Models of Welfare for Developing Countries: A Case for Indigenisation

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Many efforts have been made to develop various models to explain the nature of social welfare development in the industrialised countries. Wilensky and Lebeaux's (1965) popular model of the residual and incremental welfare is a significant example of these attempts. These models have also been used to study developing countries. This study argues that such welfare models, discounting their heuristic value, are not relevant to developing countries since they are derived from the contexts of advanced industrialised countries. Two recent attempts at conceptualising welfare development of developing countries are examined; they have originated conceptually from the developing countries. It is pertinent to formulate and develop indigenous welfare models since they can reflect, more accurately, the nature of welfare delivery in these countries.

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Introduction

Much of the recent literature on social policy in the industrialised countries has seen the welfare state as a macro-social phenomenon (Oyen, 1986). The nature of the welfare state has been subjected to very critical scrutiny. In essence, researchers have focussed on the formulation of conceptual models to describe the goals and delivery mode of social welfare accurately. At a theoretical level, models refer to representations of social phenomena that exist in the real world. They offer conceptual frameworks which aim to categorise phenomena and understand the relationships between sets of variables. The purpose of a model is to bring together many isolated perceptions into a more complete picture (Estes, 1992; Johnson, 1987). Thus, the study of social welfare models opens up a debate about the proper role of social policy in society and the boundary between public and private care.
To date, discussion about social welfare models for the industrialised nations has accompanied the growth and retrenchment of welfare provisions in the industrial world. As Macpherson and Midgley (1987) observe, the growth of social policy as an academic subject is facilitated by the rapid expansion of statutory intervention in welfare provisions by governments in the industrialised countries after the Second World War. Researching social security programmes in the industrialised nations, Tracy (1991) notes that they have a relatively long history and are well-developed, thus making them attractive subjects of research for academics. Conventionally, social policy research is pursued by academics at universities located mainly in the industrialised nations.

Many of these studies (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965; Wilensky, 1975), almost entirely based on American and European experiences, suggest that the experiences of the industrialised nations offer important lessons, in terms of programme competence, applicability, and transferability for developing countries. Some go further and claim that the industrialised societies are a macrocosm for social policy analysis, regardless of the context of any particular society. Hence, this has led for the most part to a simplistic reading of the relationship between welfare development and socioeconomic levels, that developing countries will replicate the welfare models of industrialised nations eventually. Not surprisingly, the study of conceptions of social welfare in advanced industrialised countries has failed to develop a coherent theoretical basis and research agenda which can usefully explore the welfare development of developing nations. As a result, there exists a major gap in comparative policy discourse: the study of models of social welfare which are derived from developing countries.

Given this, few attempts at formulating an 'indigenous' social welfare model for developing countries would argue with the inevitability of the usefulness of models from industrialised countries. Therefore, the aim of this paper is two-fold: to examine the appropriateness and relevance of western social welfare models to developing countries, and to look at the few attempts of developing an indigenous welfare model for these countries. However, to understand the context of why there is to date an underdevelopment of welfare models for developing countries, it is necessary to consider those forces which undermine efforts to develop those models.
Pragmatic Empiricism of Social Administration

Until recently, the pervasiveness of state welfare has not been matched by a concomitant concern with the formulation of theoretical frameworks relevant to the understanding of social policy development. As a matter of fact, systematic academic inquiry into social policies began in earnest in the industrialised countries long after the end of the Second World War. Pinker (1971), a British policy analyst, describes the way in which the history of the study of welfare institutions and policies have been based on empirical research and pragmatism in order to combat what are seen as the undesirable effects of social theory. Similarly, Lee and Raban (1983) observe that discussions of the pertinence of the concept 'welfare ideology' have been 'both restricted and restricting'. Mishra (1981) urged that the study of social policy be grounded far more firmly in social theory than was the case at the time. For a long time, such pragmatic focus seemed to restrict any model development.

