

Introduction to social policy

Sociology



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Social Policy

Dean (2012: 1) defines social policy as “ the study of the social relations necessary for human wellbeing and the systems by which wellbeing may be promoted, or impaired.” People have social needs such as food, shelter, education, health, social security, sustainable and safe environment. Social policy in this case, is concerned with the ways in which these needs are organized by government and other institutions such as the churches, families, charities, and businesses. Alcock, Erskine and May (2003: 15) on the other hand, define social policy as “ the study of social issues, social problems, social groups, social services and the experiences of users.” In this sense, it deals with principles, guidelines, legislations and activities that affect the well-being of society and the society’s responses to social needs. Social policy thus influences distribution and access to society’s resources. It includes areas such as healthcare, education, social security, unemployment insurance, pensions, housing, child protection as well as crime and criminal justice.

Social policy is vital to health and social work professions. Social work (Morgan 2011: 37) is “ working towards removing physical or psychological barriers to understanding and satisfying diverse people’s social needs.” The health and social workers need to understand and have up-to-date knowledge of social policy developments since it sets the legal framework under which these practitioners operate. The social work practice is thus influenced, constrained and directed by laws derived from social policies and legal action can be taken if health or social workers do not comply with such laws (Dickens 2010). Since social policy is very complex and influenced by <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-social-policy/>

local, national and international laws such as the Social Chapter of the European Union, such professionals need constant upgrading and adapting to changes.

References

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