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Effects of McKinney Vento Act of 1987 with Homeless Students in Mississippi

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

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Denetra Jackson – Kendrick

EdS, Walden University 2014

MPPA, Jackson State University 2010

BS, Jackson State University 2004

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Services for students who are homeless allow students and their families to deal with

their living situation psychologically and offer them resources need to succeed

educationally. The purpose of this research was to examine how services to homeless

students in one area of Mississippi inform policy makers of the needs that are addressed

with the McKinney Vento Act. The McKinney Vento Act was passed to benefit homeless

students because they deserve the same quality of education, transportation to and from

school, access to meals as well as various needed academic support as those that are not

homeless. Being homeless places this vulnerable population at a disadvantage so

offering additional allied services allows them to succeed at school and to assist with

solving their housing situations.   The primary research question focused on what

outcomes were evident with the implementation of services being provided to homeless

students. A qualitative study was conducted with semi structured interviews with shelter

personnel who work with the homeless students and their parents. Data indicated that

parents or shelter personnel were not aware of transportation, meals and medical care

included within the grant. Overall, there should be more training and awareness, as many

aspects of the McKinney Vento Act provisions are unnoticed and unused. Greater

knowledge will empower parents to take full advantage of all available services offered

by of the act. Positive social change is possible if policymakers are aware of the plight of

families as they create policies and procedures that will improve the lives of those who

are most vulnerable in the community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving son, Zion, for being my main motivation for completing this chapter in my life. You have inspired me to be a better person and a better mother. There were many times during this journey when I wanted to give up, times when I was exhausted, times when I was stressed, and times when I just did not think I could do it. But then I would think of you, and I would know that I had to keep going. I wanted to show you that anything is possible if you set your mind to it and that hard work and determination can pay off. I am so proud of the young man you are becoming. You are everything I could ever hope for in a son. I know you will accomplish great things in your life. I can't wait to see what the future holds for you. I love you more than words can say.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, brother, sister – in – love, nieces, and best friend for being my constant PUSH and motivator for standing in the gap in ways that not only aided me in the completion of this dissertation, but in life as well you guys are my biggest supporters. To my parents, thank you for always believing in me and encouraging me to follow my dreams. You have taught me the importance of hard work, perseverance, and never giving up. To my brother, sister – in – love, and nieces, thank you for always being there for me, no matter what. You have made me laugh when I wanted to cry, and you have always been there to pick me up when I have fallen. To my best friend, thank you for being my level mind through this entire journey. You have always been there to support me no matter what.

I am extremely grateful and blessed to have each of you in my life. I thank God for blessing Zion and I with each of you as being a primary part of our lives. There is no possible way that I could ever repay you, but from the bottom my heart, I love you.

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I would like to thank my Dissertation Chair for guiding me through this process and keeping me grounded and on track. My family, friends and coworkers played an instrumental role in keeping me focused and guiding me in the right direction to complete this process. They kept me focused on my goals and ensured that I maintained a sense of motivation to continue this path. I am sincerely grateful for each of you, and I could not have done it without any of you and I glad to have each of you in my life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Homeless students make up a large population of Jackson Public Schools in

Jackson, Mississippi. Students are considered homeless if they do not have permanent

adequate housing. The U.S. Department of Education passed the McKinney Vento

Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act (MCKV) in 1987 and it was

reauthorized in 2001 to aid in dealing with the homeless problem across the USA. The

McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act is a federal

law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children

and youth and provides federal funding to states for the purpose of supporting counseling

that serve homeless students (Nix-Hodes 2014). However, it has been criticized

(Canfield & Teasley, 2015; Miller, 2001) for being aspirational rather than practical and

for being an "unfunded mandate" (Julianelle & Foscarinis, 2003, p. 46). There has been

an extensive amount of literature that examines the overall effectiveness of the Act as

well as its provisions. There has been discussion of how to improve the Act at the federal

or state level, but very little regarding improvement at the school or district level

(Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). Taking this into consideration, many educators

were unaware of the Act and how to implement it effectively and with best practices in

schools.

Background

Homeless children can often be victims of abuse, neglect, and mental health

problems, but they can also face barriers that almost prevent them from academic and

emotional success without additional systemic support (Buckneret et al., 1999; Gewirtz et al., 2008; Swick, 2008); U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Due to the challenges of homelessness, students can be at an academic and social disadvantage compared to their peers.

If service delivery at the Local Education Agency (LEA) level is to be improved, educators should be provided with methods to improve teacher effectiveness and knowledge of best practices for homeless students. Professional development opportunities have proven to be effective and beneficial, especially when coordinated with other teachers and with an emphasis on collaboration, problem solving and student support (Wells, 2014). Teachers were presented with professional development presentations that discussed legal requirements, classroom interventions, and best practices for supporting homeless students and families to support teachers learn and lead to better performance and implementation of the law in the classroom ultimately lead to better outcomes for individual students in the school. Experienced teachers in the school building and classroom can improve student performance by providing them with the resources and necessities they need to stay in school and thrive academically. In addition, building stronger bonds between students and teachers can improve overall school attachment and have a major impact on students' social and emotional functioning at school (Bradley's Aviles, 2008).

As early as 1997, Stronge indicated the need for a comprehensive evaluation to empirically determine which homeless programs improve the educational experience of homeless students. However, there was no evidence that Stronge's proposal was included

in the bill. Similarly, Anderson et al., (1995) found that while local counties received grants to support various services for homeless students, the educational impact of this program was unknown. His influence remains unknown. Markward and Biros (2001) commented: "No empirical attempt has been made to determine how well these activities work. Without this information, neither policy makers nor practitioners can accurately predict which intervention strategies will work best." (p. 184). A decade ago, scholars worried about whether Congressional efforts to improve education for homeless children were having an impact. A decade later, this problem is still unresolved.

I began this evaluation of the program's pedagogical effectiveness by searching the ProQuest, ERIC, EBSCOHOST, and SAGE databases available in the Walden Libraries. To supplement this research, I used keywords related to the definition and growth of homelessness in the United States, demographic changes in the homeless population, and the causes and consequences of homelessness. During my research, I found that there is no published literature with an empirical assessment of whether MCKV improves the learning experience of homeless students. This study is the first step in evaluating the educational effectiveness of MCKV.

Many scholars believed that the number of homeless people in the United States is increasing (Jackson, 2007). Additionally, much of the increase in homelessness in recent years could be attributed to households, particularly those headed by single mothers. The increase in the number of families and mothers among the homeless has led to an increase in the number of homeless school-age children (Toro et al., 1998). The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE; 1997) reported that the number of homeless

children and youth doubled between 1991 and 1993. Nuñez and Collignon (1997) reported that homelessness among a subset of school-age children in the population was the fastest growing segment of that population. Duffield (2001) reported that approximately 1.35 million children in the United States are homeless. Jozefowicz-Simbeni and Israel (2006) found that 900,000 children and young people are homeless every year. This awareness convinced Congress that the education of homeless children had become a major national issue.

Before the Johnson administration in 1963, homelessness was not a federal government concern. With the advent of the Great Society programs, more social scientists began to investigate homelessness, who identified a wide range of issues impacted by homelessness. As research on homelessness increased, the nature and demographics of the homeless have become more clearly defined. In addition, the causes and consequences of homelessness were increasingly becoming the focus of research. This intensive scientific analysis raised awareness that many school-age children were homeless (Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2003; Julianelle & Foscarinis, 2003; Swick, 2006). Researchers found that many of these homeless children did not attend school regularly or, in some cases, did not attend school at all.

Mobility, the movement of students from one school to another (Heinlein & Shinn, 2000; Nuñez, 2001), and the bureaucratic complications involved in enrolling and attending new schools when children do not have a curriculum are two factors that have contributed to discouraging school attendance. These two main factors have discouraged students from enrolling. They resulted in two important mandates in the 2001 Program

Act. Government support for homeless education is declining. The National Coalition for the Homeless (2007) found that "the percentage of the US budget devoted to grants for the homeless has fallen by 28% since 1995. (par.2)" This study provided perhaps the first direct empirical assessment of the impact of MCKV on education in the United States.

