

# Social problem assignment essay sample

[Law](#), [Criminology](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Social Problems is the official publication of the The Society for the Study of Social Problems. A social problem is a condition that at least some people in a community view as being undesirable. Everyone would agree about some social problems, such as murders and DWI traffic deaths. Other social problems may be viewed as such by certain groups of people. Definitions social issues

Social issues are political debates involving moral judgments about how people should live.

social movement

Social movements are an organized effort to encourage or discourage some dimension of social change.

social policy

Social policy is a formal strategy to shape some aspect of social life.

social problems

Social problems are societal induced conditions that harms any segment of the population. Social problems are also related to acts and conditions that violate the norms and values found in society.

Introduction:

Social issues are matters which directly or indirectly affect many or all members of a society and are considered to be problems, controversies related to moral values, or both. Social Problems is the official publication of

the The Society for the Study of Social Problems. It is a quarterly journal published by University of California Press, in Berkeley, California. It was first published in 1953. Some of the areas covered by the journal include: conflict, social action, and change; crime and juvenile delinquency; drinking and drugs; health, health policy, and health services; mental health poverty, class, and inequality; racial and ethnic minorities; sexual behavior, politics, and communities; youth, aging, and the life course. Among Sociology journals ranked by the Institute for Scientific Information, Social Problems was ranked 5th, with an impact factor of 1. 796. A social problem is a condition that at least some people in a community view as being undesirable. Everyone would agree about some social problems, such as murders and DWI traffic deaths.

Other social problems may be viewed as such by certain groups of people. Teenagers who play loud music in a public park obviously do not view it as a problem, but some other people may consider it an undesirable social condition. Some nonsmokers view smoking as an undesirable social condition that should be banned or restricted in public buildings. Every newspaper is filled with stories about undesirable social conditions. Examples include crime, violence, drug abuse, and environmental problems. Such social problems can be found at the local, state, national and international levels. You will be focusing in the Public Policy Analyst on social problems in your own community. Specific community locations

Your own community consists of...

your school and your school district;

your village, town or city;  
your county.

The four examples of social problems above could possibly exist in all of these communities. For example, there could be a problem of increased stealing within your school or throughout the school district. Likewise, local police agencies—village, town, city and county—maintain statistics on crimes such as thefts within their jurisdiction.

### Types of Social Problems

#### A. Norm Violations

Norm violations assume that a standard of behavior exists. People who study norm violations are interested in society's failures like the criminal, the mentally ill, or the school dropout. Eitzen et al. (2009: 10) contend, however, that norm violations are symptoms of social problems rather than the problem itself. Deviants, for example, are victims who should not be blamed entirely. People who look for norm violations do not realize that the system in which they live should be blamed as well.

#### B. Social Conditions

Eitzen et al. (2009: 11) suggest that a second type of social problem involves conditions that cause psychic and material suffering for some category of people. The focus is on how society operates and who benefits and who doesn't benefit under existing social arrangements. "What is the bias of the system?" \* How are society's rewards distributed?

\* Do some categories of people suffer due to the way schools are organized \*  
Are some groups of people put at a disadvantage because of the manner  
juries are selected? \* Do some categories suffer because of the way health

care is delivered? Eitzen et al. (2009: 12) cites Maslow when describing the basic needs of human beings. There is a need for: \* shelter

- \* sustenance

- \* security

- \* group support

- \* esteem

- \* respect

- \* and self-actualization (the need for creative and constructive involvement in productive, significant activity) When these needs are not met, individuals will be hostile toward society and its norms (Eitzen et al. 2009: 12). The frustration will be expressed in: \* withdrawal

- \* alcohol and other drugs

- \* the violence of crime

- \* terrorism

- \* aggression

As people withdraw from the system that fails to meet their needs, they will be defined by that society as “ bad people, but this is so because they live in bad societies” (Eitzen et al. 2009: 12). 1. Institutionalized Deviance

Often, when one attempts to understand deviance, they will look at characteristics of the individual to explain deviance. Eitzen et al. (2009: 12) suggests that the source of deviance is found within the social structure.

