



Rethinking redistributive policies for regulatory compliance in a democratic developing society

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ARTICLE INFO

KEYWORDS:

pre-modal sentiment, redistributive policies, policy implementation, inequality.

Received: 10 May 2023

Accepted: 19 Jul 2023

Available Online: 05 Aug 2023

ABSTRACT

In a democratic developing society, policies like the redistributive type should bridge the gap between different segments of the population. The effect of this policy in a developing society cannot be overemphasised as different categories of individual are provided for, in line with extant rules and regulations guiding such policy pronouncement. More so it is one of the strategies for the reduction of inequality and promotion of sustainable development in a society. Taking into consideration the three dimensions, which are, economic, social and environmental. Unfortunately, the non-implementation of this policy renders it ineffective, as lack of political will, interest to fulfill obligations, and pre-modal sentiments poses hindrances. The study adopted the secondary data generational approaches, using the qualitative method. It advocates for a proper implementation of the redistributive policy, in order to adequately cater for the different population and segment of individual groups in the society. When there is a corresponding response from the government towards the development and growth of target groups and individuals in the society, progress could easily be made especially in a developing democratic society where inequality is seen to be prevalent.

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1 | INTRODUCTION

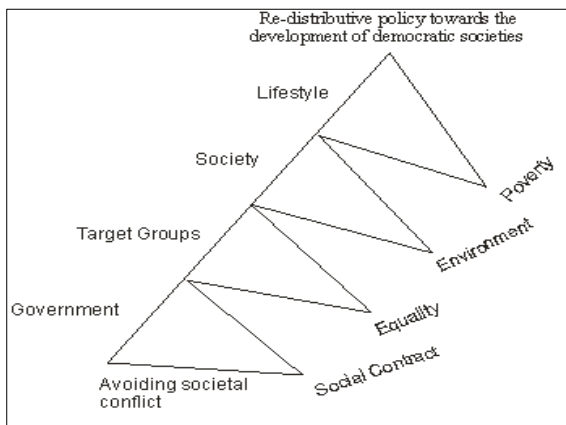
Societies tend to recognise groups and individuals in order to meet their demands and listen to their complaints through the various governmental agencies. This becomes necessary in view of creating awareness to meet the demands of the poor and needy in the society. Agara & Oaikhena (2022, 269), posits that “some states are no longer able to sustain their grip on their capacity strategies to influence the flows and levels of finance even in their national economies”. This also means that, government has a responsibility to play, in ensuring that the vulnerable people in the society are catered for, so that their vulnerability will not be taken advantage off by privileged individuals. Society does not exist only to cater for the egoistic interest of a few unscrupulous and greedy individuals. Rather, society exists to provide the basic needs of every member. In order words civil societies are formed primarily in order to provide the individual members the basic needs of life. Thus, it is the duty of society to prevent the strong, greedy, and unscrupulous individuals from exploiting the weak and over-enriching themselves at their expense. Policy process now involves the interaction of citizens drawn from a concern of issues they believe hamper state development, as formal policy making cannot only be conducted by the legislative bodies alone. Policies like the redistributive type could also be described as that which aid in economic development, social integration through peaceful coexistence and empowerment, leading to environmental development. According to Doerrenberg & Peichl (2012), they asserted that “the effect of redistributing policies on inequality appears obvious and trivial on the first glance, as the expected impact is theoretically less straight-forward if behavioral (second-round) adjustments of economic agents are considered and accounted for”. Relating the problems Zimako (2009), asserted that “massive corruption, political confusion, unemployment and increasing poverty, are associated with most administration in Nigeria”, thus leading to economic and administrative failure and lack of political will and sincerity in the society.

Notwithstanding, economic growth and development in the society has become a necessity due to its positive impact on the environment. When a policy becomes impactful, such a policy should lead to the promotion of greater equality, in the area of socio-economic, and sustainable development in the society. In this case the redistributive policy promotes equity which is sustainable and strengthened, promote the

eradication of poverty, and deprive inequality, without breaching existing boundaries. All things in the universe are interrelated, nothing is isolated one thing is linked with another which in turns is linked with another and so on. This invariably calls for action, as it is assumed that the government and its agencies are capable of reducing inequality in the system, despite potential mistrust from the citizens.

