

SOCIAL INCLUSION – Implications for Service Providers

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Overview

1. What is social exclusion ?
2. Why choose it as a framework for research?
3. Overview findings from our research
4. Caveats on the model in Australia
5. How should we respond to the new policy environment.

1. What is Social Exclusion?

Is there a difference between the terms poverty and social exclusion?

- Broader than Poverty
- Relatively recent
- Multifaceted, relational and dynamic
- Focuses on multiple disadvantage

“The most decisive precondition of perceived limitations to participate in society is the accumulation of disadvantages.” (Bohnke)

2. Why use it as a Framework?

- Complex causality of the client experience
- Intergenerational issues
- Community
- Crosses social, cultural and political domains

3. Research Findings

Indicators Project

- Around 1 in 8 clients reported not being able to afford a substantial meal once a day, to heat at least one room in their home, have a washing machine, a separate bed for each child, have regular social contact with other people or be able to afford their children to participate in school outings or activities.
- multiple deprivation – across a number of life domains. Almost half the client sample experienced deprivation of five or more essential items. The Social Policy Research Centre is now using the term ‘deep’ exclusion to describe this phenomenon.

3. Research Findings

Disability

- **Health:** half could not access disability services, 43% could not afford to buy prescribed medicines, 54% did not have someone to look after them when they were sick and one in six did not have a substantial meal once a day.
- **Place:** 40% did not have access to safe and affordable housing, one quarter had accommodation where the roofs and gutters leaked and 28% did not have secure locks on doors and windows. More than three quarters of these clients could not afford home contents insurance, 28% did not have access to a private phone and nearly a third (31%) did not have ready access to a public phone.

3. Research Findings

Community Connectedness:

- For (32%) there was a perception they were not treated with respect
- more than one third (37%) did not experience being accepted by others.
- one third (34%) did not have regular social contact.
- More than half (51%) reported not having a supportive family and not being able to buy presents for families and friends at least once a year.

3. Research Findings

Carers

- little access to carer counselling or education and few had a transition plan for their adult child in place
- Three quarters were anxious about the future and what would happen to their child when they could no longer care for them
- Two thirds considered they were exhausted and needed time out and some indicated conflicts with the person for whom they were caring.

3. Research Findings

- Two thirds rated their health and well being as below 6 out of 10
- One in five had significant issues with their financial situation and just under half expressed dissatisfaction or ambivalence about their housing situation both in terms of meeting their own needs and those of their son/daughter with a disability.
- Over two thirds (68%) of carers indicated either no or minimal support from family and almost 75% had the same result for friends. Only one in three considered that they had very good support from counsellors or professionals.

4. CAVEATS

- Can it be adopted in an Australian context
- The role of the Third Sector
- Wider than productivity and employment

5. Responses

- Keeping it focused
- A Social Compact
- Research for advocacy and policy

