

Impact of DPRK Social Policies on Population Development

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The population issue is very important for all nations.

The social policies in our country exert great influence on the development of population.

Social policies are a solid system for social welfare effectuated by the working-class party which took the power and the state throughout the society for the improvement of welfare and equal standard of living of the working people including the working class.

The social policies are unique to the socialist society where the state has become the host responsible for the life of the people.

The great leader Comrade **Kim Jong Il** said as follows.

“The state disburses a huge amount of state budget funds every year, in order to supply the people with provisions, almost free of charge, build houses, and ensure free education and free medical care, paid vacations, regular accommodation in sanatoria and holiday homes and various other benefits of social insurance and social security . These are popular and communist measures which can be seen only under our socialist system.” (“KIM JONG IL SELECTED WORKS” Vol.10 P. 157)

Included in our social policies are universal 12-year compulsory education system, study-while-working system, children nursing system, universal free medical care system, social security and insurance system, system of preferential treatment for mothers, supply system of food and consumer goods at cheap price, benefits in using houses and so on.

Through such social policies the working people in our country enjoy supplementary benefits in addition to reward from labor at the expense of the state and society.

The impact of social policies in our country on the development of population is found in the fact that they have contributed to the improvement of harmonious and well-balanced life of the population.

The social policies in our country constitute the foundation for balanced improvement of people's living and their material and cultural life.

It can be proved by the features of the social policies of our country.

One of the major features of the social policies is that it covers the main areas related to the people's living. In other words they are applied to the major and essential fields such as education, public health service, social insurance and security, use of houses, food supply and others.

Another feature is that the portion of social benefits born of the social benefits occupies considerable rate of living expense as an important factor to raise the actual income.

The portion of benefits from social policies has increased on an annual basis corresponding to the development of production force and today somewhere near equality to the share of dividend according to the labor.

Another major feature of the social policies is that they are applied to all the working people in a proportioned way.

The harmonious and well-balanced improvement of the living of the population in our country is revealed in the fact that everyone is leading a stable life without regional differences.

The harmonious and well-balanced improvement of the living of the population in our country is ensured by a lot of benefits directly in the consumption of materials such as mass consumption goods, condiment, cheap rations and cheap charge for houses.

All the working people are enjoying a great deal of benefits of being supplied from the state with rations and houses at a very low price.

Today the housing problem is a very serious issue throughout the world and the houses are extremely expensive.

Due to the fact that the rich gets richer and the poor poorer the number of homeless people and those who stay in what is not really a house is increasing day by day.

On the contrary all the working people in our country are using the houses presented by the state, paying a little charge.

At present in our country the charge for house covers extremely low rate of living expense even including the charge for fuel, electricity and others. In case countryside the houses are built for the farmers at the expense of the state and they do not even pay anything for that.

As the social policies at the expense of the state effected in the necessary fields of life for the working people who live in different areas, urban or rural our people are actually enjoying equal and well-balanced material and cultural life with nothing to worry about food, clothes and housing such as studying and medical care thanks to the free compulsory education and medical care system and jobs ensured from the state.

Another impact of social policies on the population development is that they have greatly contributed to the qualitative improvement of the population.

The qualitative development of population in our country can find its expression in the fact that there are no illiterates in our country and that the overall technical and cultural standard of the working people has been further enhanced.

Before the country's liberation there were millions of illiterates representing a quarter of the total population and in the northern half of the republic there were no colleges and vast majority of the children of school age did not go to primary schools.

Thanks to the illiteracy abolition campaign the illiteracy was completely eradicated until 1949 in our country and today all the people have possessed technical and cultural standard higher than secondary school graduates thanks to the free compulsory education system.

The universal free compulsory education system is the highest form of education system in which all forms of education work for all the members of the society are effectuated at the expense of the state.

After the country's liberation in our country measures were taken to free the children from paying schooling fees and grant scholarship for the students of universities and colleges even under the difficult economic situations.

Even during the 3-year difficult period of the Fatherland Liberation War against the armed invasion of the US imperialists, when all the schools were destructed, measures were taken for them to continue their study to cope with the wartime situation.

The advancement of the socialist construction and the reinforcement of the national economic

foundation brought gradual expansion and development of the free educational system. In 1956 the universal compulsory primary education system was put into practice in our country, in the following year the universal compulsory secondary education and in April 1959 the universal free education.

In 1967 the universal 9-year compulsory technical education was effectuated, in 1975 the universal 11-year compulsory education and in 2014 the universal 12-year compulsory education.

Everyone in our country has access to education free of charge at the expense of the state until they reach the age of labor. After class they are given opportunities to acquire skills and talents at the students' and children's palace, school children's club, sports club, school's professional clubs according to their hopes and flairs.

The children under schooling age are nursed and cared through the children nursing system at the expense of the state in our country.

In the nurseries and kindergartens the children are provided with confectionaries, milk and nutritious food at the expense of the state and the education for intellectual and physical development.

Today in our country all the children and students are brought up and taught at the expense of the state.

In our country have been established factory colleges, correspondence colleges and evening colleges so that the working people can study while working in their workshops through study-while-working system and reeducation system. The state has taken positive measures to give the students their full salary or shorten their working hours so that they can study on a regular basis.

It is the main orientation of the population development to raise the qualitative standard of the population to the maximum in our country.

