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## **Homelessness in Los Angeles**

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## Homelessness in Los Angeles

### Problem Identification

Homelessness is a significant topic of concern in Los Angeles because many people with no homes are escalating substantially. Although many people do not have proper houses and the majority of them live in conditions that are not suitable for human habitation, the Los Angeles administration needs to focus on developing solutions to ensure affordable housing to reduce the number of homeless individuals. Therefore, before developing the solutions, the administration needs to focus on understanding the causes of homelessness in Los Angeles. According to Flaming & Blasi (2019), poverty is one of the main reasons for homelessness in Los Angeles because many people live below the poverty line, making them unable to pay their rent. Also, lack of job skills is another reason because many people lack the appropriate skills required in the job market, making them jobless. Another cause is the high housing rate that makes people unable to afford it because of the reduced wages.

There has been substantial escalation to the number of homeless individuals in Los Angeles. Los Angeles Mission (n.d) emphasized that the rate of homeless people intensified by 5.7%, from 44,359 in 2015 to 46,874 in 2016. Nevertheless, another research by Flaming & Blasi (2019) proved that for past five years, <sup>1</sup> number of homeless individuals residing in Los Angeles has increased by 33 percent. Therefore, every night almost 60,000 individuals are homeless in Los Angeles. With this rate of homelessness, there seem to be expected more people to be homeless if no proper solutions and policies are developed because over <sup>1</sup> 780 000 individuals in Los Angeles utilize more than 90 percent of their income to pay for their house rent.

In 1976, Los Angeles was not crowded with homeless people in the street because the city representatives had created Skid Row as an informal containment region for homeless individuals. This made Los Angeles not have any homeless person on the streets; however, more people are currently in the neighborhoods because, since the 1981 recession, most people were unemployed and started using crack cocaine in Los Angeles (Flaming & Blasi, 2019). Many people became homeless and the Skid Row population intensified and could not accommodate the highest population, moving to other areas.

#### Brief Topic Description

With the increase in economic challenges faced by the United States, homelessness also adds to the continued economic hardship for the country. Although many people consider homelessness as a societal problem, research conducted by Bassuk (2017) argues that homelessness is an economic issue. Therefore, the community is affected immensely by homelessness in Los Angeles because these individuals consume more public resources and more expenses than income. This will make the community tax collection to be used in this population more than development. Moreover, with thousands of people suffering in the Skid Row and the streets, with some living in their cars and others in tents, the state responds by working on a plan to fight the epidemic. The plan aims to reduce arrest and expand the job opportunities gap because city representatives have been politicizing a millionaire's tax to reimbursement the agendas to discourse homelessness. Although the governor has a contrasting idea on declaring the state of emergency.

Homelessness affects many people in society. Although both men and women and children are affected by homelessness, most of the individuals affected by homelessness are single adults. Bassuk (2017) defined homelessness as missing steady and suitable housing.

Therefore, individuals can be divided as homeless if they are on the streets, living in tents, moving with temporary shelters, and staying in places that are not deemed appropriate for human habitation. Moreover, several factors can make an individual homeless, for example, most of them suffer from depression when their relationship breakdown and end up homeless, lack of required job skills, substance abuse as well as other problems including sexual and physical abuse and fights from parents can make individuals homeless.

### **Research Questions**

**Is it the public responsibility?**

**What caused the rise of Homelessness in Los Angeles?**

**A federal judge recently ordered the city of Los Angeles to find a solution; you think the city is responsible?**

### **Hypothesis**

Affordable care policy is essential in enhancing the economy and help reducing homelessness among individuals and families.

### **Detailed Topic Description**

The United States passes through significant challenges in ensuring all individuals have access to better housing because of the high population. Housing is among the critical features that affect and disturb individuals in their life. The benefits of housing are immense and thus cannot be considered like shelter only. For example, when a family has a house, they will call it a home containing important value symbols. Furthermore, the home will be valued for its situation,

elegance, and access to academic institutions, social amenities, and parks. Thus this depicts the importance of owning a house coming from the immense benefits accrued from the same.

Moreover, Ortiz & Johannes (2018) claimed that a house is regarded as the man's form of wealth for the family. **Therefore, it is not a public responsibility to ensure homeless individuals have homes because owning a house requires the work and determination of the individuals.** Similarly, insufficient housing intensifies the susceptibility to a significant predicament, for instance, health risks such as a cold. Also, proper housing ensures that children can learn well hence attaining the best performance. Lee (2016) added that the type of residential location influences an individual's susceptibility to crimes. Moreover, those in troubled residents tend to be mugged and battered on more significant dangers as well as increased cost of housing because most individuals in these residential areas attain less than the average low-income.

<sup>2</sup> The housing sector plays a crucial role in the United States economy. Therefore, the housing market cannot be underestimated and or ignored. **This makes it the responsibility of Los Angeles city to reduce homelessness by restricting the free housing market.** McClure et al. (2017) stated that from 1975 to 2008, the housing sector generated approximately 1.7 million housing every year. This number indicates a significant number of housing demands between those years; nevertheless, residential units' building has been recurring. The same source claimed that housing demand increased each year for the past twenty years.

Housing data is also vital in acting as an indicator of the economy. For instance, developing permit data is provided when housing is initiated. Moreover, Ortiz & Johannes (2018) emphasized that permit events offer awareness into residential and general events in approaching months. Therefore, it needs to be involved in the index of the top financial indicators. The same source added that residential operations are straightforwardly affected by

mortgage rates, increased interest rates, high housing costs, and decreased amount of qualified borrowers. **Thus, through the regulations developed by Los Angeles city, they can reduce the interest rates and mortgage rate, reducing the housing cost and ensuring many people can access houses.**

The problem of housing is increasing in the **city and the economy continues to suffer from homelessness. Individuals with no homes are more public resource users and produce more expenses in the nation than income.** Von Wachter et al. (2019) posit that homelessness in Los Angeles started during world war II when the population increased rapidly in the city and could not cope with the rate of houses development. This made the federal housing growth and prevalent rent regulation be ratified in 1942. Nevertheless, the exclusionary zoning exercise resulted in increased discrimination based on racism, making more Black Americans homeless than the other races.

