
An Inquisitorial Study of Public Policies Implemented for Ancient Social Welfare (From Rajarata Civilization)

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Abstract

A society is established because of human needs and activities. The concept of "welfare" has a special place in society. Welfare helps to promote the individual's physical and spiritual development and maintains social well-being and interpersonal harmony. According to the liberal view on welfare, "the state is a social welfare organization." According to that, the state is created to fulfill the welfare purpose. It is known that the rulers of the Ancient and the present have paid more attention to social welfare. This is evident from studying the regimes of kingdoms such as Anuradhapura and Polonnaru. This study examines the public policies implemented for social welfare in Ancient times. The problem of the study focuses on how the form of public policies is implemented for social welfare. A historical source study is used as the study methodology, and data exploration is further done by obtaining subject qualitative opinions. Anuradhapura was the founding kingdom of the Sinhalese Kingdoms. The rulers there have also worked with outstanding commitment to social welfare. The construction of tanks, construction of roads, construction of hospitals, and construction of canals was prominent among them. Not only that, Rajarata rulers mainly paid attention to the security of the country and improving the well-being of the people. They enrich the medical facilities, educational facilities, and security facilities of the kingdom. Further, Rajarata rulers maintained different religious festivals. Those festivals help to build harmony among people in society. Compared to the Anuradhapura rulers, Polonnaru rulers also focused on social welfare by studying the governing laws of that era. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the welfare concept of the Rajarata civilization was implemented optimally.

Keywords: - Anuradhapura, Kingdoms, Polonnaru, Rajarata, Welfare.

01. Introduction

Welfare is a comprehensive concept. Here, the organization that aims to assist individuals and groups in achieving a satisfactory standard of living and health can be identified as a social welfare system. Also, it is interpreted as the services performed to provide the country's people with a common standard of living. By providing a common standard of living to the people

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through the services provided for personal development, creating a satisfactory standard of living and health guarantees welfare. Free health, education, security, and services related to individual basic needs are prominent here. Social welfare is not limited to a particular country, group of people, time, or era and is ever-changing and flows with individual needs. Hence, the definition of "social welfare" was identified by examining different and extensive interpretations.

When considering about Sri Lankan context, the beginning of this field has spread to the ancient period. It is also clear from the information that the national historical tradition of Sri Lanka started from the emergence of kingships to the formation of welfare for the Sri Lankan citizens. Mainly from the region of Devanampiyatissa, the physical and spiritual environment of the people was created with the influence of Buddhism. On the subject of that, rulers were considered the key figure of the society to ensure all kinds of the welfare of the people. Among the historical history of welfare, the welfare process of the Rajarata civilization [Anuradhapura & Polonnaruwa] will be unique. Welfare functions were reflected more by the control of political power under various local and foreign rulers, as it originated the concept of statehood and the most extended period of kingdoms. Because migrations and invasions affected the Rajarata kingdom at different times, there were direct and indirect effects on the welfare of this period. To avoid such reasons, fulfill the people's needs, and build a moral society, the rulers have prepared long and short-term policies, laws, and decrees. Considering the state's welfare as the king's responsibility, the inspiration of the Buddhist philosophy, and the king's objective, the gathering of merits in both profane and super mundane aspects led the kingdom's rulers to engage in welfare work.

02. Research Problem

Today's welfare comes in many forms. Some current social welfare programs are narrowly targeted and create adverse social and environmental conditions. Nevertheless, the rulers of the Rajarata kingdoms have engaged in social welfare based on social needs, considering it their responsibility and duty. Therefore, those actions and policies did not negatively affect society and the environment. The utility of using the rituality of the ancient state policies in the welfare of the upcoming state policies on the welfare of the welfare work was studied on the welfare of the Rajarata civilization.

Accordingly, "What is the form of Public policies implemented for the ancient social welfare?" is the research problem. The main objective of this study was to identify the policies taken by the ruler during the ancient Kingdoms regarding social welfare.

03. Review of the Relevant Literature

Public Policies and social welfare are deeply examined by various researchers based on diverse perspectives. De Soysa (1993) observed social welfare through liberalist ideas about the clean state. Jayasingha (1997) observed current government policies for social services, social welfare services, and social work as a method and method that can be used for social development. Security and social welfare are intertwined.

The limited number of studies focused on the connection between security and social welfare. Vidyalankara (2000) observed ancient land tenure and punishment methods for social welfare.

