

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL POLICY

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lecture outline

- Introduction: What is social policy?
- What does social policy study?
- Why social policy matters?
- current issues



Hartley Dean

- Think for a moment about **the things you need to make life worth living**: essential **services**, such as healthcare and education; a means of livelihood, such as a job and money; vital but **intangible things**, such as love and security.
- Now think about the ways in which these can be organized: by government and official bodies; through businesses, social groups, charities, local associations and churches; through neighbours, families and loved ones. Understanding these things is the stuff of social policy

What people say?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18Xcz13Aw4g>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtp3L9N7fPU>

BACKGROUND

Social policy begins with the study of the social services (social security, housing, health, social work and education) and the welfare state.

It developed from 'social administration', a field devoted to preparing people for work in the social services in practice.

Broadly defined, it is an attempt to apply the social sciences ... to the analysis and solution of a changing range of social problems.

What is social policy?

- Social policy aims to improve people's well-being, and is especially concerned with the welfare of those who experience some form of disadvantage.
- Contested nature of social policy
- what is good social policy is always a subject of debate; debates about values

What is social policy?

- Policies are therefore rarely completely settled, but are frequently contested and revisited.
- What's relevance of Langer Khana Scheme/Shelter Homes etc. ?
- Contested area of social policy

GROUND BREAKING WORK

- Social Division of Welfare
- Richard Titmuss (1955), argued that it was impossible to understand the effects of welfare policies in isolation from the rest of society; there were many other channels through which 'welfare' was delivered
- Sexual Division of Welfare
- Hilary Rose in an essay on the 'Sexual Division of Welfare', argued that it was not possible to understand the impact of policy on women without putting this into its social context

What does social policy study?

- Policy formulation and its consequences
- Structure, function, organization, planning and administrative processes of institutions and agencies
- Social needs, problems, and Access to services
- Distribution of social costs and dis/welfares.
- Impact of social services.

What does social policy study?

- Roles and functions of elected representatives, professional workers, administrators and interest groups in the operation and performance of social welfare institutions.
- The study of the social rights of the citizen as contributor, participant and user of social services.
- The study and role of government (local and central) as an allocator of values and of rights to social property as expressed through social and administrative law and other rule-making channels

What does social policy study?

- Social policy, at its core, is the study of social welfare and the social services.
- Broadly speaking welfare can mean 'well-being', and in that sense it is taken to mean the benefit of individuals or groups. More narrowly, to certain sorts of collective provision which attempt to protect people's welfare.
- Social welfare' commonly refers to the range of services provided by the state.
- Policy practices

What does social policy study?

- Social conditions that produce disadvantaged conditions
- Social problems like crime : Social policy is concerned with issues that are social
- Issues relating to social disadvantage , including 'race', gender and poverty
- Collective social responses to these circumstances

Why does social policy matter?

- Professional development
- Policy formulation
- Better comprehension of the issues and processes

current issues

- Responses to climate change
- How to respond to the ageing of the population,
- Balancing work and family
- Responses to family violence
- Improvements to mental health and disability service systems
- Changes to the funding of schools so that it is more equitable and needs-based.

THE FORMS AND MEANINGS OF SOCIAL POLICY

- Social policy as Output
- Social policy as a Discipline
- Social policy as a Process

SOCIAL POLICY AS OUTPUT

- Social policy as some kind of product
- ✓ *social policy as intentions and objectives: policy statement*
- ✓ *social policy as administrative and financial arrangements: way we organise our services and institutions to achieve these intentions and objectives*
- ✓ *Social policy as outcomes: meaning the impacts of social policies*

cont

- POLICY AS A SET OF POLICY STATEMENTS
- POLICY AS MORE GENERAL STATEMENTS OF INTENT AND VALUES
- SOCIAL POLICY AS INFORMAL AGREEMENTS

SOCIAL POLICY AS A DISCIPLINE OR AREA OF STUDY

- Understanding the factors that influence particular social policies
- Impact of such policies on people's lives and the nature of society
- understanding how the organisation of society affects well-being.
- Richard Titmuss is the person probably most responsible for the development of social policy as a discipline in the United Kingdom.