The general phenomenon of homelessness has been the subject of much study for many years. Rossi (1989) provided an excellent first quantitative study linking rapid increases in rents to increases in homelessness. Anderson (2003) noted that the amount of homelessness literature at the time was almost out of control. Since then, many other publications have been published and there is now extensive documentation on the causes and consequences of homelessness. This extensive literature can be roughly divided into two main categories: causes of homelessness and consequences of homelessness. However, after extensive literature research, I found no peer-reviewed empirical studies evaluating whether the program, particularly the secondary grant component of MCKV, improves the learning experience of homeless children.

Several researchers (Attles et al., 1997) have addressed a related issue, namely the pedagogical challenges faced by highly mobile students. There were many possible reasons that the program has not been thoroughly researched. First, the target group of the program was very diverse and includes children from kindergarten to 12th grade. Some children were permanently homeless, some were only once or briefly homeless, and others were episodic. These large differences in age, duration, quality, and type of homelessness experience complicated the collection and analysis of homelessness data.

The second reason for the limited and serious study of the program related to the difficult process of assessing the impact of national legislation on geographically and culturally diverse populations. The unique needs of homeless students in a large inner-city community were very different from those of homeless students in Mississippi. Sometimes a program that works in one type of community is nearly useless in another. Perhaps a program like MCKV, which is a state and federal program with uniform national requirements, could only be effectively evaluated by location, area by area, and culture group by culture group.

A third challenge for MCKV assessment is that it was difficult to obtain documents relating academic achievement and homelessness. In two recent theses researchers evaluated the required processes of the program, but no study evaluated the educational effectiveness of the grant component of the program. Rosenfeld (2003) described the extent to which homeless youth in New Jersey were identified and enrolled in public schools. Hayes-Whigham (2006) examined the extent to which the Dallas Independent School District implemented the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001. Both dissertations assessed MCKV processes but not academic outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Reviewing the current literature on homeless students in school districts, I concluded that homeless students have not received adequate mentoring or counseling services. The Jackson Public School District in Jackson, Mississippi did not have previous statistics to track the success of these services for its homeless students.

Homelessness is not an issue that many students like to announce or address. Counseling is a way to aid them in dealing with problems that can be one of the reasons why they do not do well in college.

The teacher-student relationship plays an important role in improving the situation of our homeless students (Chow, 2014). Homeless and highly mobile students performed worse in reading and mathematics in Grades 2 to 7 than students living in poverty (Obradović et al., 2009). In addition, homeless students were less likely to continue their post-secondary education compared to their peers (Rafferty et al., 2004). Counselors were asked to provide supportive services and interventions, including individual counseling, instructional counseling, school counseling, support and consultation with outside agencies, and parent support.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), "The number of homeless families increased by 20 per cent between 2007 and 2010, and families now make up a much higher percentage of the homeless population than ever before" (HUD 2010, p 9). A December 2013 study found that in most school districts, more than half of homeless students who needed assistance were not receiving services. Very little research has been done on the educational and emotional issues faced by homeless students to resolve them. There was also very little research into whether school counselors had received adequate training for homeless students.

Markos (2003) indicated that children may struggle with the trauma that homelessness can bring and with new adjustments to living among strangers. These homeless students lived with relatives, family friends, in hotels or dormitories with total

strangers. The resulting problems could lead to more serious psychosocial problems.

Counselors understood these adaptive responses were more likely to build a trusting

relationship with the child (Markos, 2003). In general, homeless youth were often shy

and withdrawn, felt isolated and disconnected from school, and often felt stigmatized and

alienated from their classmates (Yamaguchi et al., 1997).

According to the Coalition for the Homeless, several studies had been conducted

over the past decade, all of which indicate that homeless children and youth suffered at

the school level. "In almost all studies, homeless children underperformed their homeless,

poor peers" (Coalition for the Homeless 2009, p. 1). The purpose of my research was to

determine whether homeless students were receiving adequate counseling and

educational services under the provisions of the MCKV. I examined their psychological

factors as well as several educational variables that include rising scores, secondary

perspectives, and learning skills and opportunities.

MCKV is the largest and most comprehensive federal homeless education law

passed by Congress. It was designed to enhance the educational experience of homeless

children. The program established mandated that every state must follow. This included

creating coordinators statewide to oversee services for homeless students, as well as

coordinators with similar responsibilities within each LEA. The types of services

permitted under the program are described in Chapter 3. The program also provided

limited funds to assist states fulfill these mandates. These federal funds were awarded to

the states and then distributed by the states through LEA grants issue.

No peer-reviewed empirical studies have been conducted to assess whether these leading programs have met their educational goals. The need for evaluation has long been recognized and expressed (Anderson et al., 1995; Markward and Biros, 2001; Stronge, 1997). It was critical to evaluation, planning, and budget allocation that Congress, education officials, and budget planners have information that this important education program was meeting its goals. The processes and services required for the program were assessed (Hayes-Whigham, 2006; Rosenfeld, 2003), including special transportation requirements, ease of enrollment, and the overall program goal of improving student attendance (Julianelle & Foscarini, 2003). However, no performance rating of the program was reported.

Purpose of the Study

My goal in this study was to explore and understand homeless children and how they experience formal and informal school outcomes. Homeless students were considered homeless if they lack adequate permanent housing. The units of analysis of this study were homeless children. I also measured the performance of homeless students after they received services. In the study, we analyzed the students' contributions for improvements and positive changes.

In this study, I used the theoretical traditions of qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis is conducted to make sense of or understand a phenomenon rather than predicting or explaining it. Qualitative research is "an umbrella term for a set of interpretive techniques aimed at describing, deciphering, translating, and otherwise accepting the meaning rather than the frequency of some more or less natural

phenomenon in the social world (Creswell, 2009)". Qualitative researchers investigate meaning that people have constructed and how people understand their world and their experiences of the world (Merriam, 2016). Qualitative researchers built build theory based on observations and intuitive understanding gained in the field. Information from interviews, observations, or documents are combined and organized into broader themes as the researcher moves from the specific to the general. Typically, insights derived inductively from qualitative research data take the form of themes, categories, typologies, concepts, initial hypotheses, and even theories about a particular aspect of practice (Merriam, 2016).

Central Research Questions

The overall research question for my research was: What are the outcomes of implementing pertinent changes to MCKV with homeless students? The subquestion that I used to address the primary research question was: What outcomes were evident with the implementation of services being provided to homeless students?

Theoretical Framework

The growing complexity of social systems has rendered traditional political interventions ineffective for a variety of problems. This includes measures enacted for the purpose of assisting homeless children. The complexity and limitations have led to the search for a more efficient approach to complex problems. One such approach is Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory, which looks at complex problems from a systems perspective to understand and manipulate their components to achieve desired outcomes (Harvey and Jones, 2022).

I examined how elements of the MCKV program addressed the changing needs of homeless students. CAS has been used in many studies to analyze the interactions between system components. Fidan and Balcı (2017) examined the analogies between schools and complex adaptive systems and identified school management strategies as CAS. I assumed that homeless student services are a complex adaptive system enshrined in the MCKV Act. Therefore, I used CAS to diagnose the MCKV Act's shortcomings and strengths in serving homeless students, and to propose policy adjustments that met changing needs.

The theory of CAS has become a popular research area in recent years because it can be used to solve complex problems whose individual components are often difficult to define or manipulate (Gomersall, 2018). According to CAS theory, CAS were made up of many interconnected components that interacted, leading to behaviors and outcomes that could not be predicted or explained by superficial cause-and-effect relationships (Gomersall, 2018).The theoretical approach on which the program was based assumed that placing homeless students in a school with better physical and emotional health and more effective support services would improve their academic performance.

Nature of the Study

The character of this study was qualitative. It included qualitative textual procedures and semi structured interviews with parents and shelter staff. When examining services it says: "Children affected by homelessness faced high rates of abuse, neglect, and mental health problems, as well as barriers that made it nearly impossible for

them to be academically and emotionally successful without additional systemic support (Buckner et al..1999, p.258).

In an ethnographic approach, data are collected through field research. Ethnographic research has a central and guiding assumption that any group of people who interacted with each other over a period will develop a culture (Patton, 2002). Homelessness is often viewed as a culture by society. Without proper educational intervention, homeless children may become homeless as adults, turn to prostitution for sustenance, or become pregnant at an early age (Attles, 1997). Educators made sure homeless students do not succumb to their culture. The ethnographic approach allowed me to visit shelters and interact with homeless students hoping to prevent them from becoming a permanent product of their culture.