#### **Detailed Outcome Description**

**The development of essential policies to help improve the accessibility and availability of affordable houses is vital in eradicating homelessness in Los Angeles. Therefore, the city has embarked on implementing the affordable housing program to reduce homelessness.** Skinner & Rankin (2016) claimed that the strategy utilizes 1.2 billion United States dollars to fund the building of ten thousand units of permanent housing for **individuals with no homes.** The United States of America has constantly developed different history policies to ensure individuals can obtain houses quickly. The affordable housing policy is not a new thing in the country's history because it has been in operation for many years as a policy tool. For instance, McClure et al. (2017) stated that in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century, affordable housing policy was utilized in the great depression and after world war II. During this time, an increased

reduction in houses caused soldiers' high populations to begin families. Moreover, by the 1960s, rules developed to ease civil unrest, and in the subsequent years, affordable housing was utilized to inspire the stressed economy.

Moreover, the great depression also depended on housing policies to return the economy to its knees. Temin (2016) stated that the great depression was a despicable economic decline in the commercial world's history. The recession started after the stock market crash. Therefore, while the depression was going on, congress's primary intention was to guarantee that each individual has the chance of having a house. By working on the objective, the housing market was alleviated, which resulted in many jobs being created. The majority of people obtained affordable housing and improving the situation of the slum in some cities.

The Federal Housing Administration was initiated by National Housing Act of 1934. Specifically, the organization was established to guarantee accessibility of single-family housing loans as well as control interest rates together with mortgage terms. Furthermore, the act was the foundation of the present mortgage scheme, and it transformed house ownership in America. Through the elimination of the high down payments, the mortgage procedure was changed. Nevertheless, the loan procedures' racial and ethnic discernment problem was increased (Tighe et al., 2017).

Housing policies are not always the same because the local and federal governments usually developed varying policies and programs. Nevertheless, the programs need to support more people in attaining houses because it is necessary for their economy. Ortiz & Johannes (2018) stated that the policies could be divided into three different methods: homeownership aids, residential help land utilization, on and monitoring enticements. **For instance, Los Angeles used rental assistance program intending to eradicate homelessness. The program links**

**homeless individuals to financial support through federal housing vouchers and they are not in unrestricted supply.**

**Los Angeles has also used the shelter as a stop-gap measure to reduce homelessness in the city. The strategy is essential in improving people's lives and removing them from suffering due to lack of suitable houses in the short term. One of the techniques used in this strategy is to ensure those living in vehicles can have a safe parking site and be provided with mobile showers and restrooms to ensure health and safety are maintained.** Besides, the homeownership aids policy is essential because it focuses on increasing the availability of home attainment. Therefore, this plan is promoting the development and reintegration of for-sale houses. Also, the program offers low-interest loans to the required families and individuals in need of the place, counseling, and down-payment aids. The more support individuals get in obtaining houses, the more they get to encourage. Motivated and determined in owning homes. The final method is based on land utilization and monitoring ingenuities. This plan is critical in providing the private sector with direction concerning the features, location, and cost of affordable housing progressions. For instance, this method will help local land utilization and control and develop codes and inclusionary partitioning guidelines.

### **Comparative Analysis**

**Although Los Angeles has implemented affordable housing, more resources are needed to make the project effective and successful.** This has raised debates on how the city can use to look for more resources to make the housing projects as more beneficial as possible. **Nevertheless, cities such as New York have already implemented affordable housing strategies, which have helped reduce homelessness.** Favilukis et al. (2019) argued that affordable housing is offered for low and middle-income individuals and economically weaker

regions with lower income levels. **Therefore, because most individuals in Los Angeles cannot purchase houses since the housing market is expensive, an affordable housing program will enable them to live in a good house.**

In the United States, the varying guidelines caused the variation to public housing authorities' roles (PHS). For instance, through the Brooke Amendment, the set rent that individuals living in reduced houses were required to pay was covered based on a percentage of their yearly median income. Hence the rent decreased the revenues obtained, and simultaneously, the federal administration reduced the aids money in supporting the work of the public house developments. The reduction in subsidies made the situations at several housing plans worsen quickly. Moreover, the urgency of access into public housing for individuals under life-threatening shortage decreased PHA's rental money and working margins; this made many houses less necessary for livelihood due to improper maintenance and management. Although, in one way or another, some people feel that the various amendments do not bring equality as far as securing a house is concerned, it is arguable to say that the in-place amendments and laid guidelines have helped to solve the issue of homelessness.

In summation, having elaborated and comprehensively looked at homelessness in Los Angeles, it is arguable that the issue is a significant problem across the city. **Although Los Angeles has faced the problem for a long time since world war II, it has always implemented several strategies to control the rate of homelessness. Some of the strategies implemented include Affordable houses, shelter as a stop-gap measure and rental assistance programs. Housing is essential for every human because it gives them a sense of belonging in the country and home is regarded as wealth. Although there has been a significant increase in the number of homeless people in the city, it is the responsibility of**

**the city representative to ensure they put restrictions in the housing market as well as develop strategies that will help eliminate the issue. Some of the causes of homelessness include poverty brought by the minimum wage rate, hence unable to pay the rent, lack of proper skills needed in the job market, and making people jobless and substance abuse. Nevertheless, Los Angeles needs to follow cities such as New York and benchmark how they have implemented their affordable housing program to ensure theirs is also a success.**

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