Policies that are redistributive in nature have become essential components, which are strategically used for the reduction of inequality and promotion of sustainable development in the society. It thus, becomes a powerful instrumental policy for the enhancement/improvement of equality among the population, and also an outcome through the distribution of income for enhancing equal opportunities through improvement and access to available income, and assets, such as human capital and wealth, which includes land and financial capital, across individuals or groups as well as between the public and private sectors. Thus, contributing to the harmony of the universe. According to Doerrenberg & Peichl (2012), they argued that “in countries with high levels of redistribution, employers might shift away from any social responsibility, because they expect the government to ensure decent levels of equality and fairness for the citizens”. This policy goes beyond adopting strong potentials for reducing inequality, poverty, unemployment, etc, in the society, it is also a strategy to promote values, which are consistent with sustainable growth and development, geared towards shaping of socio-economic context and incentives, that are conducive for financial stability and economic development, political inclusion, social mobility and gender equality, including environmental sustainability. What is important however is that the purpose is clear and does not generate serious divergence that could result in disputes and errors of action. In furtherance, economic development has been attributed to a successful income distribution to the various levels of society. According to Iganiga and Ogieriakhi (2008), there is need to put measures for the improvement of health care, care for the aged and vulnerable children, including widows and retirees. Therefore, to overcome limitations, government and individuals have to render their co-operation to group efforts, so that together they could achieve more and meet target group demands. Group purposes must therefore, supersede individual purpose but must satisfy the later as well, for it is only then that the individual would continue to contribute his efforts to the growth and development of the society. The individual motives that should be satisfied in the course of attaining the

specific or stated purposes of the system include the social contacts, interrelationship and communication, for even development.



Source: Author's compilation, 2023.

Fig. 1 above illustrates some of the benefits associated with a re-distributive policy in a democratic society and the platforms these could be achieved, thus leading to economic, political and social benefits.

Economist points to a number of arguments in favour of indirect methods of redistribution. The argument here is that those who could provide a more efficient means of eradicating suffering, severe hardship, and starvation amongst the less privileged population should not be encouraged. According to Zheng (2013) he observed that “the redistributive policy has in most cases targeted poverty reduction, as measured by the level to which states make pronouncement towards the eradication of poverty, a system which levels the income of the populace, determines the minimum requirement of clothing, shelter, and food, to a relative concept, that allows the poor in the society to share in the living standards”. Most countries have developed programmes to prevent severe needs or hardship, hence the definition of an acceptable minimum standard of living is generous in developed economics compared to that of the developing ones, like the United States of America, Great Britain, France etc, and this of course has reflected in high public expenditures. According to Menshikova, Pruel, Rubtcova and Varlamova (2020), the asserted that “the absence of distinct boundaries is evident since in different counties the process of ensuring access to information as well as scientific understanding are conducted in more than one way”. The pertinent questions the study is set to address would be (a) would the redistributive policies addresses economic problems in relation to developing groups or individuals who are less privileged and are need of succor; (b) if the redistributive policies will address social welfare issues in the society, thereby improving the standards of living for those earning lesser amount in the society, thereby making an attempt to bridge the gap between the have and have-not thus allowing poor population to share in real rise of living standards; (c) if it would encourages environmental and social-economic development and enhancement, with a view to increasing social welfare of the populace.

2 | SOLVING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The idea behind the redistributive policy is to aid in solving economic, social and political problems. These problems are likened to the distortion of market barriers and increase in economic inefficiency, competition and innovation through regulation and of regulatory framework for market functionality and prudent oversight. This could be the reason why Oaikhena (2021), stated that “culture, socio-economic and political ties with other nations of the world had expanded and further enrich foreign relations through cultural diplomacy”. Everyone should and sometimes insist on their right, but this is not always advisable. This could be the reason why Sardaryan (2021), observed that “democracy is understood as a political regime based on the idea that power in a country should belong to the people, who exercise it either directly or through their representatives”. In certain situation it is more prudent to wave one’s right, for example in the interest of peace. It is not always right to assert or demand one’s right. The ability to know when to demand one’s right and when to wave it is part of moral maturity. This is decided after a mature reflection on the circumstances of any given situation. Dye (1992) argued that, “the initial goal for the struggle for equality in America was the

elimination of discrimination and segregation practiced by governments, particularly in voting and public education”. Governmental policies are often times regarded as legal general obligation that command the loyalty of people or citizens. People may then regard the policies of cooperation, churches, professional organisations/establishment, civil associations and other groups or associations in the society, as important and even binding.