Society plays a role in creating and sustaining deviance by labeling those viewed as abnormal. Institutional deviance is a term Eitzen (2009: 12) uses to describe a situation when the institutions of society serves a selected few

people who are generally powerful. Institutional deviance exists when society and its formal organizations are not meeting the needs of individuals. Major social problems:

- \* Poverty
- \* Social Work
- \* Unemployment
- \* Women's Rights
- \* Child Labour
- \* Child Marriage
- \* Consumer Rights
- \* Crime and Enforcement
- \* Dowry
- \* Female Infanticides
- \* Homelessness
- \* Illiteracy
- \* Adoption and Child Support

Crime:

Crime is the breach of rules or laws for which some governing authority (via mechanisms such as legal systems) can ultimately prescribe a conviction. Individual human societies may each define crime and crimes differently. While every crime violates the law, not every violation of the law counts as a crime; for example: breaches of contract and of other civil law may rank as “offences” or as “infractions”. Modern societies generally regard crimes as offenses against the public or the state, distinguished from torts(offenses

against private parties that can give rise to a civil cause of action). When informal relationships and sanctions prove insufficient to establish and maintain a desired social order, a government or a sovereign state may impose more formalized or stricter systems of social control. With institutional and legal machinery at their disposal, agents of the State can compel populations to conform to codes, and can opt to punish or to attempt to reform those who do not conform.

Authorities employ various mechanisms to regulate (encouraging or discouraging) certain behaviors in general. Governing or administering agencies may for example codify rules into laws, police citizens and visitors to ensure that they comply with those laws, and implement other policies and practices which legislators or administrators have prescribed with the aim of discouraging or preventing crime. In addition, authorities provide remedies and sanctions, and collectively these constitute a criminal justice system. Legal sanctions vary widely in their severity, they may include (for example) incarceration of temporary character aimed at reforming the convict. Some jurisdictions have penal codes written to inflict permanent harsh punishments: legal mutilation, capital punishment or life without parole.

The sociologist Richard Quinney has written about the relationship between society and crime. When Quinney states “ crime is a social phenomenon” he envisages both how individuals conceive crime and how populations perceive it, based on societal norms. The label of “ crime” and the accompanying social stigma normally confine their scope to those activities seen as

injurious to the general population or to the State, including some that cause serious loss or damage to individuals. Those who apply the labels of “ crime” or “ criminal” intend to assert the hegemony of a dominant population, or to reflect a consensus of condemnation for the identified behavior and to justify any punishments prescribed by the State (in the event that standard processing tries and convicts an accused person of a crime).

### Definition

A normative definition views crime as deviant behavior that violates prevailing norms – cultural standards prescribing how humans ought to behave normally. This approach considers the complex realities surrounding the concept of crime and seeks to understand how changing social, political, psychological, and economic conditions may affect changing definitions of crime and the form of the legal, law-enforcement, and penal responses made by society. These structural realities remain fluid and often contentious. For example: as cultures change and the political environment shifts, societies may criminalise or decriminalise certain behaviours, which directly affects the statistical crime rates, influence the allocation of resources for the enforcement of laws, and (re-)influence the general public opinion. Similarly, changes in the collection and/or calculation of data on crime may affect the public perceptions of the extent of any given “ crime problem”.

All such adjustments to crime statistics, allied with the experience of people in their everyday lives, shape attitudes on the extent to which the State should use law or social engineering to enforce or encourage any particular social norm. Behaviour can be controlled and influenced[by whom?] in many



ways without having to resort to the criminal justice system. Indeed, in those cases where no clear consensus exists on a given norm, the drafting of criminal law by the group in power to prohibit the behaviour of another group may seem to some observers an improper limitation of the second group's freedom, and the ordinary members of society have less respect for the law or laws in general — whether the authorities actually enforce the disputed law or not.

