

## QUESTION 7 - (A)

Social class, ethnicity and prejudice effect both the power and authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our Australian Society.

Power means the capacity to influence others to a point of view or action to which they would not normally exceed. Authority is often linked to power. It involves the right to determine, adjudicate or otherwise settle issues and disputes in society.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the most disadvantaged group in Australia today. They are disadvantaged in many areas, including housing, education, health and the ~~criminal~~ criminal justice system.

In the area of health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer the most when it comes to health.

Indigenous infant mortality rates are 3-5 times higher than the mortality rate of non-Indigenous children. The risk of infectious diseases among Indigenous people is a high 12 times higher than that for non-Indigenous Australians.

In the year 2000, the age of death for Indigenous Australians is what it was for non-Indigenous Australians in 1900.

Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is also a problem of concern in our society. In the 1996 census we have been told that only 40% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

children completed schooling, compared with 71% of non-Indigenous children in Australia. We have been also told that 23.8% of Indigenous children had post school qualifications compared with 40.7% of non-Indigenous Australians.

Education has been a large problem for Indigenous Australians and there have been many programs now developed to increase the education of Indigenous Australians eg. ABSTUDY.

Housing is another problem being faced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

~~The~~ The number of Indigenous people who own their own home ~~is~~ is at 31%, whereas 71% of non-Indigenous Australians own

their own home. Indigenous people receive 9-21% less in housing benefits than non-Indigenous Australians. This is because almost 50% of Indigenous Australians live in dwellings ~~containing~~ containing 10 or more occupants.

In the area of the criminal justice system, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are ~~the~~ the most disadvantaged group in Australia. An Indigenous person aged between 18-24 is 4 times more likely to be taken into custody than a non-Indigenous Australian. Almost 20% of the prison population consists of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Social, class, ethnicity and prejudice effect both power and authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They continue to be the most socially and economically disadvantaged group in Australia today.