In our country upholding the slogan of making the entire people scientific and technical talents all the people are encouraged to learn hard the modern science and technology to be social beings developed in an all-round way possessed of cultural and technological standard of university graduates and to give full play to their distinguished talents.

In addition to developing the tertiary education institutes and the study-while-working system for all the working people who have finished their secondary education to have access to higher education the post-graduate education, on-line education, education for geniuses and others have been further strengthened.

In addition, the physical improvement and all-round development of the working people are guaranteed through science clubs, arts clubs, physical training clubs, various clubs for extracurricular activities, mass sports, free medical care and others run by the expense of the state and society, as a result of which the overall qualitative standard of the population have been regularly improved in our country.

Another impact of the social policies on the population development is that it exercised considerable influence over the change in the natural growth rate of fertility and mortality rate, the major item in the reproduction of population.

The population in early 1970s showed sharp increase due to high birth rate and low death rate.

And in 1970s the rate of fertility, mortality and population growth started to show decline for several reasons in our country.

One of the reasons is that the overall academic and cultural standard of the working people have been further raised.

The steady-rate rapid development of the economy and the introduction of compulsory primary education in 1956, universal 7-year compulsory secondary education in 1958 and universal free education in 1959 provided the population an access to education, which led to the rise in the overall academic and cultural standard of the working people.

Those, women, in particular, who started to enjoy the universal compulsory education reached the production age in the 1970s, when the death rate of infants and the birth rate started to become low, which led to drop in the natural growth rate of population.

The drop in the rate of birth, death and population growth in the 1970s is attributed to the impact of public health policies.

The universal free medical care system is one of the major social policies in practice in our country.

The universal free medical care is a popular public health policy which is under practice at the expense of the state for health recovery and improvement of the people.

Thanks to the enforcement of the universal free medical care system anyone has access to medical care free of charge.

The great leader Comrade **Kim Il Sung** first put into practice the free medical care system in the guerrilla bases in the 1930s of anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle.

The free medical care by the law on state and social insurance for the workers, office workers and their families was introduced in 1947 and on January the first 1953 of hard-fought Fatherland Liberation War the universal free medical care was put into practice in our country.

With the introduction of the complete free medical care system and the preventive public health service in our country all the working people go through regular medical check and vaccination. What's more, with the introduction of the section doctor system the doctors take care of the health of the people in their areas on a regular basis and conduct awareness service on hygiene and health.

The hospital system spreads farther to the countryside to say nothing of urban areas from residential areas to factories, enterprises so that the people have no worries about the medical treatment. At present the polyclinics elaborately furnished with medical equipments have been set up even in Ris and Dongs, the smallest units of residential administration and in the mountainous areas have been established the clinics and medical centers.

In addition the system of dissemination of knowledge on health and hygiene has been established in all regions through hospitals, propaganda of hygiene and hygienic vaccination to raise the understanding of hygiene and health and the women, in particular are kept informed of knowledge and cures of pregnancy, child delivery, various kinds of diseases and especially different types of diseases of children and their cures.

With the development of the free medical care system which started in 1960 onto the complete free medical care the hospitals have been set up in all areas their role enhanced and hygienic propaganda and dissemination have been strengthened and the production of medical equipments and pharmaceuticals. This consequently has led to the drop in death rate and raise in the knowledge on

production and contraception which served as an important factor for the low birth rate.

Before the country's liberation the mortality in our country was as high as 20.8‰ and the average life expectancy was only 38.4.

After the country's liberation, particularly in 1960 when the complete free medical care was introduced all the people got to have access to medical treatment, which in turn brought about constant decline in the mortality rate.

All the pregnant women go through regular check and get delivery aid from the special doctors and maternity nurses, which lead to fall in the death rate of the infants and the women.

Thanks to the public health policies various diseases which used to threaten the lives of the people have been removed and the death rate has gradually dropped, the result of which is that the average life expectancy has increased to over 70 in 1986.

Another reason for the decline in the rate of birth, death and population growth in 1970s can be attributed to the active participation of more women in the social and labor life and their correspondingly high social status.

Before the country's liberation women were not equal to men and due to the dominant feudal institutions they were totally excluded from social life.

Today in our country various measures have been taken to free the women from heavy burden of housework and to ensure their full participation in the social life, giving rise to the social status.

Policies have been put into practice to respect and preferentially treat the women throughout the society today in our country.

All the women enjoy 5-month paid maternity leave and the baby mothers are paid for their 6-hour labor equal to 8-hour labor.

The state is taking measures to increase the percentage of women in the staff in light labor, offices and commercial service fields, which are non-production parts of factories and enterprises.

Today the percentage of women participating in the social and labor life has been equaled to that of men and the number of women factory managers, co-farm managers, scientists and deputies to the Supreme People's Assembly is steadily increasing.

The rise in the women's social status has brought about a great deal of improvement in the approaches to their generation, influencing a lot over the generation practice.

Due to the introduction of compulsory primary education in 1956 and compulsory secondary education in 1958 the age of marriage and generation of the women has been increased, which is because their generation age started in the 1970s.

The social policies in our country also influenced over solution to the problem of aged population, social securities for disabled people, sufficient relaxation of the working people and stable working conditions.

Since the population issue is one of the key issues to be resolved along with economic construction and improvement of people's living the research on interrelationship between social policies and population development is of great practical significance. In the future too further research on the social policies and population development should be conducted to contribute to the full play to the advantages of our socialist economic system centered on popular masses.