According to Kohler (2015) he averred that “arguments on redistributive policies and equity have been inseparable since before the emergence of economics as the study of political economy, but concerns for equity where progressively eclipsed by the objectives of promoting economic growth following influential work by Kuznets in 1955”. In view of this therefore, measures should be taken to defend the interests of the public and the environment, health, social cohesion, security, and integration. There by protecting the economic effort to solve social regulations and economic problems, in line with the redistributive policy that could become secondary, if concerns or unexpected efficient effort are not sustained. It might therefore, become necessary to adduced that policy makers are faced with economic or technological problems to process policies in the open. In addition, reforms aimed at verifying regulations are needed, especially in the area of market regulations, which could be designed as a regulatory framework as an instrument for goal-based approaches and market incentives, which are simple, flexible, and more effective, at lowering market cost. According to Agbato (2010) he wrote that “those who have faced a life of unemployment or at best, a marginal economical, adjustment are often motivated predominantly by the desire for safety, and security as a means of protection at a minimal level, which is the basic psychological needs”.

In these regards, changes that improve and regulate quality market goods, should be sustained and be cost-effective. The quality of legal regulations and related government formalities, are often preferred for the sake of transparency and proper application of reform mechanism. According to Olaopa (2008), he said that “the risk that one has seen in current reform programme implementation is the deleterious effect of personalising of innovations through self-attribution of every positive achievement on reform”. The fact that the reform has not moved as fast as envisaged is a proof of complexity of the reform environment, especially the political context. Opinions are different, though the government has always argued that “it is making bold attempt to meet the need of the people”. Reform can also mean revision of regulations, the entire regulatory framework, scrapping and rebuilding of improved processes for making, managing and regulating reform. As a result, deregulations are said to be subsets of reforms that are regulated to partially regulate the sectors to improve performance line with redistributive policy.

2.1 | Need for regulatory compliance

For policies to improve regulatory compliance of the population, it must be abreast of what the target groups are yearning for or what is befitting for them to enable them leave a life of cordiality and understanding in order to key into informed regulatory design (Frank, 2009). Policymakers and regulators should be able to understand the views of the individuals and groups organisations targeted for the purpose of regulation, taking into consideration the following factors:

- How the market places were characteristics;
- Making decision in a structured manner for the people;
- Understanding the incentives that are likely to motivate individuals that are affected in the organisations, and groups in order to adhere to new or improved regulations; and
- Hindrance or obstacles to the compliance of the policy

Basically, the degree which target groups or population, conform to regulations is based on how the group is characterised to interact with the objectives and qualities of the regulations. Rational approaches to policies could make adequate requirement for a clear definition of the problem(s). Dye posits that “proponents of programs for the poor frequently make high estimates of the numbers of poor, as they view the problem of poverty as a persistent one, even in an affluent society; they contend that many millions of people suffer from hunger, exposure, and remedial illness, and that some of them even starve to death”. In view therefore, regulations could be seen as larger components, whose effect created by incentives or palliatives for private or public actors to adjust in their behavior. However, this is not easy especially when agencies of government display their power and arrogance with institutions, business owners that are said to be powerful. The central principle(s) is that, the redistributive policy could have

different enforcement mechanism through which it responds to a particular type of non-compliance regulative situation. More so, regulators could begin with a persuasive language or apply a different strategy which could be more punitive, if voluntary compliance fails, to deal with economic problems. The strategy for addressing some level of non-conformity to regulations by regulators could be less punitive. The system of trust could be explored to meet desired objectives, as the application of punitive measures all the time might most likely not yield the desired result. It is pertinent to state also that every effort should be made to compel obedience by the regulators. Harsher sanctions could also be deployed to ensure compliance through the enforcement of social welfare.

3 | ADDRESSING SOCIAL WELFARE ISSUES THROUGH REDISTRIBUTIVE POLICIES

Conforming to regulations which are aimed at maximising the “social welfare” of redistributive policy is associated with resources and activities of government, leading to the development of the factors that favoured social welfare, using the strategy to weaken or eliminate those working against it. Instrument of compliance are used to analyze and decide how to design regulatory policies that would address social welfare, as enforcement of strategy should not be hinged on compliance alone to tackle a policy and the process of making it. According to Dye (1992) observed that, “it is important to remember that most spells of welfare dependency are relatively short”. This suggests that a brief experience with the welfare system does not necessarily create long-term dependency. However, a significant segment of welfare recipients, are said to be persistently poor and dependent. It is by no means certain that the welfare system itself causes this long-term dependence. But a pattern of continuous welfare dependence may indeed be a product of attitudinal and behavioral characteristics towards family, work, and education, which are caused in part by welfare policy itself. Welfare issues must be addressed, in order to carry on with the redistributive policy and those who are beneficiaries should be adequately considered for a better welfare package. Improving their lifestyle and promoting the agenda of development and economic growth in the society. Oaikhena (2021), argued that “policies recognised the role of social protection in enabling individuals to face risk and to guarantee them a minimum income, allowing their integration into society”.