### Types of Crimes

A crime is defined as any act that is contrary to legal code or laws. There are many different types of crimes, from crimes against persons to victimless crimes and violent crimes to white collar crimes. With each type of crime also come different sociological phenomena and demographic profiles.

#### Crimes Against Persons

Crimes against persons, also called personal crimes, include murder, aggravated assault, rape, and robbery. Personal crimes are unevenly distributed in the United States, with young, urban, poor, and racial minorities committing these crimes more than others. Crimes Against

#### Property

Property crimes involve theft of property without bodily harm, such as burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson. Like personal crimes, young, urban, poor, and racial minorities generally commit these crimes more than others. Crimes Against Morality

Crimes against morality are also called victimless crimes because there is not complainant, or victim. Prostitution, illegal gambling, and illegal drug use are all examples of victimless crimes. White-Collar Crime

White-collar crimes are crimes that committed by people of high social status who commit their crimes in the context of their occupation. This includes embezzling (stealing money from one's employer), insider trading, and tax evasion and other violations of income tax laws. White-collar crimes generally generate less concern in the public mind than other types of crime, however in terms of total dollars, white-collar crimes are even more consequential for society. Nonetheless, these crimes are generally the least investigated and least prosecuted. Organized Crime

Organized crime is crime committed by structured groups typically involving the distribution of illegal goods and services to others. Many people think of the Mafia when they think of organized crime, but the term can refer to any group that exercises control over large illegal enterprises (such as the drug trade, illegal gambling, prostitution, weapons smuggling, or money laundering). A key sociological concept in the study of organized crime is that these industries are organized along the same lines as legitimate businesses and take on a corporate form. There are typically senior partners who control the business' profits, workers who manage and work for the business, and clients who buy the goods and services that the organization provides. Conclusion:

Societies differ in resources, culture, tradition, wealth, and political power. The same could be said of people. Despite these differences, societies and

people share the potential to develop and overcome historical limitations. It is not easy to define this capacity for change in the 1990s, but it includes the expectations, beliefs, and values that cause people to look ahead, to take actions, and to hope that tomorrow will be different, better, and more rewarding than today. This capacity, not easy to measure, is often behind most processes of human change from the migration to urban centre to changes in social mobility, from cultural assimilation to political mobilization, or to the emergence of new forms of community organization. One of the main challenges of the current human development approach is to make this capacity the driving force for social reform. Social policies are an effective way to face this challenge. Although there is no question about the importance of measures such as antipoverty programs, social integration efforts, political reforms, and employment programs, more than ever before there is an urgent need to design and implement social policies that explicitly address the goals of human development.

This means that the conception and operation of social polices must be looked at from a holistic, integrated perspective. This in itself is a major challenge in the prevailing circumstances of crisis of development paradigms, social frustration, economic incertitude, political disorientation, and external conditions, particularly in developing countries. At the same time, however, it seems more important than ever before that these countries have means and opportunities at their disposal to improve the social and human development conditions of their societies. This perception, perhaps optimistic, emerges, in part, as a result of examining the social reform processes — decentralization, institutional reform, and

democratization — under way in countries like Canada and those of the Latin American region. The differences among these countries are indeed many, and common conclusions about these societies, their social reform approaches, and their policy systems cannot be easily drawn from a comparative perspective.

In spite of these differences, however, there are also similarities that help to identify lessons and, above all, to identify words of caution about the opportunities and pitfalls that can be faced in social policymaking in a world where globalization has become the predominant context of human development. The following sections focus on some of the strategic areas for analysis and research on social policy that have emerged from the previous chapters. Although the reality of social reform in Canada and Latin America is too fluid to provide an exhaustive overview of the issues, opportunities, and prospects these countries face, an attempt is made to outline the main points to help set a research agenda on the principal topics related to social reform, the policymaking processes, the economic factors influencing social policymaking, and the needs for policy evaluation. Some ideas are also advanced about how a multifaceted research strategy might contribute by providing timely and relevant knowledge to reduce the current uncertainty affecting public policy in these countries.