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The Role of Social Services in The Development of Modern Mahallas

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Abstract: Being a mahalla: Social service(s) in the face of the contemporary mahallas The findings underscore the importance of social services to social cohesion, economic viability, and the health of the population. Properly organized social services help to reduce poverty, develop medicine, create jobs and hire or teach everyone who needs it. In addition, the study also stresses the role of innovative and digital technologies in promoting effective social services through the mahalla system. The results indicate that new mahallas cannot develop sustainably without integrating specific social assistance, medical and psycho-social services, work opportunities, as well as cultural and educational programs.

Keywords: social services, mahalla system, social protection, poverty reduction, employment, healthcare, education, digitalization, community development, economic sustainability.

1. Introduction

Currently, social services are being established as an integral component of the social sector and a distinct institution within modern social life. In the context of deep-rooted globalization in the world economy, the institutional development of social services has found its place in the development strategies of both Uzbekistan and other countries. From this perspective, ensuring balanced economic relations and achieving socio-economic stability through the expansion of social services is gaining increasing importance in our country.

It should be emphasized that in today's innovation-driven economy, the composition of social services in Uzbekistan remains largely focused on pension payments, financial assistance, and in-kind support. Therefore, it is essential to develop the service sector by expanding the share of social services through the introduction of new types of services.

To achieve this, it is necessary to: Expand the range of social services by considering the broader needs of the population; Utilize innovative technologies in the provision of social services; Analyze the importance and principles of social service delivery within the mahalla system. The development of social services must be based on fundamental principles to ensure efficiency, accessibility, and sustainability. This underscores the relevance and significance of the research topic in the context of modern socio-economic transformations.

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Although economic and sociological scholars have generally highlighted the importance of social services in society, a comprehensive exploration of the principles guiding their development has not been fully addressed.

Several significant academic perspectives on this subject are as follows:

In the 1940s, economists J. Fourastié and C. Clark analyzed the rapid growth of the non-material sector and predicted that social services would eventually govern society [1].

According to N. Luhmann, "Personal relationships between citizens eventually transform into professional social services, and their quality becomes guaranteed" [2].

A review of academic literature indicates that the term "social services" was introduced by J. Zingelmann in the 1970s. However, this term continues to be interpreted using various expressions, such as social service, social welfare, public welfare, merit welfare, state services, municipal services, and budget services [3].

As industrial economies developed, the amount and variety of social services also increase. Over the latter half of the 20th century, most social services became more specialized in relation to their respective theories including but not limited to "Standard of Living", "Human Development Index" and "Human Capital". In the 1950s and 1960s the field of social sector economics was founded [4] largely under the influence of T. Parsons and N. Smelser by attempting to bridge economic and social processes.

According to the Russian researcher M.O. Buyanova in this regard, social services are provided to all citizens, and are an inseparable part of social relief [5]. In the same vein, social services (including medical, psychological and pedagogical services) should be guaranteed by the state [6] — the services that have been gained through a fairly lengthy social process.

M.V. Vorontsova and V.E. Makarov state that social services are tools that contribute to the overall welfare of people who use them, raising life quality levels and multiplying the potential for people to fulfill their basic needs on their own [7].

According to I.V. Malofeev, the main purpose of social services is to ensure the population with high-quality, affordable, and free social services, and the conditions for the development of human capital. Also social services help to preserve or change the social status of individuals, demographic groups and professional communities [8].

As noted by Uzbek scholar D.Z. Ernazarov, social services protect the right of all social groups to a reasonable standard of living and facilitate the development of human capital [9]. Furthermore, P.Z. Khashimova states that the social sector's primary functions include social protection, social insurance, and social services [10].

2. Materials and Methods

This study analyzes the key principles influencing the development of social services in mahallas. To achieve this, the research employs a combination of scientific abstraction, analysis and synthesis, scientific observation, systematic approach, and expert evaluation methods.

Through these methodologies, the study examines:

The unique role of social services in societal development;

The directions of social service expansion within the mahalla system;

The role of state policy in the field of social protection.

By integrating theoretical and empirical approaches, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping social service provision and its impact on community well-being.

