Homelessness: The different dimensions, causation and consequences.

Research for 21st Century Scholarship

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Assignment #3 – Essay Draft

Begin work on Assignment #4 Research for 21st Century Paper (see below):

1. In preparation for Assignment #4, choose a scholarly topic of interest. Type the topic on

the title line on the cover page and the first page of the paper. Explain your reasoning for

choosing the topic in the introduction section (after the title and before the first Level 1

heading) of the paper. Use your best academic voice, correct sentence structure, tense,

and punctuation. In the rest of the introductory paragraph, preview three points you

would address in an essay about your topic with ideas that came from your sources.

2. Develop a list of search terms and phrases that pertain to the subject chosen and

include these immediately following the first Level 1 heading. Give the list a name and

use the name as the Level 1 heading (use the heading styles in the template and the

APA 7 Manual or Guide provided in the hyperlinks in this syllabus). Present the list in a

complete sentence or a bulleted list with an opener (e.g., Search terms related to the

topic of this paper are as follows:). Use correct punctuation.

3. Continue building the Works Cited list you began in Assignment #2. Locate a minimum

of two books (minimum of one published in the last five years) relevant to your chosen

topic and develop an APA reference for each book. Insert the properly formatted

references in the Works Cited section of the paper.

4. Locate four primary research journal articles relevant to your chosen topic; three articles

must be less than five years old. Develop a reference for each journal article and insert

the references into the Works Cited section. Put your 10 references in alphabetical

order.

Homelessness: The different dimensions, causation and consequences.

**Introduction**

Homelessness is a social issue that I have been passionate about since the mid-nineteen eighties. Many challenges faced by individuals and families lead to homelessness; which include, loss of jobs or income, underemployment, or simply being unable to pay the rent or mortgage, due to inflation, high cost of housing and general lack of affordable housing. Often, there are other challenges accompanying homelessness, including: mental health issues, lack of adequate nutrition or food, exposure to the elements, lack of safety and access to healthcare. I do not have to look very far in my community in Florida, to see the homeless at the libraries, stores, along the beach, at the stop lights soliciting help and in parks and other areas where there is access to water, restrooms and other facilities. Our hearts go out to the homeless and we do what we can, even if just one person at a time. Still, there are not enough local shelters and agencies to help the homeless. Homelessness is a growing problem that the society needs to address more comprehensively.

Homelessness may be defined as a state of having no home or permanent residence. Homelessness is a global social issue. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Developments, 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2023 Population Estimates, reflect an increase in homelessness in the United States of 10.7percent between 2015 and 2023, with California reflecting an increase of 56.05 percent, and the state of Vermont 108.9 percent during the same period. The nationwide ‘Point-in-Time’ Count from the Bureau offered the following facts about people experiencing homelessness: 71.5 percent, the vast majority, are individual adults of which 51.2 percent experienced unsheltered homelessness; and 28.5 percent are people living in families with children. In this essay, we will discuss the importance of addressing the social problem of homelessness, explore the different dimensions of homelessness, identify causes and pinpoint consequences.

**Dimensions of Homelessness**

* Long-term Homelessness
  + Recurring cycles of living on the streets or in shelters over the long-term.
  + Sometimes associated with substance abuse, lack of social support and mental illness.
* Short-term Homelessness
  + Temporary homelessness, which may result from loss of housing due natural disasters, job loss, eviction, or other factors.
  + Often solvable with temporary assistance, like shelters or government programs.
* Urban versus Rural Homelessness
  + Differences in homelessness in urban and rural areas.
  + Urban homelessness is typically very visible, while rural homelessness may be more difficult to discern.

**Causes of Homelessness**

* **Social Factors**
  + Family discord, abuse and domestic violence as major contributors to homelessness.
  + Substance abuse and mental health issues. Does homelessness evolve naturally into mental health issues; or does poor mental health create a path that leads to homelessness?
  + Absence of support systems or socials platforms to or vulnerable individuals.
* **Economic Factors**
  + Loss of income, low income, or underemployment.
  + Financial instability and poverty resulting in the inability to secure housing.
  + High housing costs, and the unavailability of affordable housing options
* **Public Policy Factors**
  + The shortage or lack of government and social programs that address the shortages in affordable housing.
  + Discrimination and stigmatism which create hurdles for the homeless to obtain permanent housing.
  + Gentrifications and loss of low-income communities.
* **Individual Actors**
  + Family discord, abuse and domestic violence as major contributors to homelessness.
  + The need for upgrading skills to precure jobs that pay well to secure housing.
  + **Personal health issues, including mental and physical health challenges.**

**Consequences of Homelessness**

* **Social and Economic Factors**
  + Public safety concerns, with increased crime, and over-burdening the limited shelters and services in place.
  + Detrimental effects on families, including poor nutrition, lack of adequate healthcare, and unacceptable educational outcomes for children.
  + **The stigma of homelessness which makes it difficult for individuals to break the cycle, and obtain jobs that almost always require a permanent address for employment.**
* **Health Factors**
  + Mental health obstacles, including anxiety, depression and suffering.
  + Greater vulnerability to chronic illness and infectious diseases. **Exposure to unsafe conditions from exposure to the elements, and lack of shelter.**
  + Agency – the capacity to help oneself. Christ the source of healing.

**Conclusion**

* **Summarize the dimensions, causes and consequences of homelessness.**
* **Discuss the need for comprehensive solutions that include prioritizing government programs and funding that address the required affordable housing in quantity and quality, partnering with the private sector; involvement of the communities in providing local shelters, food banks, clothing and other resources; and, job training and educational programs that allow individuals and families to change their trajectory, and obtain good-paying jobs that provide the income required for their well-being and housing.**

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