I collected qualitative data through semi structured interviews with parents and staff at a homeless shelter. I only indicate the gender of the participants and the age range of the students, no personal identification methods were considered or used. I asked parents if they feel their children had benefited from the changes introduced by the law.

The qualitative sample for the face-to-face interview consisted of 13 parents and shelter staff from the total population of parents and shelter staff. Approval from the school district administrator was obtained and a consent form was signed. The study took place in the homeless shelter where the students live. Participants answered questions about their perceptions of obstacles to law and order in schools and shelters. I recorded the audio and made notes of the interviews for later analysis.

Interviews consisted of three open-ended questions followed by three sub questions. Participants discussed how public policies affected students' ability to receive education and housing services within the school district. The interview data were used to determine the percentage of students who encountered barriers related to public policy and gain an in-depth understanding of the barriers faced by young people. I broke down each question by topics related to education, stability and services.

Qualitative data required manual rewriting of qualitative data on related topics. I used Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel to organize the qualitative data. I compiled questions to compare data for final analysis and conclusions.

Definitions

Homelessness: individual who lacks adequate housing (Caplow et.al 1968)

Homeless youth: An individual aged 16 to 24 years who does not have family support, is unaccompanied and being homeless or in a shelter (Burt, 2001)

McKinney Vento Act: ensure that each homeless child or youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. (Foscarinis 2007)

Assumptions

I assumed that the data used in the qualitative portion of this study and obtained from the Jackson Public School District were of high quality. This assumption meant that the tests were performed correctly, the tests were adequately protected before administration, and the data was adequately protected after administration. I also

assumed, but did not otherwise verify, that the information obtained was a valid indicator of the homeless population in the Jackson Public School District.

Scope

The scope of this study included all the homeless and normally housed students in Jackson Public School District who participated in study were from the 2022 to 2023 school year.

Delimitations of the Study

Due to the large number of potential participants in the study population, the study included interviews with parents and shelter personnel. Those interviewed in this study were delimited to parents and shelter personnel.

In this study, I did not cover Grades Pre-K to Grade 11. I did not consider states other than Mississippi and considered only the high school seniors in Jackson, Mississippi who participated in the test. A further delimitation of the study was my choice accommodate a random selection process. In this study, I conducted an evaluation of the subgrant component of the MCKV that has been implemented among homeless students in Jackson, MS.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations to this survey existed because many participants may choose not to answer and complete the questionnaires. Limitations to this study included where the selected participants decide to participate of not.

Initial discussions with national and state officials familiar with efforts to provide educational services to homeless students led me to conclude that while this study is

valid, it has some limitations. While this study was large, involving more than 20,000 Mississippi high school students, about 5,000 of whom were homeless, it was limited to 450 homeless seniors from Jackson Public Schools (JPS). I was not sure whether a large study conducted in a single state would justify a generalization from a particular state to the entire USA. Mississippi is a different state. There were large, rich, urban counties and small, rural, poor counties. The educational needs of students were very diverse, ranging from elementary school through university to high school. It is unclear whether a consistent approach could be applied to the K-12 grades. I was unsure whether program assessment at the secondary level, as in this study, could be reliably extended to elementary or junior high school. situations. It was impossible to find a good estimate of the percentage of homeless JPS students who never attend school. A full program evaluation was required. This first study examined the impact of homeless and normally resident high school students at Jackson Public was just the beginning.

Significance

Homeless students are often afraid of not being accepted in their new environment. Being able to stay at their home school meant less stress and one less problem to face as a student. It also reduces their ability to be less effective at school.

According to the USDA (2004):

Changing schools significantly impedes a student's academic and social growth. The literature on highly mobile students indicates that it can take a student four to six months to recover academically after changing schools. Highly mobile students have also been found to have lower test scores and overall academic

performance than peers who do not change schools. Therefore, the MCKV calls

for LEAs to maintain students in their schools of origin to the extent feasible.

 (p. 14)

My goal for this study was to demonstrate the positive impact that the

implementation of service changes through the MCKV should have for homeless

students. As already mentioned, many students do not receive the statutory benefits. If

students do not have the financial means to afford further training services or if they

could take part in various advisory services, they were not exempt from making use of

these services. The law provided that arrangements should be made to enable homeless

students to have access to these services, whether provided on school premises and/or at

their place of residence, if they were staying in a transitional home.

According to the National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty, two

common myths about homelessness prevented organizations from providing assistance.

These included the myth that providing services will cause homeless people to migrate to

the region from across the country and the myth that homeless people will remain

homeless for long periods of time. Homeless people did not usually stay homeless for

long. 40% report being homeless for less than 6 months and 70% report being homeless

for less than 2 years (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2002).

In this study, I sought to improve practice by ensuring that schools have adopted a

common practice of providing counseling and tutoring services to their homeless

students. There have been many studies in the past that have produced numbers that

barely scratch the surface of the problem at hand. Many Americans know that

homelessness is a problem in their school district, but few know the stories behind this phenomenon. By assisting readers to understand and relate to homeless children, I hope to encourage a deeper examination of the services provided to homeless students in their school district. One purpose of this study was to examine the value of the MCKV in assisting the homeless and thereby strengthening current homelessness policies.

Summary

MCKV is the leading federal initiative addressing the educational needs of homeless children in the US (Hayes, 2006). The effectiveness of this program in improving the educational experience of homeless students has never been empirically verified by experts. This study was a first step in determining the value of the program. This study is divided into five chapters as follows: Chapter 1 includes a general introduction to the research, problem definition, scope, research question, and definition of research terms and limitations. Chapter 2 includes a detailed overview of the relevant literature on the MCKV directive. Chapter 3 includes a presentation of the study design and methodology, and validity risks. Chapter 4 includes a description of the method used to determine the selected sample, the procedures used, and the instrument used to collect the data. Data analysis, interpretation and discussion of the results are also presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 contains a summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study, as well as implications for societal change, limitations and limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The success of the students is the main goal of the teachers. However, in addition to student ability, there are many other factors that influence student performance. In early 2011 school districts across the USA were seeing increasing numbers of homeless children and youth enrolled in their schools and districts. In 2011, the number of children and young people in the United States was reported as homeless doubled in count from previous years. Schools increased nearly 91% (National Center for Homeless Education Data 2011). Homeless students face adverse conditions that threaten their future (Curtis, 2006). One of the factors that leads to student homelessness is poverty (Tobin, 2016). Homeless students live in poverty and their parents are unable to meet their basic needs (Havlik, 2017). The prevalence of high levels of stress and anxiety among homeless students further affects their mental health and prevents them from fully focusing on their studies (Champagne, 2014). This negatively affects their academic success. A key concern for teachers is to reach students at a level that enhances their learning and mental goals. It is the responsibility of district leaders, policy makers and teachers to provide the best possible educational opportunity for homeless and non-homeless students.

Homelessness in general has increased every year since the economic downturn began in 2008 (Annual Homelessness Annual Report, 2014). HUDS Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) for Congress estimated that 549,928 people were homeless each night in 2016 (AHAR, 2016). Of these, approximately 194,716 were

homeless households, accounted for more than a third of the total homeless population in the United States.

Homeless students are less likely to seek or receive support services such as counseling and mentoring than their non-homeless peers. The lack of such services affects their academic merit, graduation rates, and future success (Champagne, 2014). Overall, this could further impact their employment opportunities, professional success, and overall health. Taxpayers could incur mental health and public safety costs, as well as long-term revenue losses, if problems related to homelessness are not addressed in a timely manner (Banguma & Oketcho, 2010). Student homelessness must be addressed to secure their adult lives as it not only affects academic performance but also undermines social and economic well-being.

The plight of student homelessness in the USA was a non-state challenge until the enactment of the MCKV. The law included a number of programs that coordinate multiple agencies dealing with emergency shelter, transitional housing, primary health care, job training, education and permanent housing. Hendricks and Barkley (2012) stated that MCKV had been amended several times since 1988 to meet the changing needs of homeless children and to tighten regulations.

