M1 Essay Quiz

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1. Historically, America has always supported the efforts for the provision of financial assistance to the poor in society. The first settlements of the New World had their policies about social assistance based on English heritage. These practices for aiding the Pilgrims at Plymouth, Massachusetts were primarily derived from Elizabeth Poor Laws 1594 and 1601. According to these laws, the poor were classified into two classes; the worthy poor and the unworthy poor. The orphans, widows, elderly and handicapped were categorized a worthy poor while the lazy and drunkards were categorized as unworthy poor. These poor laws were used as means for maintaining the system and dealing with both categories of the poor (Buck, 2017).
2. Poverty has different expressions and explanations as there are for different religions. Several studies have been published that present an unprecedented platform for comparing diachronically that how Islam, Judaism, and Christianity have defined and dealt with poverty throughout history (Beyers, 2014). Jewish and Christian writings have recognized poverty as an innate part of human nature regardless of society and culture. In the middle ages, the philanthropy was entirely religious based which involved spiritual welfare of the charity givers. Their motive was never eliminating poverty. In Christianity, the bishop was considered as the nourisher of the poor. Judaism school did not have sound ideological and economic grounding. However, the concept of poverty and charity is much more complex in Islam and is considered as purification of the believer’s soul and wealth and Quran became the guideline for the economic sphere (Cohen, 2005).
3. In the early colonial system, poverty was seen as a justification for social classification. The English laws of the poor lingered into the American colonies and originated the concepts of poverty, social segregation, and slavery. Isenberg said that independence did not eradicate the British system of class. George Washington also believed that the lower class should serve as foot soldiers. Thomas Jefferson believed that ranking humans within society was a natural phenomenon. John Adams too had a passion for distinction. This distinction and disparity still exist in a society deeply embedded (ProPublica & Macgillis, 2016).
4. The colonial government established the parish and made them responsible for administering the law. They were in charge of taxing and managing almshouses and providing food for the worthy poor. They also provided means for the labor of able-bodied and vagrants were put in jails for refusing to work. The aid system was established which included the auction of the poor, outdoor relief and contract system for the dependent people. This system led to the ill-treatment of the poor and abolition of their basic rights. The segregation of the poor in the society led to permanent discrimination, poverty and the civil revolt (Hansan, 2011).
5. The cases of Lydia and Rhoda are a useful example for describing social welfare practice in the nineteenth century. The children of the poor needed support but at the expense of certain social implications. The aid assistance system did help the poor child and had received all the rights as an ordinary citizen. But with improvement in the social, economic and philosophical ideologies of the nations, it altered the approach of the welfare policies radically. This progression led to the study of several study corners of poverty and its consequences. Problems such as poverty were subjected to mental illness, character trait and disability (Popple, 2018).
6. In the 1800s, the workforce in America revolutionized towards urbanization, agriculture, and industrialization. Commerce increased with a diverse workforce and helped uplifting the economic development. The farmers got the opportunity to increase their exports of foodstuff to Europe. But before the civil war, a magnificent increase in transportation introduced an intricate network and labor-saving technology enhanced the segregation of classes in the society. These revolutionary changes improved the market of America but new class conflicts, immigration, child labor, and slavery emerged as the consequences and ultimately the ratio of poverty even increased in the coming decade before the start of the war (Goodall, 2017).
7. The perception of poverty and welfare has transformed dramatically over the past two centuries. In the 1700s and 1800s, poverty was considered to be an inevitable societal component which was necessary to maintain the class system and division of the economic strata. And the welfare workforce did efforts to provide assistance to control poverty. However, now the concept of poverty is considered as a constraint in the economic development and welfare practices tend to reduce and even exterminate poverty from society (Ravallion, 2016).

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