Analysis of Socio Professional Integration for Homelessness

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Abstract

Homelessness is a phenomenon with various causes and tyrannical consequences. Reviewing the theoretical background there is a lack of national and local strategy which addresses adult homelessness, NGOs are more involved in this area being more responsible to develop strategies that prevent homelessness through social-professional integration. This study is focused on exploring the result of program social-integration homelessness in Christian Centre for Homeless, Cluj-Napoca, during the years 2011-2013, a system of emergency shelter and transitional housing program. This study is a qualitative research including analysis of reports and data. The database has a total of 100 beneficiaries for the individual interviews and group interviews, including 66% men and 34% women. The sample includes 56% Roma young people, 15% Hungarians and 29% Romanian between 20 and over 45 years of age. The socio professional integration is successful for those beneficiaries who were included in integration training activities, and were strictly monitored. More than 70% were social-professional integrated. Socio professional integration must be final and irrevocable. There is a lack of consistent social services support, in order to get a final integration of homeless people. Moreover there is a need for an alternative system of social policy as Housing First, assisting homeless to gain their own permanent apartments. A new study is requested to reveal the chance the homeless have of obtaining a permanent job in order to be part of the Housing First social policy. Another study is about social recidivism among ex-beneficiaries of social services.

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1. Introduction

Theoretical references highlight explanatory issues of the roots of homelessness being related with unequal relations with implications for health and well-being or the negative feature, poverty, (Norman, Pauly, 2013), lack of affordable housing, chronic or deep-rooted unemployment, little welfare support (De Venanzi, 2008). Moreover recent research for EU acceptance specifies the new crisis of phenomena in the change of the profile of homeless including more young people, Roma and other minorities, women and families. (Ilieva & Blazheva-Trukyova, 2013). The recent studies on this social field of homelessness phenomena provide the evidence and the insights of impact on the ex-homeless in order to gain understanding for a successful solution and development. (Norman & Pauly, 2013). Moreover, recent studies promote specific strategies for diverse homeless people that account ethnicity, gender and other differences (Tierney & Hallett, 2012). Thus it is oversimplified in application of quality services that embrace both prevention and intervention through socio professional integration for a large spectrum of the issue, indicating the new profile of homeless.

This study attempts to explore the actual social methods and results for socio professional integration of homeless in a non-profit organization activity, based on recent studies on NPOs innovation and performance with an important role in delivery quality services. (Verschuere & Beddeleem, 2013).

2. Method and research samples

Some studies on homelessness canvass the valuable role of qualitative research based on ‘emotional retreat’ (Woodcock & Gill, 2014) or trauma impact on homeless (Robinson, 2008), important aspects to be revealed for integration approach, and developing of policies based on beneficiaries experience. (Martin, Kunnen, 2008). This study embodies a qualitative research, it attempts to examine inner practices of Social Centre for Homeless, branch of Prison Fellowship Romania, the results of their assistance, discerning from the social-professional reintegration numerical cases, and finally to illustrate the level of social-professional reintegration for the homeless for a 3 year period. It is a descriptive and exploratory research of the analysis the social-professional integration of homeless.

The research sets up in four entrenchments: The first one provides theoretical reference and precedent research in this area as an overview upon the actual tendencies in homeless research area. The second step tries to examine the main social practices and instruments in these Centres in area of social-professional integration, facilitating the analysis of the degree of application of quality services for homeless. The third step was to identify the number of total assisted homeless, and its characteristics as: cause of homelessness, gender, age, and ethnicity, oversimplify the results in a descriptive statistic framework. The fourth one focuses on analysing the social-professional integration of homelessness as a result of the social assistance for 3 years. The main instruments of the research to gather an in-depth understanding were analysis of documents and materials as: assessments or data collection for developing a plan of action, datasheet support, social services contract, and monitoring reports, monthly activity reports, quarterly activities reports and social surveys or individual interviews and group interviews.
From 2001 until 2013 there are approximately 650 to 824 beneficiaries of social services of Christian Centre for Homeless, a branch of Prison Fellowship Romania Organization. Other organisations reports reveal a number of 824 homeless, but from personal study on relevant data reports as Evidence Book, concluded this as 650 total assisted homeless.

Through this data were identified the causes for homeless, a coping review of the methods for socio professional integration and their impact or results. In order to oversimplify the research, it aims to analyse the integration process in a period of 3 years, including 100 new homeless. The demographic profile of the sample was man (66%) and women (34%), during the years 2011-2013 new assisted homeless reached a total of approximately 100 people, percentage represented as 37% in 2013, 31% in 2012 and 32% in 2011, except the former beneficiaries.

