

Homelessness

Sociology



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Homelessness Homelessness in modern society is not a new thing as it existed even in earlier times, but experiences and perceptions of the homeless have changed. As such, persons who are homeless tend to be desperate to find a place to call home, and their state of despair usually leads many astray in relation to crime. as a result of this, I cannot say that all my experiences with the homeless have been good, but neither have they been bad. Some of the homeless people I have interacted with are into petty crime in order to cater for their daily needs while making just enough money from regular activities to afford motel fees. On the hand, there are the homeless that I have had good experiences with in that they barter their services for accommodation. This makes them very industrious and friendly with anyone interested in addressing their plight, as it shows not all homeless people are evil. Personal opinion on homelessness points to two issues as the chiref cause of homelessness, where one cannot help but first point a finger at society for its structures. As such, the breakdown of social structures is to blame for the high rate of homelessness and even homelessness in itself, where social senses of responsibility have been disregarded. It is as a result of this there is no one to look after the needs of the homeless by even offering accommodation except for homeless shelters, but then again, these are not entirely social structures but institutions. On the other hand, there is also the individual part of the issue, where some are just comfortable living off free accommodation of homeless shelters, while others just lack ambition to get an improved life. This way, they do not have credentials to get jobs or even look forward to get jobs of their own. This makes it an individual issue in that homelessness is directly affiliated with personal factors of an individual and his/ her general outlook in life.

Institutions in the issue of homelessness have a hand in that it is up to them to curtail the proliferation of homelessness following the inherent nature of the issue in being individualistic, as well as structural. This is because institutions such as families need to stay close-knit in order to look after their own and ensure that their members are not out on the streets.

Consequently, there are other institutions such as charities that look after those that do not have families by establishing homeless shelters such as those started by urban authorities and other religious institutions to address the lack of accommodation for the poor or those that lose their homes due to poor financial decision making. Financial institutions also have a role in the issue of homelessness in that they act as part of why the issue exists through repossession of people's houses to compensate for loans and poor investments by their clients. This way, social institutions have a key role in homelessness in that some cause, while others attempt to tackle the issues. Different social theories provide different perceptions for homelessness in that their focus lies in different aspects of the society. As a result, the functionalist theory focuses on the concept of an orderly society, where all institutions are functional and efficient (Kendall 368). As such, homelessness is perceived as failure by some institutions to fulfill their part in society such as family in keeping its members protected, and the government in providing adequate housing for its people. Homelessness becomes a social issue created by the people through the social structures they create. The conflict theory, on the other hand, views society as being in a consistent power struggle, thus in this case, homelessness becomes a struggle for the poor in society to establish stability, while the rich seek to keep this away from them. This is because it takes away their power, thus a status quo must

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remain with the rich being rich and the poor, poor. Other theories such as the symbolic interactionist theory perceives homelessness as an individual issue , which can only be understood by understanding the homeless people one at a time and their unique circumstances (Kendall 367). This way, tackling the issue would involve empowering each individual on his or her own level to overcome homelessness as it focuses on individual differences. The postmodernist theory has its own perception of homelessness in that it opposes the academic generalization of other theories, thus making homelessness an issue brought about by numerous factors coming together such breakdown of social structures, segregation, inequalities and economic, as well as political oppression. This way, homelessness is brought out as an issue with its core in society and all its problems brought together, making homelessness part of its own cause. In conclusion, homelessness is a social problem that can be analyzed using theories and with each theory standing for its own set of ideas. This way, homelessness gain multiple dimensions from which it can occur and be tackled. Work cited Kendall, Diana Elizabeth. Sociology in our times. 9th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cenage Learning, 2013. Print.