

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOMELESSNESS AND SOCIOECONOMIC
STATUS, MINORITY POPULATION, AND ACHIEVEMENT RATE

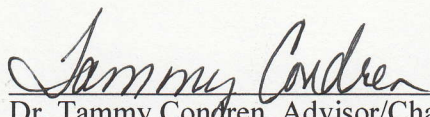
DEREK BANWART

2019

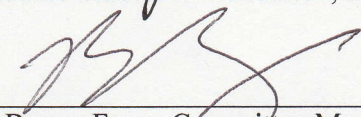
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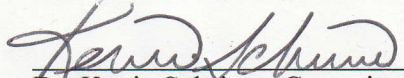
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOMELESSNESS AND SOCIOECONOMIC
STATUS, MINORITY POPULATION, AND ACHIEVEMENT RATE

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Graduate Education Department
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Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By Derek Banwart, B.S. M.S. ED.S

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation assesses the relationship between homelessness and socioeconomic status, minority, and student achievement. This study is motivated by four research questions. (1) What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and socioeconomic rate in a district? (2) What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and a district's minority population? (3) What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and student achievement rate in a district? (4) What is the predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement? Previous research has indicated relationships between homelessness and student achievement rate, minority population, and socioeconomic rate. The lack of research connecting all of these indicators on larger scale (all public schools in the state of Missouri) was a leading factor in the completing of this research. The aim of this research was to contribute to public school administrators' and teachers' knowledge of indicators that lead to poor student achievement. Data was gathered from the public access on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Web site. The results of the data collection were analyzed with a Pearson's r and multiple regressions. The results and implications for educators was discussed with the need of further research.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

No longer are men the fastest growing subgroup of the homeless population in America, but women and children have taken over that role (Hulchanski, 2009; Springer, 2000). Across the United States the number of homeless children and youth has grown from 679,724 in 2006-2007 to 1,301,239 in 2013-2014, nearly doubling in a 7-year time span (US Department of Education, 2016). In the state of Missouri homeless data were originally released by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in 1996; at that time 7,695 students were reported as homeless across the state. In the 2016-2017 school year that number had more than quadrupled to 33,757 students who were reported as homeless across the state (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018).

Societal and governmental agencies across the country have attempted to create solutions for the homeless epidemic. The first governmental response to homelessness and how it dealt with education was the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act in 1987 (National Coalition of the Homeless, 2006). Once Congress passed the McKinney-Vento Act schools across the country began to look at the need to make sure homeless students were receiving an education, while taking away barriers that made enrollment difficult. The McKinney-Vento Act, for the first time, also gave definition to what a homeless student was (National Coalition of the Homeless, 2006).

There are various groups of people who are classified as homeless but one of the largest groups of the homeless population is women and children. Most are single parent

families, in which the mother heads the family. This growing homeless population trend has continued to put a strain on schools concerning how to best service these students. Now not only is a school responsible for teaching the student the basics of the school curriculum but it is also responsible for meeting the basic needs of the students in order to make them comfortable so the students are in the right frame of mind to even be willing to learn (Ingram, Bridgeland, Reed, & Atwell, 2017).

Various schools have programs that are aimed at various demographics of students but few, if any, of the programs are aimed specifically at the homeless population. Programs geared specifically for homeless students could help students achieve at higher levels once their basic needs are met, which could then in turn help those students gain future employment and hopefully help end the cycle of homelessness with the students' families (Ingram et al., 2017).

While researching the topic of homelessness in education this researcher had difficulty in finding peer reviewed articles on the topic. One reason for the lack of resources was the difficulty in obtaining an accurate count of homeless, and it is challenging to get homeless to participate in census data or survey data (Jocoy, 2013). Additionally, schools must treat information about students, including their living arrangements, as educational records protected by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which limits the access researchers have to student records (Hallett & Skrla, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The homeless population in schools in the state of Missouri is rising dramatically (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018). Schools across

Missouri are having to adapt how they service these students. This study compared data from across the state to analyze the relationship homelessness is having on education. The United States government has recommended the McKinney-Vento Act as its guiding document for schools to use in order to best serve the homeless population of students (National Coalition of the Homeless, 2006).

The McKinney-Vento act has been reauthorized numerous times, most recently in 2015. According to this act homeless children and youth are defined as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” (US Department of Education, 2016, para. 2). This includes youth who are sharing homes of others due to a loss in housing or economic hardship. The definition also includes students who are living in campgrounds, hotels, motels, emergency shelters, and transitional shelters, as well as those abandoned at a hospital or those awaiting foster care placement (U.S. Department of Education, n.d).

According to a 2011 publication by the National Center on Family Homelessness 41% of homeless children will attend two different schools while 28% of homeless children will attend three or more different schools. These students are highly mobile and therefore transfer schools frequently. The McKinney-Vento Act attempted to ease some of the restrictions of a student transferring between schools. The act not only made it easier for students to transfer between schools, but also allowed homeless students to be able to stay at their home school even if they moved out of that schools attendance area.

The homeless population has increased by 400% over the last 15 years in the state of Missouri (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2018). State and federal laws have changed over the course of this same time period as to the rights

students have regarding school enrollment. This has created a need for schools to adjust procedures to make the school not only a place of learning but also a place of meeting students' basic needs.

The DESE has posted records on multiple data points, none of which have compared the homeless students' data to how those students performed overall as compared to other districts. Administrators need to be aware of the achievement of all student groups in order to best assist students in achieving to their potential.

Research has been done on homelessness and how it affects student performance in schools (Cowen, 2017; Tobin, 2016; Uretsky & Stone, 2016). However, these studies have been looking at students who have no structure with which they live. This study looked at students who were classified as homeless by their school according to the McKinney-Vento Act, which included students who were doubled up with other families, or bounced from house to house of friends and relatives. Research has not directly tied socioeconomic status to homelessness inside schools, nor has research been done directly tying minorities to homelessness inside of schools. Research has not been done between the three main factors that were researched in this paper: socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and student achievement, all compared to homelessness with students. By identifying relationships of the factors that influence students, educators will be able to apply strategies to homeless students and better meet their basic needs, which will in turn improve the overall education of the homeless students.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between homelessness and socioeconomic status, minority population, and educational achievement in the state

of Missouri. This was a quantitative study to examine what, if any, relationships there were between homeless rates, achievement rates, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Next, the researcher did multiple regressions to determine predictability of factors on homelessness.

This study will assist school leaders in determining the needs of their students that are deemed homeless. The study will help administrators meet student needs based on the characteristics that are most indicative of homelessness. Administrators can then use this information to implement programs to best assist their homeless students.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and socioeconomic rate in a district?
2. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and a district's minority population?
3. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district?
4. What is the predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement?

Null Hypotheses

- H₀1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district.
- H₀2. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the minority population in a district.

H₀3. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district.

H₀4. There will be no statistically significant predictable power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was based upon Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. According to the hierarchy one has to meet student's physiological needs before being able to meet any other need. Maslow stated that when a human being is missing everything in life in an extreme fashion, it is most likely that they strive for food more than anything else. When all needs are unsatisfied the person then becomes dominated by physiological needs and all other needs become nonexistent or at least are pushed into the background (Maslow, 1943).

Once the individual's physiological needs are met they then have to meet their safety needs, which include security, stability, dependency, protection, order, and structure. A person that lacks any of these factors in an extreme enough or chronic enough situation will live for safety alone. Individuals who are chronically in fear will not be able to move past the safety needs (Maslow, 1943). Schools offer a safe place for students for a portion of the day and at least one meal. The McKinney-Vento Act for Homeless Education stated in Section 721, "Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths" (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006, Sec. 721, para. 1). The McKinney Vento Act opened doors for homeless students to be able to

attend school more easily. The act removed compulsory residency requirements, noting that “Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment” (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006, Sec. 721, para. 3).

After the safety needs are met a person will move into the need to belong. Individuals will search for acceptance from a peer or peer group. The individual will hunger for affection from those around them. The person will then strive for acceptance more than anything, because the first two levels of physiological needs and safety needs are met and the individual does not have to strive for those any longer. Once they find a satisfactory amount of acceptance they will move to the next level of needs (Maslow, 1943).

Once the physiological, safety, and belonging needs are met, individuals will seek to have their self-esteem needs satisfied. Individuals in their search for meeting self-esteem needs will be searching for adequacy and confidence within the world in which they live. The individual will also be searching for reputation within their community and prestige within their profession. Once these needs are satisfied they will advance to the final stage of Maslow’s hierarchy, self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

The need for self-actualization is the final stage of the Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs. An individual must be doing what they are meant to do in order to meet this need. Individuals that are able to be productive in areas in which they are comfortable in are more likely to be successful individuals than those that are producing in areas to which they are not connected on a personal level (Maslow, 1943).

Maslow (1943) stated that we are motivated to achieve each level only after the previous level has been met. Homelessness would be in the base level of physiological needs, which means the students who are homeless could not strive to meet any of the other levels until their basic levels have been met. This makes it difficult for schools to help students achieve in the education realm when they are struggling to meet their basic needs (Perkins, 2016).

Definition of Terms

Achievement Rate. The quality and quantity of a students work (“Achievement”, 2019).

Enroll/Enrollment. The act of attending classes and participating fully in school activities (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006).

Homeless Child and Youth. Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are counted as homeless. This includes children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. Children who are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations are also included. Children who are living in an emergency or transitional shelter; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement should also be incorporated. Also children who have a primary nighttime residence that is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans should be counted (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006).

Minority Population. Any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural differential and unequal treatment, regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination (Lumen Learning, n.d.).

Socioeconomic Status. Socioeconomic status is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

Unaccompanied Youth. Youth not in physical custody of a parent or guardian (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006).

Limitations

The limitations of this study were as follows:

- Data were based on preexisting records gathered by DESE.
- This study was limited to correlation rather than causation.
- This study was nonexperimental.
- The validity and reliability were limited to accurate data being reported and then confirmed by DESE.

Delimitations

The researcher delimited this study as follows:

- This study was geographically limited to the state of Missouri.
- The data were limited to the years 2014 -2018 of the Missouri Department of Education's database.
- This study was limited to the theoretical framework of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

- The study only examined the variables of homelessness compared to socioeconomic status, achievement, and ethnicity.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made during the course of the study:

- It was assumed that the data posted on DESE's Web site were complete and accurate.
- It was assumed that districts reported data honestly and used the definition outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act.
- It was assumed that findings could be generalized to similar populations in other states.

Summary

In summary there are growing numbers of homeless students in schools across the State of Missouri. The number of homeless students has more than quadrupled since 1996. Schools have had to try to accommodate these students as they filled their seats in the classrooms across the state (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

In 1987 the federal government began to give guidance as to the requirements for educating homeless students by passing the McKinney-Vento Act. The McKinney-Vento Act eliminated the compulsory residency requirement, making it easier for students to maintain enrollment in schools, even when they lack a permanent residence. The McKinney-Vento Act has also given schools a definition of homelessness to make it easier to identify students and provide assistance to those who may need it (National Center for Homelessness, 2016).

Students who are homeless often find themselves in the safety needs level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which is the base level of the hierarchy. When students are in the safety needs level of the hierarchy they have a hard time being able to perform at their fullest potential because all of their needs are not being met. The McKinney-Vento Act attempts to help students get past that level of need (Perkins 2016).

This study sought to assist school leaders in identifying the needs of students who were deemed homeless. The study attempted to help identify services that can best support students who are facing homelessness, as well as students who are facing other crises. This study acknowledged services that have been successful in other schools, so school leaders can replicate these services in their schools to help meet the need of students.