Optimism of the Convergence Thesis

In the absence of any major concern about theory, a simple evolutionary perspective on the welfare state has developed which pervaded both academic and public policy circles in the 1960s. The welfare state has been represented as a necessary and inevitable institutional consequence of industrialisation. In short, industrialisation and social policy development go hand in hand. Wilensky (1975), for example, demonstrated that, of all the factors he was able to quantify and consider across a range of 64 countries, the item most strongly associated with the level of social welfare spending was the level of economic development. Such evidence strengthened the plausibility of theories which postulate an iron law of convergence between different social systems under the influence of technological change, the development of common industrial and worldwide interdependent exchange systems, and the expansion of equal citizenship (Taylor-Gooby and Dale, 1981). Accordingly, this thesis of convergence includes social welfare, and researchers would show that, irrespective of political and ideological differences, state welfare programmes are developing in all industrialised societies.

Centrality of Institutional/Residual Conceptions of Welfare

Closely linked with this evolutionary approach are the dual concepts of residual and institutional welfare which are used to depict the
development of welfare systems in the advanced industrialised countries. For a long time, the idea that all industrialised societies would move from the state of residual welfare to that of institutional welfare has remained unchallenged. Social policy debates have been dominated by comparisons between the residual and institutional models of social welfare (Midgley, 1966). This view of welfare development is further extended to explain and predict the growth of welfare institutions in developing countries. It would not be an exaggeration to say that this evolutionary perspective of welfare enjoyed something akin to a universal consensus for a long time. With the emergence of crisis in the welfare state in the late 1970s and with the spate of studies discussing social policy development from a theoretical standpoint, rival conceptions of welfare development have cropped up.

The above factors explain why development of welfare models in advanced capitalist countries did not take place earlier. The underdevelopment of indigenous welfare models in developing countries is attributed to certain factors. First, the continued marginalisation of social welfare in many developing countries and the priority/precedence of empirical evidence over theoretical debate undermine efforts a higher level conceptualisation. Second, pressing social needs in many developing countries have made it necessary for policy analysts to be pragmatic and issue-oriented. Finally, in many instances, the development of social welfare policies in developing countries has been done through the exchange of information and views between policy makers from different countries. Given the advanced level of welfare provisions in the industrialised countries, it is not surprising to see that policy makers from the developing countries are learning from those policy analysts and experts in Europe and America. Very often, social workers from developing countries are trained in western theories of social work and are taught to implement western social work methods in their daily practice. Thus, the lingering bias that social welfare development can only be interpreted in terms of experiences of the industrialised countries is still very strong.

Models of Social Welfare in Advanced Industrialised Countries

What are these established models of social welfare that are supposed to apply to developing countries? The pioneering works of Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) and Titmuss (1964) deserve primary attention. The American researchers, Wilensky and Lebeaux hold that two distinctive notions of social welfare — residual and institutional —
can be used for understanding the nature of social policy development in modern industrialised societies. The residual conception of welfare stipulates that 'social welfare institutions will come into play only when the normal structures of supply, the family, and the market, break down' (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965:38). In the residual model, the scope of welfare is thus minimal. Social welfare services are largely undeveloped and non-statutory forms of welfare are more prominent. This model sees public assistance and services as catering mainly to low income groups, if not solely for the poor. Assistance is akin to charity with its accompanying stigma. The idea of social rights or entitlement to a basic minimum level of living is absent. There are no clearly defined and accepted national minimum standards toward which the social welfare institution is directed.

In contrast, the institutional concept 'sees welfare services as a normal, first-line function of modern industrial society' (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965:138). This notion of welfare implies 'no stigma, no emergency, and no abnormalcy. Social welfare becomes accepted as a proper, legitimate function of modern industrial society in helping individuals achieve self-achievement' (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965:139)

In this model, citizens are entitled to a range of benefits and services. Basic services include education, medical services and old age pensions. By and large, benefits are paid for and received by all. The idea of national minimum standards is usually found in this approach. Basic needs at a reasonable minimum standard are met by social welfare services.

Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) predict that social welfare development in almost all western industrialised countries would move from a residual to an institutional pattern. They even suggest that as industrialisation proceeds, the institutional concept will finally prevail. The significance of this process lies not only in its prediction of welfare growth but also in its explanation and depiction of the state of welfare in any country at a particular point in time, that is a country's welfare system could be either residual or institutional or moving towards institutional. In its original formulation, Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) have characterised the United States as a 'reluctant welfare state' which is somewhere between residual and institutional welfare.

