CITIZENSHIP, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN WELFARE STATE IDEA
-A COMPERATIVE ANALYSIS ON STATIST AND LIBERAL PERSPECTIVES-

Refah Devleti Anlayışında Vatandaşlık, Hak ve Sorumluluklar -Devletçi ve Liberal Perspektif Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analiz

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Abstract

This study proposes to shed light on rights and responsibilities of citizens specific to welfare state in terms of social policy. When doing this, statist and liberal perspectives of social policy literature will be considered. Status of rights and responsibilities will be underlined in the light of European context. Especially White’s citizenship definition and arguments in specific to Western Europe will be incorporated into the text. Study also aims at demonstrating inevitable relationship between social policy implementations and welfare state idea. This inevitable relationship will be detailed by referring policy design maintained by governments and the re-distributive background of welfare state. Comparison among statist and liberal perspectives will also make visible this inevitable relationship among social policy implementations and welfare idea.

In addition to conceptual framework, some field studies regarding the perceptions of citizenship will be incorporated into the text. Dweyer and
Conover’s applied studies maintained in the USA and the UK will shortly be mentioned at the end of the study.

Lastly, this paper tends to show some statist/paternalist social policy implementations in some Western European countries. At this point, it is intended to allow reader to analyse major liberal discourse on developed countries and their social policy applications in a critical way.

**Key Words:** Welfare State, Social Policy, Citizenship, Rights, Responsibilities, Liberal and Statist Perspectives.

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**Öz**


Bahsedilen kavram ve perspektiflere yönelik teorik çerçeve sunmanın ötesinde, vatandaşlık algılamalarına yönelik alan çalışmalar da calismaya dahil edilecektir. Çalışmanın son bölümlerinde Dweyer ve Conover’in İngiltere ve Amerika’da yürütüttüğü çalışmalarına atıfta bulunarak detaylaştırılmaktır. Liberal ve devletci uygulamalar arasındaki karşılaştırmalı analizler bu iddiayı daha da açık bir şekilde oraya koyma/destekeleme eğilimindedir.


**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Refah Devleti, Sosyal Politika, Vatandaslık, Haklar, Sorumluluklar, Liberal ve Devletci Perspektif

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**Introduction**

Social policy, which holds an important role and interest among social sciences, includes some specific notions such as welfare state (and its components), citizenship,
social welfare, etc. These notions that shape the social policy might be evaluated in various criteria and perspectives. For instance, the idea of welfare state could be questioned according to liberal sight or communitarian one. Some might defend the active intervention of state on social life in order to reach optimum welfare level. Other thinkers or social scientists, on the other hand, might take the state as a potential hindrance for a free society. In addition, the notions given above might prompt reader to consider social policy in terms of rights and responsibilities. In this respect, it wouldn’t be wrong to assert that citizenship as a notion that reflects the consideration mentioned above is a kind of platform on which we might observe both ideal sights and the perspective of rights/responsibilities.

This study, in this respect, proposes to explore the new responsibilities that the new understanding of welfare state is required. More specifically, study tends to discuss the responsibilities that citizens are expected to hold in societies ruled under the thought of state welfare, as well. The questions of “How far is the state responsible for meeting certain needs? Should every citizen have rights to have their needs met, and does the community have a duty to meet them?” (Blakemore & Griggs 2007, p.27) and answers will determine the main perspective of this study. In order to deal with these issues, firstly, the notion of social policy and its basics will be discussed. After that, definitions on welfare and welfare state (or state welfare) will be presented so that they can provide a background for both liberal and communitarian sides. To touch upon the main point, then, roles and responsibilities of welfare state will be listed by referring to some theorists. Finally, the concept of citizenship will be underlined according to its current status in social policy literature.

Actually, this is not a work aiming to explain every single notion regarding the triangle of social policy, welfare state and citizenship. That is why, connections between notions and their relation in practical applications will be shown. To exemplify the connections mentioned, empirical some researches about citizenship, responsibilities and values will also be subjected within text. In addition, questions, which might lead us towards sociological inferences, will be raised.