This strategy is an attempt to account for the outcome of compliance on the redistributive policy, which are brought about through the cordiality that exist among regulators and people that are being regulated, that is, authorised regulators/governments agents; loyalty or disloyalty on the part of the targeted groups, as well as, voluntary compliance with regulations, the knowledge of regulation, and the effects of legal control structures and sanctions. As a result, Moller (2020) posited that, “monitoring the plans implementation for the federal target program takes fundamentally and methodologically a new level on the content and quality of reporting”. The impacts of social welfare on the redistributive policy have been expanded to accommodate non-regulated impacts, like non-point source runoff. Which has also become more difficult for environmental and governmental agencies to make adequate gains, applying the traditional approaches. Thus, agencies are putting measures in place to manage and focus on concerned groups, for the purpose of getting results from target groups by deploying resources for efficient and effective development of collaborative partnership with interested parties or stakeholders. This new welfare management strategy paved the way for easy growth and the culminated into the use of measurement systems which are based on adequate outcomes. Expression like “make sure to inspect the right places at the right time” and question like “does the environment feel our positive impact” can be provided answers.

In view of these, where possible, agencies are also making the burden of regulatory policy lighter, for the benefactors that have demonstrated greater ability towards regulatory conformity, with the law and commitment to achieve the redistributive policy objectives. This burden therefore, becomes lighter, through the granting penalty discounts when minor lapses occur, reduction of routine inspections, simplifying licenses and permits, correction of non-fraudulent activities, and providing indemnities for voluntary disclosure. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2000), it advised that “when violations are detected, the use of restorative justice to build up the possibility for compliance should be applied, if there is a way to remedy the situation and improve compliance for the future”.

4 | PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND SECURITY

According to Abraham Maslow, he identified five, important hierarchy of needs, which he believes could be universal. These are: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualisation needs (Offiong, 2004). Safety being the second in hierarchy according to Maslow is essential for increased responsibilities to policy makers. The responsibility of policymakers towards ensuring a safe environment does not end with policy pronouncement alone but proper and adequate implementation of rules. As a result, fresh regulations and rules may need to be followed by campaigns to ensure they are brought to the notice of target groups and made easy and comprehensible. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, it argued “that the traditional regulatory approach of establishing standards of behaviour and legal enforcement mechanisms is not the sole means for governments to influence the behaviour of citizens and enterprises and may not be the most effective”. Dye recognised that “output in public policy may have a modifying effect on the environment and the demands arising from it”. As a result the people would expect adequate care and safe environment to pursue their desired objectives in line with the redistributive policy.

Government is expected to play a significant role in promoting and strengthening the credibility of policy makers. Due to obvious behavioral effects caused by insecurity in most developing countries, it is however not clear whether re-distributional policy shall be able to deal fully with the issues relating to inequality. This could be the reason why Doerrenberg, & Peichl, wrote that “most countries with high levels of redistribution, employers shift away from social responsibilities because they expect the government to provide decent levels of inequality and fairness” (2012). It commonly assumed that, the target group should be abreast with how to comply relatively with rules and regulations associated with the redistributive policies. The masses are generally uninformed, passive and lack the competence of motivation and interest to actively influence the policy process. According to Ikelegbe (2006), he wrote that “the elite on the other hand consist of those who hold leading positions and thus wield power in the strategic sectors of society such as the military, politics, bureaucracy, business, education and religion.” The need to encourage the culture of distributional policies is of crucial importance to the future of democracy in African countries. Baradat (1979) posits that “popular government is indeed the essence of a democratic system”. It is widely known that politicians always prefer to be on the winning side and would therefore prefer to strike deals with the winning party.

