

## Differing attitudes for various population groups towards homeless people

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### ABSTRACT

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**Introduction:** People who are homeless are most often unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure, and adequate housing, or they lack a “fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence”.

**Purpose:** To assess the attitude of secondary-school students, high-school students, university students, and working adults towards homeless people.

**Materials and methods:** A survey of 420 randomly selected middle school students (n=120), high school students (n=100), university students (n=100), and working adults (n=100) was conducted. Nearly half of the participants reported a fear of homeless people.

**Results:** According to the majority of respondents, a homeless person collects scrap metal and waste paper, and also begs. The first words that come to mind when a majority of people think of the

homeless were: poor, unhappy, dirty, lonely, and smelly. The participants reported the main reasons for homelessness to be: joblessness, family problems, alcohol, helplessness, and avoiding work. The majority of respondents argued that social and legal problems are the main reasons that it is difficult for homeless people to extricate themselves from their situation. The groups surveyed had a variety of opinions about homelessness. According to most respondents, a homeless person is a poor, miserable, lonely, childless man with a vocational education who begs, collects scrap metal and waste paper, and is also usually dirty and smelly.

**Conclusions:** In the survey groups, respondents' opinions about homelessness varied.

**Key words:** Homeless people, youth, attitudes

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