Lee and Raban (1983) comment that in the two decades after the Second World War, many people were committed to an institutional view of social welfare. They note that the term 'institutional' has 'no
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pertinence for social policy analysts during this period, other than to outlaw certain beliefs... from the domain of policy studies'. The limitations of this view of welfare development are highlighted by some social policy analysts (Baker, 1979; Carrier and Kendall, 1977; Higgins, 1981). Firstly, this dichotomy, which is based on two ends of a spectrum of possibilities, has failed to capture the whole reality of welfare in advanced industrialised countries. Marxists, in particular, have found faults with the functionalist assumption of the industrial society behind this model. They contend that the history of class struggles and the influence of organised labour on welfare state development are left out of this analysis. These criticisms led other policy theorists to expand on this simple dichotomy. A landmark study by the well-known British policy analyst, Titmuss (1974), suggests a classification of three models: residual, institutional redistributive, and industrial achievement-performance.

Titmuss' first and second models correspond to Wilensky and Lebeaux's (1965) residual and institutional conceptions. The industrial achievement-performance model 'incorporates a significant role for social welfare institutions as adjuncts of the economy. It holds that social need must be met on the basis of merit, work performance and productivity' (Titmuss, 1974:31). A practical embodiment of this model is the system of occupational social welfare or workfare in industrial organisations. Both the institutional redistributive and the industrial achievement-performance models are found only in western industrialised countries. While the institutional redistributive model compensates individuals for social disadvantages and redistributes the gains of capitalism, the industrial achievement-performance model rewards proven work effort. The former entails greater formal equality of provision while the latter places greater emphasis on the idea of equality of opportunity.

Titmuss' typology represents a more elaborate way to reconceptualise welfare development by accepting that many industrialised countries have moved beyond the stage of residual welfare, and some of them are moving towards institutional redistributive welfare, while others are heading towards the industrial achievement-performance model of welfare. Thus, diversity of development is accommodated. Some critics have pointed out that these two models are variants of the institutional model as suggested by Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965).

There are many other analytic rivals to Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965). The increasing influence of Marxist ideas on social policy has
led to the recognition of capitalism as the key distinguishing feature of any welfare development. Jones' (1975) classification of welfare capitalism and welfare capitalism represents one such attempt. To her, welfare capitalism is a better characterisation because it signifies a combination of competitive/exchange values and practices with compensatory/gift values and practices. The balance struck between the two varies from country to country. Welfare capitalism (which clearly resembles Titmuss' industrial achievement-performance model) gives priority to 'society first' social policy, relying on work-related social provision with equality of opportunity and the encouragement of competition as the objective. On the other hand, welfare capitalism (which clearly resembles Titmuss' institutional redistributive model) gives priority to an 'individuals first' social policy with social provision based on citizenship, wherein the objective is a fairer and more equal society.

In sum, welfare capitalism is intended to support and reinforce the capitalist system while welfare capitalism sees capitalism as a necessary evil and calls for redistribution of resources. Jones (1975) further suggests that West Germany with high social spending, and the United States, with low social spending, fall into the category of welfare capitalism. On the other hand, Sweden and the United Kingdom with high and low social spending respectively, are examples of welfare capitalism.

Jones' (1975) typology is based upon apolitical economy conception of welfare. Her classification is a study of the nature of welfare delivery which incorporates capitalism and the level of social expenditures as the units of analysis. As such, reactions of different types of political regimes to the problems and crisis of capitalism influence the nature of welfare provisions. Undoubtedly, both Titmuss and Jones go further than Wilensky and Lebeaux by expanding on the possible categories of welfare development in the western countries. However, such sophisticated formulations are neither applicable nor relevant to most of the developing countries which barely go beyond the residual state of welfare. For those developing countries which attain higher economic development and hence afford higher social spending, the level of social spending and the state of capitalist development are still not comparable to those in advanced industrialised countries. This renders any classification based on social spending and the relative significance of welfare and capitalism useless.
Two more classifications are worthy of attention. Mishra's (1984) notions of the Keynes-Beveridge or differentiated welfare state (DWS) and the corporatist or integrated welfare state (IWS) are further efforts at depicting social welfare in relation to the economy and polity of a particular country. In a nutshell, both the DWS and IWS are ideal-typical variants of the institutional model.

