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# Axiology Of Philosophy Of Science Towards Social Assistance Policy Of The Ministry Of Social Affairs

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ABSTRACT

Social assistance policy is a state instrument for protecting vulnerable communities and mitigating the impact of poverty. However, policy success is not solely measured by budget size or number of recipients, but also by distributive justice, targeting accuracy, respect for human dignity, transparency, and accountability. This article aims to analyze the social assistance policy of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia through the perspective of the axiology of philosophy of science. The research uses a qualitative method based on literature review with a philosophical approach and policy analysis. The study materials include scientific journal articles published between 2024 and 2026, laws and regulations, and fundamental literature on axiology and justice. The analysis is conducted by linking ethical values, policy objectives, distribution mechanisms, and their social consequences. The study results indicate that the moral legitimacy of social assistance is determined by the alignment between social protection objectives and policy implementation. Data integration through the National Social and Economic Single Data can support targeting improvements, but does not automatically guarantee justice if verification, complaint mechanisms, data protection, and oversight are not adequately implemented. This article emphasizes that axiology can be used as a normative evaluation framework to ensure that social assistance is not only administratively effective but also fair, humane, transparent, and accountable .

***Keywords: Axiology, Philosophy Of Science, Social Assistance, Distributive Justice, Ministry Of Social Affairs***

## INTRODUCTION

Social assistance is a public policy instrument used by the state to protect communities facing poverty, economic vulnerability, and limited access to basic needs. In the Indonesian context, the implementation of social welfare is not only related to the distribution of resources, but also to the state's constitutional responsibility to care for the poor and neglected children and to develop a social security system for all citizens (Lukman Hakim, Kolopaking dan Kinseng, 2025). Thus, social assistance policy has both an administrative and a moral dimension related to human rights, justice, and dignity. The issue of social assistance cannot be

reduced to questions about whether aid has been distributed or how many families have benefited. More fundamental issues are whether recipients have been identified based on relevant needs, whether citizens who meet the criteria have equal access, and whether administrative decisions can be audited and accounted for.

Research on the distribution of social assistance in rural Indonesia shows that targeting errors can occur in both directions, with poor people not receiving assistance while those who are not classified as poor are actually listed as recipients. These findings come from a study of 289 respondents in three villages in West Java and should therefore be interpreted within the scope of the study and not generalized as national figures. (Pertiwi et al. 2025). Recent studies also indicate that the effectiveness of social assistance is influenced by data quality, implementation mechanisms, inter-agency coordination, and the social conditions of recipients. Research on aid distribution policies for extreme poverty alleviation in Indonesia positions distribution effectiveness as a policy issue that needs to be assessed through program implementation and its relationship to poverty alleviation goals. (Subekti dan Kensiwi, 2025)Other studies highlight issues of targeting accuracy, transparency of the process, and the potential politicization of aid as factors that could reduce public trust in policies.(Nunung, Latifah, Fatmawati, dan Sulastri, 2025).

The development of social assistance data collection policy in Indonesia was marked by the issuance of Minister of Social Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 2025 concerning the Updating and Use of the National Single Social and Economic Data for Social Assistance, Social Empowerment, and Social Welfare Programs. This regulation came into effect on June 12, 2025, and replaced Minister of Social Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 2021 concerning the Management of Integrated Social Welfare Data (Mujiburrahman, Umar et al., 2025).. The presence of DTSEN demonstrates the importance of data updating and integration in social protection governance. However, data integration should be understood as an administrative tool, not automatic proof of equitable aid distribution. This is where the axiology of philosophy of science becomes relevant. Axiology examines the values, goals, and ethical considerations that accompany the use of knowledge. In the context of public policy, the axiological question is not only whether a system can technically work, but also what values it aims to realize, who benefits, who is at risk of harm, and how the policy's impacts can be accounted for (Sinaga, Lubis, Situmorang, dan Harahap, 2022).

Administrative knowledge about poverty, for example, can help determine aid recipients, but decisions about poverty criteria and recipient priorities also involve value choices.(Firmansyah dan Solikin, 2019). The distributive justice perspective provides a basis for assessing whether public resources are allocated equitably, especially when societal needs outweigh available resources. (Sarjito dan Djati, 2025).Meanwhile, the capability approach emphasizes that well-being should be seen through a person's actual ability to live a worthwhile life, not solely from their income or administrative status. (Azzahra, Musyaffi, dan Khairunnisa, 2025).Both perspectives help broaden the assessment of social assistance from mere procedural

correctness to attention to the recipient's living conditions and the social consequences of policies.