**Inevitable Relationship between Social Policy and Welfare State**

In order to meet the notion of social policy, Titmuss’s (1974, p.15) reference book, which understands social policy as “a knowledge of population changes, past and present and predicted for the future; the family as an institution and the position of women; social stratification and the concepts of class, status, and mobility, social change and the effects of industrialization, urbanization... minority groups, social control...”, could firstly be examined. Social policy, fundamentally, seems as an area that deals with the problems of society and individuals in terms of different research areas and majors. Perhaps, that is why; “social policy cannot be isolated from the study
of society as a whole in all its varied social, economic and political aspects” (Titmuss 1974, p.15). Social policy, in this respect, seems as an area basically seeks the social phenomena about in terms of not only sociological perspective, but also comprehensive political and economic dimensions that social life is based on. Various dimensions of social policy lead us to conduct a multiple exploration based on institutions and individuals, who set up society. In combination with these, basic relationships between institutions and individual reminds another remarkable issue. At this point, state, which principally means unified and official appearance of institutions, becomes the focal point to discuss. From the perspective of social policy, state shows itself as a welfare, which is mainly acknowledged (King & Waldron 1988, p.415) “from the Second World War until very recently” as “education, health, social security and employment”, or more individually, “[E]xistence of caring feelings” (Wiseman 1991, p.55) provider. However, “[T]he term of ‘welfare state’ does little distinguish modern industrial states from each other” (Spicker 2000, p.146), so following questions might be subscribed in order to determine the perspectives clearly: In what ways could state provide welfare to its citizens? What are the limitations of state when making socio-political and economic arrangements? Should state, as an official/authoritative institution, directly intervene socio-political and economic life or just give some opportunities or prompt civil organizations people to satisfy themselves in terms of basic needs?

In terms of many perspectives, social policy and idea of welfare state are evaluated together. Even the questions above might clarify the inevitable relationship between welfare state and social policy. Especially the term of ‘policy’ directs us to think about a well-organized institution which releases or allow releasing the policy for the ‘welfare’ of society. These institutions could be defined as governments which “prompt[s] the welfare of the people” (Spicker 2000, p.139). At this point, welfare could be recognized in terms of some processes that states provide citizens. As Sørensen (2006) stated, as a re-distributive mechanism, welfare state certifies equality of opportunity for its citizens in terms of rights. For a more specific implementation that could demonstrate the inevitable relationship among welfare state and social policy, it could be said that welfare states combine “social protection benefits, social services and labour market regulations” (Wood & Gough 2006, p.1696). To sum up, relationship among two socio-political processes tend to answer the question of “[h]ow do variations in policy design effect welfare distributions?” (Esping-Andersen 2001, p.14481)

Liberal and Statist Welfare States

In order to clarify the rights and responsibilities in state welfare, two basic perspectives regarding state (or government) and its intervention onto social life could be detailed. “Although government is a part of society, a government can also try to change the society; governments and states are agents of maintenance and change” (Spicker 2000, p.128). This change could be read as the process of social policy run by governments. Accordingly, state or government reserves the rights that individuals
probably benefit in the future. In addition, states are responsible for the wellness of society and individual. That’s why; paternalistic side includes administrative form which is “concerned with social problems and social pathology; with adjusting and rehabilitating individuals... to the values and norms of society” (Titmuss 1974, p.48). This process reminds us of the idea of social contract that pushes individual to set up a system in order to systematize the social life. State or government is empowered by individuals who cannot make an order without any authority. In this respect, foundation and “[J]ustification of paternalism then depends on showing some failure of autonomy-of rationality or self-discipline-on the part of individual who is to be subjected to paternalistic intervention” (White 2000, p.523). Background of intensive state (or government) intervention called paternalistic on social policy could be increased.

