

Market Liberalization and Community Revival under the Great Transformation of Welfare State : the Big Society and the Welfare Policy Controversy in the UK

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Abstract

This essay examines a series of policies change under the concept of “big society”, especially its impact on the development of social enterprises in UK. This study believes that British government has continued the path of Thatcherism since the 1980s, and persistently appropriate the market logic to solve the problems brought about by the traditional welfare state. The failure of policy derived from the idea of “big society” lies in the illusory binary division between the state and society, leading to the misuse of market logic in the field of public services. It also misconstrues the inherent complex relationship between society and the community. The Conservative government insists that social enterprises can take the lead in solving the problems of the divided community, but social enterprises are increasingly living up on government funds to operate.

Keywords: Welfare state, Big society, Community development, Inequality