The following chapters will include literature, methodology, analysis of data, and conclusions and recommendations based on the findings. Chapter Two gives the review of literature including characteristics of homeless individuals and how various entities have tried to help the issue. This chapter will also include perceptions of different groups related to homeless individuals. Chapter Three includes the methodology of the research. Research questions, null hypotheses, participants and procedures are discussed. The overall research design, instrumentation, and data treatment will also be identified. Chapter Four includes the analysis of data based on the results of the data collected and analyzed. Research questions and null hypotheses will also be reviewed. Finally, Chapter Five includes conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the analyzed data. This chapter will also include implications for the future of educations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of the relationship between homelessness and socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and achievement. Homelessness across the United States has been a societal issue worthy of being addressed for years. The country has seen a continual increase in the homeless population until recent years when the United States finally started seeing a dip in the number of homeless present at the government's "point-in-time" census. Governmental agencies as well as private agencies together have attempted to mediate in the homeless epidemic, but many of those attempts have been stand-alone efforts, without being coordinated in their attempts to end homelessness (Baker, Elliot, Williams, Mitchell & Thiele, 2016).

The U.S. government estimates there are approximately 600,000 homeless individuals in the United States on any given night. There are numerous causes of homelessness and various ways different organizations have gone about trying to decrease the number of homeless present in America today. One of the homeless population groups is school-aged children who require their own set of intervention to help them succeed in school (U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2017).

While researching the topic of homelessness in education this researcher had difficulty in finding peer reviewed articles on the topic. One reason for the lack of resources is the difficulty in obtaining an accurate count of homeless, and it is challenging to get homeless to participate in census data or survey data (Jocoy, 2013). Additionally, schools must treat information about students, including their living

arrangements, as educational records protected by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which limits the access researchers have to student records (Hallett & Skrla, 2017).

The review of literature that follows is organized thematically. The researcher used the literature review to summarize the history of homelessness in the United States, analyze causes of homelessness, and review different programs attempting to reduce the number of homeless on the streets being offered by both the government and the private sector. The review of literature also analyzed the characteristics of homeless students, including their socioeconomic status and achievement levels. The researcher looked at current trends and initiatives for these groups of students. The review of literature was used to report the characteristics of homeless people across the United States. There are currently no data comparing homeless students in the State of Missouri as a whole. The lack of long-term data on homeless students has left a void in knowledge as to whether or not their needs are being met in the current climate of schools. In conclusion, homelessness in education will be addressed and analyzed regarding achievement, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity of students who are deemed homeless. Finally, a discussion of what schools have done individually as well as the governmental approach including the McKinney-Vento Act will be examined.

Theoretical Framework

This study was based on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs. According to this hierarchy, one has to meet their physiological needs before being able to meet any other need. Maslow stated that when a human being is missing everything in life in an extreme fashion, it is most likely that they strive for food more than anything else. When all needs

are unsatisfied the person then becomes dominated by physiological needs and all other needs become nonexistent or at least are pushed into the background (Maslow, 1943).

Homeless individuals face a shortcoming in meeting their physiological needs, in the primary need for shelter. Even though many homeless individuals are faced with a myriad of other issues, organizations have realized that until shelter is provided the other issues cannot be addressed. This reasoning is why many organizations have gone to the housing first model in attempting to reduce homelessness (Henwood, Derejko, Couture, & Padgett, 2015).

Once their physiological needs are met a student then has to meet their safety needs, which include security, stability, dependency, protection, order, and structure. A person that lacks any of these factors in an extreme enough or chronic enough situation will live for safety alone. Individuals who are chronically in fear will not be able to move past the safety needs (Maslow, 1943). Schools offer a safe place for students for a portion of the day and at least one meal. The McKinney-Vento Act for Homeless Education mandates in Section 721 that homeless youth have access to appropriate public education that is provided to other children and youth (National Center for Homelessness, 2016).

After the safety needs are met a person will move into the need to belong. Individuals will search for acceptance from a peer or peer group. The individual will hunger for affection from those around them. The person will then strive for acceptance more than anything, because the first two levels of physiological needs and safety needs are met and the individual does not have to strive for that any longer. Once they find a satisfactory amount of acceptance they will move to the next level of needs (Green, 2000).

Lydia Spenceley (2014) noted that schools have worked to meet students' physiological and safety needs while they are at school. When a school is able to meet the first two basic needs a student then progresses into the self-esteem needs. While in self-esteem needs students will be searching for adequacy and confidence in the classroom. To see a student achieve, the teacher must make the classroom one that welcomes everyone and has a high level of empathy. When students feel the welcoming nature of the room they are more likely to perform at a higher level in the classroom.

The last tier for a student to cross into and fulfill Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualization. Students are more likely to reach the self-actualization stage when they are challenged with extracurricular events that they enjoy and with which they feel productive. When students are challenged to participate in multiple local, state, and national events, there is a greater likelihood that they will achieve self-actualization (Rose et al., 2016).

Education Conceptual Framework

The McKinney Vento Act opened doors for homeless students to be able to attend school more easily. The act removed compulsory residency requirements, noting that "Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment" (National Coalition of the Homeless, 2006). This legislation is the sole legislation with which schools must comply in order to provide a fair education to students who are defined as homeless.

On top of the compulsory residency requirements being removed, school districts must also immediately allow a student to enroll in school, even if they are lacking the appropriate paperwork that is normally required for students to enroll in the district. The

McKinney-Vento Act (National Coalition of the Homeless, 2006) also defines who homeless students are and says they may be enrolled in school even when lacking appropriate medical documentation normally required for school entry. The school district then takes on the responsibility for helping the student maintain appropriate health care to meet the school's requirements.

History of Homelessness in America

Obtaining historical data on homelessness is very vague because the definition of homelessness has changed over the years. In the 1800s men were called homeless because they lived outside normal family life. Without a place to live and a family with which to live, a man was homeless. After World War II, homelessness was defined based on affiliation of the armed services (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

There has been evidence of homelessness in the United States as early as 1725 in Colonial America. Historians have documented that homelessness increased during economic depressions. Specifically, there was an increase in the years 1873, 1885, and in the Great Depression years of 1930-1938. Also at the end of any major war, homelessness dramatically increased (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

Historians look at the homeless in five major periods: the Colonial Period, the Post-Civil War Period, the Progressive Era, the Depression Era, and the recent Skid Row Era. The colonial period is documented as being from 1725-1864; during this time frame homeless were usually street youth. In 1860 it was estimated that as many as 30,000 youth resided in the streets of New York state alone (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

The Post-Civil War Period ran from 1865 to 1900. The Civil War caused the first documented increase in homelessness, due to homes being destroyed during the war.

During this time soldiers who had become accustomed to living off the land continued to do so as the era ended (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

The Progressive Era was documented from 1900 to 1929. During this time the United States witnessed a decline in the number of homeless. Jobs were plentiful and those who had resided in the streets were now being pulled into the workforce (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

The Depression Era ran from 1929 to 1944. During this time the economic depression that engulfed the United States caused a great increase in the number of homeless across the country. Government estimates of homelessness in 1933 revealed that 1% of the population was homeless, which would be 1,200,000 individuals. However, toward the end of this era World War II was beginning and the homeless were being recruited into the armed services (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

The recent Skid Row Era was documented as lasting from 1950 to 1979. During this time homelessness was documented as drastically decreasing compared to the previous era. This was partly due to the growth in the post war economy. From the beginning of this era to the end of it, the median family income nearly doubled as a result of the economy doing so well (Murphy & Tobin, 2011).

During the last decade the face of homelessness has changed. No longer is it just individuals; the new shift is whole families are being affected. This rise in families being affected by homelessness is due in large part to the rising housing market. The average price of rent in the United States has risen dramatically in comparison to the average family income (Wright, 2017).

Characteristics of Homelessness

The United States government attempts to get a census of homeless in America by using a point-in-time count. This is a count of all homeless in one night, usually in January. The count attempts to account for all those in shelters as well as those who are unsheltered. Every city across the United States is charged with attempting to count the homeless in their city and turning that number in for a census count (Henry, Watt, Rosenthal, & Shivji. 2017).

Homelessness is divided into two categories. Chronic homelessness is defined as long-term or repeated episodes of homelessness. This is often due to mental illness or substance abuse. The other type of homelessness is short-term homelessness. Short-term homelessness is often caused by an unforeseen financial need or loss of a job (Lefebvre, 2018).

In 2017 when the point-in-time census took place there were an estimated 553,742 people who were homeless. Out of that number, two thirds of them lived in homeless shelters or transitional housing while the other one third was unsheltered homeless people. These numbers were higher than the previous year for the first time since 2011 (Springer, 2000).

Homeless youth in the United States is one of the most complex subgroups to account for when looking for population numbers. One of the biggest problems in identifying the number of homeless youth is the fact that governmental agencies use different ages to identify what classifies as a “youth.” The age ranges for various agencies vary from being 0-17, 5-12, up to age 18, up to age 21, or up to age 24 (Springer 2015). Out of the homeless students who are reporting to school it is estimated that 75%

of them are students who are doubled up with another family. This number of doubled up families has risen dramatically since the Great Recession in 2008 (Dill, 2015).

Out of the 553,742 people who were homeless on the 2017 census count 40,799 of those were unaccompanied youth. The data for this census considered youth to be under the age of 25. Out of those 40,799 unaccompanied youth 3,958 were age 18 or younger. Additionally, there were 184,661 people who were homeless but with their family unit. Out of those 184,661 people who were homeless with their family unit 114,829 were children under the age of 18 (Springer, 2000).

In contrast, Morton et al. (2018) argued that the numbers provided by the government's point-in-time count are not representative of how many youths are actually homeless. In a survey they conducted 3.4% of families with 13 to 17 year-olds reported the teen had a homeless experience in the last 12 months. Using the numbers provided by the government's point-in-time census for homeless youth that percentage would be .02% of youth experience homelessness.

Minority Population

In an article published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) in 2016 statistics indicated 64.7% of the chronic homeless population was Black while only 28% were white and 6.7% identified as Hispanic. At the same time in the United States 73.8% of the population was white, while 17.2% were Hispanic and 12.4% were black. These numbers show a drastic disproportion in the number of homeless blacks in comparison to the population in the United States. According to the *Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (AHAR)* (U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2017), the rate of unsheltered Latino/Hispanic individuals increased by

35% while there was only a 6% increase among the non-Latino/Hispanic individuals.

Many times a family of Hispanic origin is more likely to double up with relatives in order to avoid living on the streets (Jones, 2016).

A black family was 7 times more likely to spend time in a homeless shelter than a white family. At the same time White families and individuals are more likely to exit a homeless shelter once they begin to reside there than a Black family or an individual. One reason for this phenomenon according to Jones (2016), is that black males are 6 times more likely to be incarcerated, making it harder to be employed, which leads to time in homeless shelters.

The elderly homeless population is a growing concern across the United States. In 2010 the amount of homeless over the age of 55 was 44,172. It is estimated that by the year 2020 that number will see a 33% increase and be nearing 60,000 homeless individuals age 55 or older. The elderly struggle with being homeless as compared to their younger counterparts since these living conditions lead to increased health issues (Kimbler, DeWees, & Harris, 2017).

Socioeconomic Status and Homelessness

There are numerous documented causes of homelessness in the United States. One of the most common scenarios is being a family, or an individual, and moving for a job only to find upon arrival that the job is no longer available. This sudden change in socioeconomic status can often lead to homelessness for the individual or family affected by the event. At times families move for a job but the family cannot find housing in their price range. This does not typically cause the family or individual to be homeless for a

long period of time, but it does cause temporary homelessness for those affected (Baker et al., 2016).