This research also enables us to identify how the security of the ancient social community was established and how justice and fairness were fulfilled.

This research mainly focuses on the Rajarata Civilization. That includes both Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa Kingdoms. The limited number of studies focused on Social welfare Implemented by rulers in the Anuradhapura period. Udepala (2013) observed the services rendered by the ruler of the Anuradhapura period to social welfare.

Ancient rulers considered welfare as their responsibility and engaged in welfare work; nowadays, this concept is combined with human rights. Herath (2009) observed welfare-related statutes that are intertwined with human rights.

In this way, prior studies can be identified. No works are written targeting the public policies for social welfare in Ancient Ceylon. Due to that, this research fills that research gap. This is the uniqueness of this research.

04. Methods

A systematic research plan was prepared to collect the required data. The qualitative research methodology was used here. Accordingly, the data was collected through the literature survey, and primary and secondary sources were used. The primary sources were Deepavamsa and Mahavamsa. As the secondary sources, a variety of other reading resources were used. After that, the information that has been obtained from primary sources and secondary sources was thoroughly investigated to reveal an actual research output. Data Analysis is a crucial task involved in any research. As noted earlier, this research is qualitative. Therefore, the conclusions will depend on the ideas derived from the collected data. A suitable scientific analyzing method was chosen to arrive at valid conclusions and avoid errors. At the very outset, the available information was classified and analyzed using the thematic analysis method.

05. Results and Discussion

5.1. Welfare Services in the Rajarata Kingdom of Ancient Sri Lanka

The welfare policies that the rulers of the Rajarata kingdom implemented could be discussed under the following pillars.

5.1.1. Health Services

Literary and archeological sources reveal that the ancient rulers of Ceylon were engaged in various tasks to preserve the health of their fellow citizens as a service to the people. The administrators have primarily worked to preserve the physical and mental health of the campaigners. It is mentioned in Mahavamsa that King Pandukabhaya, who focused on personal health and hygiene, has prepared the governance structure of the city in such a way that the physical health and mental health of the community are developed. "Five hundred servants were employed to clean the city, two hundred saddle men to dispose of excrement, and one hundred and fifty saddle men to carry the corpses to the tomb outside the city" (Mahavamsa, Chapter 10). Also, there were two buildings built for Sottishala and Sivikashala.

There are two views that the Sivikasala may have been the halls where the Shivalinga was replaced or a maternity ward. Commentators argue that a Sottishala is a place where Brahmins chanted the Vedas or a building used as a sanatorium.

In the same way, the patronages shown by the Ancient Sri Lankan kings for the field of medicine are clear from the literary and archaeological information. The services rendered to improve the health of ordinary people can be identified during the reign of Dutugemunu when most chapters of the Mahavamsa were dedicated. That is, it is mentioned in the Mahavamsa that pregnant mothers were given free food, drinks, and medicines, eighteen nursing stations were built for the sick, and midwives were given salaries and gifts (Udepala, 2013).

As a famous physician, King Buddhadasa, who recognized the ancient Sri Lankan society, was interested not only in the fourth group of Bhikshu, bhikshuni, upasaka, and upasika but also in protecting the health of animals. He also wrote a medical book called "Sarartha Sangraha." It is clear from the information taken from the chronicle literature that King Buddhadasa was a surgeon, a psychiatrist as well as a veterinarian.

- King Buddhadasa cured a monk suffering from leprosy.
- A tumor in the stomach of a venomous snake has been cured by cutting it and applying it for medicine.
- A monk suffering from a stomach ailment from milk consumption was cured by drinking a horse's blood.
- Also, one doctor has been appointed for every ten villages (Udepala, 2013).

The rulers of the Ancient era worked this way to improve the health of the ordinary people, and the ruins of a large infirmary built to care for the monks have been found on the earth. Considering the ruins here, it appears that much money was spent from the treasury for such large constructions.