The IWS regards economic and social policy as closely interrelated and, therefore, in need of coordination. This implies that a productive market economy and a highly-developed system of social welfare cannot be sustained in the long run without the cooperation of major social groups. Capitalists and workers are recognised as major partners in the national enterprises of production and distribution. They are expected to bear responsibility to make the whole system work. On the contrary, the DWS is a system in which 'the social welfare sector is seen, by and large, as distinctive and unrelated to the economic, industrial and public sectors' (Mishra, 1984:102). It sets out only to correct the tendencies of a market economy by introducing some social intervention and limited forms of social policy.

It is clear that Mishra's (1984) formulation is based largely on a corporatist approach to social policy drawn from the experiences of European countries like the Netherlands and Austria. He is very certain of the strengths of the IWS:

What the IWS seems to promise is a measure of working consensus over the system of mixed economy and state-protected minimum standards. Beyond that lies the realm of pluralism, of values and of interests. It would be absurd to pretend that some form of corporatism can be a panacea for the ills of modern society in general, and welfare capitalism in particular. It seems to offer an institutional framework in the context of a capitalist economy and liberal polity within which the values of the welfare state (DWS) may be better realized (Mishra, 1984:150).

However, corporatism in practice faces considerable difficulties. To other European countries, like the United Kingdom or Germany, the corporatist arrangement is hard to implement. In the case of developing countries where workers' unions are generally weak (Deyo, 1987; 1989), it is inconceivable that such an ideal-type could ever be put into practice in the short run. At any rate, the ideal-type IWS adds little to the understanding of the existing situation in these countries.
Another important conceptualisation of the welfare state is that of Furniss and Tilton (1977). Their analysis, unlike most other conceptions of social welfare, breaks away from the dichotomy of institutional and residual welfare systems and, instead, relates the level of social spending (that is social welfare spending) to the social philosophy of western countries. Thus, they note three important notions of the welfare state. First, the United States represents a positive state with low social spending geared to reinforce the market system. The middle-spending United Kingdom is portrayed as a social security state which is committed to providing minimum protection for all. Lastly, the high social spending Sweden is a social equality state wherein redistribution according to the need is the order of the day and equality of outcome the possible long-term objective. Furniss and Tilton’s categorisation assumes a certain level of social spending and a basic commitment to welfare as a solution to problems or as means toward an end. Yet, almost all developing countries can hardly approximate the minimum state of welfare assumed in their framework, thereby reducing its relevance and applicability.

More recently, an influential scheme has stimulated much debates. Esping-Andersen (1990) has put forth a 'regime analysis' which is based on two variables: commodification and social stratification. Esping-Andersen begins with a Marxist tenet: the spread of capitalism leads to the rise of workers who sell their labour in the market and thus become in some sense 'commodified.' Social welfare systems are then introduced, and engender decommodification because workers acquire social rights. The levels and targets of social benefits are influenced by social classes and their relations with the state. Thus, social benefits are accorded based upon a socially stratified hierarchy. Essentially, his analysis identifies three welfare regimes: social democratic, liberal, and conservative corporatist. Critics of his analysis have pointed to the lack of discussion on socialist Eastern European countries (Johnson, 1995). Equally, one can argue that Esping-Anderson has not extended his analysis to the developing countries when he maintains that there are only three worlds of welfare capitalism.

In sum, for all the relevance and soundness of these different conceptualisations of welfare state models, it is not difficult to see that their applicability to developing countries is fraught with difficulties. First, these conceptualisations grow out of western experiences which are foreign to most developing countries. They assume that different countries will reply in similar fashion to similar problems with similar
resources. Second, some conceptions clearly are ideal-types or ideals which are not attainable even in some western countries. Third, most conceptualisations have, institutional welfare as their starting point. What needs to be done is how to delineate different forms of the institutional model. Disagreements among social policy analysts take place only within a very narrow space. Given this, the focus on institutional welfare is definitely too 'far-fetched' for developing countries, many of which are barely out of a residual state of welfare. Last, any uncritical adoption of western social welfare models by developing countries inevitably leads to the slighting of indigenous welfare models.