The lack of income among homeless individuals is a barrier to finding permanent housing for an individual or family. Research done by Montgomery, Szymkowiak, and Culhane (2017) indicated the income level of homeless individuals is usually not enough to support themselves in permanent housing. The research shows that out of the homeless who were surveyed 14.4% were actively employed, while 70.6% were recipients of passive income. However, neither the wages nor the amount of passive income payments was enough to pay for permanent housing.

In the past homelessness was considered to be a temporary phenomenon that could be contained (Hambrick & Johnson, 1998). Now homelessness has spread beyond the urban places where it seemed to originate. Homelessness in rural areas of the United States is usually when families are doubled up with other families, instead of living on the street or in shelters (Springer, 2000). Often times homeless families in the rural areas are left there without any access to the governmental or societal support services (Lightfoot, 2011). Homelessness in rural areas is becoming more prevalent as agricultural jobs decline. Agricultural technology has made farming so efficient that only 1.9% of the current work force is employed in agricultural jobs (Gross, 2016).

According to a survey published in the *Journal of Housing and Community Development* (Paris & Kangari, 2005) the availability of low-cost housing is the leading factor of homelessness in the United States. However, the federal low-income housing assistance program has decreased and the minimum wage has not kept pace with the

growing cost of owning a home. These factors combined have made it difficult for many to afford permanent housing (First, Rife and Tooney, 1994).

One well documented reason of homelessness for women is domestic abuse (Murray, 2011). Women who find themselves homeless as a result of domestic abuse often have children with them. They require a different set of supports than men or women who are homeless for different reasons (Hardin & Wille, 2017).

Veterans are also a common subgroup of the homeless population. Often times veterans get used to the daily life of being in the military, especially while they are deployed, and then have a difficult time coming back to civilian life. Homeless veterans find it difficult to perform day in and day out holding a typical job and living as everyday citizens (Baker et al., 2016).

People with a chemical dependency as well as those who are otherwise disabled also comprise a large subgroup of the homeless population. These individuals often find it hard to hold down a job for various reasons, which makes it difficult to maintain permanent housing. These individuals find it difficult to maintain a stable income due to spending their money on illegal substances (Baker et al., 2016).

According to Greenwood, Stefancic, and Tsemberis (2013), individuals who do not have permanent housing will never have a substantial base in Maslow's hierarchy of needs in order to progress to the upper levels of the hierarchy. Henwood et al. (2015) noted that most approaches to ending homelessness mean dealing with other issues as well. However, those other issues cannot be dealt with until the basic need of shelter is established.

Societal View of Homelessness

Williams and Stickley (2011) surveyed the public to find their feelings on homelessness in the United States. The results were published in “Stories From the Streets: People’s Experiences of Homelessness” in the *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*. The results of the survey showed societal feelings in the United States revealed several varying viewpoints ranging from blaming failed government policies to blaming the homeless for being homeless (e.g., the choices the homeless have made along the way have created their homelessness).

Society has also realized there is a group that has been labeled as “deserving poor” or homeless due to extraordinary circumstances, such as physical and mental disabilities. Society realizes that these people are not homeless for a lack of their own effort but because of the circumstances they have to deal with. Society is usually more willing to give assistance to homeless with these types of needs (Williams & Stickley, 2011).

In a study done by Phillips (2015), published in the *Journal of Poverty* research is presented that shows society has multiple views on what caused homelessness as a whole. The primary responses in Phillips’ research showed that society viewed poor economic conditions, mental illness, and addiction to illicit drugs as the top three reasons people become homeless. Phillips also stated that individuals who had done volunteer work with homeless shelters were more likely to state economic factors were to blame over addiction or other self-induced behaviors.

One other area that society feels is to blame for the homelessness epidemic is the public arenas theory. This theory is based on the belief that governmental policies, social

service agencies, and private sector help to the homeless have kept the homeless dependent upon the aid that is offered to them. This theory states that agencies have not made the needed efforts to help the homeless find permanent housing and help them be successful without the help of aid offered to them (Lee, Lewis, & Jones, 1992).

In addition to the negative feelings that society has toward homeless individuals, there are also negative feelings toward the homeless who have kids with them. Researchers have stated that families who are homeless often struggle with parenting skills. Often since the base level of Maslow has not been met the homeless parents are not concentrating on being good parents (Harris-McKoy, Woods, Brantley & Farineau, 2015).

Studies indicate society as a whole believes that homelessness is too great a problem to ever completely end it. Research has indicated that society believes private and governmental groups can create programs that will limit the number of individuals living as homeless but the epidemic will never be fully rectified. Additionally people believed there were other societal problems that deserved more attention than homelessness (Dittmeier, Thompson, Kroger, & Phillips, 2018).

Homeless View on Homelessness

When researchers interviewed homeless individuals the homeless individuals agreed with society and research on the cause of their homelessness. The homeless individuals mostly blamed themselves for their homelessness, reporting they had a negative attitude toward life and lacked self-discipline (Goode & Maskovsky 2001). Other homeless individuals blamed their mental health, physical handicaps, or addiction for their homelessness (Maskovsky, 2001, Liebow, 1993; Goode &).

In their research Hardin et al. (2017) noted the homeless they interviewed reported a lack of family support as a major causes of homelessness. However, the researchers did note the lack of family support could be linked to other factors that were not disclosed by the interviewee (addiction, physical health, or mental health). All these factors, according to the researchers, could deteriorate a family dynamic.

In the book *Streetways: Chronicling the Homeless in Miami* (2014) Provenzo et al, interviewed 21 different individuals who were homeless in the city of Miami, Florida. Within these interviews a few different common threads were noticed. The first of those was that homeless people don't believe they are any different than individuals who are not homeless. C.A. Franco, one of the homeless men who was interviewed in the book, made the point that there are good people in every walk a life and that people should be judged by their character and not by their circumstances.

Another common theme among the homeless interviewed in the Provenzo et al. (2014) book was that shelters are not always looked on kindly by the homeless. Shelter administrators impose lots of rules that the homeless do not want to abide by. Having a warm and dry place to sleep is appreciated, but the hoops that the homeless have to jump through are frowned upon. An article published in the *BMC Public Health Journal* (Kerman, Sylvestre, Aubry, & Distasio, 2018) revealed that homeless individuals avoid both shelters and healthcare because of the stereotype involved when the homeless individual enters a place designed to help. Finances are also a determining factor in avoiding healthcare, even though many individuals have chronic issues that need addressed by the healthcare system (Klop, Evenblij, Gootjes, de Veer, & Onwuteaka-Philipisen, 2018).

Homeless individuals noted they were forced to cope with the stigma of being homeless. Researchers identified three common ways homeless individuals cope. First, homeless individuals take pride in being clean. Being clean is not always an easy task when there are limited resources, but there is still a sense of pride from those that are able to maintain that status. A second point of pride for homeless is avoiding addiction. Many times society assumes that homeless individuals are addicts; however in the interviews done by the research team the homeless were very proud of not being addicts. The final point of pride pointed out by the research team was employment. Again, often times the stigma of homeless individuals is that they are unemployed, but the homeless that were interviewed took great pride in their employment (Terui & Hsieh, 2016).

Throughout the interviews conducted by Provenzo et al.(2014), the homeless continually talked about how hard the life on the streets was. Those interviewed did take notice of how kind people were in giving them a helping hand, but they also made note that a lot of the services provided were not long term and just as they started to make strides and started to get their feet under them, the services were pulled for a new person, and then they were back to square one.

The final theme that was noticed throughout the interviews with homeless individuals was how much they did not want to be homeless but the cycle they were stuck in was hard to get out of. Often times jobs are temporary if those are even available because they lack a permanent address to put on an application. When homeless people do not have a job many are stuck panhandling for money; regardless of where the income is coming from it is rarely enough to even begin to think about starting a new life in permanent housing (Provenzo et al., 2014).

Private Sector's Reaction to Homelessness

Across the nation people attempt to answer the question of how to end the homeless epidemic. The traditional model of helping the homeless is through various entities offering a variety of services, however most of those services stand in silos and do not work together. The homeless person is charged with the task of trying to navigate from service to service without any true help of knowing how best to end their current situation (Baker et al., 2016).

Churches have been one of these entities that has attempted to help the homeless by opening up their sanctuaries at night and letting the homeless sleep on the church pews. However, churches have found letting homeless sleep in the church building could bring some red tape to wade through from local municipalities. Cities often have restrictions about who can open a shelter and where these places have to be located. Therefore, churches often do not meet those requirements and are forced to either comply with the local municipality or willfully and knowingly break the law (Massey, 2018).

The answer to homelessness for a majority of Americans is the obvious: they need a place to stay. Most homeless do not want to stay in a shelter, they want a place to call their own. This idea of giving the homeless a place to call their own is where the “housing first” model originated. Many cities across the country have seen a decrease in homelessness by giving the homeless a place to live. Once they are settled into their own place, then the housing first initiative starts to help with other resources, such as mental health assistance, financial assistance, or help finding a job (Lefebvre, 2018).

The advantage for the housing first model is individuals are no longer stuck trying to navigate the various organizations that exist in the traditional method. The housing

first method is a more community-minded approach to ending homelessness. The housing first method gives individuals or families the solid base that is needed so the homeless can then focus on the next level of needs that they may have (Baker et al., 2016; Greenwood et al., 2013; Kerman, Sylvestre, Aubry, & Distasio, 2018;). Collins, Malone, and Clifasefi (2013) noted research has suggested that the housing first approach gives a solid foundation for the homeless individual and helps them make greater strides toward healing over other models that have also been used.

In Santa Monica, California, residents initiated a .0025¢ sales tax to help the homeless and allowed them to reside inside their city libraries. Homeless individuals can sign up to make the library the nightly shelter. In turn they must take part in self-betterment programming during the day, including mental health assistance, role playing different life skills, and applying for home loans. The library provides a host of self-betterment skills for the homeless who occupy the library at night. The hope is that the homeless will better themselves enough so that they can find permanent housing and stay off the street (Segal, 2018). Along with a place to stay, many recognize that homeless having steady employment is also a vital ingredient to having a successful transition from the streets for a homeless individual. Stewart, Nodoushani, and Stumpf (2018) stated to keep employment at a high retention rate employees had to meet all the levels of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs at the work place, just like they have to in their personal life.

Government Reaction to Homelessness and the McKinney-Vento Act

The George W. Bush administration prompted numerous interagency collaborations in an effort to end chronic homelessness. These included the Collaborative

Initiative to Help End Chronic Homelessness, which funded housing and treatment for individuals who were termed chronically homeless. Another effort was called Ending Chronic Homelessness through Employment and Housing; with this effort there was funded permanent housing as well as employment assistance. The final effort under the George W. Bush administration was the pilot program Housing for People Who Are Homeless and Addicted to Alcohol (Perkins, 2016).

In 2005, under the direction of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) cities began using point-in-time counts of homeless throughout the country. In these counts HUD picks a day, usually at the end of January, and cities try to capture all those individuals who are living in shelters, transitional housing, or fixtures not meant for human habitation. The first year these numbers were released was in 2007, and that year it was estimated that there were 647,528 homeless individuals in the United States; in 2015 that number had dropped to 564,708 (Purcell, 2014).

Due to the rising number of homeless in the United States, Congress enacted the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act in 1974 (P.L. 93-415). With this act the government created the Runaway and Homeless Youth program (RHY), which was the first federal program to focus on homeless individuals regardless of age (Springer, 2015). In 2009 the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH) was born. HEARTH revised the age of homeless youth to 21 and also redefined a portion of the McKinney-Vento Act, giving protections to homeless students until the age of 21 (Springer, 2015).

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 was the first significant federal legislative response to homelessness. President Ronald Reagan signed this act into law on July 22, 1987. The law made federal money available for homeless shelter programs (Foley, 1987). The original act was comprised of fifteen programs that helped homeless have emergency shelter, transitional housing, job training, primary care, education, and some permanent housing (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2016).