Notwithstanding, rapid increases in the complexity and volume of these new regulations can make this basic assumption unrealistic. Today the federal government directly aids three categories of welfare recipients. These are the aged, the blind, and the disabled, under the various schemes. The federal government also provides grants to states to assist displaced persons, who were victims of insurgency. Idehen & Oaikhena (2021) argued that “policy inconsistency other than the height of poor governance must be rooted out of Africa countries if there is to be any meaningful development”. Within broad outlines of federal policies, states retain considerable discretion in the provision of Aids to families with dependent children, in terms of the amounts of money appropriated, benefits to be paid to recipients, rules of eligibility, and rules of the programmes. Each state may choose to grant assistance beyond the amounts supported by the national government. Each state establishes its own standards to determine need. As a result, there is a great deal of variation among the states in ease of access to welfare rolls and in the size of welfare benefits, in order to promote a safe and peaceful environment. A focus on the feasibility of compliance to safety and security rules is also needed, especially for groups that are small, thereby eliminating technical and complex rules that can undermine confidence and become unreasonable regulatory structures. As a result governments in this regard are expected to have a long-term, clear and sincere interest in maintaining positive attitudes toward the regulatory systems among the population and citizens with regards to the target groups, as these attitudes largely constitute the level of acceptability and safety compliance. Putting into consideration the strategies for enforcement of security measures to protect the citizens and promote equality, especially within the ranks of redistributive target beneficiaries.

Unfortunately, the significant effect of the redistributive policy on post-government income inequality is often characterised by difficulties. Governments at all levels should endeavour to deal with insecurity issues in the country as this measure will also aid the reduction of mass poverty

and inequality. As long as people in the society remain poor and lack access to basic means of livelihood, they will continue to remain susceptible to all kinds of manipulations, including being used to foment all kinds of violence, thereby making the environment unsafe.

5 | SOCIAL CONTRACT WITH THE PEOPLE

A critical issue like the redistributive policy in a developing democratic society is a collective memory, established to deal with persons' or groups moral demands from their government which has to do with political obligations as dependent upon a contract or agreement by policy makers to form the society in which they live. Oaikhena (2022) posits that, "society with all its complexities have become a mirror reflecting human nature with multiple needs. Human nature, he said is founded on civil society". Succinctly, social contract is an implicit agreement between the people and their government representing what each side should provide to the other. The redistributive policy is based on components which are essential for strategic purposes to enhance the reduction inequality and promote sustainable development among the target groups thus focusing on economic growth. This could be the reason why Agbato (2010), posited that "the essence and emphasis of the scientific management was not only on technological development of industry, it was more on maximum output with optimum human effort through the methods of separating waste and inefficiency from human work at all levels of operative performance". Government do many things that cannot be measured, however the best available measure of the overall dimensions of government activities is ensuring that the yearning of the people are taking into consideration, especially in the areas of policy implementation. Arguments relating to the redistributive policies have not been separated before the emergence of economics as it relates to the study of political economy. Concerns has also been raised for equity and equality in the society, where progressive eclipse by objective of promoting social and economic growth following influential and adequate policy implementation laid down in terms of agreement and due acceptability. According to Dye (1992), observed that, "the interplay of interest groups in policy making is praised as "pluralism" by many political scientists. He quoted Robert A. Dahl, that "...proclaimed the central guiding thread of American constitutional development" to be "the evolution of a political system in which all the active and legitimate groups in the population can make themselves heard at some critical stage in the process of decision".

While notions of the social contract have historically tended to focus on things like security, employment opportunities, fridge benefits, provision of adequate housing accommodation, and some other forms of social welfare to help address people's needs. Social contracts can also include agreements on how communal relations are managed. Communal relation is a very old system that is originally meant for local communal relationship among a small number of people. Peoples' lives can be changed through government approach and its exercise of power to end discrimination, eradicate poverty, eradicate slum environment, provide employment, uplift the downtrodden, provide education, and provide health care for the aged and sick through states and local governments. As the national government have more resources to deal with these issues than the state or local government, hence states and local governments are closer to people than the national government. More so the national government did not serve the people directly, and that governmental responsibility was parceled out to either states or localities, or to the national government. This ineffectiveness of government to continue to leave up to it responsibilities to the people made Oaikhena & Osemeke (2016) to posited that "government has become more ineffective because its' ability to secure compliance with its policies had diminished". The redistributive policy therefore, represent powerful policy instrument for the people, as it improves equality of outcome through the redistribution of income, wealth or other resources geared towards the enhancement and promotion of equality and opportunities through the improvement and distribution of income-generating assets.