This is recognized as the oldest hospital in the world and was built in the 9th century AD. According to Mahavamsa, this was done with the patronage of King Sena II. However, Mihintala Hospital is essential because of two inscriptions erected by King Mihindu IV. Institutions in this square-shaped building are medicine stores, a Buddha temple, and the ruins of a medicine boat. The two earthen jars found in the excavations carried out in 1954 were imported from the East, and because they were made airtight, it can be thought that they were storage tanks for medicines. Such hospitals are near Madirigiriya, Polonnaruwa, Alapatha Piriven Complex, Anuradhapura Thuparamaya, and Ruwanweli Seya. Archaeological evidence was found in areas such as Vessagiriya, Arankele, and hospitals built for monks' health care and the laity. Physical health was mostly done through hospitals. The Ancient rulers also paid attention to the mental health of the community and made city plans in such a way as to promote mental health. Cities are planned with priority to proper waste disposal, water management, landscaping, and the natural environment. City designs such as Anuradhapura and Sigiriya can be recognized as examples. Also, it appears from the survey of the inscriptions of the last half of the Anuradhapura era that many officials worked in association with the medical service (Udepala, 2013).

Despite the scarcity of specific references to healthcare policies, historical accounts indicate that healthcare and medicine were practiced during the Polonnaruwa period. Ancient texts

such as the "Sarartha Sangrahaya" mentioned about medicinal plants and traditional medicine, including Ayurveda. Monastic institutions and hospitals almost certainly played a role in providing healthcare to the general public (Siriweera, 1994).

There are even sources of information about hospitals and pharmacies that manufacture medicines. Considering this, it must be said that the main reason for the emergence of a great culture in the Ancient eras was the healthy society built due to providing health facilities for fellow citizens.

5.1.2. Upliftment of Education

It was considered a social service by the Ancient state administration and allocated for education from the state treasury. Piriven was the foremost educational institution in Ancient society. Monks were primarily educated in the Piriven. Sometimes the children of royalty and nobles were educated in these places. Those institutions were built with the state's support and maintained with the same support. Piriven, the ancient educational institution that started in this country, originated with the Mahindagamana—on the advice of Mihindu Thero, King Devanampiyathissa made several pirivens for the first time. One of the aims of this was to spread religion. During this period, information about teachers, students, and education subjects is revealed through inscriptions and ancient literature. Early inscriptions show that names such as "Thera, Mahathera, Acharya, and Achari" were used by persons imparting knowledge (Dhunuwila, 2013).

It is evident from the construction and dedication of the first pirivena temple, "Kalaprasada Pirivena," built for King Devanampiyathissa at Tissamaharama in Anuradhapura for Mihindu Thero (Mahawamsa, Chapter 15).

King Devanampiyathissa has also started many Pirivenas like Marugana Pirivena, Phalagga Pirivena, and Diksanda Senevi Pirivena (Udepala, 2013).

Another important one is "Monarapirivena," established by King Buddhadasa in the 4th century AD, according to the Mahavamsa (Udepala, 2013). It is mentioned in the Mahavamsa that the king gave daily donations to the 500 monks who lived there (Mahawamsa, Chapter 15). Also, a significant part of the budget of the state treasury was used for the maintenance of this educational institution, which was built with a focus on the theological sector (Udepala, 2013).

The primary purpose of building education in ancient times was to develop attitudes. Inscriptions and other archeological factors reveal that educational institutions were expected to produce good citizens for society (Dhunuwila, 2013).

Buddhism was essential during the Polonnaruwa era, and monastic institutions were actively involved in education and welfare. Monastic complexes like the Gal Vihara and Lankatilaka Vihara served as learning and spiritual guidance centers. Monks were essential in promoting education, providing scholarships, and supporting people's intellectual development (Siriweera, 1994).

In this way, it is an actual oath that the education system was started in society as a service to the people during the Ancient government administration, and work was done for its

development.

5.1.3. Construction of Tanks

One of the essential services from the Ancient state treasury is the expenditure of resources for activities that help to protect and develop the economic situation. Most importantly, the managers are committed to developing the irrigation industry. Some rulers considered it their responsibility to build tanks for their fellow citizens. The inhabitants' labor to create these tanks was often obtained free of charge. Most ancient kingdoms, in particular, arose in the dry region. The first Arya groups formed settlements along the rivers.

Over time, the need for tanks to store water arose due to the flooding of rivers. The change of water in the rivers according to the change of seasons, overpopulation, and the lack of any other way to get water for farming other than river water are the things that motivated the rulers to create the tanks. Accordingly, the ability to carry out their agricultural activities properly in every season arose with the creation of tanks. Through this, the country's economic prosperity and food self-sufficiency were secured.

