

Department of Sociology and Social Policy
Sociology Seminar Series 2023 - 2024

A Study of Perspectives on Roles and Responsibilities in Social Welfare in Hong Kong

Date: 14 March 2024 (Thursday)

Venue: LYH310, 3/F

Time: 11:00am - 12:30pm

Lau Lee Yuen Haan Amenities Building



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Vincent Wan-ping Lee is attached to the Department of Social Work, Hong Kong Baptist University. Dr Lee is a registered social worker in Hong Kong and has recently been working on research projects related to public welfare attitudes, social service evaluations, the use of information technologies by older adults, employment of older adults and the livelihood of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. He has also authored a number of articles published in international academic journals.

Abstract

Scholars studying Hong Kong's social welfare system and other stakeholders tend to see it as a residual system. That means social welfare is seen as an institution that facilitates the failures of the market economy and the breakdown of family functions.

This study aims to examine how people perceive the roles and responsibilities of the government, the human service sector, and the general public in Hong Kong in social welfare. Using the method of constructivist grounded theory, qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted between June 2021 and April 2022 with 45 different stakeholders of social welfare to understand the viewpoints and attitudes on the role and responsibilities of social welfare in Hong Kong.

The majority of the interviewees reflected that the significant social problems in Hong Kong, in their eyes, were the shortage of adequate housing, long waiting queues for elderly and disability services, uncertain prospects of young people, and limited opportunities in the job market. Most interviewees agreed that the Hong Kong government had to take up the primary responsibility of supporting individuals and social groups in need. They also thought that the business sectors should play a more substantial role in caring for people's livelihoods. This study has served as an insightful analysis for a better understanding of the welfare mentalities of different stakeholders in Hong Kong.

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