Knowledge of the impact of full deployment of MCKV is limited. There has been extensive research on homeless students, largely due to research into homelessness in the public education system, which includes government funds that were distributed to various school districts. Much published work (Aviles & Helfrich 2004) focused on academics and the reasons students become homeless. Buckner (2008) provided valuable

insight into dealing with homelessness, it provided limited research into the implementation of counseling and teaching services for homeless students.

A wider societal problem is that homeless students appear to be less likely to seek or receive support services. They do not use these services, which could affect their GPA and overall success in the future (Champagne, 2014). Overall, it could have negative consequences for individuals in terms of employment opportunities, professional success, and general health. Ultimately, taxpayers could incur mental health and public safety costs and lost revenue (Banguma & Oketcho, 2010).

My goal in this literature review was to review the literature on homeless college students using various homeless services offered in public schools across the United States. Many of the services offered included counselling, mentoring, housing and various enrichment services. This study also included some reflections on positive postgraduate outcomes for a homeless student when the law is effectively applied. Finally, as I to describe the theory within the homeless, I summarized the possible implications of providing all aspects of the deed.

Literature Search Strategy

The sources that I selected for the literature review had a direct link to the MCKV. I also took other factors into account when selecting sources. These included the impact of homelessness on student achievement and the need to address the current problem.

I used the following databases for the literature search: ProQuest, ERIC, EBSCOHOST and SAGE databases. Sources of information included peer-reviewed

journal articles, books, government statistics, theses and dissertations. Inclusion and exclusion were considered during the research process to ensure that only relevant and pertinent sources were selected for the study. For example, during the research process, all literature that did not address the impact of MCKV services on homeless students was deleted.

I began by establishing a literature review component outline and used the following keywords and search terms: *homelessness*, *homelessness in education*, *homelessness and counseling services*, *homelessness and tutorial services*, *counseling students*, *tutorial services in education*, *teenager*, *teen youth*, *counseling therapy*, *psychotherapy*, *academic, adolescent*, *young adults in education*, *grade school counseling*, *educating our homeless youth*, *education school and homeless educational outlook*, *tutoring homeless*, *McKinney Vento*, *secondary education of homeless*, *counseling homeless students*, *mental outlook on education*, *psychological factors in education*, *psychological factors in homeless students*, *homeless graduation*, *homeless mental health*, *student performance*, *homeless student performance*, *educational counseling in homeless*, *educational tutoring in homeless students*, *adolescent homeless tutoring*, *adolescent in tutoring education*, and *adolescent tutorial*.

I focused my search on the definition and growth of homelessness in the USA, the changing demographics of the homeless population, and the causes and consequences of homelessness as it related to MCKV. However, I found no assessment in any of these searches to determine whether MCKV had improved the educational experience of homeless students.

In addition to the systematic literature search regarding the program, I held conversations about MCKV and the components of the program with individuals who were arguably the most knowledgeable. These experts included school counselors and homeless shelter personnel. These conversations confirmed the lack of full usefulness of MCKV and did not provide useful insights into my literature review.

No published reports exist that assess the educational effectiveness of MCKV. However, a large amount of scholarly literature related to homelessness, including numerous studies discussing the problem of educating homeless students, had been published. This literature had documented a wide variety of studies and theory regarding the causes and consequences of homelessness, but the specific variables used in this study have not previously been defined in the literature.

Theoretical Basis

Schneider and Ingram (1997) argued that the social constructions of populations influence the political agenda. Politics embeds itself in political transactions and constructs the objects and agents of government (Ingram, 1997). Law and order must be analyzed as a political achievement and as a force that influences political actors, organizes political agreements, and structures political relationships (Ingram, 1997). In the context of homeless students, I used target group theory to analyze how sector policies serve the interests of important stakeholders.

One such approach was CAS theory, which can be used to examine complex problems from a systems perspective to better understand and manipulate system

components to achieve desired outcomes (Harvey and Jones, 2022). I used CAS to better understand the delivery of services to homeless students.

The growing complexity of social systems renders traditional political interventions ineffective for many problems. This also includes measures aimed at homeless children. The complexity and limitations have led to the search for a more efficient approach to complex problems.

I examined how elements of MCKV activities could meet the changing needs of homeless students. CAS has been used in many studies to analyze the interactions between system components. Fidan and Balci (2017) examined the analogies between schools and CAS and identified school management strategies as CAS. Similarly, I assumed that homeless student services were a CAS enshrined in the MCKV. I used CAS to assess MCKV's shortcomings and strengths in serving homeless students and propose policy adjustments that met changing needs.

CAS had become a popular research area in recent years due to its usefulness in solving complex problems with components that were difficult to define or manipulate. The theory states that CAS had interdependent components that interacted, leading to behaviors and outcomes that could not be predicted or explained by superficial cause-and-effect relationships (Gomersall, 2018). CAS, also known as complexity science (Harvey and Jones, 2022), is an interdisciplinary approach that applies physical and mathematical models to understand behavior in a multicomponent system resulting from component interactions, feedback loops, and other processes.

The basic principles of CAS include self-organization, emergence, and adaptation. Self-organization is the spontaneous emergence of order out of chaos. With CAS, system components could self-organize to achieve an optimal outcome (Edwards, 2020). On the other hand, emergence is the idea that individual components work together to produce effects that are not visible in the individual (Lane, 2009). Rather, homeless students are the result of collective behavior. Finally, adaptation refers to the system's ability to adapt to external stresses or environmental changes. CAS suggests that these processes could be used to understand complex systems and enable interventions with desired outcomes. Adaptability is essential to the policies that guide the delivery of services to homeless students.

Political regulation of homeless services present complications. The complexity increase even more when the system are designed to solve the problem of homeless students. Homeless students demonstrate significant maladaptive behaviors and negative coping skills because of their unique life experiences and exposure to environmental stress (Harvey & Jones, 2022). Maladaptive behavior makes it difficult to understand and engage in study material or extracurricular activities. This could widen the education gap between homeless students and their peers. A lack of support and access to educational resources could worsen already poor academic performance. Therefore, meeting the educational needs of homeless students could be a daunting factor in providing other services to homeless students. Factors to consider are their social and economic background, their lifestyle, and the support they may need.

Given the complexities of providing appropriate services to homeless students, CAS theories were a practical framework for understanding MCKV. The law considers the diverse educational needs of homeless students. As mentioned above, the law contains several programs under nine titles, aimed at different government agencies and stakeholders to address the needs of homeless students (Preiser et al., 2018). The law also applies to local governments, educational institutions, federal agencies, and other organizations that provided services to homeless students. The nine-title report includes a complex scenario for the use of political regulation to meet the diverse needs of students. I used CAS to decode the intricacies of the MCKV Act and how it could be used to provide services to homeless students.

The literature included descriptions of those environmental factors that affect academic performance and the mental and physical well-being of homeless students and their families. I used this theory to understand how CAS components interact and how they affect performance. Edwards (2020) argued that the theory describes how physical and mathematical models are supportive in representing relationships In the last step, interventions in the system were defined and implemented; it was done through programs and policies tailored to the specific needs of homeless students, such as providing support and resources to assist them thrive academically and personally.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables

The key variables of this study included identifying educational needs in respects to educating homeless students. I also focused on aspects of policies in place that outlined procedures in place to aid in the educating of homeless students. I examined the

existing literature to provide insight to current homeless policy as it was related to actual services provided in the MCKV.

Challenges Facing Homeless Students

The provision of basic programs such as information services for homeless students was largely under-researched. Wood et al. (1990) and Bassuk and Rosenberg (1990) concluded that preschool-age children raised in homeless families experienced greater developmental delays than their home-based peers. About 15% of the homeless children experienced one or more developmental delays, significantly more than the children living there. Homeless children also suffered from language delays and inappropriate social behavior; Challenges hurt the academic performance of homeless students.

