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Everyone Is in Favor of Justice in Society. What Is It that People Who Use the Term “Social Justice” Believe in that Others Do Not?

Justice is the core basis of societal well-being and adequate performance. However, social justice is a principle that outlines the governmental, social, and individual obligations for the appropriate functioning of micro- and macro-communities. This principle is not new: its development has been continuous. The current version of social justice differs from the initial one, but the main patterns remain similar. Social justice proponents believe that there is a correlation between government, society, and individuals, which signify the religious, political, social, economic, healthcare, and environmental rights and responsibilities of all participants.

Social justice is a principle that considers equality and fairness to be essential elements for relationships between an individual and the community. Social justice as a movement concentrates on the equal distribution of resources and rights among all individuals in the community regardless of their current status. People using the term ‘social justice’ believe in the unity of all members of society: “a society which has been made by a civil union, a society of active citizens living at equal as lawgivers, whose dignity is founded on public laws of the state” (Nikolic and Cvejic 280). Stemming from this idea, advocates of social justice

acknowledge the need to support all people and not ignore socially, politically, racially, economically, or ideologically oppressed groups. From such a standpoint, people possess both duties and rights that provide them with the ability to directly or indirectly participate in the establishment of social justice. A government often gains the role of a catalyst for needed changes as the institution of power and authority.

Religion has been considered a source of social justice initiatives for a long time, and it has been undergoing significant shifts towards liberalization recently. Religion often attracted public attention to social and political needs or organized aid for deprived groups. Being a center of moral formation for centuries, religious institutions outlined the social needs of the community as well. Churches can support and help to establish social justice in developing countries. The majority of dominant religions help low-income individuals or those with health complications. Religions respect the human right for life as a central value; therefore, helping those who face struggles is a moral obligation for people of a higher status. At present, religions, especially the ones heavily relying on hierarchy, transform to include all people in their manifestation. Churches change the attitude towards racial minorities, women, and representatives of the LGBT+ community to meet modern standards. People endorsing social justice view religion as a critical promoter of social changes.

For social justice, political equality allows all people to engage in the formation of their well-being and development of their communities to achieve equity. The political aspect of social justice is critical due to the political participation of social justice movements and the

influence of modern political philosophy on promoting equality. Political parties and officials receive the most considerable role in managing public issues and utilizing their authority and influence for the benefit of the community. Correspondingly, politicians exercise the goodwill of citizens to implement changes that address unfairness. Human rights are the central value in the political perspective, and people should receive their right to participate in politics freely. The government uses its mechanisms to ensure that all citizens are equal by law and that all of them are granted fundamental liberties from birth. People should be free from discrimination based on any criteria, and politics is the main channel of influence for social justice.

Furthermore, the equal distribution of possibilities, liberties, and rights in society lie at the core of the social justice principle. Any society is a dynamically modifying unity dependant on political and cultural stressors. These changes should remain fair. People have a right to choose their occupation, place of living, and act in accordance to their will if it is lawful and non-discriminatory. The advocates of social justice emphasize that institutions are both formal and informal, and they often exclude people who are either ‘deviant’ from a common point of view or lack a particular social advantage necessary for integration. Hence, even if formally a person is free, the person’s inability of self-realization, as well as the absence of possibilities, limit freedom. The existence of equal opportunities is the goal for social justice: “resources have an important influence on the factual freedom because they greatly determine how much power we will have to change circumstances that are unfavourable to us” (Nikolic and Cvejic 275). Resources are not only material; some of them are the accessibility to similar services,

rights, and treatments as others may possess. Society accepts responsibility for all, realizing that not economic and social changes may become dramatic while the importance of an individual's life and liberty remains stable.

From an economic standpoint, social justice relies on economic fairness, which makes it realistic to achieve factual freedom. The gap between high-income and low-income communities is the reason for injustice. Since every member of a community should receive financial support, taxation is one of the significant concepts that supporters of this idea promote, as it redistributes income depending on each person's economic capability. Other vital institutions are public services and labor laws, as well as social insurance; they aim at protecting workers. Many social justice advocates consider the value of the government's assistance in receiving free or partially refunded education due to the investment in a future reformation of economic challenges for the whole society. Financial support would eliminate the barriers to group mobility and promote financial safety. Research by Kavuri and Shao proves that the principles of social justice should be part of government policies because it is economically sufficient: "The simple OLS regressions illustrate that for OECD countries a 1 point increase in the weighted social justice index would increase GDP per capita 61 % when controlling for the endogeneity" (23). Such steps are necessary from a social justice perspective to make formal equality real.

One should not eliminate the role of healthcare in the discussion on social justice. Healthcare is one of the fields that deserve significant attention from a social justice outlook

because it influences an individual's life as well as the access to safety and treatment.

Healthcare expenditures are high and people may refuse treatment if it is expensive.

Furthermore, the quality of healthcare varies depending on the region and the economic status of the neighborhood. To specify, rural areas often remain in a vulnerable position, and governmental promotion of primary healthcare, elderly care, and freedom of choice in treatment is a focus in many cases. In such situations, social justice views a set of challenges as economic and geographic inequality, which impacts the quality of life. While people having a different opinion would regard equal access to healthcare unnecessary or harmful, the proponents of this principle believe that it illustrates the well-being of the state. The global approach to healthcare develops with issues of severe diseases, malnourishment, and infections typical of low-income countries. Viewing human life as a basic unit of societal formation, a government promotes the improvement of healthcare and access to it.

Recently, the environmental factor has become an emerging element for social justice defenders. The present environmental crisis sets strict requirements for contemporary generations to avoid the ecological catastrophe of the future. The anthropogenic factor influences the planet and the worldwide community. The violence that social justice regularly criticizes manifests itself in the widespread attitude towards the environment: “In fact, our bodies themselves can be viewed as sites of struggle for environmental justice” (Lanese par. 5). For social justice proponents, environmental support is a social responsibility since nature’s

status impacts people's survival. All generations have a responsibility for the environmental challenges that they cause and should make them a part of their social justice agenda.

From the above, current societal difficulties may be addressed by the principle of social justice. The supporters of social justice believe in the community's responsibility for a set of issues. While the view is idealistic, the concept is partially plausible. People's development depends on the economic resources they possess and societal liberties on which they may rely. Societies promoting social justice are at a stable level of economic growth. With increasing multiculturalism, globalization, and economic and environmental crises, social justice is a more attractive option for political thinkers and social activists.

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