Topic

Class Inequality: a contributing factor towards homelessness for older Australians.

This research report examines the issue of homelessness in Australia, focusing on homeless men and women who are aged 45 years and over, and the contribution that class inequalities have towards the construction of this social problem. The report defines homelessness and analyses the causes and consequences of the issue over the last 20 years using recent peer-reviewed data sourced from academic journal articles and government documents. The term homelessness will cover primary, secondary and tertiary states of homelessness. Class inequality is the main organizing principle of modern capitalist societies; divisive factors such as gender, ethnicity, education, wealth, and family background are all components that comprise social class and this position can have a considerable bearing upon life chances. The state of homelessness therefore maybe a socially constructed issue stemming from inward personal incapacities and/or the outward pressure of external factors related to the structural fluctuations of a capitalist economy. The position of social hierarchy that is held by an individual could strongly influence the possibility of homelessness occurring. This report will research and report the causal personal and economic factors towards an older individual’s experience of homelessness in relation to class position and discuss possible directions for a solution or alleviation of the issue as it stands in Australia today. In addition, sociological perspectives and ideologies will attempt to illustrate that the state of homelessness can be explained by linkage to elements of sociological theory.
Resource 1

Journal Article

Citation


Evaluation

Australian Social Work, the journal of the AASW (Australian Association of Social Work) addresses contemporary thinking on social work, social welfare and social policy. Carole Zuffery (PhD, MSW, BSoc Admin, and BA) presents research findings on homelessness with the results analysed from a social constructionist perspective. (how social phenomena develops in social contexts) and notes the dominating influences of the contemporary political and economic climate. As I would like to link the private and public issues of homelessness to a sociological perspective this article has particular relevancy to that aspect of discussion.
Resource 2

Government Document

Citation


Evaluation of resource

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) is the Australian Government's principal source of advice on social policy and in partnership with other government and non-government organizations manages programs and services supporting Australians. The Road Home is a paper addressing homelessness, the causes and provides a framework for prevention, aiming for a reduction in the numbers of homelessness by 2020. Essentially the paper outlines the government’s policy implementation strategies towards the issue of homelessness, and provides relevancy I may draw upon to compile recommendations in the light of my research.
Resource 3

Journal Article

Citation


Evaluation of resource

The Australian Journal of Social Issues contains peer reviewed journal articles and is a publication of the ADSRI (Australian Demographic and Social research Institute). The author Denise Thompson (BA (Hons) PhD UNSW) provides recent information with an economic perspective of homelessness being a structural phenomenon. The bulk of the paper discusses the relationship of the published figures from the CENSUS and a data collection agency for the SAAP, the nation’s main program for combating homelessness. The concluding analysis indicates that policies for alleviating homeless are not achieving their aims.
Resource 4

Kind of resource

Journal Article

Citation


Evaluation of resource

The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health is a publication of peer reviewed articles relevant to researchers, practitioners and policy makers. The researchers initiating this report aimed to increase understanding of the reasons for homelessness amongst people aged over 50 years and contribute to the development of preventive practice. This was done through a comparative study between England, Australia and the US, however there is a large proportion of information within the report devoted to the homeless in Melbourne, Australia and that has relevancy to the topic. An extensive reference list accompanies the report indicating trustworthy, authoritarian sources have been used in compilation and the recent date of publication indicates the information is current.
Resource 5

Kind of resource

Journal Article

Citation


Evaluation of resource

The Australian Journal of Social Issues contains peer reviewed journal articles and is a publication of the ADSRI (Australian Demographic and Social research Institute). In this paper the focus was on exploring the situations of older Australians living in rental accommodation with reference to the structural factors contributing to the possibility of homelessness, such as the changing nature of the Australian welfare state. It does not focus on the personal issues associated with homelessness and therefore gives another perspective to the topic. Published in 2005, the authors Morris and Judd are UNSW affiliated Researchers and have considerable professional knowledge, therefore being credible authors.
Resource 6

Kind of resource

Journal Article

Citation

Trickett, E & Chung, D 2007, ‘Brickbats and bouquets: health services, community and police attitudes and the homeless experiences of women 45 years and over living in rural South Australia’, *Rural Social Work and Community Practice*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 5-15, (online SocINDEX)

Evaluation of resource

The Rural Social Work and Community Practice journal is peer reviewed and the content covers social issues, policy and practice. Donna Chung is a senior lecturer at UniSA and presents recent research findings in the article as an authoritative and credible source. The focus of this article is homelessness amongst rural older women in South Australia. Analysis of this perspective, contrasted against the focus of previous resources will enable an overview of the situation for both older males and females in regional and rural centers of Australia.
References


Trickett, E & Chung, D 2007, ‘Brickbats and bouquets: health services, community and police attitudes and the homeless experiences of women 45 years and over living in rural South Australia’, *Rural Social Work and Community Practice*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 5-15, (online SocINDEX)