**Applying Welfare Models to Developing Countries: The Example of Hong Kong**

Some efforts have been made to clarify and contextualise discussions about the relevance of western welfare models to the study of nature and development of social policy in developing countries. Given the inappropriateness of many of these elaborate models, it is not surprising to see that social policy analysts fall back on the original formulation of residual and institutional models by Wilensky and Lebeaux as their point of departure.

Hong Kong, a former British colony (returned to China in 1997) and one of the four East Asia's Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) is a case in point. Since the early 1970s, Hong Kong's economic growth has been phenomenal, with a concomitant increase in social services. At present, nearly half of the total public spending goes to finance services like education, housing, health, and social welfare (Hong Kong, 1994). Since the 1980s, local scholars and the government have debated whether Hong Kong should replicate the social welfare development of advanced industrialised countries. Some academics are convinced that Hong Kong is following the path of western advanced capitalist countries in welfare delivery and therefore can freely adopt the dual concepts of institutional and residual welfare.

Curiously, social policy in Hong Kong is still residual when compared to that of western welfare states (Hodge, 1980; Yeung, 1984). That is, the level of social services and the amount of social expenditures compared with those of western industrialised countries places Hong Kong in a residual category. However, given the wide gap in welfare provision between developed countries and Hong Kong, it is almost certain that Hong Kong will forever be described as residual.
The same is true for other East Asian NICs such as Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. But when one compares the development of social policy in these NICs with many other developing countries, which have similar levels of welfare delivery, the NICs turn out to be more developed in terms of social spending.

Other policy analysts contend that Hong Kong is moving away from residual welfare. To a great extent, the Government of Hong Kong espouses this view (Chow, 1986; Hong Kong, 1994). They argue that, in the last twenty years, social policy has developed beyond residualism. However, these same researchers cannot say where Hong Kong is and where it is going, as far as social policy development is concerned. This pitfall is related in some ways to the original framework of Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) which does not provide for any middle stage in a continuum between residual and institutional welfare.

**Alternative Models of Social Welfare**

Some welfare models for the developing countries have been developed only recently. Policy analysts feel that welfare models from the western industrialised countries have limited validity in developing societies, and attempt to devise an alternative classification which is more appropriate. The search for indigenous welfare for developing countries has been long.

First of all, how would we conceive 'indigenous'? The Random House Dictionary (1987) defines 'indigenous' as 'originating in and characterising a particular region or country'. Implicit in this idea is the need to adapt to local ways and contexts. Often, the term 'indigenisation' is used in the context of the creation and applicability of both theory and practice in the particular country under examination. This would mean that indigenous models must be culturally appropriate. Clearly, such models can be either normative or analytical. At the normative level, an indigenous welfare model would call for answers to the question 'what should be the delivery model'. At the descriptive/analytical level, one will have to prove its relevancy towards the needs and problems of the country. It must also be locally grounded and captures the essence of welfare delivery systems. For the purpose of this paper, the descriptive/analytical welfare models will be relevant.

The search for appropriate indigenous models to summarise welfare delivery is not an easy task. On the one hand, developing an indigenous
model can be a painstakingly slow process. On the other, it is difficult since some theoretical and methodological underpinnings for the analysis have to be formulated. More importantly, some scholars dislike the concept of indigenisation on the ground that it is inherently limiting: it can be seen as one form of localism (Martinez-Brawley and Roy, 1990). In fact, there is an inherent paradox in the construction of an indigenous welfare model: specific analyses (for instance, single-country study), while conducive to such a model, would seldom lead to generalisation. On the other hand, focussing on universal experiences, as dictated by the construction of conceptual models, would help little in the creation of a culturally appropriate welfare model for all countries.

Based on the above analysis, one might argue that a 'pure' (universally applicable) indigenous welfare model could not ever exist since social welfare developments in different developing countries are so diverse that they would call for multiple indigenous models. However, one could accept some qualified forms of an indigenous model: as long as they originate from a particular region, they are considered culturally and socially relevant. Some classifications from these models can be devised. Rather than apply western concepts uncritically, academics look at the existing sociopolitical contexts of these developing countries and examine how social welfare is conceptualised, configured and evolved in these circumstances.

Two such attempts are worth examining. First of all, Stewart (1989) proposes that it is feasible to divide the developing nations into different categories by looking at their level of economic development, inequalities, and social policy. Her classification is heavily influenced by Ferge's (1989) ideas of mixed economies and social economies and it is built on interactions between economic development and social policy (Table 1).

