

外国語要約

Deprivation of Housing: A Case Study of Domestic Violence Victims and the Homeless

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1. Background and Objectives

In recent years, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened in Japanese society. This research examines the level of deprivation among the poor and how they manage to rebuild their lives. For the study, I collected data of domestic violence (DV) victims who live in single mothers' shared houses and the homeless who are supported by Housing First in Tokyo. Focusing on support from the private sector, I identified the problems of the public support system.

2. Method

Using the fieldwork method, this research aims to understand the subjects' life histories and their process of rebuilding and improving their lives. I collected data using different methods for DV victims and the homeless. In 2015 and 2017, I lived with DV victims who moved into single mothers' shared houses without any official support. The participants included three DV victims, two tenants, and two caretakers. I conducted interviews with three DV victims and two landlords of shared houses.

I also participated in the Housing First Tokyo Project, which moves the homeless to their own accommodation. I conducted interviews with five formerly homeless people and four support staff using the participant observation method.

3. Results

(1) DV victims

I found that DV victims had left their homes suddenly in order to escape from perpetrators, and they had to rebuild their lives all over again. They experienced difficulties in their attempts to return to a stable life because they had to get jobs, arrange for childcare, and obtain accommodation.

(2) The homeless

I found that the homeless lost their jobs repeatedly. Therefore, they were not willing to participate in society even after they had their own accommodation, and continued to remain on the fringes of society.

4. Implications

My research has several implications. The policy implications are as follows. First, the Japanese definition of the homeless should be expanded. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare defines the homeless on the lines of a rough sleeper. Adopting a wider definition for the homeless will help identify persons who do not have suitable accommodation and support. Second, the public support system should be more flexible since the current step-up model is unsuitable for the vulnerable. Third, official sectors should improve DV literacy given that the victims are inclined to resolve their personal problems on their own. Fourth, for a long time, a household of husband, wife and two children has been considered as the standard family structure in Japan. However, the official and private sectors should affirm the various structures of family form such as a single parent household who lives in shared house or single household who suffers from mental, addiction or economic difficulties and living their lives with receiving necessary support as one of the lifestyles.

The academic implications are as follows. First, I highlighted the conditions of DV victims who did not use official support. Such people pose long-standing challenges for DV victim research. Second, I presented the difficulties faced by the homeless in getting their own accommodation. Third, by adopting the labeling theory for this research, I elucidated that the biggest problem of the official independent support system is, it hides insufficiency of the system itself and various problems this society have.