In 1988 the act was amended but with only minor changes that expanded those who were eligible to receive services. In 1990 amendments were made that were far greater than those enacted in 1988. The 1990 amendments included the Education of Homeless Children and Youth program. This authorization required states to make grants to local educational agencies for the purpose of implementing the law (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2016).

In 1992 the bill was amended for a third time. The amendments took away some of the stipulations that were in place before allowing more people to participate in the services that had been established by the original bill and the amendments to the bill that preceded the 1992 edition. In 1994 Congress amended the Homeless Children and Youth program. This amendment provided local educational authorities greater flexibility to use funds that were allocated to them. The 1994 amendment also granted homeless preschoolers with a free and appropriate public education (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2016).

In 2002 the amendment was reauthorized again, making the enrollment process for homeless youth much easier. Now students who became homeless during the school year could stay in their school of origin. Also if a child was to become homeless in

between school years they were then allowed to stay in their school of origin for the school year following the time they become homeless (National Center for Homeless Education, 2017).

The most recent reauthorization was enacted in 2015 under the Every Student Succeeds Act. With this reauthorization schools now have to provide transportation to students who are identified as homeless even if they are housed permanently in another district. The reauthorization also provides stability to preschool age students. Preschools that are administered by the Local Education Agency (LEA) must identify students that are of preschool age and homeless and help those families enroll those students into the preschool, even if they lack proper evidence of residency (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Education's Reaction to Homelessness

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 recognized schools as one of the few stable environments in a homeless student's life (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). According to the Department of Education 78% of homeless youth were enrolled in school in 2008 (National Coalition of Homelessness (NCH), 2009). Although a significant portion of homeless students are in school, in a stable environment there is also a large portion of students who are homeless that are somewhere on the posttraumatic stress disorder spectrum, making it very difficult for these students to perform well at school (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012; Yeager & Bennett, 2012).

According to the data released by DESE student homeless population has grown by 400% from 1996 when the reported homeless student population was 7,695 to 2017 when

the reported homeless student population was 33,757 (DESE, 2018). However, in 2002 the United States Department of Education announced the expansion of federal money for the education of homeless students under Title I money. Most schools at the time already used Title I money, which was designed to increase academic achievement of the disadvantaged. Now the federal government would give school districts more money under Title I funds if the district could show they had a need in educating homeless students (National Center for Homeless Education, 2006).

Achievement

Homeless students continually fall behind their cohort peers in academic performance and are 4 times more likely to exhibit developmental delays compared to their nonhomeless peers [National Center on Family Homelessness (NCFH), 2011]. In research conducted by George Springer (2015) more than half of homeless students tested below grade level in reading (52%) and math (57%). According to a study done by Masten, Fiat, Labella, and Strack (2015), 38% of homeless students had to repeat at least one grade level in their educational career. On top of the low academic achievement often times homeless youth also acquire oppositional, defiant traits and other behavior issues that will negatively affect their education success.

Tobin (2016) argued that homelessness itself does not directly affect a student's academic achievement in school. Tobin compared the homeless students of a large urban school district to the students who were housed, but still considered to be low socioeconomic status. There was not a significant difference between the two groups as far as student achievement. Tobin argued that a more important factor in a student's

performance is their attendance rate. Conversely, research done by Cowen (2017) stated that homeless students score far lower on standardized reading and math tests.

Research done by Pavlakis, Goff, and Miller (2017) compared math scores of students who lived with sustained poverty to homeless students. Through this research the researchers attempted to predict growth in math achievement. They concluded that homelessness has one of the greatest impacts on students' academic achievement, second only to attendance rate.

When students perform poorly in high school and they are highly mobile, which many homeless students are, it creates a more difficult task for them to earn high school credit needed to graduate high school. Often times students who are performing poorly transfer to a different school because of family situations. This transfer from one school to another then affects the student's overall performance and hinders their accumulation of credits necessary for completion of high school (Uretsky & Stone, 2016).

According to researchers Adelman and Taylor (2017), students who exhibit learning and emotional problems with high avoidance of classroom learning are better met with personalized instruction. Personalized instruction is defined as not only having a learning plan for students based on their capabilities but also based on their motivation. By personalizing learning students are more apt to have their needs met in Maslow's hierarchy.

Teachers dealing with homeless students should approach them from a mindset of dealing with a student who has been impacted by great trauma. Vicky Dill (2015) identified four ways to help students from trauma, especially homeless students, be successful. The first way that Dill identified for teachers to be successful is for teachers to

take an active role in creating a relationship with the student. Teachers can take a few moments daily to ask the student about their day and how their classes are going. The goal is for the student to have a strong sense of community in the classroom in order to overcome the lack of sense of community they have in their home life.

The second way is for teachers to look at a student's behaviors indicative of the student's state of mind at that time and not a factor of who the student is (McInnes, Diamond, & Whittington, 2014). When the teacher does not label the student according to the behavior the student is exhibiting the student will become more empathetic in the classroom. Once the student begins becoming more empathetic in the classroom there will be a heightened sense of community for the student. Once the student feels like they belong, the student's behaviors will become more positive (Dill, 2015).

Homeless students often have a sense of embarrassment that they carry with them day in and day out (Yeager & Bennett, 2012). Dill (2015) noted the third way of dealing with a student from trauma is to give the student a sense of accomplishment within their classroom. Teachers should layer classroom tasks so the student can be successful. When the student begins to gain success in the classroom the weight of embarrassment will begin to decrease while in the classroom (Dill, 2015).

Dill (2015) recognized giving students the opportunity to talk as a way to help traumatized students cope with their daily struggles as the fourth way of dealing with students from trauma. Getting students to talk about their struggles is often a product of building a classroom community, which McInnes et al. (2014) noted as being an effective tool when dealing with traumatized youth. Once students begin to feel comfortable and are able to voice their feelings, they begin to see more success.

As an added struggle for teachers attempting to educate homeless students, most teachers do not have any formal training on how to deal with diverse students or how to deal with those from a background of trauma or chronic stress, which is highly common in homeless students. Many teachers believe students from some experiences have no chance of succeeding after experiencing such trauma in their lives. For students to be successful teachers need to maintain hope for their students, but also be prepared for these students with training and preparation (Zacarian, Alvarez-Ortiz, & Haynes, 2017).

Summary

Homelessness in the United States has been an issue even before the establishment of the country. The first record of homelessness was documented 50 years before the establishment of the United States due to an economic depression in England and the Colonial United States (Murphy & Tobin., 2011). Although the definition of homeless has changed, the problem has been recognized for years.

Modern day homelessness is categorized into two categories: chronic homelessness, which is defined as long term or repeated episodes of homelessness, and short-term homelessness, which is often caused by the temporary loss of job or unexpected financial need (Lefebvre, 2018). In 2017 the United States government estimated over 550,000 people were homeless on any given night in the United States. The majority of those that were classified homeless were residing in homeless shelters (Henry et al., 2017).

Lack of affordable housing and low minimum wage have been the leading causes of homelessness in the United States. The minimum wage has not kept pace with the growing cost of housing, which has created a gap in society of those who cannot afford

permanent housing. In the Great Recession of 2008 this led to a growing number of those who were considered homeless (Roa, 2014).

These issues have not gone unnoticed to society, which as a whole has been willing to help the homeless, but most of the efforts put forth by churches and other nonprofit organizations have been in individual silos, making it difficult for the services provided to help the homeless become less dependent on society. The services issued by these nonprofits make an immediate impact on providing food and shelter for the homeless but they do very little for sustaining long-term change in reducing homelessness (Massey, 2018).

In an effort to assist homeless youth in acquiring their education the United States government began an effort to help homeless students in 1987 with the passing of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The act has been reorganized numerous times in an effort to help homeless students. The act has made it easier for students to enroll in school and has also made it easier for students to maintain continuous enrollment in a school when moving from place to place (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2016).

Students who are homeless struggle to meet all of their basic needs and will often struggle to get out of the basic needs level of Maslow's hierarchy. Schools can help students advance past Maslow's base level by helping them meet some of the basic needs in the classrooms. Schools can have healthy snacks, basic hygiene products, and extra school supplies accessible for students to help meet some of those basic needs (Shankar-Brown, 2017).

Data have been collected on data points of schools across the state of Missouri. These data points included free and reduced lunch rate, which can be translated to a socioeconomic status, achievement rate, and minority populations, but the research does not exist to attempt to tie all those data points together. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between homelessness and socioeconomic status, minority population, and educational achievement in the state of Missouri. If a statistically significant relationship existed, predications could be made that might assist educators in recognizing future educational needs of homeless students, and thus be able to better meet those needs.

Chapter Three includes the methodology of the research, research questions, null hypotheses, participants, and procedures. The overall research design, instrumentation, and data treatment will also be identified. Chapter Four includes the analysis of data based on the results of the data collected and analyzed. Research questions and null hypotheses will also be reviewed. Finally, Chapter Five includes conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the analyzed data. This chapter will also include implications for the future of education.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This quantitative study of current public schools in the state of Missouri was designed to find what variables, if any, has a relationship to homelessness. The researcher examined the public data available on DESE's Web site regarding homeless students. Focus was on data gathered from 2014-2018. Analysis was completed to determine districts population of homeless students then compared to free and reduced lunch rates, ethnicity, and achievement data. Data were obtained for these districts with intent to determine possible relationships between these factors. Based on achievement of their homeless population multiple regressions were run to see if certain factors could predict achievement more or less than other factors. In this chapter the reader will find a list of research questions, null hypothesis, selection sampling, research setting, data treatment, and the research design.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and socioeconomic rate in a district?
2. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and a district's minority population?
3. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district?
4. What is the predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement?

Null Hypotheses

- H₀1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district.
- H₀2. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the minority population in a district.
- H₀3. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district.
- H₀4. There will be no statistically relevant predictable power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement.

Selection Sampling

Data from all 518 public school districts from across the state of Missouri were analyzed for the years 2014–2018. This total sampling allowed for a well balanced sample large enough to make generalizations. Total population sampling allows for characteristics to be exposed that are not common, but ensured that a valid estimate of a generalized relationship between variables had been obtained (Etikan, Abubakar, Alkassim, 2015). All school districts were selected as DESE housed all of the data for Missouri schools in an open access database on their Web site, therefore making a total population feasible instead of simply analyzing the data from a smaller sample of school districts. Using the data from all public schools allowed for a large enough population to allow for generalizable conclusions to be made. The data used included the DESE open access data on homeless populations, free and reduced lunch rates, and ethnicity. Finally, achievement data, also extracted from the DESE Web site were used to identify high achieving schools.

Research Setting

The research was done in the state of Missouri using data from all 518 public school districts. Missouri districts ranged in size from a district with a total of 57 students to the largest district with a population of 24,955. According to the DESE (1996) there were 7,695 students reported as homeless across the state. In the 2016-2017 school year that number had more than quadrupled to 33,757 students who were reported as homeless across the state (DESE, 2018).

Instrumentation

The researcher used the open access data on The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Web site to collect data for the public school districts in the state of Missouri. Use of the database as an instrument was appropriate, as it included all data collected from every school district in the state, and was verified for validity and reliability by DESE via the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) evaluation process. The researcher used homeless population, minority population, free and reduced lunch rate, and student achievement as reported by the percent of students testing advance and proficient on the English and Mathematics Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) test in the third-, fourth-, and fifth- grade years, as well as the eighth-grade years. Additionally, the researcher used the End of Course (EOC) exam for Algebra 1 and English II for secondary students. These tests were utilized as they were a requirement for all Missouri students.

