

affordable housing programs onto the provinces and territories, which have, in some cases, directed the issue onto the municipalities. Each level of government has its own role to play in the solution of homelessness. The federal government has the financial resources, the provinces have the social housing dollars, and the municipalities have the local leadership. There are limits to what can be accomplished. Failure of the Canadian government to work as a cohesive whole contributes to an inability to meet the unique housing needs of homeless individuals, including adolescents.

Here the authors present their research questions after the purpose statement.

Among the scant social housing programs, only a few have addressed youth as a subpopulation of the homeless, and even fewer have addressed young women in particular. Historically, the Youth Homeless Strategy, which was part of the National Housing Initiative (NHI) established in 1999 by the Liberal government, narrowly focused on adolescents' job training (Government of Canada, 2004). Although employment status contributes to a person's ability to find and maintain housing, this program overlooked major factors that contribute to their homelessness such as poor levels of well-being and lack of affordable housing. All NHI

Elements present:

1. The authors pose a central question (#1) and three subquestions that narrow the focus of the central question.
2. All the questions begin with the word "How" to convey and open and emerging design.
3. The questions focus on the central phenomenon: homelessness.
4. Generally used nondirectional language (experienced, shape, perceived).
5. Questions are open-ended and do not refer to the literature.
6. The participants are identified: adolescents.

Ontario Works Act

The Ontario Works Act is provincial legislation that provides either employment or financial assistance to those "in need" (Government of Ontario, 2006). Although it varies slightly between municipalities, in most regions it is mandatory for individuals under the age of 18 to be enrolled full time in school or an alternative learning program to be eligible. To have mandatory enrolment in the school system could be viewed as

encouraging adolescents to continue their education. It does not, however, consider a variety of factors that might keep youths from attending school, such as homelessness or a variety of health concerns.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The overall purpose of this study was to explore the experience of homelessness among adolescents. More specifically, the research questions that guided this investigation are

1. How is homelessness experienced by adolescents?
2. How does gender shape these experiences?
3. How is health perceived and experienced by homeless adolescents, and what are the barriers they encounter with respect to the health care system? and
4. How does current Canadian policy shape these experiences?

Method

Elements missing:

1. The authors could have more clearly tied their research questions to a strategy of inquiry. They go on to discuss a narrative inquiry approach and therefore their questions could have asked about the stories of the adolescents and the contexts that shape these stories.
2. Question 3 includes directional language in terms of the word barriers.

As selected study participants were from a group who are often in the margins of society, this research created a "space" for the voices and perspectives of homeless adolescents to be heard. At the same time, their individual, subjective experiences were analyzed with particular attention to the manner by which those experiences are shaped by gender and by public policy. Narrative inquiry is a research method that is highly compatible with critical social theory.