As mentioned in the Mahavamsa, the first identified lake among the lakes created in this country was the Anuradha Lake, built by the minister Anuradha near the Kumbhanadee Valley (Mahawamsa, Chapter 8). However, there is no archaeological evidence. According to this, the Ancientest known irrigation industry is the Abhaya Tank by King Pandukabhaya (Mahawamsa, Chapter 10). In addition, Gamini and Jaya Tanks were also seen but have not been identified. During Devanampiyathissa, there was a great revival in the irrigation industry, and the concept of Tank, dageba, village, and temple was socialized. This time the Tisa Tank was created to cover four hundred acres. The reign of Dutugemunu is also a remarkable period in the history of irrigation. The Sorabora Lake was created this time by the initiative of a giant called Bulata. Several kings were prominent in the construction of tanks during the Ancient kingdoms. It is mentioned in the Poojvali that 18 tanks were made by King Saddhatissa (Ellawala, 1962). According to it, Padaviya Lake was built by King Saddhatissa. King Vasabha can be identified as a king famous for constructing tanks. Rajavali said King Vasabha created 12 tanks (Ellawala, 1962). King Mahasen was also a ruler who served the irrigation industry extensively.

Minneriya Lake has a unique place of importance among the lakes he built (Mahawamsa, Chapter 37). In this way, King Dhatusena also built large-scale irrigation factories. Kalaveva is unique among them. The Parakrama Samudra, built by King Parakramabahu, is important as a basic irrigation design found during the Polonnaru Kingdom. It is clear from the evolution of the irrigation industry that by gradually enlarging the small-size tanks, adding the necessary components for the regular maintenance of a tank, and adding canals and tunnel water systems, the managers are developing the irrigation industry from time to time and making the people happy.

Agriculture and irrigation advanced significantly during the Polonnaruwa era. The Chola kings built extensive irrigation systems that included large reservoirs (called "tank" systems), canals, and dams. These systems aided in the management of water resources and the improvement of agricultural productivity, thereby benefiting farming communities (Siriweera, 1994). The Polonnaruwa era is remembered for its extensive irrigation systems, which greatly aided agricultural development and people's well-being. These systems, which include the Parakrama Samudra and various tanks, are mentioned in inscriptions and historical texts such

as the "Mahavamsa." These texts emphasize the importance of irrigation in sustaining the economy and ensuring food security.

On the one hand, the rulers allocated money from the state treasury for the irrigation industry, but the taxes created in connection with the irrigation industry, such as "Matsya Bhagaya, Diya Badda, Bojakapati" were an additional source of income (Udepala, 2013). Through this, the king was able to maintain the loyalty of his fellow citizens, and instead of using the state capital for other expenses, resources were invested in a certain way through the irrigation industry. Thus, it is clear that the irrigation industry provided a social service and a wealth investment to the state treasury.

5.1.4. Construction of Roads

The rulers of Ancient Sri Lanka created highways as a social service. Passing through the high mountain ridges was tiring for the passengers. Because of that, the rulers built roads through the plains so the passengers did not tire. According to source information, passengers mainly used wagons, animal rides, and river rafts as modes of transportation (Udepala, 2013). Through these types of transportation, the country's people conducted trade activities and relationships with other members of society. Therefore, roads were an essential factor in fulfilling the community's needs. A main road from Dambakola Patune to Anuradhapura can be traced back to the kingdom period. Due to these routes, it has been easy for the rulers of Anuradhapura, the country's capital, to maintain close Indian relations with Sri Lanka. The first delegation sent by King Devanampiyatissa to Emperor Ashoka sailed from Dambakola Patune. They then came to Anuradhapura after twelve days in Sri Lanka (Mahawamsa, Chapter 11). It took seven days to travel by sea and five days to walk. There was a short road between Dambakola Patuna and the main town. Through this, the trade relations between the two countries may have been more accessible. In this way, there were roads from Anuradhapura to Mahathitta Port, from Mahagrama to Anuradhapura, and from Anuradhapura to the country of Malaya (Udepala, 2013). In this way, it is possible to identify a road system spread all over Sri Lanka, and it is also clear from the source information that the rest houses were built by the rulers to relax on the way. The construction and maintenance of highways was the work of the king, and in the areas outside the capital, these works were carried out by the local rulers. However, the king's responsibilities to carry out these constructions locally in association with the capital were also essential.