The homeless population, minority population, and free and reduced lunch rate data were reported to DESE by each Missouri school district as part of the December core data cycle. The tests that were used were scored by a third party, and then reported

back to the schools and DESE once all tests across the state had been scored. School districts that were identified as charter, parochial, and private school districts were not used in this study. Only Missouri public schools were used in this study.

All public school districts in the State of Missouri were required to upload data four times a year to DESE through the Missouri School Information System (MOSIS). Once the MOSIS data were received DESE organized the data and reported it back to all public school districts in the State of Missouri through the DESE Web site. Some information shared with schools was shared through a public Web site while the rest of the information was shared through a password-protected Web site. Only authorized school personnel had access to the protected data. The DESE then checked the information given through the MSIP review process. The MSIP review was a thorough review of a school's operating and reporting practices.

The MSIP began in October of 1987. The first two MSIP cycles included a survey sent to all professional and support staff in a district, as well as the school board, all parents, and all students in Grades 3-12. The survey helped inform a team of educators who would conduct an onsite review team. During the onsite review, the review team conducted interviews with teachers, administrators, and school board members. At the end of the process DESE sent a report to the school stating strengths, weaknesses, and areas of concern (DESE, 2017).

In 1993 the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 was passed. This act allowed DESE to identify schools that were academically deficient. The act also gave DESE the authority to intervene at the building level (DESE, 2017)

The third cycle of MSIP began in 2001. For the first time schools were assessed primarily on students' success and participation in various programs, as well as attendance rate. Schools were then given an Annual Performance Report (APR) that was a snapshot of how the school was performing compared to the MSIP standards. This system was able to give DESE and the school district a proactive approach to addressing any needs that may have arisen (DESE, 2017).

At the time of the current study the state of Missouri practiced within the fourth cycle. The standards in the fourth cycle have primarily remained the same as the third cycle of MSIP. The review process in the fourth cycle has changed to concentrate more on the schools who had low APRs instead of doing onsite reviews of schools who were performing well (DESE, 2017).

Data Treatment

The researcher gathered data for every school district including the free and reduced lunch rate, student achievement data, and minority population. The researcher reported the mean, the frequency, and the range of each set of data. The data gathered were then input into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data cleanup was completed, eliminating any incomplete categories in order to run the analysis. A Pearson's r was chosen for analysis, as it was a measure of the strength of the linear relationship between two variables. Significance was reported as a correlation coefficient, with the stronger relationships being closest to 1, or -1. Coefficients near 0 would have meant there was not a strong relationship to be considered significant. Significance was determined at the .05 level; as in the majority of analyses an alpha of .05 was used as the cutoff for significance. A p -value of less than .05 indicated there was not a difference

between the variables and that a significant difference did exist, thus the null hypothesis would be rejected.

There are basic assumptions needed to run Pearson's r : each variable should be continuous and each set of variables must have a related pair; in the case of this research there was a related pair for each of the relationships. The variables for this study included homeless population and socioeconomic rate, homeless population and minority population, homeless population, and achievement rate. Every school that was used in this study had a value for each of the relationships measured. Another assumption needed to run Pearson's r was the absence of outliers. Outliers were determined by being less than 3.29 standard deviations from the mean. Pearson's r did not assume normality between the variables. The final assumption needed to run Pearson's r is linearity; when the scatterplot is created the dots should create a line when connected from left to right (Statistics Solutions, 2013).

Next, a multiple regression was completed in order to see what, if any, predictor variables (socioeconomic status, achievement) were uniquely associated with the criterion variable (homelessness). Multiple regression was used to predict the value of a variable based on the value of two or more other variables. Multiple regression was also used to explain the relationship between one continuous dependent variable and two or more independent variables. The variable the researcher was trying to predict (homelessness) was called the dependent variable while the other variables (socioeconomic status and achievement) were the independent variables. The closer the p -value was to zero the less the effect of that variable. A low p -value (< 0.05) indicated the researcher could reject the null hypothesis. In other words, a predictor that had a low

p -value was likely to be a meaningful addition to the model because changes in the predictor's value were related to changes in the response variable.

Like the Pearson r , there are basic assumptions needed to run multiple regression. The first of those assumption is the variables are normally distributed and any outliers have been removed. The next assumption is that there is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The third assumption is the variables are measured without error. The final assumption is the assumption of homoscedasticity, the variance of errors is the same across all levels of the independent variable.

Research Design

The researcher used a quantitative correlational study following up with multiple regression. The relationship correlational design determined any possible significant relationships between the following:

- relationship between percent and homeless population and socioeconomic rate;
- relationship between percent of homeless population and minority population; and
- relationship between percent of homeless population and achievement rate.
- predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rate on student achievement.

For research question one data was analyzed to identify what, if any, relationship existed between homeless population and socioeconomic rate. For the homeless data the number was gathered from the DESE's Web site, each district's homeless population was reported as an exact number, and that number was used for the 2014-2018 school years. To determine the socioeconomic rate of a district the researcher used the free and reduced lunch rate of the district. Free and reduced lunch rate was reported as a percentage of the

district's total population. This percentage was also available on the DESE Web site, and was accessible to the public. Again, the researcher looked at school years 2014-2018.

For research question two data was analyzed to identify what, if any, relationship existed between homeless population and the minority population. As with question one homeless data was gathered from the DESE's Web site, each district's homeless population was reported as an exact number, and that number was used for the 2014-2018 school years. Data for minority population was gathered from the DESE Web site, using the ethnicity report. Ethnicity was reported as a percentage of the total population. The minority population for this study used the following ethnic categories from the DESE Web site: Asian, Asian Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, Indian, Multiracial, Pacific Islander, and White.

For research questions three data was analyzed to identify what, if any, relationship existed between homeless population and the student achievement levels. As in question one and two homeless data was gathered from the DESE's Web site, each district's homeless population was reported as an exact number, and that number was used for the 2014-2018 school years. For the student achievement indicator, the researcher used results from the MAP test for English and Mathematics for third to fifth grades as well as eighth grades for results from elementary and middle school for each district. In the state of Missouri, these were the only elementary and middle school grade levels assessed. The MAP test results were reported in four levels in order from least to greatest: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The information available on the DESE Web site was the percent of students who performed at each of these levels for

each district. For this study, the researcher used the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence in achievement on the MAP test.

Additionally, for research question three at the secondary level (grades 9–12) in the state of Missouri the EOC exam was given. The required test for every student in the subject of Mathematics was the Algebra 1 test and the required test in English was the English II test. Since both of these tests were required of every student, the researcher utilized the results of both of these tests. Much like the MAP tests the EOC results were reported in four levels in order from least to greatest: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The information available on the DESE Web site was the percent of students who performed at each of these levels for each district. For this study, the researcher used the total of the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence in achievement on the EOC.

This research used multiple levels of the state test for the student achievement variable. For the subject of English, the researcher used the third-, fourth-, fifth- and eighth- grade MAP tests for the years 2014-2018; the results were reported annually using the total of the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence in achievement. Additionally, the researcher used the English II EOC exam for each of the school years during the 2014-2018 time period. The results were reported annually using the total of the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence in achievement.

In the Math subject area this research used the third-, fourth-, fifth-, and eighth-grade MAP tests for the years 2014-2018. These results were also reported annually using the total of the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence

in achievement. To report scores for secondary age students the researcher used the results from the Algebra I EOC exam for each school year during the 2014-2018 time period. The results were also reported totaling the percentage of students achieving advanced and proficient to indicate competence in achievement.

For research question four multiple regression was run with predictor variables (minority population, homelessness, and socioeconomic status) with respect to the criterion variable (student achievement) in order to determine if any of the predictor variables were statistically significant in predicting for student achievement. All public schools in the State of Missouri reported data to DESE annually. Data for homeless status was gathered from the DESE's Web site, each district's homeless population was reported as an exact number, and that number was used for the 2014-2018 school years. Data for minority population was gathered from the DESE Web site, using the ethnicity report. Ethnicity was reported as a percentage of the total population. The minority population for this study used the following ethnic categories from the DESE Web site: Asian, Asian Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, Indian, Multiracial, Pacific Islander, and White. To determine the socioeconomic rate of a district the researcher used the free and reduced lunch rate of the district. Free and reduced lunch rate was reported as a percentage of the district's total population. This percentage was also available on the DESE Web site, and was accessible to the public. Again, the researcher looked at school years 2014-2018. Data for student achievement used results from the MAP test for English and Mathematics for third to fifth grades as well as eighth grades for results from elementary and middle school for each district. In the state of Missouri, these were the only elementary and middle school grade levels assessed. The MAP test results were reported in four levels in

order from least to greatest: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The information available on the DESE Web site was the percent of students who performed at each of these levels for each district. For this study, the researcher used the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence in achievement on the MAP test.

Additionally, at the secondary level (grades 9–12) in the state of Missouri the EOC exam was given. The required test for every student in the subject of Mathematics was the Algebra 1 test and the required test in English was the English II test. Since both of these tests were required of every student, the researcher utilized the results of both of these tests. Much like the MAP tests the EOC results were reported in four levels in order from least to greatest: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The information available on the DESE Web site was the percent of students who performed at each of these levels for each district. For this study, the researcher used the total of the top two categories, proficient and advanced, to indicate competence in achievement on the EOC.

Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology for this study, as well the research questions and hypothesis, procedures, design, sampling, instrument, participants, and data analysis. Once the data were collected from DESE's open access database the researcher ran a Pearson r to attempt to find the correlation between homelessness, socioeconomic status, minority population, and achievement. The researcher then used multiple regressions to see how the variables were uniquely associated with one another.

Chapter Four includes the analysis of data based on the results of the data collected and analyzed. Research questions and null hypotheses will also be reviewed in Chapter Four. Finally, Chapter Five includes conclusions and recommendations based on

the findings of the analyzed data. This chapter will also include implications for the future of education.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

In the state of Missouri, homeless data were originally released by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in 1996. In that year there were 7,695 students reported as homeless across the state. In 2017 that number had more than quadrupled to 33,757 students reported homeless statewide (DESE, 2018). While these numbers keep rising, research shows that homeless students do not perform as well as their peers: 52% of homeless students tested below grade level in reading, while 57% tested below reading in math (Springer, 2000). Retention throughout their school years is also a concern for homeless students; 38% of homeless students had to repeat at least one grade level during the course of their educational career (Masten et al., 2015). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between homelessness and socioeconomic status, minority population, and educational achievement in the state of Missouri. This study was designed to assist school leaders in determining the needs of their students that are deemed homeless and help administrators meet student needs based on the characteristics that are most indicative of homelessness.

In Chapter Three, the researcher detailed the methodology of the research, including the research questions, null hypotheses, participants, and procedures. The overall research design, instrumentation, and data treatments were also identified. Data are presented in Chapter Four to identify if a relationship existed between minority population and homelessness, socioeconomic status and homelessness, and student achievement and homelessness.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and socioeconomic rate in a district?
2. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and a district's minority population?
3. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district?
4. What is the predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement?

Null Hypotheses

- H₀1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district.
- H₀2. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the minority population in a district.
- H₀3. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district.
- H₀4. There will be no statistically significant predictable power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement.

Each question and related hypothesis were investigated through quantitative analysis, with the researcher conducting Pearson correlations to determine the strength of possible relationships. Further analysis was the conducted using a multiple regression to determine the potential for predictive measures.

Data Analysis and Findings

Data for this study data were collected by the researcher; the data were directly extracted from the DESE open access Web site and input into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to make comparisons between the variables. Data were used for all 518 public schools in the state of Missouri. Data were also available for charter schools in Missouri, however the researcher chose to not use the data for charter schools and only focus on public schools. The data the researcher used included free and reduced lunch rate as a measure of socioeconomic status, minority population, and End of Course (EOC) and Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) exams including exams for third-, fourth-, fifth- and eighth-grade English and Math MAP tests, as well as English II and Algebra I EOC tests. A correlation design was used in order to show the relationship between Missouri public school districts' homeless rate and socioeconomic status, homeless rate and minority status, and homeless rate and student achievement. A multiple regression follow-up was used to find any data trends in the relationship between student achievement and homelessness.

