

## ABSTRACT

HUD recently released their 2023 annual homeless assessment report demonstrating that on a single night in 2023, approximately 653, 100 individuals were experiencing homelessness (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2023). Having access to safe and secure housing is a human Right. However, it is a human Right that many do not have the privilege or access to.

“Everyone has the right to own property as well as in association with others. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property” (United Nations, 1948, article 17). Through my studies in the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) in Human Rights Leadership program, I am currently utilizing a social justice and Human Rights-based lens perspective to analyze the homelessness epidemic.

Through my studies I am exploring solutions, frameworks, and policies to address the affordable housing crisis and barriers and challenges homeless individuals currently face while trying to access housing and resources.

## RESEARCH FOCUS

The problem that this research will aim to address is **-What the challenges are that homeless individuals experience in accessing housing.-** Furthermore, this research will aim to utilize the lived experiences of those facing homelessness and if their experiences can influence access to housing. Each of these individuals has a narrative to share on the circumstances that led to them becoming homeless. These stories are significant in that they help researchers and others in governing bodies gain perspective from those facing the issues that they are trying to resolve. By working in partnership with the very individuals we are trying to shape policies around, we gain invaluable information.

Currently literature demonstrates that individuals living in poverty, particularly those that are extremely low income (ELI) face the most substantial inequities and challenges in finding affordable housing. Currently, there are only 33 affordable housing units per every 100 ELI renters (National Low-Income Housing Coalition, 2023). This is significant to note as poverty has a high prevalence rate across the nation, which results in significant barriers to accessing housing, let alone affordable housing. In 2022, according to the United States Census Bureau, there were 37.9 million Americans living in poverty (Shrider & Creamer, 2023).

## RESEARCH QUESTION & METHODS

The research question for this study is “How can the lived experiences of individuals facing homelessness influence access to housing”. The research design that will be utilized for this study will be a qualitative research method.

Additionally, this study will utilize a case study approach along with grounded theory to gather and interpret the data. This model was chosen since this research study focuses on gathering and analyzing individuals’ lived experiences with homelessness and the impact of their stories.

This study will utilize a semi structured interviewing approach to collect narratives from participants on their experiences of homelessness and what challenges they may have experienced with accessing housing. These semi-structured interviews will be composed of open-ended questions and an interview guide.

## DATA ANALYSIS DISCUSSION

Data analysis will be conducted utilizing grounded theory. This theory was chosen for its fluidity in the ability for theory to arise from the data that is produced (Tie et al., 2019). By utilizing this contemporary framework, the researcher can allow the study to take place and the collected data and narratives to then shape the work and theory. This allows for the study to not be dependent on or confounded within a rigid theory. This will allow for participants lived experience to not have to fall into a restricting limitation of theory.



## IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

The implications of this research could have a positive impact on homelessness studies and research. This research study could be significantly important and impactful in shaping theoretical knowledge on how to utilize a qualitative, case study approach through grounded theory to share individuals’ lived experiences. This approach could affect the way that we look at policy and shape future approaches of shared governance. It could also shape how we move forward in working with homeless individuals.

## CAPSTONE PROJECT OUTLINE

- 1. Literature Review-** Description & Impact of the social problem both historical & contemporary, prevalence, Gaps in knowledge, study contributions to understanding, inequalities that contribute to the issue, risk factors & potential causes of housing crisis, issues of responsibility & barriers, mechanisms of change and theoretical groundings for change
- 2. Case Study-** Explore a case example of homelessness and any implications on impact of lived experiences
- 3. Multimedia Project-** A documentary of compilations from interviews with participants from the study.