SOCIAL POLICY & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Table 1.1: Social policy and the social sciences

	Relationships	Processes	Problems areas	Institutions
Sociology				
Shared interests	Gender	Socialisation	Deviance	Family
Distinct interests	Personal relationships	Social interaction	Military power	Religious worship
Economics				
Shared interests	Labour market	Recession	Economic inequality	Public spending
Distinct interests	Money market	Trade	The firm	Banks and finance houses
Politics				
Shared interests	Power	Legislation	Race relations	Government
Distinct interests	Political change	Voting	International relations	Party structures
Psychology				
Shared interests	Pro-social behaviour	Child development	Attitude change	Psychiatry
Distinct interests	Group behaviour	Mentation	Perception	—
Social work				
Shared interests	Worker-client relations	Community care	Child abuse	Social care
Distinct interests	Family functioning	Counselling	Group interaction	—

SOCIAL POLICY AS A DISCIPLINE OR AREA OF STUDY

- How different institutional arrangements affect well-being?
- The study of social policy is about an analysis of how policies impact on the welfare of individuals and groups

1. What constitute welfare?
2. Assess the impacts of policies on people's welfare
3. How policies are 'institutionally organised and implemented' (for example, how the child protection system operates)

SOCIAL POLICY AS A DISCIPLINE OR AREA OF STUDY

1. Understanding 'the components of welfare', which may go beyond the examination of existing government policies to understanding how new social issues, needs and arrangements can impact on people's well-being.
2. Multidisciplinary area of study that 'draws on the methods and theories used in sociology, statistics, management science, history, law, economics, political science, philosophy, geography and social psychology to help explore well-being

SOCIAL POLICY AS A PROCESS

- The activities people, groups and institutions undertake in order to introduce new policies or to change existing policies
- Useful actions that are more likely to be effective in creating change
- Policy practitioner or policy actor at different levels.

MAIN FEATURES AND SCOPE OF SOCIAL POLICY

- Social policy has different meanings, including particular policies, areas of study or processes for action.
- Social policy is more planned than random—it involves some kind of purposeful, intentional activity and a 'authoritative choice' e.g. no-fault divorce

MAIN FEATURES AND SCOPE OF SOCIAL POLICY

- Social policy is concerned about the welfare (or well-being) of individuals and groups in society.
- social policy is concerned with social relationships—the relationships between individuals, individuals and society, and between different groups in society.
- Social policy is concerned with both overall welfare and also about how welfare or well-being is distributed among different groups according to important facets of life, such as health, education, income and employment.

MAIN FEATURES AND SCOPE OF SOCIAL POLICY

- Social policy is concerned with the articulation of objectives and principles, and critically involves **debates about values** as well as action to achieve them. Different values and beliefs will mean there are different understandings about what constitutes welfare and also about how welfare is best promoted.
- The process of social policy involves not only rational analysis but also political contest about different values and the position of different groups. Analysis of social policy therefore requires an understanding of the power relationships within society and is informed by different theories about power and how it is exercised.

POLICY	PUBLIC POLICY	SOCIAL POLICY
1. A label for a field of activity	[Public] policy is the continuing work done by groups of policy actors who use available public institutions to articulate and express the things they value.	1. The study of social policy is concerned with those aspects of public policies, market operations, personal consumption and interpersonal relationships that contribute to, or detract from, the well-being or welfare of individuals or groups.
2. An expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs		2. Social policy is 'actions aimed at promoting social well-being'
3. The produce of a particular activity		

SCOPE OF SOCIAL POLICY

- How individuals and groups fare in a range of domains or spheres of life, such as living standards (or material well-being), access to information, social participation, family relationships and overall life satisfaction
- Broad definition of welfare points to a shared responsibility for welfare
- Social policy is mainly concerned about what governments do (public policy), it also covers the market and the operations of local communities, non-government organisations and families