5.1.5. Working for the Security of the Country

The ancient rulers considered it their responsibility to protect the city. Therefore, in the early days of the Anuradhapura era, the rulers built enormous walls than the city to protect the city. That is also mentioned in the Mahavamsa (Mahawamsa, Chapter 10). The ancient rulers considered it their responsibility to protect the city. Therefore, in the early days of the Anuradhapura era, the rulers built enormous walls than the city in order to protect the city. That is also mentioned in the Mahavamsa (Mahawamsa, Chapter 35). Explaining why King Vasabha took such a step, Prof. Paranavithana points out that it was a long-awaited strategy for the invasion of Soli when the day of Vankanasika Tissa came (Udepala, 2013).

Several kings ruled Sri Lanka during the Polonnaruwa era, and they were responsible for the country's security.

Vijayabahu-I was one of the most prominent Polonnaruwa-era kings. He took over the Polonnaruwa Kingdom from the Chola invaders and worked to stabilize and secure the country. Parakramabahu-I is regarded as one of the most fabulous Polonnaruwa-era kings. He concentrated on fortifying the kingdom's defenses and expanding its borders. Parakramabahu-I implemented effective military strategies and constructed fortresses, including the impressive Citadel of Polonnaruwa. Nissanka Malla was well-known for his architectural achievements, but he also took precautions to keep his kingdom safe. He built defensive structures and participated in military campaigns to protect the kingdom's interests (Siriweera, 1994). These kings put in place various security measures to protect and stabilize the kingdom of Polonnaruwa. Fortifications, military campaigns, and diplomatic strategies were used to defend against external threats and ensure internal security.

The former rulers have spent money on the country's Security just as they spent on providing social services from their state coffers. By intervening in the country's Security in this way, the ruler's existence and the Security of the country's people are confirmed. On the one hand, this is an advantage for the king; on the other, it is a social service.

5.1.6. *Various Events and Awards*

Many different religious festivals have been maintained long since the historical period. A king could not fail to continue these religious festivals. Kings like Devanampiyatissa, Dutugemunu, Bhatikabhaya, and Amarandagamini have continuously held such religious festivals (Udepala, 2013). Vesak Festivals, Ariyavasa Sermon, Mihidu Perahera, and Dalada Perahera are festivals held continuously. The state exchequer has also spent money on special events like the Tulabhara main Abhisheka festival. With the intervention of such festival rulers, the harmony between the people of the society, the respect for the ruler, and the love for the religion will develop. Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa eras had the same attribute when considering the events and rewards. Therefore, it can also be termed a social service. According to these facts, it is clear that the rulers have done social welfare work in the Ancient. As a strategy to overcome the social problems faced by the community in ancient society, the rulers developed social welfare programs. As the responsibility of the government to fulfill basic human needs such as security, food, health, and education, various measures and policies can be identified based on the literary and archaeological evidence that includes the details of the Rajarata civilization

06. Conclusion

An organized society that aims to assist individuals and groups in achieving a satisfactory standard of living and health is called a welfare system. Social welfare can also be identified as the services provided to the country's people with a common standard of living. The social problems that were prevalent in the Ancient era also became a reason to encourage welfare work. According to the facts, it was clear that social development has also taken place in Ancient Sri Lankan society compared to social programs. As discussed, social development took place through many welfare measures the ruler took to solve the social problems in Ancient society. The creation of new cities, the creation of highway systems, the initiation of large-scale water projects, and the development of the health sector were how society moved forward from the era in which it existed. By the middle half of the Anuradhapura period, people's life and society became more complex than in the first half. The ruler provided other social welfare through various welfare schemes in such cases. It can be concluded that social

development has occurred through the social welfare of Ancient society. In this way, by identifying the government policies implemented by the Ancient rulers for welfare, it is clear that the rulers who prepared these policies paid more attention to individual needs. However, some rulers have paid more attention to the issues that influenced the creation of those requirements and what they think may be the cause. Some of the living members of any society need special care. In modern times, special care has been provided for the groups that need special care. Especially women, children, the elderly, those who are helpless due to illness, and those affected by wars and refugees are protected in modern law as groups that require special protection. It can be concluded from the ancient government policies related to welfare that the ancient rulers of Ceylon, nourished by Buddhist teachings, had implemented various policies to protect individuals and groups who needed special protection. "What is the form of public policies implemented for social welfare in ancient Ceylon?" Finally, it can be concluded that the research problem was in a positive state during the study.

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