MCKV created a liaison office for homeless students in each district, with some large boroughs having a liaison office in each school. Schools were required by law to aid with immediate enrollment with no paperwork, free meals, school supplies, tuition waivers, and transportation. However, it did not specify how schools would be responsible for expanding these services. This lack of clarity led some to call the bill "ambitious legislation" due to a lack of enforceable laws and regulations, a lack of specific ways for school districts to identify children and families in need of services, and a lack of accountability. to find out how school districts provided services. Experienced education professionals could act as advocates for students and families to ensure they have access to the services they need to stay in school and thrive in school. Educators were in a unique position to aid their schools meet the needs of homeless students and

families. Teachers often have the most contact with students outside of their parents, which allowed them to identify changes that might indicate housing insecurity or assist in MCKV-related care. However, many school staff were still unaware of the existence of the MCKV or its specific regulations (Miller, 2011). Greater awareness was particularly needed if psychologists and others were to work effectively with homeless students. They should be familiar with the latest research and issues related to the implementation of homeless services in schools.

MCKV services were provided in a manner that conforms to the guidelines for implementing special education services, including placing students in mainstream schools. Saxberg (2011) believes that the building manager lays the foundation for the successful implementation of good practice in caring for homeless families and students. Writing from the school principal's perspective, she advocated additional training and institute days to educate teachers about the special needs and services that need to be met or provided to homeless students. This top-down leadership had both advantages and disadvantages, but it turns out that raising awareness remained one of the most popular strategies in the literature.

Liaison often filled multiple roles in a district and few focus solely on the MCKV. Therefore, it was best practice for the liaison role to be a staff member's primary role and not a secondary role so that due diligence can be exercised to meet the needs of homeless students and families, particularly in schools or colleges. Researchers (Chow et al., 2015) noted that teachers were often not involved in policies and decisions about service delivery. They based their service delivery model on an ecological framework and

suggest that since teachers were often the most directly involved with children during the school day, they were best placed to make important connections with homeless students and implement social, emotional, and academic actions. Despite these best practice recommendations, there were still several systematic barriers to MCKV implementation.

Segal (2010) defined policy enforcement as the putting of laws into practice; However, the reality was much more complex than the application of the rules. This section reviewed the literature on policy implementation, particularly regarding education legislation. The focus was on the way researchers designed the implementation of policies and research methodologies around the topic, rather than the outcomes.

Legislation had goals and intended consequences, and the way in which legislation was implemented in practice reflected how the problem is conceptualized (Spillane et al., 2002). Furthermore, the importance of policy intent depended on how the problem was conceptualized and perceived (Spillane et al., 2002). Reflection and understanding of the problem influenced the goals of public policies and the way they were implemented (Spillane, 2000). The successful implementation of policies depended on the coherence between the objectives and the understanding of policy makers (Lundin, 2007). Different approaches to understanding and formulating goals could influence policy intentions and the way legislation is implemented. For school social workers, understanding both politics and homelessness will inform the delivery of services to support homeless school-age children and youth.

Two distinct approaches emerged in the policy implementation literature. The initial work, conceptualization and implementation of policies was expected to follow a

top-down approach, with the agency creating policies based on perceived needs of the region (Barrett et al., 2004). Top-down approaches relied on entrenched traditional structures that existed between systems to achieve policy goals (Honig, 2006). This sets clear policy goals and objectives but gave law enforcement no say in deciding the goals of the legislation (Harris, 2007). The opposite of this approach was the bottom-up approach, where participants could influence policy goals (Harris, 2007). Greater granularity was achieved where customizations could be made for individual systems, a comprehensive policy that covered multiple service areas, but was difficult due to the varying needs in different locations. Both approaches offered advantages and disadvantages in implementation, but both emphasized that policy implementation was a process in which systems interacted with each other to achieve the intended goal (Barrett, (2004).

Because of high housing and educational mobility, homeless children and youth were more likely to experience extraordinary difficulties in achieving academic and social achievement (Jensen, 2009). The challenges faced by this traditionally marginalized group put them at high risk of losing access to stability and educational opportunities (Wynne et al., 2014). Research shows that children and young people who were homeless and highly mobile were more likely to fail in school.

A longitudinal study conducted at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis among preschool children showed that "early childhood exposure to poverty had a significant impact on brain development later in school" (Luby et al., 2013) .Their study found that the effects of poverty appeared to affect areas of the brain involved in

emotional processing and memory, which could have long-term effects on children's psychosocial and academic outcomes (Luby et al., 2013).

Homeless children and young people often faced stressful life events related to their transition lifestyle, such as school mobility, absenteeism from school, poor grades or dropping out (Cunningham, 2014; Hendricks & Barkley, 2012). A lack of residential stability and a lack of security in permanent housing have a lasting effect on the socio-emotional functioning of homeless children and adolescents as well as on their school performance (Masten, 2013; Samuels et al.2010;). The MCKV was designed to provide homeless students with the same access to educational services and academic stability as students living in stable housing (Wynne et al., 2014). Research showed that children with high mobility rates had poorer social and academic outcomes than children living in stable households (Masten, 2013; Samuels et al., 2010).

Counseling Homeless Students

Counseling for homeless students was an area that has not been well researched. The research did not provide information on whether homeless students received or were offered counseling services. Subsequent studies by Wood et al. (1990) and Bassuk and Rosenburg (1990) showed that homeless preschoolers experienced greater developmental delays than their homeless peers. Wood and his colleagues found that 15% of homeless children had one developmental delay, while 9% had two or more, which is significantly more than the children who live there. Language and social behavior were identified as areas with significant weaknesses. These significant weaknesses were factors that explain the decline in homelessness education.

Previous qualitative research indicated that school counselors were the first line of defense and support for homeless students. Daniels (1992) argued that counseling interventions were provided to consciously respond to the expressed needs of at-risk youth and to aid them in fulfilling their human potential. Before starting a counseling measure, however, it was important to establish a trusting and respectful relationship with homeless young people and their parents. Clear communication and relationship building assisted to break down communication barriers that may arise from feelings of shame or resentment about the homelessness situation. Daniels (1992) went on to say that building positive, trusting relationships with these young people tends to encourage a greater willingness to share their feelings and concerns openly and honestly about their life situation. Their willingness to assist was great, but many said they were unwilling to support homeless students. Their challenge was to identify and meet their needs and to be able to rely on a positive cooperation with experienced professionals in this field.

To date, there has been little research on school counsellors' knowledge of the McKinney Vento Act and the educational and emotional issues faced by homeless students and the provision of services to these students (Gaenzie, 2012). It's also unclear if they received training aimed at the homeless. According to reports, 77% of the homeless population live in urban areas (Henry & Sermons, 2010); Perhaps school counselors in city schools were handling more cases and more requests for services from homeless students. Examining the knowledge of school counselors, the services they provide, and the experiences of homeless students would assist to better target school-wide service delivery to this group of students.

Counselors need to be more aware of the emotional and educational needs of homeless students in order to provide them with long-term psychological support. School counselors recognized that homelessness could have a profound impact on the entire child, including intellectual, physical, socio-emotional, and academic development. Adolescent homelessness could also impair neurocognitive functioning and academic performance, and lead to an increased likelihood of negative childhood experiences such as trauma and abuse (Edidin et. al., 2012). Almost 75% of homeless students dropped out of school before completing secondary school (Abdul Rahman et. al., 2015). It was often said that it is the counselor's job to identify and work with students' strengths and weaknesses. They worked with community stakeholders to enlist community support, remove barriers to academic success, and implement positive and flexible prevention and intervention programs for homeless children.

An exploratory study was conducted to examine how school counselors perceive homeless students. Using the KHSS (Knowledge and Skills with Homeless Students) survey (Gaenzle & Bryan, 2013), this study included responses from school counselors to the portion of the survey asking them to describe academic, personal/social, and planning needs. These areas were selected based on the three areas of student development according to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (ASCA, 2012). They found that counselors tend to work more closely with homeless people and cater to their specific needs. The counselors' perspective provided a broader perspective that enabled schools to better reach out to students in need.

Homelessness affected the well-being of many students; because they were unable to provide proper guidance to that student, these students' childhood and adulthood were more likely to be affected. Homeless students should have received counseling to ensure they were in good mental health and could have a positive impact on their learning (Havlik, 2017). Homeless students without psychological support may face difficult living conditions in the future (Daniels, 1994). Counseling provided students with excellent mental health, which translated into better academic performance (Daniels, 1994). The implementation of counseling could increase the chances of improving life and educational opportunities in school.

