



DETERMINANTS, NEED ASSESSMENT AND SOLUTIONS OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract: Homelessness is a global phenomenon that brings tyrannical consequences to the society. The purposes of this study are to investigate the determinants of youth homelessness, the needs of homeless youth population and probable solutions in solving this issue. Mixed method (including Qualitative and quantitative approaches) is applied in collecting the data and information. Convenience sampling and purposive sampling method are employed in selecting the samples. There are seven homeless respondents and ten volunteers participated in this research. The determinants of youth homelessness from the perspective of homeless youth and volunteers were investigated. Besides, the needs of homeless youth were studied. The framework and solutions in addressing youth homelessness were analyzed in the discussion. Researcher had come out with few recommendations in enhancing and modifying the framework in addressing this issue.

Keywords: Youth, Homelessness, Determinants, Needs, Probable Solutions

I. INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a complex social issue as no country is excluded from the proliferation of this issue (Adib, et al., 2016). There are innumerable people who do not own a permanent shelter over their heads or have enough money to purchase the basic indispensable elements of life (Fulton, Kut, Morianos & Spencer, 2010). The population of homelessness is diverse which includes individuals from all ethnic groups, diverse generation and ages group, gender, marital status, individual from urban or rural areas as well as people who are with physical or mental problems (Martens, 2002). The understanding of homeless is varying based on different perspectives and situation. Red Deer & District Community Foundation (2009) categorized homeless into absolute, relative, chronic and episodic homeless. Australian Bureau of Statistics used three different types of homelessness as the standard cultural definition of homelessness in Australia such as primary; secondary and tertiary (Cool Australia, 2015). Homeless youth are the people under the age of eighteen who are lacking care from parents, guardians and institutions (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007; National Conference of State Legislatures, 2016). The term homeless youth is frequently utilized as an umbrella term for an extensive assortment of youngsters comprising unaccompanied youth, street youth, systems youth, runaways and throwaways youth (Moore, 2005). Youth who are experiencing homelessness are referred as the youth people (between ages of 13 and 24) who are living independently of parents or caregivers, have lack of social supports which are important in the transition from childhood to adulthood (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2017).

Homelessness is often debated as one of the results from the economic system – capitalism. During the Industrial Revolution, the perspectives of mercantilism are widespread in the society and affecting the lifestyle of the social members (Fulton, et al., 2010). In other cases, homeless is defined not only with the characteristics and conditions of the homeless people but also along with social phenomenon. From the view of French social law, the group of homeless people is often considered as the subsection of the group of people who are associated with social problem. The definition of social problem is typically alluding to social conditions that distort or harm society (Best, 2013). To end homelessness, the only way is to recognize the determinants. Majority of youth do not chose to be homeless (National Network for Youth, 2017). House of Commons (2005) stated that the leading cause of homelessness was the lacking of accommodation of friends and family. There was evidence showed that increase in housing prices contributed to the rising of homelessness. Homeless Link (2017) stated that individual circumstances and structural factors (poverty, inequality, unemployment, housing affordability and supply, welfare and income policy) cause the homelessness.