Several recent studies reinforce the urgency of such evaluations. A study on the inaccuracy of targeting social assistance in Rancaekek Kulon Village places the implementation process and the role of local government as crucial to the distribution issue (Dinanti, Aini, dan Mirnawati, 2025). Research on social assistance in Merauke Regency highlights the gap between social protection policies and distribution practices. (Kamila dan Putra, (2025).A study on the accountability of social assistance fund distribution in DKI Jakarta also discusses findings of recipients deemed to not meet the criteria, demonstrating the importance of oversight of distribution decisions. (Haliim, 2025).These findings do not mean that all programs have failed, but they do suggest that policy designs need to be continually tested against principles of fairness and accountability.

Based on these issues, this article examines the relationship between the axiology of the philosophy of science and the Ministry of Social Affairs' social assistance policies. The discussion focuses on two questions. First, how can axiological values be used to assess the orientation and implementation of social assistance policies? Second, how can the principles of justice, humanity, transparency, and accountability be translated into more responsible policy evaluation measures? The purpose of this article is to formulate a normative analytical framework that connects philosophical values with concrete issues in social assistance governance.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a literature review approach. The qualitative approach is used because the research is directed at understanding and analyzing in depth the relationship between the axiological values of the philosophy of science and social assistance policies from an economic and social welfare perspective. This research is not oriented towards statistically measuring the relationships between variables, but rather on analyzing concepts, policies, previous research results, and various documents related to the implementation of social assistance in Indonesia. The literature review approach is carried out by collecting, identifying, comparing, and interpreting various sources relevant to the research focus. The data sources used in this study are secondary data obtained through a search of various scientific literature and policy documents. These sources include national and international journal articles, books on welfare economics, poverty, social protection, and public policy, government agency reports, documents from the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, and laws and regulations related to the implementation of social welfare and social assistance. The use of these various sources is intended to gain a comprehensive understanding of the position of social assistance in economic policy and social protection for the community. (Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña, 2019). Subsequent research analysis focused on several key economic aspects, namely poverty alleviation, equitable distribution of welfare,

reduction of economic vulnerability, targeting accuracy, budget effectiveness, and the sustainability of social assistance policies. These aspects were used to examine how social assistance policies can provide economic benefits to recipient communities. Previous research has shown that social assistance is linked to efforts to meet basic needs and reduce the economic vulnerability of the poor. Therefore, the success of social assistance can be seen not only in the amount of assistance distributed but also in the benefits received by the community and its contribution to improving welfare ( Hermawati, Kusnali, Witono, Muhammad, and Saryana, 2024). This study used the axiological perspective of the philosophy of science as an analytical framework to assess the values and objectives contained in social assistance policies. Axiology is concerned with discussions of the value, benefits, and purposes of using knowledge for human life. In the context of social assistance policies, an axiological perspective is used to analyze whether the knowledge, data, budgets, and policy instruments used by the government are directed towards generating social and economic benefits for the community. Thus, social assistance policies are viewed not only as government administrative instruments but also as policies that have valuable consequences for people's lives. (Suriasumantri, 2009).The analysis was carried out in several stages, namely identifying sources, grouping information based on themes, interpreting concepts, comparing previous research results, and drawing conclusions. (Creswell, 2018).The information obtained is grouped into several themes, namely social assistance policy, poverty, social protection, public welfare, targeting accuracy, data governance, and axiological values. This grouping is used to identify the relationship between the economic objectives of social assistance policy and the values underlying its implementation. This research seeks to produce an analysis that not only explains what and how social assistance policy is implemented, but also the purpose for which the policy is implemented and what values should be the basis for its implementation. The economic perspective is used to examine the benefits and impacts of policy on public welfare, while the axiological perspective is used to analyze the values that should underlie the process of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Thus, this research is expected to provide an understanding of the importance of balancing economic effectiveness and humanitarian values in the implementation of social assistance policy.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Axiology of the Philosophy of Science as the Value Basis for Social Assistance Policy

Axiology places value as a crucial element in the use of knowledge. Knowledge is not limited to explaining reality but also relates to the purpose of its use and considerations of the merits and demerits of actions. In social assistance policies, knowledge about welfare levels, household conditions, and the characteristics of vulnerable groups forms the basis for developing recipient criteria. However, utilizing this knowledge always involves decisions about the priority, eligibility, and allocation of public resources. In this sense, axiology is not a substitute for technical analysis or policy administration. Rather, it provides a framework for

assessing whether technical and administrative decisions are ethically justifiable. A data collection system can be judged for its processing speed, but it still needs to be examined for the fairness of criteria, the transparency of procedures, and the possibility for citizens to correct erroneous data. Therefore, policy quality needs to be understood through the relationship between instrument effectiveness and the values it seeks to achieve.