Home Environment vs. Academic Achievement of Homeless Students

Informal instruction took place after the student had left the classroom. Homeless students faced problems related to an unstable home environment. Informal education could take place at home, in libraries, museums or anywhere where students acquire new or previously learned information. According to Jeffs and Smith (2011), informal education was motivated by conversation and being with others, spending time with people and sharing experiences.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds could not afford to study at home. It was possible that actual school learning was not extended to the home environment. Homeless students would not benefit from tutoring services for students with permanent housing due to the unique challenges they face at home. The same services were not available to homeless students. After-school programs such as ambulance and disability support would not be available to students at risk of homelessness. Masten et al. (2015)

found that homeless students were likely to perform worse than their peers on grades and test scores. They were much more likely to experience delays in communication and in social and emotional development (Haskett et al., 2016; Tobin, 2016).

Homeless students faced emotional and behavioral difficulties (Fantuzzo et. al., 2012; Obradovic et al., 2009). Homeless students attended school irregularly, which prevents them from accessing the same academic services as their permanently home-based peers (Hicks-Coolick et al., 2003). Absences lead to learning delays, poor school performance and increased learning difficulties.

In summary, homelessness policies provided homeless students with holistic support to meet all of their emotional and physiological needs. Health professionals and other stakeholders needed to recognize the complex relationship between academic achievement, mental health, physiological needs and other challenges faced by homeless people. The MCKV had several provisions that tutors could use to improve these services. However, the success of these challenges depended on conceptualizing the challenges and being able to break down each component. The environment of homeless students as a complex adaptive system MCKV led many federal agencies and departments in responding to the complexities of homeless students.

Homeless Students' Environment as a Complex Adaptive System

This section examined the analogies between the MCKV law and CAS. Complex systems theories required that health care providers who care for homeless students develop strategies that were compatible with the changing student environment. The law changes anticipated the unpredictability and volatility of the homeless student experience.

In the years 1988-1994 this policy underwent many changes according to the current needs of the homeless. Recent changes in the learning environment, new diseases, drugs, addictions, and technological changes were creating unpredictable problems in the delivery of services to homeless students. Second, the homeless student came from an environment with many unforeseen challenges. Therefore, a school environment where student learning was hampered by an unstable home environment is tantamount to a complex system riddled with uncertainty. Daft (2016) found that natural systems like schools did not behave like ordered machines; They involved rather unpredictable challenges, making them part of complex adaptive systems. Fidan and Balci (2017) found that organizations were open systems operating under the influence of unpredictable factors; These factors were both internal and external.

The school environment was self-organizing, which was equivalent to a complex adaptive system. However, the hierarchical school structure could become resistant to dynamic adaptive systems. In the school environment, educators and trainers must have the necessary skills to address the complex issues of homelessness among students in the school environment. Furthermore, Carroll and Burton (2000) posited that the complex functions of adaptive systems can optimize their performance when operating as interconnected networks with interdependent components. Systems function freely as independent components, often on the brink of chaos. The environment in which homeless students learn depended on the interaction between its components and how they optimize in times of order or disorder. However, an ideal learning environment could not function in a situation of instability and chaos; Schools were designed to

function in an orderly system. In many cases, administrators culturally tend to observe in conventional ways; They had limited flexibility in the unpredictable situations that typify the problems of homeless children.

However, their constant scenarios in which schools face uncertainty could only be manipulated through sound expertise. In such scenarios, the school system should rely on the expertise of its stakeholders, members, and administrators to anticipate future scenarios related to homeless students. However, does MCKV offer software for the insecurity in the learning environment of homeless students?

An important aspect of managing a complex system was analyzing changes in the environment and modeling possible scenarios based on the data gathered from the analysis. Homeless students faced many technological, social, economic, and emotional trends that came and go. Trends were volatile, unpredictable, and difficult to manipulate. For example, enrolling in a program for homeless students and the teaching skills required to address the dynamics of students enrolled in programs are unpredictable. Therefore, educators needed skills to analyze the environment and use the information to create scenarios that work in unsafe conditions. The ability to analyze the environment required that actors have up-to-date skills that match those needs. The need to adapt the school environment to the changing needs of society should also formed the basis for policy adjustments; whether MCKV directs emergency services and homeless education, or whether it equipped administrators with advanced skills to analyze and model possible factor scenarios affecting homeless students.

In addition to the analysis, Simmons et. al., (2007) suggested that administrators could manipulate the system environment. If the scan was successful, manipulation was possible. Data obtained from environmental scans should form the basis for proactive responses to changing conditions in the external environment. However, manipulating the external environment could prove more difficult than internal changes. Large organizations could change the environmental conditions that make students homeless or undermine the impact of MCKV services. Fidan and Öztürk (2015) suggested that stakeholders could increase certain activities or services, improve others, or abandon those that undermine the efficiency of the system. Within the framework of the MCKV, system-compliant regulations could be addressed through changes, additions, modifications, or the replacement of some programs with more responsive programs. At the school level, administrators could use the concepts of emergence to influence new, more adaptive structures in the school environment.

Central to CAS is MCKV's ability to alleviate many, if not most, of the common challenges faced by homeless students in school settings. MCKV prioritized nine core programs related to educating homeless students in school settings. For example, Title VI of the Act authorized health services for the homeless, including mental health, and Title VII authorized education for homeless students. The services fell under the Departments of Health, Education and Social Services. However, psychological stability and access to quality educational services depended on the effectiveness of other services under other policy headings. Psychological coercion results, for example, from bad news services; this indicated a weakness in other legislative provisions. Likewise, homeless students'

lacked access to educational services may be due to other hotline restrictions, substandard transitional housing, or the ineffectiveness of other government regulations.

The relationship between primary care, the school environment, and MCKV programs interacted in a manner typical of complex adaptive systems. However, the weaknesses of the MCKV system increased the unpredictability of various phenomena in the provision of services to homeless students. In the following sections, empirical evidence on the challenges faced by homeless students and poor academic standards (characterized by poor access, poor performance and problematic student behavior in MCKV programs) will explained the limitations of the system.

Conceptualizing the living and learning environment of homeless students as a complex adaptive system made it easier to dissect the meaning of MCKV to the various stakeholders included in the law. In the literature review section, the school environment was conceptualized as a complex system with interconnected elements; The components included the human aspect (teachers, administrators, policy makers, government agencies and students) on the one hand and MCKV programs on the other. Interactions between school leaders and complex and sensitive issues required political intervention; If school administrators were to provide feedback or information in support of policy changes, they need a training program based on the same principles.

Recent research has used secondary data to highlight the strengths and limitations of MCKV in the context of homeless college students in some US states. The CAS theory assumptions discussed in the Literature section will be served as a guide for policy

critique and served as a basis for policy adjustments to meet the changing needs of homeless students.

Summary and Conclusions

The MCKV defined homeless as a person that doesn't have access to a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. They were forced to live in areas that are not conducive to their mental health and general well-being. Homelessness is a multifaceted problem that has given rise to a variety of opinions. However, general agreement across the political spectrum has widely accepted that homelessness is a serious national problem, especially for homeless preschool and school-age children. Politicians also agreed that it is difficult to precisely determined the number of individuals who are homeless, but all political persuasions would agree that the number of homeless school-age children is too large.

Counseling homeless students was one of the solutions to the existing problem of homeless students. Counseling homeless students prevented them from developing mental health illness that hurts their educational performance. Counseling enhanced the chances of having a positive mindset that gave them hope of having a better tomorrow. Tutoring homeless students was a remedy to the existing problem. Many homeless students did not have access to education materials because of poverty. Offering the students tutoring services ensured that they can be competitive and have better education performance.

More research is needed to understand further and address the effects that utilization of services has on homeless students. The problems that they face were often

bigger than their living status themselves. The USDE assisted to improve equality in

education for all students. In many cases, homeless students are often left in the wind.

Beginning that structured interview was the purpose of this study. Chapter 3

explains the research method of the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the methods that I used to collect and analyze data. The first section of the chapter includes an overview of the research design, including the research questions, the population and sample, and the data collection methods. The second section of the chapter includes a description of the data analysis methods I used to code and analyze the data. The third section includes a discussion of the ethical considerations for conducting this research with parents and shelter personnel about homeless students.