![Total Homeless per year](image_url)

**Fig 3. Total Homeless per year**

3. Criteria of maturity

In number of studies in these past years, Simon Teasdale (2010) identified six models of social enterprise in the homeless field, involving both social and economic objectives, underlining the risk of abandon of unprofitable homeless from an economic point of view. Trudy Norman and Bernadette Pauly made a recent literature review on people who experienced homelessness. They concluded little evidence of effective practices reintegration and lack of significant strategies respectively on gender and other differences, the need for development of guidelines for social reintegration on municipal level. Work programme on social enterprise being carried out at Birmingham and Middlesex universities as part of the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC). The purpose of this paper is to identify the different ways in which social enterprise responds to the needs of homeless people and some of the challenges faced by social enterprises in the homelessness field. From these actual studies, social-professional integration faced up some difficulties as a result of economic issue, lack of relevant strategies due to gender and other differences and challenges in working with homeless demonstrate competence. To be more specific the provided theoretical reference reveals explanatory issue of the roots of homelessness being related to implication for health, and well-being, or poverty. (Norman, Pauly, 2013): lack of affordable housing, chronic unemployment, little welfare support (Venanzi, 2008). The profile of the homeless changed: more young people, Roma and other minorities, women and families. (EU research statement, 2011). Other new research reveal more homeless men than women (Norman & Pauly, 2013). Different new studies on homelessness including socio professional integration appeared: experienced homeless- specific strategies on impact (Norman & Pauly, 2013), promote strategies that account ethnicity, gender, and other differences, NGOs- important role in delivering quality services (Verschuere & Beddeleem, 2013).

4. Results

The main social practices and instruments in these Centres in areas of socio professional integration, facilitating the analysis of the degree of application of quality services for homeless. The main strategy was Increase the Access to Employment Strategy 2011-2013 in which it struggled to enhance interaction with social and professional environment, improve professional skills through group activites and social/cultural events participation, engage professional responsibility, explore labour market and employment opportunities, reduce frequency of dissmision
for anger outburst, prevent creation of nonparticipation behavior. The second step was Social Integration Strategy involving relational issue, improve social relations and enhance self-control, increase social participation in group situation, improve communication skills, express anger in a constructive manner, reduce incidents of abusive behavior. Another step is gaining independence by uniting the efforts of the homeless in working colectively and ensuring independence in managing a rent or other affordable housing issues. All of the 100 homeless participate in counseling and activities dedicated to these very objectives.

The third step in identifying the characteristics of homeless people lead to a series of conclusions. The main cause of homelessness phenomena is past institutionalisation (57%), followed by unaffordable housing (15%) and chronic unemployment (9%). Over the years there is a higher percentage of male homeless than women, in spite of this numerical feature women are more social-professional integrated than men (75 % women, and 25 % men). Homeless people assisted for 1 year have the high percentage 85%, revealing the time issue in offering assistance for homeless to avoid dependence on social services. Women developed a more dependence on social services than men. From a professional point of view women are more potential integrated and for Roma people is more difficult to obtain a permanent job due to their behaviour. Conducted social survey revealed some behavioural characteristics of homeless: violent behavior, proffesional irresponsability, lack of financial management skills, street dependence or liberty, rule breakers, weak self-esteem and fear of rejection.

5. Discussion

Socio proffessional integration represents an important issue in social practices and social assistance. Professional integration based on maintained proffessional activity is easier to achieve then for social integration seen as relational features. As the studies reveal, the homeless lack social relations and the engagement in adaptive behavior in society. (Norman & Pauly, 2013). The main indicators of socio integration are seen as obtaining a relational behaviour, no conflict issue, identify and obtain an affordable housing, gaining responsibility in daily customarily living. In Romania as in other European countries homeless phenomena is one of the issues difficult to summarize in specific practices in order to eliminate this phenomena. The lack of consistent strategies and social services which may entrust several practices to respond to each homeless needs are sufficient to reveal a huge phenomenon rise.

6. Conclusion

There is a need for an alternative system of social policy as Housing First, assisting the homeless to gain their own permanent apartments, in order to maintain an independent life. Firstly the homeless should be continuously included in public shelter services, and then moved to transitional housing, after gaining the independent ability, they must be part of Housing First. The social services must be parted and a continuous social activity: first is the public shelter and then transitional shelter. This third alternative should be a triad of the first two social services: public shelter and transitional housing. A new study is requested to show the chance of the homeless to obtain a permanent job in order to be part of the Housing First social policy. Another study is about social recidivism among former-beneficiaries of social services. The lack of consistent social support intervention represents the main problem in the solution process. Moreover there are other relevant impediments at national level as follows: the high costs of social services and lack of an actual and comprehensive data concerning the number of homeless in Romania. Homelessness causes social and professional marginalization. The lack of financial support is the main effect of a constant homelessness, attempting a vicious circle.

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References