Research Objective

The objective of this study is to examine the unique essence, characteristics, and significance of social services within the mahalla system in the context of societal development, as well as to analyze the principles guiding their advancement.

3. Results

The rapid development of the intangible sector in society, alongside the transformation of personal relationships among citizens into professional social services, ensures service quality and guarantees its sustainability[11]. Ultimately, social services are recognized as an integral part of public administration. Research findings indicate that as society progresses and the economy grows, social services never remain static; they require continuous development and adaptation to meet the evolving needs of the population.

In our view, the development of social services at the mahalla level should be based on the following principles: 1. Targeted Approach Principle This principle involves the provision of services to specific individuals based on their needs. A database of vulnerable groups (such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, single-parent families, and large families) is established through the mahalla system (local governing bodies)[12].

Currently, targeted state support for socially vulnerable populations is the most efficient approach, considering the limited resources allocated by the government. This ensures that social assistance is directed to truly low-income families and disadvantaged individuals. In delivering targeted social assistance, the following key aspects must be considered:

Assessing household income and property status to determine eligibility for support; Considering the minimum subsistence level and current market prices when allocating social aid; Creating conditions for self-sufficiency within families, promoting employment for those capable of working; Prioritizing employment initiatives for economically active individuals in need of social protection. Transparency Principle This principle guarantees access to social services as defined by national and regional state-guaranteed service lists. It ensures the availability of both free and partially paid services to the population[13].

The quality, volume, and conditions of service provision must comply with state standards set by authorized government bodies. Additionally, regional authorities must not reduce the scope of services at the local level. The list of social services is determined based on the specific needs of the population and the available service providers. Voluntariness Principle. Social services should be provided based on voluntary requests from individuals, their legal representatives (guardians, trustees), state authorities, local self-governing bodies, or public organizations[14]. Citizens have the right to refuse social services at any time. No individual should be forced to receive services against their will. Humanitarian Principle. Citizens residing in institutional care facilities have the right to be free from punitive measures. The use of: Medical substances for discipline, Physical restraints, or Isolation as punishment is strictly prohibited. Violations of these rules result in disciplinary, administrative, or criminal liability for the responsible personnel. Confidentiality Principle Employees of social service organizations must maintain confidentiality regarding personal data obtained during service provision. Such information is considered a professional secret.

Any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information leads to legal liability under relevant legislative regulations. Preventive and Human Rights-Oriented Approach. This principle ensures continuous and uninterrupted access to all types of social services while respecting human rights and freedoms. Social services should be regarded as: A system that fosters social and humanitarian values; A process of service provision that supports societal well-being; A specific form of social activity aimed at ensuring comprehensive protection for the population; A critical structural element of the legal and organizational framework of social security.

The rapid development of the intangible sector and the institutionalization of social services as a professional domain highlight their growing significance in public administration. Social services are one of the cornerstones of social stability and economic development and need to be improved on an ongoing basis to be fit for the changing socio-economic environment[15].

The study notes that some basic principles should be followed when expanding and enhancing social services in the mahalla system to make them effective, accessible and sustainable. They include principles of specificity, clarity, permissiveness, compassion, privacy and proactive. The foundation of these principles acts as a crucial way to deliver social service, maximize the efficiency of resources, and help disadvantaged groups.

The targeted approach to social services has also proven to be the most effective policy mechanism in controlling government expenditures and maximizing societal impact, based on an assessment of household income and the socio-economic conditions of households. Transparency and compliance with national and regional standards of care must be maintained to ensure quality and equity in service delivery.

4. Conclusion

Additionally, the voluntariness and confidentiality principles uphold human dignity and individual autonomy, while the humanitarian and preventive approaches emphasize the protection of human rights and the continuity of social services. These foundational elements enable social services to function as a structured system that enhances social cohesion and economic development.

In conclusion, the institutional development of social services within the mahalla system requires a comprehensive policy framework that integrates modern governance mechanisms, innovative service models, and community-based approaches. Strengthening the legal and organizational infrastructure of social services will contribute to the long-term sustainability of social protection systems, ensuring inclusive development and improved quality of life for all members of society.

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