Samples

This study used a total population sampling by using the data for all public schools in the state of Missouri. Five hundred and eighteen schools were used in the study. School districts identified as charter schools were not used in this study. All public schools identified as K-8 or K-12 schools were used.

Data were extracted from DESE's open access database, input into SPSS, and then analyzed seeking possible relationships between districts' homeless population and minority population, homeless population and socioeconomic status, and homeless population and student achievement. The researcher completed an ethics class and all of

the ethical standards were applied. Results were uploaded into SPSS. After the completion of the study, the researcher will keep the information on a secured thumb drive for 5 years and then destroy it.

Demographics

The researcher used the open access data on the DESE Web site to collect data for the public school districts in the state of Missouri. The database had open access and was available to the public. Use of the database as an instrument was appropriate, as it included all data collected from every school in the state, and was verified for validity and reliability by DESE via the MSIP evaluation process. DESE is an established educational community that compiles a statewide open access database for educational use. This research made comparison of data extracted from this open access DESE database with regard to districts' student achievement, socioeconomic rate, minority population, and homelessness.

Table 1 shows the demographic data of the student population numbers. In the category of homeless population there were 2,573 data points collected; 2,456 (95.45%) of them were reported as 10% or less. In the category of the percent of Asian students enrolled, only 39 (1.52%) data points out of 2,573 were reported above 5%. Of the population of Black students enrolled, 1,073 (41.71%) of the data points collected in the category were reported at less than 10%. For the category of students who were Hispanic, 1,450 (56.35%) of the data points collected were under 10%. For the category of Indian population in the school district, 2,565 (99.69%) data points collected out of the 2,573 total were reported as less than 10% population. Very similar to the Indian population, districts reported the multiracial category in a similar pattern: 2,563 out of 2,573

(99.61%) data points reported less than 10% of their population to be multiracial.

Table 1

Demographic Data of Student Populations

<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Percent of Schools with less than 10% of total population</u>
Homeless Population	95.45%
Percent of Asian Students	98.48%
Percent of Black Students	41.71%
Percent of Hispanic Students	56.35%
Percent of Indian Students	99.69%
Percent of Multiracial Students	99.61%
Percent of Pacific Islander Students	99.99%

Data Cleaning

All public schools in the state of Missouri were used in the data for this research. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education also reported data on charter schools; those schools were not used in the data for this research. School districts with kindergarten through eighth-grade populations as well as kindergarten through 12th-grade populations were used.

Results

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and socioeconomic rate in a district?

Null Hypothesis 1

There will be no statistically significant relationship between the percent of

homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district.

A Pearson’s *r* correlation was used to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between a district’s homeless percentage and socioeconomic rate.

In Table 2 FRLR stands for free and reduced lunch rate. The descriptive statistics of the homeless population including the following: $M = 59.6634$, $SD = 282.79744$, $N = 2,570$. The descriptive statistics of the free and reduced lunch rate include the following: $M = 52.0117$, $SD = 16.07844$, $N = 2,454$. The homeless data was affected by a majority (1,542 out of 2,573) of the data points for the homeless percentage being reported as zero. This data made the mean low, while the standard deviation was high.

In the Pearson’s *r* both variables, homeless population and free and reduced lunch rate, were continuous. Upon analyzing the scatterplot, the two variables had a linear relationship and there was no significance. The data in each variable were normally distributed.

Table 2

Pearson’s r Correlation Research Question 1

Homeless		Homeless	FRLR
	Pearson Correlation	1	.115 **
	Sig. (2 tailed)		.001
	<i>N</i>	2,570	2,452
FRLR		Homeless	FRLR
	Pearson Correlation	.115 **	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	
	<i>N</i>	2,452	2,454

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Free and Reduced Lunch Rate (FRLR)

There was statistically significant correlation between homeless percentage of a school district and the free and reduced lunch rate within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,569) = .115$, $p < .001$. Homeless

percentage statistically explained 1.3% of the variability in the free and reduced lunch rate.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and a district's minority population?

Null Hypothesis 2

There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the minority population in a district.

The descriptive statistics of table 3 include the following: the homeless population included the following: $M = 59.6634$, $SD = 282.79744$, $N = 2,570$. The descriptive statistics of the Hispanic enrollment were $M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.897$, $N = 1,595$. The descriptive statistics of the Indian enrollment were $M = .33$, $SD = .830$, $N = 704$. The descriptive statistics of the Multiracial enrollment were $M = 2.46$, $SD = 1.932$, $N = 1,358$. The descriptive statistics of the Pacific Islander enrollment were $M = .38$, $SD = .904$, $N = 249$. The descriptive statistics of the Asian enrollment were $M = .80$, $SD = 1.204$, $N = 852$. The descriptive statistics of the Black enrollment were $M = 2.35$, $SD = 2.487$, $N = 1,307$. The homeless data was affected by a majority (1542 out of 2573) of the data points for the homeless percentage being reported as zero. These data made the mean low, while the standard deviation was high.

Table 3

Pearson r Correlation Research Question 2

Homeless	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (two-tailed)	1
	<i>N</i>	2,570
Asian Pacific Islander Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	No data
	<i>N</i>	No data
Hispanic Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.081 **
	<i>N</i>	.001
		1,595
Indian Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	-.097 *
	<i>N</i>	.010
		704
Multiracial Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.125 **
	<i>N</i>	.001
		1,358
Pacific Islander Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	-.114
	<i>N</i>	.071
		249
Asian Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.119 **
	<i>N</i>	.001
		852
Black Enrollment Percentage	Pearson Correlation	Homeless Population
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.278 **
	<i>N</i>	.001
		1,307

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

There were statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the Hispanic population percent of students within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(1,594) = -.081, p <$

.001. Homeless percentage statistically explained .7% of the variability in the Hispanic population percentage.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the Indian population percent of students within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(704) = -.097, p < .05$.

Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.9% of the variability in the Indian population percentage.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the Multiracial population percent of students within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(1,357) = .125, p < .001$.

Homeless percentage statistically explained 1.6% of the variability in the Indian population percentage.

There was no statistically significant correlation between the homeless population of a school district and the Asian Islander percent of students within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(248) = -.114, p =$

.071. Homeless percentage statistically explained 1.3% of the variability in the Pacific Islander percent of students, thus the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the Asian population percent of students within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(851) = -.119, p < .001$.

Homeless percentage statistically explained 1.4% of the variability in the Asian population percentage.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the Black population percent of students within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(1,306) = .278, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 7.7% of the variability in the Black population percentage.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district?

Null Hypothesis 3

There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district.

The descriptive statistics of the data outlined in table 4 includes the following for the homeless population: $M = 59.6634, SD = 282.79744, N = 2,570$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the third-grade Communications Art MAP test include the following: $M = 53.5850, SD = 19.24440, N = 2,358$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fourth-grade Communications Art MAP test include the following: $M = 55.4133, SD = 19.23460, N = 2,352$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fifth-grade Communications Art MAP test were as follows: $M = 54.8218, SD = 15.38021, N = 2,351$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the eighth-grade Communications Art MAP test included these: $M = 55.4133, SD = 15.38021, N = 2,351$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the English II EOC test included the following: $M = 70.1787, SD = 14.39902, N = 2,135$. The

descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the third-grade Math MAP test included the following: $M = 50.0661$, $SD = 17.68670$, $N = 2,362$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fourth-grade Math MAP test were as follows: $M = 46.5944$, $SD = 18.23655$, $N = 2,357$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fifth-grade Math MAP test were the following: $M = 42.8071$, $SD = 25.07201$, $N = 2,346$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the eighth-grade Math MAP test included the following: $M = 30.6827$, $SD = 20.56553$, $N = 2,306$. The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the Algebra 1 EOC test included the following: $M = 54.7271$, $SD = 19.82184$, $N = 2,184$.

Table 4

Pearson r Correlation Research Question 3

Homeless Population	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	Homeless Population 1 2,570
A/P % 3 rd Grade CA MAP	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.081 ** .001 2,357
A/P % 4 th Grade CA MAP	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.085 ** .001 2,351
A/P % 5 th Grade CA MAP	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.089 ** .001 2,351
A/P % 8 th Grade CA MAP	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.065 ** .002 2,348
A/P % English II EOC	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.089 ** .001 2,135
A/P % 3 rd Grade Math MAP	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.092 ** .001 2,361
A/P % 4 th Grade Math Map	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.051 * .013 2,356
A/P % 5 th Grade Math Map	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.050 * .015 2,346
A/P % 8 th Grade Math MAP	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.076 .001 2,305
A/P % Algebra I EOC	Pearson Correlation Sig. (two-tailed) <i>N</i>	-.044 * .038 2,184

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Communication Arts MAP test (CA MAP)

Percentage of students scoring Advanced or Proficient (A/P %)

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the third-grade Communication Arts MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,356) = -.081, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.6% of the variability in the third-grade Communication Arts MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the fourth-grade Communication Arts MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,350) = -.085, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.7% of the variability in the fourth-grade Communication Arts MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the fifth-grade Communication Arts MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,350) = -.089, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.8% of the variability in the fifth-grade Communication Arts MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the eighth-grade Communication Arts MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,347) = -.065, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.4% of the variability in the eighth-grade Communication Arts MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the English II EOC test within the school district among elementary

and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,134) = -.089, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.8% of the variability in the English II EOC test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the third-grade Math MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,360) = -.092, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.8% of the variability in the third-grade Math MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the fourth-grade Math MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,355) = -.051, p < .05$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.3% of the variability in the fourth-grade Math MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the fifth-grade Math MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,345) = -.050, p < .05$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.3% of the variability in the third-grade Math MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the eighth-grade Math MAP test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,304) = -.076, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.6% of the variability in the eighth-grade Math MAP test.

There was statistically significant correlation between the homeless percentage of a school district and the Algebra I EOC test within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,183) = -.044, p < .05$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 0.2% of the variability in the Algebra EOC test.

Research Question 4

What is the predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement?

Null Hypothesis 4

There will be no statistically significant predictable power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement. This null hypothesis was rejected.

For table 5 and table 6 the descriptive statistics of the homeless population include the following: $M = 15.0995, SD = 6.06148, N = 86$. The descriptive statistics of the free and reduced lunch percentage were as follows: $M = 64.7570, SD = 14.46744, N = 86$.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the third-grade Communications Art MAP test included these: $M = 53.5850, SD = 19.24440, N = 2,358$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.720. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a variance inflation factor (VIF) of 1.006.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fourth-grade Communications Art MAP test included the following: $M = 55.4133, SD = 19.23460, N = 2,352$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-

Watson value of 1.652. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.008.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fifth-grade Communications Art MAP test included these: $M = 54.8218$, $SD = 15.38021$, $N = 2,351$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.444. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.006.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the eighth-grade Communications Art MAP test included the following: $M = 55.4133$, $SD = 15.38021$, $N = 2,351$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.618. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.006.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the English II EOC test included these: $M = 70.1787$, $SD = 14.39902$, $N = 2,135$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.456. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.000.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the third-grade Math MAP test included these: $M = 50.0661$, $SD = 17.68670$, $N = 2,362$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.837. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.006.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fourth-grade Math MAP test were as follows: $M = 46.5944$, $SD = 18.23655$, $N = 2,357$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.386. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.008.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the fifth-grade Math MAP test included the following: $M = 42.8071$, $SD = 25.07201$, $N = 2,346$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.240. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.006.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the eighth-grade Math MAP test were as follows: $M = 30.6827$, $SD = 20.56553$, $N = 2,306$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.559. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.005.