This issue is evident in studies on the effectiveness of social assistance for alleviating extreme poverty. Policy assessments are not simply about the existence of a program; they also need to examine the relationship between distribution mechanisms and the intended goals. (Haliim dan Muhammad, 2025).A study evaluating a social assistance program in Baramamase Village, for example, prioritized data accuracy, program management, and poverty alleviation impact as interconnected elements of the evaluation. (Jewed, Abdullah, dan Ishak, 2025).Thus, the existence of a program and its distribution are indicators of the process, but do not automatically prove that welfare goals have been met. The first important value is distributive justice. In social assistance policies, justice means that public resources are allocated based on criteria relevant to the needs and objectives of social protection. Justice does not necessarily mean that everyone receives the same amount of assistance, as the circumstances and needs of each household can differ. A more appropriate principle is to ensure that differences in treatment have an explanatory basis, are related to the program's objectives, and do not lead to unjustified discrimination.

This justice perspective can be used to interpret inclusion and exclusion errors. Inclusion errors occur when assistance is received by parties who do not meet the criteria, while exclusion errors occur when citizens who are entitled to it are denied assistance. Hakim and his colleagues' study found both forms of errors in a sample of three villages in West Java. (Anggrasari dan Hanri, 2025).Axiologically, these errors are not merely technical deficiencies. Inclusion errors have the potential to reduce resources for groups in greater need, while exclusion errors can leave citizens vulnerable to the loss of support that should be available. These local findings provide a reason to strengthen verification, not a basis for assuming the magnitude of errors at a national scale.

The second value is social utility. Social assistance policies aim to help communities address socioeconomic risks, meet basic needs, and improve well-being. Therefore, policy success cannot be solely measured by the amount of aid distributed or budget absorption, but must be linked to the benefits received by the community. Studies on social assistance and intergenerational poverty highlight the importance of examining the links between economic support, human resource development, and the sustainability of family well-being. However, utility also requires careful analysis: studies demonstrating relationships or impacts in a particular context do not necessarily prove that all types of assistance have the same results in every region. The third value is humanity. Aid recipients should not be treated simply as administrative objects or numbers in a database. They are citizens with dignity, experiences, needs, and the right to receive explanations for decisions affecting access to social services. A humanitarian approach requires non-demeaning service processes, understandable procedures,

and accessible complaint channels. This principle also means that data errors should not be automatically attributed to recipients, as errors can arise from changes in household circumstances, limited access to information, or administrative inconsistencies.

The fourth value is transparency and accountability. Transparency requires sufficient information regarding criteria, procedures, and complaint channels, while still protecting recipients' personal data. Accountability requires that administrative decisions be explained, reviewed, and corrected if errors are found. Studies on administrative justice in algorithm-based social assistance distribution systems underscore the relevance of digital transparency as service decisions increasingly rely on data systems and automated processes. (Yusriadi, 2026).Thus, digitalization should not be viewed as a guarantee of neutrality; system-based decisions still require oversight and correction procedures accessible to citizens.

In the context of the Ministry of Social Affairs, these values can be translated into operational evaluation measures. Fairness can be assessed through the quality of criteria and the handling of targeting errors. Benefit can be examined through the program's linkage to recipient needs. Humanity can be examined through service accessibility, recipient treatment, and protection of vulnerable groups. Transparency and accountability can be assessed through the availability of information, decision documentation, oversight, and complaint resolution. This framework places philosophical values as the basis for assessment that can be linked to administrative mechanisms, rather than simply as normative statements.