Liberal or right side of welfare state, on the other hand, “puts great value on economic growth... and emphasizes individual free choices in making contracts and agreements... The distribution of income and wealth, education, ...depends on ... individual bargaining power with a minimum of interference from the state” (Parker 1975, p.4). In other words, “minimum government, ... liberation from State intervention, a residual role for voluntary social policy, and maximum permission (or freedom) for the individual to act according to his own conscience” (Titmuss 1974, p.33). The idea of liberal state and welfare provision illustrates an obvious axial dislocation. When paternalistic thought engages in authoritative institutions which are expected to contribute directly to social policy processes such as healthcare, education, social security, etc., liberal side, as you guess, pay attention to individual activities might benefit the basic sectors of social policy mentioned above. By doing this, liberals criticize state intervention in various ways. They assert, for example, that “[T]he bureaucracy of welfare institutions reduces individual freedom” (King, Waldron 1988, p.417). Instead of providing welfare directly and from an absolute centre, for liberal side, state could prepare suitable conditions that individual might sustain in an autonomy or self-social policy process.

State Welfare and Responsibility/Facility Approaches

Notion of state welfare probably calls to mind paternalistic state and welfare model just mentioned above. As Plant (1992, p.15) indicated, “it was in the modern period that rights come to be seen in terms of rights to resources (to welfare, health, education, income and social security)”. Accordingly, first responsibility of modern governments could be stated as to accept the necessity of looking after individuals and to care them according to expectations of citizens and to specific conditions of society. That is why, “[C]aring about has to do with understanding needs, and with selecting means and choosing various strategies for action” (Sevenhuijzen 1998, p.83). State needs to recognize that caring citizens is fulcrum of social policy and it needs to be
arranged according to “perception of what was desirable for the nation and for the groups” (Thane 1996, p.291). After this realization, welfare state could deal with the main components of social policy in order to maintain following facilities and services. However, when state applies protective social policy, it should be very careful. As Spicker pointed out (2000, p.154) “[M]aintenance of social circumstances may serve to protect people, and to make them secure, but it may also trap them in unsatisfactory conditions”. Providing minimum income, providing basic healthcare and housing opportunities should not threaten the freedom of individuals. Their basic rights should be evaluated “as an unconditional right of reasonable access to a given resource” (White 2000, p.510) rather than being in favour of state, which could be used for authority over individuals. State, on the other hand, should provide equal opportunities when it maintains social policies. However, this facility of state is not a one-way solution for equality. As Dweyer (2000, p.52) cited from Marshall; “[T]he equality of status that existed between each individual citizen in terms of common rights and duties would ensure that citizenship as an institution reduced some of the inequalities”.

Main objection to this approach rises from, as you may guess, liberal side. Paternalistic welfare state seems to carry an existential tendency to intervene people’s lives by crossing over the borders of social policy process and it makes itself apparent by coercion. Then, “coercion by the state may restrict liberty” and “coercion can be used to protect some people from the actions on inactions of others” (Spicker 2000, p.163). The reason under the objection of liberals against directly state intervention to social policy services and facilities begins from this point. Perhaps the term of “contract” might mediate between two poles. Attributing rights and responsibilities to a contract between individuals and state provides a fair relationship that covers both liberal and paternalistic sides. As Marshall (1967, p.47) indicates, for example, “[C]ompulsory insurance also created a kind of contractual relationship between the insured and the state... Government was a party to the contract, being responsible for its terms and for their faithful fulfilment”.

This example brings us to the notion of reciprocity which we might use it to transmit the idea of citizenship, and responsibilities and duties of citizens.