In her cross-sectional analysis, Stewart holds that most developing countries are early capitalist economies which are characterised by increasing inequalities and a breakdown of traditional support systems. There is widespread absolute poverty. The wage-labour system involves low wages. The state has not yet taken on the obligation of supporting the destitute. However, there are three other categories in her study. The first type comprises capitalist economies (incidentally, mostly the NICs) which have economic systems engendering moderate economic inequalities but which provide reasonable income-earning opportunities for most people. Social spending in these
is higher than the early capitalist economies. The second category, socialist economies, are committed to the elimination of private ownership and geared to the provision of basic health and education services and subsidies on basic foods. In them, employment is virtually guaranteed to everyone and social spending is considered an appropriate function of the state. The third category, the welfare-type economies, are mixed economies which do not have severe inequalities often because the distribution of land is less unequal than in some countries. The poor are given food subsidies and basic health and education services. Inequality is thus moderated.

### TABLE 1
A Classification of the Developing Countries by their Political Economy and Social Spending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Economic Growth</th>
<th>Social Spending</th>
<th>Inequality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capitalist Economies of NICs</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Countries (China, Cuba)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare-type Economies (Costa Rica, Sri Lanka)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Capitalist Economies</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Drawn from Stewart (1989).

Stewart's typology rightly assumes that pathways of social welfare development are diverse for different developing countries. It correctly reminds us that social conditions, ideologies, and social policies in developing countries are very complex and do not readily fit the categories invented by western social scientists. However, there are some problems to her classification. Since her typology is cross-sectional in nature categorising different countries at one point in time, it is difficult to analyse the social policy development of any country within a specific time frame. Another weakness is that by focussing on political economy, the nature of social policy is not studied indepth. With the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, the category of socialist economies remains dubious.

Another cogent conceptualisation of social policy development in the developing nations is proposed by Hardiman and Midgley (1989), and focuses on two dimensions: residual and incremental social welfare. This classification is based on the historical evolution of social
welfare in developing countries. Residual social welfare was dominant in most developing countries before and after the Second World War. Residualism in developing countries was tied with the development of colonialism, where colonisers had set up systems of social welfare services long before the Second World War. Hence, many services were remedial and pragmatic, without provisions for long-term planning (Hodge, 1980). After the Second World War, residual social welfare lingered when many of these countries became either independent or embarked on the road to modernisation and industrialisation. In Hardiman and Midgley's (1989) view, proponents of residualism believe that government intervention to social needs should be kept to a minimum, and incomes should be raised through rapid growth so that individuals and their families have the means to meet their own social needs and satisfy their economic wants. Thus, the attitudes of colonial government prevailed and resulted in the adoption of residual social policy.

This explanation of residualism differs greatly from that of Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) since the latter emphasises that failures of family and market are the preconditions for social intervention; industrialisation and urbanisation are the latent societal forces behind these changes. In the developing countries, limited state intervention was unavoidable in the colonial era because of massive social needs and worsening social problems. After independence, the continuance of residual welfare was explicable in terms of the dominant thinking about social issues: governments and social planners strongly believed that social welfare spending had to be kept to a minimum because it was non-productive. Today, as in the advanced countries, many developing countries at this stage of residualism look upon voluntary organisations as a source of support for their people. This residual model however, does not work in many cases in the developing countries. Midgley (1984; 1986) puts forth several reasons.

First, residualism requires a certain level of economic growth in order to generate even minimal social welfare. However, many developing countries have failed to industrialise and generate such growth. Even with rapid economic growth, they have not made improvements in levels of living and welfare. In other words, the benefits of economic growth have not trickled down to the poor. Also, there is tremendous social welfare demand in these countries. Perhaps due to 'habits' of colonial social structures, after independence, many governments faced strong demands from people to increase social spending. At the
same time, many political leaders were not averse to increased social expenditures for the social services if the latter could symbolise their concerns for the people.

Instead, in the wake of the abandonment of residual social policy, incremental welfare — a continual expansion of social services — has been adopted. Incremental welfare allows growth in the social services through gradual increases in budgetary allocations and the extension of existing provisions. The phenomenon of incrementalism is corroborated by a report of the United Nations (1979) which observes that public spending on the social services and the share of the public sector in providing these services seem to have grown in all developing societies.

