



Sociological Perspectives on Social Policy

Postmodernism

Postmodernists generally not interested in social policy (but should be pro-diversity)

Examples of policies supported: 2010 Equality Act (possibly)

Evaluation - ignores global problems

Feminism

Lib Fem - working with governments to legislate for more equal opps

Examples of policies supported - equal pay acts, divorce act, maternity and paternity acts

Radical Feminism - support Lib Fem policies, but more needs to be done to tackle Pornification and DV.

Evaluation: enforcing radical feminist ideas means more interference in private lives

Marxism

Policies tend to benefit elites by maintaining wealth inequalities and providing ideological control

Examples of Policies criticised: Private schools, 1988 education act, selective law enforcement

Evaluation: Many social democratic policies seem to benefitted the working classes

Late Modernism

Social policies need to adapt constantly to globalisation

Examples of policies: New Labour and New Right education policies, numerous crime control policies

Evaluation: Tend to assume policies are neutral responses to globalisation

Barriers which might prevent some social policies getting implemented

Electoral popularity

Ideological preferences of governments

Cost/ Funding

Positivism

Sociologists should work with governments to uncover objective 'causes' of social problems such as crime/ suicide etc

Example: Durkheim's study of Suicide

Evaluation: Conservative theory which supports the status quo

Social Democratic

Agree with Positivism, generally favour wealth redistribution

Eg Peter Townsend's work on Poverty leading to better welfare provision

Evaluation: Welfare breeds dependency

Neoliberalism and The New Right

Government should interfere less in social life; believe in policies to encourage competition and are anti-welfare

Evaluation: policies are uncaring and tend to increase class and gender inequality

Examples of policies supported: 1988 Education Act, Benefit cuts, Right Realism crime control