The purpose of my study was to analyze and gain a clear understanding of the children that experience homelessness and how they experienced formal and informal educational outcomes. Homeless students were considered homeless if they did not have permanent adequate housing. The units of analysis for this study were the children that were experiencing homelessness. I also measured the outcomes of homeless students after the services were received. I investigated post analysis of the students in a matter of improvements and positive changes.

In this chapter, I review my rationale for using a qualitative approach and provided support for the method selected. I present my role as the researcher, data sources, population, data collection, analysis of the data, and ethical assurances. Results from this study were used by the school district to gain a better understanding of the needs of their homeless student population which included a critical aspect of effectively serving these students. Understanding these needs and the effectiveness of the services

offered to homeless students in the district informed this district and others regarding which ways to best serve students who were experiencing homelessness.

Research Design and Rationale

In this study, I examined a growing, urban school district, and the research investigated the following question: What outcomes were evident with the implementation of services being provided to homeless students?

I used a qualitative research approach to understand the research population's experiences based on the insights provided by the participants. Wilson (1998) argued that qualitative research is research that seeks not only to understand the world but also to understand what the world is through the eyes of the participants. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) confirmed that qualitative research referred to multiple research strategies that shared common characteristics. They also pointed out that the data collected by the researcher is considered "soft," that is, rich in descriptions of people, places and conversations and could not be easily processed by statistical methods. In this study, I aimed to bring homeless students' school experiences to life.

Qualitative research is used to connect with the participants to understand their life experiences related to homelessness. Creswell (2007) argued that qualitative research is appropriate when there is a problem to be investigated. In this study, I wanted to understand how parents and home staff serve homeless children and how they perceived the educational support that the federal government provided through McKinney Vento. Devers and Frankel (2000) stated that qualitative research methods have made great strides over the years as researchers developed the disciplines and processes needed to

move from research questions to actual results. In addition, they stated that qualitative researchers should indicate their study locations, studies, topics, and data collection methods.

Role of the Researcher

During this research, I served as the collector and analyzer of the data, and I was a neutral, non-participant in the research setting. As such, my own biases were less likely to influence the findings of the study. Creswell (2018) states that the role of the observer in research is to collect data about the participants in a study without interfering with their behavior and are observers are either covert or overt. Covert observers are not known to the participants that they were being observed, while overt observers are known to the participants (Creswell, 2018). The observer role is an important part of many different types of research, including qualitative research and quantitative research. Observers provide valuable data about the participants in a study, and they ensure that the study was conducted in a fair and unbiased manner.

I had no personal or professional relationship with the participants. I was in no way in a supervisory or instructor relationship with the participants or their parents or legal guardians. I had no direct or indirect power over the participants that were involved in this study.

Researcher biases and power relationships are managed in several ways. Wilson (1998) suggests that one way is to be aware of one's own biases and to take steps to mitigate them by conducting a self-reflection exercise, talking to a trusted colleague, or seeking professional support. Another way I managed biases and power relationships was

using a variety of research methods. By doing this, I ensured that the findings of the study were not biased by any one method. Finally, it was important to be transparent about the research process and I made sure the participants were aware of their rights. This can build trust between the researcher and the participants and to ensure that the participants were not exploited.

Methodology

In this study, I considered only the high school seniors in Jackson, Mississippi. A further delimitation of the study was my choice accommodate a random selection process. In this study, I conducted an evaluation of the subgrant component of the MCKV that had been implemented among homeless students in Mississippi.

A sampling strategy was planned for selecting a subset of a population to be studied. My strategy was to select a sample that was representative of the population, so that the findings from the study could be generalized to the population. For this study I used systematic sampling. In systematic sampling, every kth member of the population is selected, where k is a constant. This was a good option when the population is large, and it is not possible to list all the members.

Participant Selection Criteria

Participants were selected based on them being classified as homeless parents, the second group are classified as shelter personnel. Students were classified as homeless during their enrollment process which in fact documents their parents. They were classified as homeless under the MCKV if they lacked a fixed, regular, and adequate

nighttime residence. Participants were known to meet the criteria based on school records that verified their living status.

I determined the number of participants in a study using several factors, including the size of the population being studied, the desired level of precision, and the cost and time available to collect data. In general, the larger the sample size, the more precise the findings will be. However, there is a point of diminishing returns, where increasing the sample size does not significantly improve the precision of the findings.

The qualitative sample for the face-to-face interviews consisted of 10 parents and 3 shelter personnel from a total population of parents and shelter personnel. Based upon the total population of homeless students, I used systematic sampling due to the large population but also used to ensure an accurate representation of all homeless students.

Participants were identified based on their living status being determined based on registration data. I contacted participants via email, phone, and /or personal visit to the specified shelter where the students were housed. I recruited participants by providing them with more information about the study, answering their questions, and making them feel comfortable about participating, an overall breakdown of the study, potential intent in addition to meeting the inclusion criteria for the study.

In qualitative research, saturation is the point at which no new information is being gained from additional participants. This means that the sample size is large enough to capture the diversity of experiences among the population being studied (Creswell, 2018). The sample size varies depending on the diversity of the population

being studied, the complexity of the research question, and the research methods being used (see Appendix A: Invitation Email to Participate in research study).

Instrumentation

For this research I conducted semi structured interviews. I created and generated the interviews based on the criteria that I was addressing. There were no prior documents to represent the source of data that was addressed within this study. The interviews contained three open-ended questions, followed by three sub questions. I determined the proportion of students who experienced public policy obstacles and examined an in-depth understanding of the obstacles encountered by youth. Participants answered questions concerning their perceptions about public policy obstacles at the schools as well as the shelters. Participants explained how public policies affected students' ability to gain an education and stable accommodations services within the school district (Appendix B: Sample list of Initial Semi structured Interview Questions).

There are several ways to establish content validity. One way is to have a panel of experts review the test items to make sure that they are relevant to the construct that the test was designed to measure. Keeping that in mind, I worked with the McKinney Vento Liaison at the school district to review each interview question about its driven purpose. I also had a group of people take the test and then asked them to rate how well each item measures the construct. I also continued to monitor the test to make sure that it remains valid over time by periodically having the test reviewed by experts and by having people take the test and rate the items.

I interviewed participants via telephone and the video conferencing platform Zoom. Thus, the participants and I were in separate locations such as public library meeting room. At the beginning of each interview, I confirmed that the participant was in a room alone with the door closed. I recorded the interviews via memo note-taking. As previously stated, no interview was conducted without the corresponding written and oral consent of participants. Each interview was conducted in a single session with an expected duration of 60 to 90 minutes in length. I repeated interview questions for clarity if needed.

At the close of each interview, I encouraged participants to ask additional questions if needed. I also asked additional follow-up questions to ensure that all questions were understood correctly as well as answered to the best of participants' ability. Participants were not a part of the writing or editing of the actual analysis and results, and they did not have access to any other interview. Each participant's data was individually collected not depending upon the responses of any other participant.

To collect data, I interviewed participants using a recording device. Details of the interviewing method, including the interview questions, can be found in the Appendix B: Sample List of Initial Semi structured Interview Questions. Memo notetaking was used to record details of each interview. Each interview began with open-ended questions that were tailored to allow the participant to relax and be more comfortable with the process. They were also tailored to allow promote and open conversation. As the interviews progress, I asked more questions on counseling and

tutorial services for homeless students. Each question was asked with the intent of gathering more relevant data.

I conducted he interviews via telephone and video conferencing. The interviews, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, were recorded using memo note-taking. Each interview was individual and not in group sessions. The only persons that were present during the interviews were the participant and the interviewer.

I used coding to ensure all aspects of the interviews were covered. Each interview was coded immediately upon completion. By doing this, I coded the data correctly while they were fresh in the mind. I used coding to further understand the perspectives of the participants and in analyzing their combined experiences. Based on the data being sought, codes were created in a manner to better gather and analyze the data.

By coding the data, I was able to break down each interview into segments that were easily read and interpreted. This improved my detection of the importance of the interview as well as detected all aspects of the interview in a clear format. I used selective coding. Selective coding denoted no specific format, but core categories. When using selective codes, some were used interchangeably, meaning they were used to detect more than one meaning throughout the interview. One theme was used in various areas thus pointing out specifics of that coding area.