A number of developing countries have adopted an incremental welfare policy. It is a characteristic of centralised authoritarian governments of Latin America (Tracy, 1991). For instance, Mexico had legislative provisions for social security programmes which contained 'deferment clauses' to regulate programme coverage and benefits. This allows the executive power to fix the most suitable time for applying obligatory legislation (Diaz, 1979). Another example of incrementalism is within the East Asian NICs partly due to their reluctance to expand social welfare (Midgley, 1986; Jones, 1990). Two Asian tigers, Hong Kong and Taiwan, are illustrative. In the latest policy paper on social welfare, the government (Hong Kong, 1994) argues that 'it is ...accepted that increased public contributions should allow for expansion and improvement of services rather than to justifying a reduction in Government's commitment of resources.' Incidentally, social welfare (covering social security and personal social services) has had incremental increases, beginning as 4 per cent of total government spending in the 1970s, 5 per cent in the 1980s and rising in the 1990s to an average of 6 per cent. Similarly, in Taiwan, a trend of increased social spending has been noted between 1955 and 1990, though the scope is limited (Yu, 1995).

A third example is Turkey which has also adopted a stage-by-stage approach to implementing social insurance policies for the elderly. Originally, income maintenance and health care programmes for the elderly were attributed to a 1961 constitutional proviso that required the state to assure its citizens protection from the risk of the loss of income due to disability, old age, and death. The law allowed for the mandate of state intervention to be fulfilled on an incremental basis over an unspecified period of time. For a long time, the government...
Kwang-Leung Tang was torn between two sets of opposing forces; this included some factors which impeded programme development and the counteracting pressures for the government to expand social programmes.

On the other hand, the incremental model in developing countries has suffered from a number of drawbacks (Midgley, 1984; Tang, 1996). First, social programmes have shown a trend of gradual evolutionary expansion of existing provisions which has resulted in the perpetuation of inappropriate social policies. This has led to an emulation of the social policies of the industrialised nations without considering their relevance to local conditions. A case in point is the diffusion of social work from the western nations to developing countries. Social problems are conceptualised in western social work as individual maladjustments and thus, social workers are to treat these emotional difficulties by interpersonal relationships. However this orientation is problematic since many developing nations have been plagued by the problems of widespread absolute poverty and inequalities. The effectiveness of social work in developing countries and the relevance of its values (mainly European and North American cultural values of individualism, liberalism, and the work ethic) to other cultures is also very questionable. Thus, Midgley (1981) coins the words 'professional imperialism' to describe the fact that social work has imposed alien theories and techniques on developing countries. A study by Scott (1984) shows that the education system in Ghana replicated (ideologically and structurally) that of late Victorian Britain which assumed that girls' education should be oriented toward domestic skills and social etiquette. Such 'professional imperialism' thus invades the logic of incrementalism, which is more suited to advanced western nations. Many scholars believe that the dominant mode of decision-making in advanced industrial nations is incremental (Jones, 1985; Wildavsky, 1964). Incrementalism in, for example, public budgeting is conceived as a reluctance to question and eliminate existing programmes, while tinkering at the margin and eschewing systematic evaluation (Lindblom, 1979). Thus, it is evident why an incremental approach adopted wholesale into a developing country pre-empts even the possibility of reform to fit a local context.

Besides, it was too demand-driven and those with the greatest social needs might not be able to influence the planning process. In some developing countries, the social welfare services have evolved incrementally to deal with the growing for health, education, and housing in the urban areas (Midgley, 1981). Incremental welfare represents a
slow process to meet overwhelming social needs in developing countries. As Hardiman and Midgley (1989:31) put it, it is unlikely to achieve its stated objective of providing the whole population with ready access to modern social services for many decades to come. Nor is it likely to solve the problems of poverty and deprivation...

Moreover, this approach has faced a formidable challenge from the privatisation movement in the early 1980s. In particular, the adoption of radical conservative and neo-liberal views by the International Monetary Fund in the form of structural adjustment policies and their imposition in a growing number of developing countries has posed a threat to the incremental approach (Midgley, 1994). This has resulted in the revival of residualist social policy in some countries (Midgley, 1991; 1992; 1994; Moser, 1989).

