



Drivers of Locational Disadvantage

Never Stand Still

Built Environment

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What is locational disadvantage?

- Locational (or ‘spatial’) disadvantage involves:
 - the problematic effects that residents can experience because of living in a particular place*
- It can be associated with either:
 - a. the geographical situation of a neighbourhood in relation to employment and/or services
 - b. characteristics of a locality or community, rather than its position in the city (or the country)

Locational disadvantage related to geographical situation

- Where a suburb sits within a large metropolis in which jobs/services are spatially concentrated/bunched – but remote from these
- Remote regional communities far from any urban amenities
- Ongoing economic restructuring seen in Australia's major cities since 1990s: 'knowledge industries' re-concentrating in central areas
- Inadequate transport infrastructure investment alongside expanding population and rising car ownership
 - Residents of middle and outer suburbs at a growing disadvantage
- Growing road congestion means access to inner city employment or services comes at growing cost for many outer city residents
 - travel costs and commuting time/stress

Remoteness from jobs/services more problematic for certain groups

- Carer responsibilities (children or elderly parents) tend to be delegated to women
- Therefore scope to sustain distant employment tends to be more limited
- Women therefore subject to 'spatial leash' more than men
 - more likely to require employment involving a restricted length working-plus-commuting day

Locational disadvantage due to local situation or community characteristics

- Such disadvantage could be about a neighbourhood's environmental situation – e.g:
 - Next to busy road or under airport flight path
 - Near smelly factory or tip
 - Subject to high flood risk
- More controversially, it could arguably result from the socio-economic characteristics of the neighbourhood
 - The argument that living in a 'poor neighbourhood' can compound the impact of poverty and disadvantage affecting an individual

'Concentrated socio-economic disadvantage' as a specific problem

'Deprived people who live in deprived areas may have their life chances reduced compared to their counterparts in more socially mixed neighbourhoods ... living in a neighbourhood which is predominantly poor is itself a source of disadvantage'

(Atkinson & Kintrea 2001)

- Associated advocacy for 'mixed income communities' controversial

Other issues linked with 'locational disadvantage' due to concentrated poverty

- Socio-economically disadvantaged areas may receive poorer public services like street cleaning or public open space maintenance
- Perhaps reflecting lack of articulate, 'pushy' or socially well-connected residents better able to voice local concerns and secure action
- If the entire catchment of, say, a primary school is a disadvantaged community, that may not be advantageous for the pupils
- Living in a place with concentrated poverty and social problems may stigmatise residents
 - negative impact for those seeking jobs or even wanting pizza delivery

Drivers of locational disadvantage

- The biggest one is the sifting effect of labour markets and housing markets – leading to an increasingly polarised city
- An ever-diminishing stock of lower rent dwellings remaining in inner suburbs
- Insufficient action to protect the precious resource of lower rent social housing in such areas
- Ongoing reluctance to exert landuse planning powers to require inclusion of affordable rental properties within market housing developments
- Resistance to reforms to ensure fairer allocation of funding for public services – e.g. the Gonski school funding formula