**Responsibilities and Duties of Citizens in Welfare State**

In order to elucidate the relationship between citizens and state in terms of social policy and welfare approach, it might be looked at the explanation which Dweyer (2002, p.275) quoted from Tony Blair: “Modern notion of citizenship give rights but demands obligations, shows respect but wants it back, grants opportunity but insists on responsibility”. Basics of this definition are seen in Marshall’s earlier citizenship definition. As King and Waldron cited from him (1988, p.418) “citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All he possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties”. As in “contract” example, reciprocity is one of the most important things to sustain a healthy social life.
Reciprocity as a principle is important in this context because “Citizens... make a reasonable effort to ensure that others also benefit from their membership of productive scheme” (White 2000, p.513). Responsibility-based approach is not only evaluated between citizens in a society, but it is also considered between generations. “Everyone who receives benefits from the previous generation acquires responsibility, not only to them, but to other generations” (Spicker 2000, p.139). This statement might lead us to think that duties and responsibilities of citizens could be seen as a socialization process by suggesting “preservation of civil life”, and in addition, “preservation of political system” (Conover, Crewe & Searing 1991, p.818). All of these bring us sense of belonging to community and responsibilities emerge from here.

In an empirical study, Dweyer (2002, p.291) exemplifies duties according to respondents’ point of views: “[I]ndividuals who received benefit should be expected to contribute in some positive ways” and “lazy individuals would effectively be forced into activity”. Attendees also point out an important point related to social punishment or exclusion about the citizens who engage in unacceptable behaviours and who can’t support common welfare requirements (Dweyer 2002, p.295). Now, it is obvious that in state welfare, one of the main responsibilities of citizens is contribution to group or society and to behave as expected by the society.

In another empirical study, which has already been cited, Conover and his colleagues seek the insights of duties of citizens by comparing British and American respondents’ point of views. It seems, American discussants focus mainly on political tasks including tax payments, defending realm, and voting. British attendees, on the other hand, expect the others to contribute to common wealth, as in previous empirical study maintained by Dweyer, and suppose “non-coercive/ constructive accomplishments” (Conover et al. 1991, p.813). Anglo-Saxon world, which prepares main forms of social policy and welfare provision, basically discusses duties of citizenship in state welfare in two main ways. However, we might assert that British sight, which accepts obligatory status of laws and also makes “more general emphasis on civility and on obedience to community norms” (Conover et al. 1991, p.813), seems more inclusive for the idea of modern citizenship and definition of welfare.

**Review and Conclusion**

Different perspectives regarding social policy bring us an idea of state welfare. Various state welfare thoughts also refer to diverse citizenship profiles and definitions. These, at the same time, also give us a chance to emphasize responsibilities in terms of state and citizenship.

If the idea of welfare is taken from the perspective of liberal thought, it is not a coincidence that you might be interested in minimum state intervention on social policy processes. Because of this minimum proportion, responsibilities of state should
be kept limited. However, if you approach the matter from statist outlook, you probably see the arrangements maintained by state in high proportion. When liberal side supports civil activities in order to provide an optimum welfare for society, statist perception let you focus on official institutions and representatives that could provide main form of welfare in societies. As you shall see, there is a main conflict that determines responsibilities, rights and duties for both citizens and state. However, when inevitable relationship between state and social policy is remembered, expectations are established on welfare provision. Responsibilities of state, in other words, rights of citizens in terms of state welfare are not so complicated. State, as a source of policy and intervention, supplies at least minimum basic services for its citizens. On the other hand, citizens receiving the benefits of state welfare could be expected to behave responsibly. Background of this responsibility could be defined as sense of belonging that emphasizes “a baseline for the generation of mutual concern” (Lewis 2004, p.22) as it was pointed out the respondents of field studies in the UK and the USA. This consideration also reminds the responsibilities for next generations. It is possible to say that, duties of citizens emerge from this basic rule. Regular payment of taxes, voting, working for common good, being productive, etc. are the results of self-belonging. It is not so obvious that whether state creates this idea or this is a main reflection of social life. However, responsibilities of both citizens and the idea of state welfare attempts at constituting more liveable communities.

REFERENCES