The descriptive statistics of the advanced and proficient percentage for the Algebra 1 EOC test included the following: $M = 54.7271$, $SD = 19.82184$, $N = 2,184$. The data met the assumption of independent errors with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.742. The scatterplot was visually inspected for linear relationship between the variables. There was also no multicollinearity with a VIF of 1.001.

Table 5

*Multiple Regression Research Question 4- Elementary Grades
Regression-Coefficients*

<u>3rd Grade Communication Arts MAP test</u>					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	70.322	.9.221		7.627	.000
F/R L %	-0.420	.118	-.359	-3.551	.001
Homeless %	.371	.283	.133	1.314	.193
<u>4th Grade Communication Arts MAP test</u>					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	89.980	8.779		10.249	.000
F/R L %	-.592	.111	-.512	-5.345	.000
Homeless %	-.018	.281	-.006	-.065	.948
<u>5th Grade C Communication Arts MAP test</u>					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	88.204	8.089		10.905	.000
F/R L%	-.614	.104	-.544	-5.908	.000
Homeless %	.116	.248	-.043	.466	.642
<u>3rd Gr. Math MAP test</u>					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	60.351	9.255		6.521	.000
F/R L%	-.376	.119	-.318	-3.167	.002
Homeless %	.669	.284	.237	2.358	.021
<u>4th Gr. Math MAP test</u>					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	62.872	8.662		7.258	.000
F/R L%	-.399	.109	-.366	-3.651	.000
Homeless %	.598	.277	.216	2.156	.034
<u>5th Gr. Math MAP test</u>					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	72.329	9.834		7.355	.000
F/R L%	-.484	.126	-.388	-3.833	.000
Homeless %	-.253	.301	-.085	-.841	.403

Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage (F/R L%)

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the third-grade communication arts MAP test, $F(2,85 = 7.579)$, $p = .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .154$. The two variables added statistical significance to the prediction,

$p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5. The formula was student achievement = $-.42*(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .371(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement whereas homeless percentage was not.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the fourth-grade communication arts MAP test, $F(2,83 = 14.363)$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .262$. The two variables added statistical significance to the prediction, $p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5. The formula was student achievement = $-.592*(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .018(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement whereas homeless percentage was not.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the fifth-grade communication arts MAP test, $F(2,85 = 17.888)$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .284$. The two variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5. The formula was student achievement = $-.614*(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .116(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement whereas homeless percentage was not.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the third-grade Math MAP test, $F(2,85 = 8.430)$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .169$. The two variables added statistical significance to the prediction, $p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5. The formula was student achievement = $-.376*(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .669(\text{homeless$

percentage). Free and reduced lunch percentage and homeless percentage were statistically significant in predicting student achievement.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the fourth-grade Math MAP test, $F(2,83 = 9.752)$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .194$. The two variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5. The formula was student achievement = $-.399 * (\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .598(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage and homeless percentage were statistically significant in predicting student achievement.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the fifth-grade Math MAP test, $F(2,85 = 7.493)$, $p = .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .153$. The two variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .001$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5. The formula was student achievement = $-.484 * (\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + -.253(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement whereas homeless percentage was not.

Table 6

*Multiple Regression Research Question 4 – Secondary Grades
Regression-Coefficients*

8 th Grade Communication Arts MAP test					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	60.020	15.019		3.996	.000
F/R L%	-.131	.193	-.074	-.677	.500
Homeless %	.242	.460	.058	.525	.601
English II EOC Test					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	112.944	7.585		14.890	.000
F/R L%	-.576	.091	-.586	-6.325	.000
Homeless %	-.723	.325	-.206	-2.226	.029
8th Gr. Math MAP test					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	33.276	10.163		3.274	.002
F/R L%	-.170	.131	-.142	-1.300	.197
Homeless %	.135	.312	.047	.431	.667
Algebra 1 EOC test					
Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	92.837	9.965		9.317	.000
F/R L%	-.591	.121	-.495	-4.897	.000
Homeless %	-.544	.431	-.128	-1.264	.210

Free and Reduced Lunch percentage (F/R L%)

The multiple regression model showed there was no statistically significant predictors for student achievement for the eighth-grade communication arts MAP test, $F(2,85 = .397)$, $p = .500$, adjusted $R^2 = .009$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 6. The formula was student achievement = $-.131 * (\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .242 * (\text{homeless percentage})$. Neither free and reduced lunch percentage nor homeless percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the English II EOC test, $F(2,73 = 22.695)$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .390$. The two variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 6. The formula was student achievement = $-.576 *(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + -.723(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage and homeless percentage were statistically significant in predicting student achievement.

The multiple regression model showed there was no statistically significant predictors for student achievement for the eighth-grade Math MAP test, $F(2,84 = .985)$, $p = .197$, adjusted $R^2 = .023$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 6. The formula was student achievement = $-.170*(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + .135(\text{homeless percentage})$. Neither free and reduced lunch percentage nor homeless percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement.

The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted student achievement for the Algebra EOC test, $F(2,74 = 12.968)$, $p < .001$, adjusted. $R^2 = .244$. The two variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .001$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 6. The formula was student achievement = $-.591 *(\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + -.544(\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement whereas homeless percentage was not.

Summary

The statistical analysis and findings of this study exploring the relationship between socioeconomic rate, minority population, and homeless rate with student

achievement in Missouri school districts from 2014-2018 were presented in this chapter.

Four null hypotheses were tested:

- H₀1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district. This null hypothesis was rejected.
- H₀2. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the minority population in a district. This null hypothesis was rejected.
- H₀3. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district. This null hypothesis was rejected.
- H₀4. There will be no statistically significant predictable power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement. This null hypothesis was rejected.

Statistical significance was noted for at least a portion of every null hypothesis. Information and insight were gained regarding the relationships between homelessness, socioeconomic rate, minority population, and student achievement. Chapter Five includes conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the analyzed data. This chapter will also include implications for the future of education.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This research began with the realization the number of homeless students in the state of Missouri had grown more than 400% over the last 15 years (DESE, 2018). Homeless students often times struggle to meet the requirements of modern day schools due to various issues (Masten et al., 2015). One of the largest issues these students face is dealing with the trauma of not having a house to call their own. The day-to-day dealing with their lack of permanent housing while also trying to navigate schools creates a struggle for students (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012; Yeager & Bennett, 2012).

The state of Missouri had collected data from data points on minority population, homeless population, free and reduced lunch rate, and socioeconomic status. However, the research did not exist to compare these various data points and the relationship the data had with one another. This research attempted to close that gap and compare the various data points with each other to see what relationships existed between them.

Chapter Five will present the purpose of the study, a summary of methods, a summary of the findings by each individual research question, the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the data, and recommendations based on findings. Through the course of this project, the goal has been to make connections between homelessness, socioeconomic status, minority population, and student achievement. This study accumulated data from the DESE Website for 5 school years (2014-2018). The study attempted to identify relationships between the aforementioned variables.

Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between homelessness and socioeconomic status, minority population, and educational achievement in the state of Missouri. This was a quantitative study to examine what, if any, relationships there were between homeless rates, achievement rates, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. This study will assist school leaders in determining the needs of their students that are deemed homeless. The study will help administrators meet student needs based on the characteristics that are most indicative of homelessness. Administrators can then use this information to implement programs to best assist their homeless students.

Summary of Methods

After receiving Research Review Board (RRB) approval on February 28, 2019, a list of school districts in Missouri was generated using the DESE Web site. The researcher then deleted all charter schools from the list. Next the researcher gathered data points for the following demographic data points: homeless population, total district enrollment, free and reduced lunch rate (used for socioeconomic status), and minority population percentage for each of the minorities included on the DESE Web site (Asian, Asian Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, Indian, Multiracial, and Pacific Islander). Also data were gathered on the percent of a school district's enrollment that scored advanced or proficient on the following tests: third-grade Communication Arts MAP, fourth-grade Communications Arts MAP, fifth-grade Communication Arts MAP, eighth-grade Communication Arts MAP and English II EOC, and third-grade Math MAP, fourth-grade Math MAP, fifth-grade Math MAP, eighth-grade Math MAP and Algebra I EOC.

After being organized into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, the data were uploaded into the SPSS program to be analyzed. There are basic assumptions needed to run Pearson's r : Each variable should be continuous and each set of variables must have a related pair; in the case of this research there was a related pair for each of the relationships. The variables for this study included homeless population and socioeconomic rate, homeless population and minority population, homeless population, and achievement rate. Every school that was used in this study had a value for each of the relationships measured. Another assumption needed to run Pearson's r was the absence of outliers. Outliers were determined by being less than 3.29 standard deviations from the mean. Pearson's r did not assume normality between the variables. The final assumption needed to run Pearson's r is linearity; when the scatterplot is created the dots should create a line when connected from left to right (Statistics Solutions, 2013). The data were first run with a Pearson's r , then multiple regression was run. Once the data were run through SPSS they were analyzed and the results were interpreted.

Research Questions

The research focused on four research questions. The research questions and null hypotheses are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and socioeconomic rate in a district?
2. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and a district's minority population?
3. What is the relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district?

4. What is the predictive power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement?

Null Hypotheses

- H₀1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district.
- H₀2. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and the minority population in a district.
- H₀3. There will be no statistically relevant relationship between the percent of homeless students and achievement rate in a district.
- H₀4. There will be no statistically significant predictable power of socioeconomic status and homeless rates on student achievement.

Procedural and Data Issues

Once the data were collected and organized into a Microsoft Excel document the data they were then run through the SPSS software. Upon analyzing the results of the SPSS software output it became apparent much of the demographic data were clustered together toward the bottom or top of the range depending on the category. In the category of homeless population there were 2,573 data points collected, 2,456 (95.45%) of them were reported as 10% or less. In the category of the percent of Asian students enrolled, only 39 (1.52%) data points out of 2,573 were reported above 5%. For the population of Black students enrolled, 1,073 (41.71%) of the data points collected in the category were reported at less than 10%. For the category of students who were Hispanic, 1,450 (56.35%) of the data points collected were under 10%. For the category of Indian population in the school district, 2,565 (99.69%) data points collected out of the 2,573

total were reported as less than 10% population. Very similar to the Indian population, districts reported the multiracial category in a similar pattern: 2,563 out of 2,573 (99.61%) data points reported less than 10% of their population to be multiracial. The lack of variability in these categories limited the r value in the relationships using these categories.

Summary of Findings

When examining the relationship between the percent of homeless students and the socioeconomic rate in a district, there was statistically significant correlation between homeless percentage of a school district and the free and reduced lunch rate within the school district among elementary and secondary schools in 2014-2018, $r(2,569) = .115, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 1.3% of the variability in the free and lunch rate. Significance was expected when the researcher began this project. Based on personal observation while working in schools in Missouri, typically students who are homeless also utilize the free and reduced lunch program. The significance was affected by using the total population of the schools. With such a large sample size one could expect to find significance. With homeless percentage statistically explaining only 1.3% of the variability, it is likely other variables that were not accounted for also had an effect.

The data above support the research of Baker et al. (2016) and Montgomery et al. (2017), who reported often times homeless who were classified as short-term homeless found themselves that way due to a lack of employment. When interviewed, 70% of homeless had passive income; however, it was often not enough to support permanent housing. The homeless who were employed equaled 14.4%; even though they had active

employment it was still lower than the amount needed for permanent housing (Montgomery et al., 2017).