Social contract compliments efforts, especially in developing democracies, which are arguably better placed to keep social contracts updated, alongside the redistributive policies, which have largely become associated with virtues of mechanisms put in place to promote responsiveness and accountability in governance and society. In addition, politicians/leaders can be voted out of office for failing to effectively adhere or deliver for their constituents the promises made during campaign, via protests, petitions, and other available means for removing them from office, thereby allowing the people to let their leaders know what they must do to retain legitimacy. According to Bell, Walker & Willer, (2000) they

wrote that "classical arguments by Marx Weber, describes steep hierarchical structures as those at the top, with substantial control over subordinates and gain a disproportionate share of the organisation's benefits".

It is therefore imperative, to state that the period of economic regulations in Nigeria is characterised with limited human investment to easily deal with the issues of income and wealth redistribution, which aid in the reduction of poverty and inequality, as opportunities to create a better world is difficult for the less privilege in the society. Economic policies in the country represents a set of contracts between the government and the various groups in the society. This provides justification for government intervention in class welfare in other to rethink economic activities in instances of the redistributive system, while policies in Nigeria typified the intervention of philosophy of government. This may not accelerate growth in any major way, except to reduce social tensions arising from inequality. As a result, renegotiation of contracts that entail direct government involvement, in the redistributive processes as it affects the poor and vulnerable in the society, thus allowing poor people to devote more resources to human and physical asset accumulation. This strategy would aid efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

6 | SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The implementation of policies is nonetheless based on experts and professionals, who play important roles in government as noted by the study. Governments are consulting and seeking optimal policies to solve societal problems, which becomes more acute with regards to uncertainty that constitutes acceptable compliance. The contributions of scholars are usually sought at the early stage of problem identification, so that policy can be formulated, studied, and analyzed, as well as, seek alternative policy choice. The redistributive policy, as discussed in this study, gives a unique opportunity for the government to address the notion of inequality. The people or groups affected by this policy feel a sense of belonging and fulfillment if the policy is adequately implemented. Thus, addressing the problems associated with policy failures and summersault as it relates to the redistributive policy. These problems could in part be explained by the lack of commitment, the lack of emphasis on and the absence if institutionalised evaluation.

The study also noted that governments most times do not know how their programmes are doing, the problems they are encountering, the modifications and redirection to be instituted and what should be done to enhance performance. Rather than a systematic evaluation investigation, data gathering and analysis to proffer performance to enhancing solutions, most of our government would prefer to increase expenditures as a solution to performance failure. If it is not increase expenditure, then it is the establishment of new agencies to handle implementation. The study opined that democracies shall continue to promote the redistributive policy which are based on government expenditures as they serve their aim to reduce inequality, and also reduce the risk of policy failure, despite the mixture of voluntarily implementation of the standards under the supervision of regulators and regulatory authorities for enterprises or establishments that reached certain standards of management and compliance. This was found to be effective and efficient in improving environmental problems than traditional regulatory methods, especially as it concerns the redistributive policies, and also in a situation where environmental problems are not solve by adequate regulation-making and inspection capacities. The study also noted the need for government to adequately adhere to strategic roles in the implementation of the social contract programmes with the people, by promoting and enhancing voluntary programmes and establishing compulsory terms of reference for equality. Adequate supervision of these programmes will improve commitment in the action plan.

7 | RECOMMENDATIONS

- Broad evidence that is based on standards should be applied, monitored, and enforced instead of specific rules to address the redistributive policies as dialogue leads to the process of policy development among regulators and regulated authorities.
- The argument that intergovernmental competition disadvantages the poor rests on a version of the free rider problem. It is therefore important that state and local government should set welfare benefits for their citizens to avoid the problems of the poor people migrating into generous jurisdiction.

- Policy makers are aware of the benefits levels provided by the governments, they should use this level as guidance in their decision making to create an enabling environment for the purpose of equality and avoid inequality in the society.
- Proponents of the redistributive policy should help to reduce conflict, poverty, increase political participation, encourage policy innovation, and improve government efficiency.
- Emerging technologies should be deployed to implement the redistributive policy programmes to the advantage of the nation and target groups. The performance of the public service institutions and programmes demand an institutionalisation of evaluation in the public sector. Besides, in the situation of scarce resources, poor services and gross competition by various services and sectors for the allocation of scarce resources, the efforts of government should be directed at ensuring performance and a good worth for monies invested towards the redistributive policies.

Acknowledgment:

The authors are grateful to the anonymous referees of the journal for their extremely useful suggestions to improve the quality of the paper. Usual disclaimers apply.

Funding:

This research paper received no internal or external funding. It was carried out solely at the cost of the authors.

Data Availability Statement:

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data is not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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