## Axiological Evaluation of the Governance of Social Assistance by the Ministry of Social Affairs

Social assistance policies are within the framework of social welfare implementation, which is regulated by laws and regulations. Minister of Social Affairs Regulation Number 3 of 2025 regulates the updating and use of the National Socioeconomic Single Data (DTSEN) for social assistance, social empowerment, and social welfare programs. (Setiadi dan Nurcahyo, 2026).From an administrative perspective, data integration is intended to support information consistency and the recipient determination process. From an axiological perspective, the question that needs to be asked is whether the use of this data results in decisions that are fairer, more auditable, and more sensitive to changes in citizens' conditions. A study on the implementation of the SIKS-NG application in DTSEN-based social assistance data collection at the Pasuruan City Social Service discusses the application's effectiveness as well as implementation constraints and access to the system. (Safitri dan Sa'diyah, 2026).The study on the digital transformation of DTSEN management through SIKS-NG also positions information systems as part of changes in social welfare data governance. (Ramadhani et al., 2026).Both studies demonstrate that digital systems are relevant for discussion in distribution reform, but their benefits remain contingent on data quality, implementer capacity, and procedural design. Information systems can facilitate data management, but they cannot alone ensure the accuracy of every piece of information or the fairness of every decision.

Axiologically, data updates need to be accompanied by clear verification and correction mechanisms. Household socioeconomic information can change due to job loss, changes in family size, health conditions, disasters, or relocation. Therefore, data that is accurate at one point in time may not remain accurate in the next. Policy assessments need to consider not only the completeness of the database, but also the speed of updates, audit procedures, the division of responsibilities between institutions, and the opportunity for citizens to submit corrections. These issues relate to the value of administrative justice. Research on the effectiveness of SIKS-NG implementation in Pasuruan City places centralized access and data collection constraints as part of the implementation evaluation.(Syahputra dan Muamar, 2026). Meanwhile, the study on optimizing the DTSEN policy emphasizes the importance of data integration in social protection reform and extreme poverty alleviation. (Tiri et al., 2026).Normatively, this integration will be more meaningful if it is followed by an objection procedure, providing reasons for decisions that impact citizens, and re-examining disputed information.

The next challenge is transparency and accountability. A study on the implementation of social assistance in Aceh examined targeting accuracy, timeliness, accuracy of amounts, and distribution efficiency, while also noting differences in performance between regions and limitations in transparency and accountability. (Waluyo, Tui, dan Nani, 2025).Research on the governance of the Family Hope Program in Nagari Aie Angek, West Sumatra, also placed transparency and accountability as elements in assessing program implementation. (Yasin, Dunakhir, dan Rijal, 2024).Both studies demonstrate that evaluating social assistance requires looking at more than one indicator and taking into account the local implementation context. Transparency does not mean that all recipients' personal data must be made public. Information that needs to be made public is information that allows citizens to understand the program's objectives, general criteria, procedures, responsible parties, and complaint and correction mechanisms. Conversely, identities, detailed addresses, health conditions, or other personal information must be protected in accordance with applicable regulations. Thus, openness and privacy protection should not be at odds.

Both can be designed in a balanced way to enable public oversight of policies without increasing the risk of misuse of recipient information. The oversight aspect is also related to the potential for irregularities and politicization. Studies on the effectiveness of social assistance and the dynamics of corruption, governance, and politics suggest that institutional and political factors can influence policy implementation. (Sihombing et al., 2025).Another study on the inefficiency of social assistance in poverty reduction discusses the limitations of approaches that rely too heavily on assistance as the primary instrument for poverty alleviation. (Khairi, 2026).Axiologically, both issues remind us that social assistance needs to be managed as an instrument for citizen protection, not as a means of building political dependency or replacing long-term empowerment policies. However, criticism of social assistance also needs to be proportionate. Assistance can serve as short-term protection when households face economic risks, while sustainable poverty alleviation requires other, complementary policies, such as increasing access to education, health, employment, and economic empowerment. Research on

poverty and social assistance targeting emphasizes the importance of understanding poverty through more than one dimension. (UUD 1945, Pasal 34).Therefore, the value of benefits demands that programs be evaluated based on their context, recipient characteristics, and specific objectives, rather than solely through a single indicator.

A study on the digital governance of direct cash assistance at the village level positions digitalization in relation to transparency, accountability, and data-driven decision-making. (Peraturan Menteri Sosial Nomor 3 Tahun 2025).A study on the governance of direct cash assistance from the perspective of transparency and public accountability also shows that the distribution of assistance can be assessed through the quality of the accountability of managers. (Rawls, 1999).Practically, both perspectives support the need for traceable decision documentation, clear role allocation, regular audits, and complaint channels that are not only formally available but also functional for citizens facing digital access barriers. Based on this synthesis, an axiological evaluation of social assistance policies can be structured through five dimensions. First, targeting equity, namely the suitability of recipient criteria with the needs and objectives of the program. Second, usefulness, namely the relationship between the assistance provided and the social protection goals to be achieved. Third, dignity and accessibility, namely the ability of citizens to understand procedures and obtain services without degrading treatment. Fourth, transparency, namely the availability of relevant information while still protecting personal data. Fifth, accountability and correction, namely the existence of responsible parties, documentation of decisions, complaint mechanisms, and evaluation of errors.

