickness, disease injury
- protection of children, young persons, women and the aged

- ILO - Declaration of Philadelphia (1944)
- call for extension of social security measures
- need of such protection and comprehensive medical care
- provision for child welfare and maternity protection
- universal and lasting peace - only be achieved through Social Justice

- Social security refers to all policies and programmes providing benefits
- to secure protection

- World community recognized social security as a human right
- basic right and freedoms to which all humans are entitled
- Universal recognition - a right based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination
- embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- Government must be committed to providing effective, efficient and comprehensive social security service to all
- current social security framework and services fragmented

- Preamble to South African Constitution
- establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights
- Social Justice only achieved if poverty and inequality have been redressed

- Right to Social Security enshrined in the Bill of Rights
- Constitution affirms rights to
 - Access to health care
 - Access to social security and social assistance
 - Access to emergency medical treatment

Constitution at s27 asserts that

“The State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights.”

- South African government maintained Social Assistance and Social Insurance that provides protection of its citizens.

Social Security defined as measures to protect all from:

- Poverty and social exclusion
- Detrimental Financial consequences
- Insufficient family support for children and adult dependents

- Comprehensive Social security important to close gaps by:
 - aligning benefits
 - Removing inefficiencies
 - eliminating duplication
 - improving coverage
 - building social solidarity

- The social security system - used as economic and social policy planning system
- provide data about unemployment and economic activity
- used for Public Employment Services
- active labour market policy tool
- must be affordable, accessible and financially sustainable

- Means Test must be reviewed
- personal income tax rebate structure will compensate
- will remove bias against household savings and asset accumulation

Conclusion

- South African Social Security network 17 million beneficiaries
- serious limitations on the fiscus
- developing nation
- benefits provided better than other developing nations

Conclusion

- means test should be revisited
- ensure less stringent system
- seek to be inclusive
- disjuncture between provisions of the Constitution and achieving social justice through social security
- justified due to the limited resources

Thank You