Overall, Hardiman and Midgley's conceptualisation (1989) of welfare provision represents a distinct advance over other formulations. Its strength lies in the application of the concept 'incrementalism' to depict social welfare development in developing countries. It is grounded in the social welfare development of developing countries, in particular those of erstwhile British and French colonies. Thus, it is far closer to reality than the western-imported models of institutional welfare and residual welfare. Furthermore, this model brings out the major distinguishing feature between the dominant mode of welfare delivery in advanced industrial countries (institutionalisation of welfare) and that of developing countries (residualism and incrementalism) (Moser, 1989). Finally, this model illustrates a dynamic dichotomy which can accommodate the fact that some countries can move back and forth along the same continuum.

However, a few unsolved issues remain for this model. Conceptually, what is the boundary between residual welfare and incremental welfare? Is there any objective criterion to delineate one from the other? In other words, what will be the level of welfare delivery that is needed before a country shifts from one mode of delivery to the other? Second, it is hazardous to lump all the developing countries in one group since they have diverse socioeconomic political conditions. Third, how does incremental welfare accommodate any episodic development or big jumps in social welfare development? Social policy development in some developing countries (such as the East Asian NICs) has gone through some periods of big bursts in social services expansion after the Second World War as part of a government's
responses to the political instability it faced (Tang, 1996). Ideally, the incremental model should accommodate such fluctuations so as to explain the different courses of development in different countries.

**Conclusion**

The aim of this paper was to reflect on the nature of social welfare models in the developing countries and to examine some of the problems connected with the uncritical adoption of welfare models derived from developed countries. Two classifications of models conceptualising social welfare development have been reviewed. The first includes early models emerging from western countries which largely describe residual and institutional models. However, as has been shown, there are considerable difficulties applying these to developing countries. This is not to belittle the analytical stimulation offered by existing welfare state studies which carry much heuristic value. This study has argued that the second classification (post-colonial and incremental) is a much better and more relevant analytic tool than the welfare models which are derived from industrialised countries. The different forms of institutional welfare have been dwelt upon. This study suggests that the possibilities for welfare models are broader than this when all developing countries are taken into consideration. All in all, respecting the uniqueness of social welfare development in different parts of the world is essential if such model-making is truly to bring together isolated perceptions and contribute to a fuller understanding of social policy worldwide.

**NOTES**

1. Use of the concept 'welfare state' has always been imprecise. A useful explanation is given by Pierson (1991) who suggests that the welfare state, in a narrow sense, may refer to state measures for the provision of key welfare services, including health, education, housing, income maintenance, and personal social services. He further notes that (1991:7): '...increasingly broadly, the welfare state is also taken to define (1) a particular form of state, (2) a distinctive form of polity or (3) a specific type of society'.

2. A conventional use of the term social welfare refers to all the categories of services such as education, health, housing, social security, and personal social services. It has to be noted that social welfare takes on the meaning appropriate to the socioeconomic-political context of a nation.

3. 'Developed countries' in this article refer to those prosperous, industrialised countries of Europe and North America, the world's wealthiest countries. Hence, 'developing countries' become a residual category, distinct from 'developed
countries'. Over time, other terms gained currency. For instance, many colonies which became independent after the Second World War were labelled as 'newly independent' countries. Another term much in vogue has been 'Third World.' Other synonyms for developing countries comprise 'underdeveloped' and 'less developed.' For a good discussion on the finer differences between these terms, see Hardiman and Midgley (1989).

4. The incremental approach and the rational-comprehensive approach are the two fundamental public sector decision-making models (Bobrow and Dryzek, 1987). In the original formulation, Lindblom (1959) argues that decision-making is incremental, a mutual adjustment based on successive yet limited comparisons among a few alternative. This he calls the 'science of muddling through.' According to Lindbolm, policy-makers do not need to agree about goals to set policy, they simply need to agree about policy. In short, effective decision-making consists of small steps taken one at a time. It is an approach which takes existing policy and expenditure as given and tinkers at the margin. The idea of incrementalism is taken up by Hardiman and Midgley (1989) to describe the incremental changes social welfare services undergo in many developing countries.

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