Transparency and accountability are essential principles in the implementation of public policy. In the context of social assistance, transparency relates to the openness of information regarding requirements, recipient determination mechanisms, distribution processes, and complaints procedures. Meanwhile, accountability relates to the obligation of program administrators to explain and be accountable for decisions and the use of public resources. From an axiological perspective, these two principles are not only administrative obligations but also forms of the government's moral responsibility to the public.

**Table 1.1** Axiological perspective and its forms of application

| Aspect | Form of Implementation | Axiological Values |
|---|---|---|
| Data collection | Recipient data updating and verification | Justice |
| Determination of recipient | Clear and consistent criteria | Certainty and equality |
| Distribution | Easily accessible and timely procedures | Benefits |
| Complaint | Complaint and data correction channels | Procedural justice |
| Supervision | Examination and evaluation of program implementation | Accountability |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Information protection | Use of data according to purpose and authority | Ethical responsibility |

Source: Processed by researchers, 2026.

Table 1.1 shows that axiological values can be translated into concrete administrative measures. Justice, for example, can be supported through data updates, while accountability can be strengthened through monitoring and evaluation. Social assistance policies can be understood not only as economic instruments for distributing resources to the poor and vulnerable, but also as policies containing a value dimension. From an economic philosophy perspective, economic policies are not solely directed at efficient resource use but also consider the social goals to be achieved through economic activities. Therefore, social assistance needs to be placed within the framework of social protection and improving public welfare.

The axiological perspective of the philosophy of science broadens this understanding by placing the issues of value, benefit, and responsibility as essential elements in the use of knowledge to formulate policy. Knowledge of poverty levels, socioeconomic conditions, basic needs, and the characteristics of vulnerable groups forms the basis for the government in determining the targets and forms of assistance. Therefore, the use of data and knowledge in social assistance policies requires not only technical accuracy but also results in decisions that are accountable in terms of utility, justice, and humanity. In the context of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, this approach can be applied to all stages of social assistance policy, from data collection and recipient determination, distribution, complaints, monitoring, and evaluation. Research on the utilization of social assistance shows that assistance can contribute to meeting basic needs and alleviating the economic burden on families, but still requires improvements in targeting accuracy and economic empowerment. This suggests that the success of social assistance cannot be measured solely by the amount of assistance distributed but must be linked to the tangible benefits received by the community.

Thus, economic philosophy provides a framework for the social purpose of using economic resources, while the axiology of science provides a framework for assessing the value, benefits, and responsibilities of using knowledge as a basis for policy. Both can be used to analyze the Ministry of Social Affairs' social assistance policies through the values of justice, benefit, humanity, efficiency, transparency, and accountability. The ultimate goal is for social assistance to become not merely a resource distribution mechanism, but a policy instrument that benefits society, reduces socioeconomic vulnerability, and respects the dignity of recipients.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The axiology of the philosophy of science provides a framework for assessing the Ministry of Social Affairs' social assistance policies not only from a technical and administrative perspective, but also from the values embodied through those policies. Distributive justice, social benefit, respect for human dignity, transparency, and accountability

are the primary principles that should form the basis of evaluation. Data integration through the DTSEN (Disaster Data Enforcement Agency) is an important tool for improving targeting, but it does not in itself guarantee accurate and equitable distribution. Policy quality also depends on data updates, verification, correction mechanisms, privacy protection, access to information, and oversight. Previous research findings have revealed various issues in the implementation of social assistance, but these findings should be interpreted in light of the region, methods, and programs studied, rather than being generalized across Indonesia. This article recommends that social assistance evaluations link administrative indicators with value indicators. The government should strengthen needs-based targeting, ensure accessible complaints procedures, safeguard recipient data, disclose relevant policy information, and establish auditable accountability systems. Furthermore, social assistance should be positioned as part of a broader social protection system, synergizing with economic empowerment and improving access to basic services.

This research is limited to a literature review and normative analysis. Therefore, further research could test the proposed five-dimensional framework through empirical research in specific programs and regions, allowing for a more measurable evaluation of the relationship between philosophical values, administrative procedures, and beneficiary experiences.

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