The data also supported the findings of additional research, which stated socioeconomic difficulty was associated with higher risk for homelessness. Those who found themselves in a lower income bracket had a greater chance of being homeless (Brown et al., 2016). Additionally, research done by Mojtabai (2005) and Tessler, Rosenheck, and Gamache (2001) labeled socioeconomic disadvantage as the number one reason for homelessness in America.

When comparing the relationship between a district's homeless population and minority rate the Black population had the most significant relationship with homelessness in schools from the years 2014-2018, $r(1306) = .278, p < .001$. Homeless percentage statistically explained 7.7% of the variability in the Black population percentage. These data were not what the researcher expected to find when starting this research. From personal experience from working in schools the researcher expected more minority groups would have a similar relationship with the homeless population rather than only Black.

The 7.7% variability within the Black population is an area of concern for this researcher. These numbers lend themselves to suggest discrimination is more prevalent in the state of Missouri than this researcher realized. It is assumed by this researcher that there is discrimination against the Black population happening in the lower income housing market, specifically in the larger cities. This data could be further investigated to see how the larger cities of Missouri compared to the rural areas of the state.

This data supported the research published by the NAEH (2016) and Jones (2016), which stated 64.7% of the chronically homeless population was Black, while only 28% was White. The research also included the fact a Black family was 7 times more likely to end up in a homeless shelter than a White family. While the homeless shelters are predominantly populated with Black people, the Latino/Hispanic population is typically unsheltered. In 2016 the rate of unsheltered Hispanics grew by 35% (Jones, 2016). These results were additionally supported by the research done by Morton et al. (2017).

The NAEH has not once mentioned race in any of the reports it has published, yet the AHAR published by HUD does mention the percentage of populations who are homeless. Research done by Jones (2016) noted not taking race into account when dealing with homelessness would be justified, assuming there is no discrimination against minorities in modern day society. However, as noted by Frey (2014), many cities in America continue to be racially segregated and therefore taking race into account when dealing with homelessness is absolutely necessary.

While examining the predictive power of socioeconomic and homeless rates on student achievement, the variables had the most predictive power on the fifth-grade Math MAP test, $F(2,85 = 7.579)$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .154$. The two variables added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .001$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 4. The formula was student achievement = $-.484 * (\text{free and reduced lunch percentage}) + -.253 * (\text{homeless percentage})$. Free and reduced lunch percentage was statistically significant in predicting student achievement whereas homeless percentage was not.

This research supported the research conducted by Masten et al. (2015), and the NCFH (2011), which stated homeless students are 4 times more likely to exhibit delays when compared to their nonhomeless peers. The research also stated 52% of homeless students were behind in reading and 57% were behind in math. Pavlakis et al. (2017) also noted homelessness has one of the biggest impacts on student achievement, second only to attendance rate.

Homeless students kindergarten through eighth grade have been documented to have lower grade point average, test scores, and absenteeism when entering high school compared to their nonhomeless peers (Uretsky & Stone, 2016). While this can be tied to homelessness, Tobin (2016) argued the greater impact of low grade point average and test scores is the low attendance rate. Tobin, however, did acknowledge students who are homeless typically have a lower attendance rate.

Research done by Rumberger (2015) echoed the fact that while homelessness is detrimental to a student the bigger issue is student mobility. Rumberger argued a student who is homeless can still find academic success when their educational environment is consistent. The most recent update of the McKinney-Vento Act attempts to support this type of research by abolishing the residency requirements for homeless students (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

Educational Implications

This quantitative study did find statistically significant relationships in all three of the research question topics that were tested with a Pearson's r ; homelessness and socioeconomic rate, homelessness and minority population, and homelessness and achievement rate. There was also statistically significant predictable power of

socioeconomic and homeless rates on student achievement, tested with multiple regressions. Although there were statistically significant relationships in all these areas the relationships were low. This could be due to the fact there was limited range in the data collected from across the state of Missouri in the categories that were analyzed.

School leaders are tasked with creating learning environments for students from all walks of life to flourish in the educational environment. The information gained from this study helps administrators focus on students who display characteristics of individuals who may not achieve as highly as their peers. Administrators could use this information to implement programs to help identify struggling students earlier in their education career.

The expansion of the McKinney-Vento Act over the years has helped identify more students who qualify as homeless (National Center for Homeless Education [NCHE], 2017). The expanding definition and the fact the United State government tied federal dollars through the Title I funds (NCHE, n.d.) to homeless students has increased the number of homeless most schools have counted over the last 15 years (DESE, 2018). Although these students are now identified on a more consistent basis, there was not any research identifying relationships between the various data points (homeless, minority population, socioeconomic status, and student achievement). This research identified those relationships with hopes school districts can now not only identify homeless students but now begin to make data-informed decisions on how to best service these students.

Administrators and teachers alike can use this information to justify greater urgency in paying more attention to the students who are labeled as homeless in their

schools and classrooms respectively. This research gives educators the information needed to justify spending more time and resources on homeless students in order to create equal access to the educational opportunities of their nonhomeless peers. When intentionally spending time and resources on homeless students, schools can help the homeless students work their way through Maslow's hierarchy and become more successful.

School districts could use the knowledge gained in this study to not only justify the time and resources spent on homeless students, but also begin to identify students who exhibited similar qualities as those deemed homeless by the McKinney-Vento Act. Armed with the information gained in this study schools could broaden the programming they would implement with homeless students to include students who are on the free lunch program, who have a low attendance rate, or a combination of the two in order to help more students than just the homeless students. This information could help districts close the achievement gap between students who fall in these categories and those who do not.

Students in foster care are one of the largest groups of students who are serviced by the expansion of the McKinney-Vento Act under the Every Student Succeeds Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). With this legislation students in foster care no longer have to jump school to school when their location is changed. They can now maintain placement in their home school even if their current family does not live in the district where they are attending. Foster students, although not covered under the traditional definition of homeless, often times exhibit the same tendencies as a homeless

student. Therefore districts should take special consideration of this group of students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

The findings in this research are consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which was the theoretical framework for this study. Administrators could take the information gained from this study and present it to staff and begin to offer professional development in how to best teach students from a homeless background. Administrators could then help teachers identify the students in their classrooms who are labeled as homeless and help them make a plan on how to best reach each of these students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Building on this study, the next phase of research could include study that attempts to gain access to identifying students who are labeled as homeless. The review of literature in this study highlighted the need for homeless students to have interventions at school in order to help them in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It has been noted the difficulty of accounting for homeless people because of the embarrassment and shame that comes with the stigma of being homeless.

Consequently, a future study may look at exact students who are labeled homeless, in order to see how they perform day in and day out and on standardized tests. This could be challenging for a researcher to accomplish due to the difficulty of identifying homeless individuals. It would be the recommendation of this researcher for future researchers to attempt to make contact with all parents in a school to let them know of your intent to conduct research and ask for permission to gain access to their child's educational record. The researcher believes if the communication was worded in a way to

show compassion and willingness to help the students, there would be a greater response and the possibility of gaining access to the educational records would increase.

Additionally, expanding the exams analyzed could also increase the knowledge base for how students perform in school as a whole. This research used the third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade MAP tests for the subjects of English and Math, as well as the EOC test for Algebra I and English II. Researchers could also include the following tests: sixth- and seventh-grade English MAP and English I EOC; sixth- and seventh-grade math MAP and Geometry and Algebra II EOC; and fifth- and eighth-grade Science MAP, Biology I, and Physical Science EOC, as well as the American History and Government EOC. Expanding past the tests that were used would give a more well rounded approach of making decisions about students and their educational performance.

One group most recently included in the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless students was students in foster care. Additional research that could be beneficial to school leaders would be to identify students who are in foster care, and compare their achievement rate to other students who fall within the McKinney-Vento homeless definition, as well as compare them to students who do not fall within McKinney-Vento. This information could help school leaders be better prepared for students who are in foster care.

In addition to examining students' educational performance it would be interesting to link in students' extracurricular involvement to see what impact those activities have on homeless students' performance in the classroom. The sense of belonging that comes with being part of a group or team would possibly help a student progress through Maslow's hierarchy of needs more quickly. Also the skills that are

often acquired by those involved in an extracurricular activity are skills that are not easily taught in the classroom. Skills that could be gained from being in extracurricular would include time management, leadership, interpersonal, and communication skills. All of these skills could help students perform better in the educational setting. Seeing if there is a tie between homeless students involved in extracurricular activities and their academic achievement may help school districts make better informed decisions about programs to help students succeed.

As trauma-informed schools become one of the latest educational focuses a researcher could expand on this research and analyze how the professional development with trauma-informed schools affects the performance of homeless students in the schools. Using information from schools that have been through trauma-informed training and comparing to those schools that have not yet been through trauma-informed training could expand this research by comparing the same data that were gathered during this research between the two types of schools. Often times students who are dealing with homeless will fall on the trauma spectrum. Dill (2015) noted it is best to treat homeless students as students who have been impacted by great trauma.

Summary

As the definition of homelessness has changed over recent years the focus on educating homeless students has become more prevalent (NCHE, 2017). Understanding what homeless students endure will make it easier for educators to meet those students where they are and create programs that will support the education of all students in the district. Based on this research districts need to identify these students at an early age and begin to help these students feel safe and secure; this will help the students progress into

the upper levels of Maslow's hierarchy at an earlier age. Once the student is able to progress into the advanced stages of the hierarchy the student is more likely to increase their educational performance.

The results of this research match the needs outlined in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which was the theoretical framework of this study. The base level of the hierarchy is the physiological needs, which are followed by the needs of safety and security. A school meeting these needs is imperative for a homeless student to find success within their school; without these a student will struggle to continue through the levels of the hierarchy (Perkins, 2016). Once a student has met the first two levels of the hierarchy they then are ready to progress to the need of belonging. Helping a student become connected to the school or a group at school can help the student progress through this level as well (Rose et al., 2016).

After the first three levels of Maslow's hierarchy are met a student will begin to look to meet their self-esteem needs, then they will strive to meet their self-actualization needs. When a student progresses into these top two levels of the hierarchy the student is more prepared to learn (Perkins, 2016). With the information offered through this research schools will better be able to identify the students who would most benefit from programming to help students progress through the hierarchy.

This research attempted to identify relationships between key data points that DESE already gathered but had not analyzed against each other. It was the intention of the researcher to give school leaders information that would be helpful to create programs that would benefit all students in the district. The information gathered in this study

outlined data schools need to be aware of in order to best service students from homeless backgrounds.

Since these data are now identified school leaders can take this information and offer professional development to the teachers and staff on how to best educate all students who enter a district in order to give the best education to all students.

Additionally, future research has been outlined that will help add to the knowledge base on how to best service students from a homeless background. Administrators and teachers can take the knowledge gained from this research and not only use it to help educate the homeless students, but also help educate the students who exhibit similar characteristics.

Administrators and teachers alike can use this information to better understand the students who walk the halls of the schools where they work. Often times these students can blend in, and then progress through the educational infrastructure and never have appropriate services offered to them. Hopefully, this information will help not only identify homeless students but also service the students who are identified with the best education possible.

Although this research did not explicitly connect homelessness to poor student achievement, it did outline certain categories indicative of students who have poor academic performance (Black minority students and students in the free and reduced lunch program). This research paired with prior studies' findings (Cowen, 2017; Pavlakis et al., 2017; Tobin, 2016) can be very beneficial for school districts to initiate programming that will increase student achievement. It would be the recommendation of this researcher to not only concentrate on homeless students but also identify the students

who perform closely to the homeless students, and initiate programs to help all of those students.

There is no one program that will benefit every student but when districts are aware of key indicators educators can be better prepared to teach the homeless students along with their nonhomeless counterparts. The more prepared a school is to educate students from all walks of life the better the school will perform as a whole. These students have the ability to overcome their circumstances outside of school. Districts and educators just need the tools to make it happen.

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