I used ATLAS to code the data. ATLAS is a powerful coding software that is used for the qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio and video data. It includes a variety of tools to code data such as a coding frames, code manager,

search function and a code linking function to link code relationships. It offers automatic coding that linked data based on keywords, phrases or patterns which was a beneficial way to identify patterns that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. I used ATLAS to maintain a more systematic and consistent form of coding. Once properly coded, I used ATLAS to analyze all codes. I created reports, graphs and / or network diagrams to visualize my data in simpler form.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness and validity of qualitative research depended on what the researcher sees and hears. What the researcher sees and hears were based on interview methods as well as verbal and no verbal language. For quantitative studies, trustworthiness is referred to as validity and reliability. However, in qualitative studies, trustworthiness is a more obscure because it is put in different terms. Since qualitative researchers did not use instruments with established metrics about validity and reliability, it was pertinent to address how qualitative researchers established that the research study's findings are credible, transferable, confirmable, and dependable (Patton, M,Q. 2015) Trustworthiness was all about establishing credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

Credibility was described as how confident the qualitative researcher was in the truth of the research study's findings. The question was mostly asked, "How well do you feel your findings are accurate?" What aspects were used to determine if your findings are accurate? Determining accuracy of finding was the focal point of determining

credibility. Qualitative researchers used triangulation to show the research study's findings are credible.

Transferability was how the qualitative researcher demonstrated that the research study's findings were applicable to other contexts. In this case, "other contexts" were defined as similar situations, similar populations, and similar phenomena (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative researchers used thick descriptions to show that the research study's findings were applicable to other contexts, circumstances, and situations (Maxwell, 2013). Transferability in short referred to whether one thought or idea can be transferred or referred to any other idea, context or though within the research.

Confirmability was the degree of neutrality in the research study's findings. In other words, this means that the findings were based on participants' responses and not any potential bias or personal motivations of the researcher (Maxwell, 2013). Confirmability limited biases. This involved making sure that researcher bias did not skew the interpretation of what the research participants said to fit a certain narrative. To establish confirmability, qualitative researchers provided an audit trail, which highlighted every step of data analysis that was made to provide a rationale for the decisions made (Maxwell, 2013). This aid establish that the research study's findings accurately portrayed participants' responses. Confirmability allowed us, the researcher, to confirm their findings.

Dependability was the extent that the study could be repeated by other researchers and that the findings would be consistent. A qualitative researcher could use inquiry audit in order to establish dependability, which required an outside person to review and

examine the research process and the data analysis in order to ensure that the findings were consistent and could be repeated.

Participants and data were protected by first obtaining an informed consent prior to participation in the study so that they could decide on whether to participate. Extra steps were taken to ensure the confidentiality of their personal information so that they could not be identified in any way. I constantly monitored the participants to ensure that they were not experiencing and negative effects. Interviews were conducted in a disclosed location in a manner to which it was to be determined that they were participants.

Data was stored in a secure location, using pseudonyms, and redacting identified information from reports. I took steps to avoid data breaches to aid in protecting their data from being hacked or stolen. Once the research was completed data was disposed of by shredding physical data and permanently deleting technological data so that it could not be accessed by unauthorized individuals.

Summary

The goal of this chapter described the qualitative methods used to collect and analyze data. The chapter provided an overview of the research design, that include the research questions, population and sample, and the data collection methods that will be utilized. Also determined was the unit of analysis that will be addressed are children that are experiencing homelessness. Potential results from the study allowed school district to gain a better understanding of the needs of their homeless student population which included a critical aspect of effectively serving these students.

Important aspects on the researcher's role were outlined by stating their key aspects of being neutral, possessing no personal affiliation with the participants. Pointed out were the grade specifics that included Grade 12 only. Also, only considered were those within Jackson, MS and were randomly selected. Systematic sampling was stated to be used considering the large population. Participants that were selected based on their classification of being classified as homeless during the enrollment process.

The qualitative sample for the face-to-face interview consisted of 12 – 15 parent and shelter personnel from a total population of parents and shelter personnel. Based upon the total population of homeless students. It was determined that semi structured interviews were conducted to address the study. Interviews contained three open – ended questions followed by three sub – questions. Data was collected using a recording device. Questions were structured in a manner to allow the participant to relax which led to a more productive interview.

Data was coded utilizing ATLAS which is a coding software that aided in maintaining a more systematic and consistent form of coding. It analyzed all data into codes to create reports, graphs and / or network diagrams to visualize data into a simpler form. Prior approval of participation was obtained. Confidentiality and data security was ensured so participants were at ease throughout the process. The goal of Chapter IV was to provide the study results and demonstrate that the methodology described in Chapter II was adhered and followed.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter includes the results of the study I conducted to determine the answer to the following research question: What are the outcomes of implementing pertinent changes to MCKV with homeless students? This chapter also includes discussion on how the analysis conducted was consistent with the CAS methodology and how the analysis ties back to the centralized research question. The chapter also includes demographics, using tables to complement to the summary. The process used to analyze transcripts of all participants totaling 13 parents and three shelter personnel interviews conducted over a 30-day time frame to uncover codes and themes is described in this chapter.

There were two levels of analysis: (a) data level and (b) conceptual level; each level of analysis in ATLAS works together to facilitate a comprehensive and iterative process of qualitative data analysis. I used these levels interchangeably to code data, develop analysis, and refine the understanding of the research topic. Included in this chapter are tables and graphics used to present detailed code and theme data from the individual interviews used to emphasize key themes.

Sample

Sixteen participants were interviewed for this study. Only participants that were parents of homeless children or shelter personnel that housed those families were included in this study. Participants were selected based on their being classified as homeless parents or as shelter personnel. Students were classified as homeless during their enrollment process which in fact documents their parents. They were classified as homeless under the MCKV if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime

residence. Participants were known to meet the criteria based on school records that verified their living status.

The total time duration of being classified as homeless varied among the 13 parents interviewed and the total time being employed at the shelter varied among the three shelter personnel interviewed. All participants, both parents and shelter personnel, were all female.

Data Collection

The 16 research interviews with female parent and shelter personnel served as the primary source of research data. Although there was no formal demographic portion of the interview, interviews were conducted via online conference as well as telephone and female gender was determined. At the close of each interview, I encouraged participants to ask additional questions. I asked follow-up questions to ensure that all questions were understood correctly as well as answered to the best of participants' ability. After each interview, I coded the data manually and reviewed them for important themes. After this method was completed, the researcher ensured CAS methodology was embedded throughout the data collection of the research process.

Data and Analysis

All interviews were manually coded in ATLAS based on word frequency and mapping. The interviews were analyzed and coded in groups of three participants, allowing time to analyze each interview before moving on to the next set of three participants. I coded each set and analyzed for categories and/or themes.

Transcripts were uploaded into computer software, ATLAS, for further analysis. Each interview was coded manually using the software and then compared to the manual coding initially completed during the interview process. The additional step in coding the interviews again, having all 16 interviews to compare, aided on the constant comparative analysis techniques that are critical in comparing data. I used this process to remain consistent in emphasizing key points during coding.

In the next analysis phase, I analyzed the raw data to find categories emerging from the similarities in the codes. Using the ATLAS software, I used all codes and designed them into reports that show how frequently codes that appeared in the data.

Keeping in mind CAS theory, all parent participants were asked the same questions; whereas the shelter personnel were all asked a separate list of questions from the parent participants. Shelter personnel questions were geared toward their general understanding and involvement with homeless parents, school personnel as well as the MCKV.

<div align="center">**Parent Participants**</div>

Understanding

Having a general understanding of the act was the beginning portion of ensuring that parents knew what they are entitled to during their homelessness as it relates to their child/children. Several codes were assigned to the term understanding. All participants mentioned at least five of the codes related to understanding.

Three participants notably captured the essence of what all participants shared when asked their general understanding of MCKV. Their responses revolved around

ensuring that homeless students have the same rights and privileges as those that were not classified as homeless. They also asserted confirmation of students being able to attend school without having to overcome any barriers. Barriers were one of the codes selected during open coding of question one of the interviews. In a general sense the act covered a broad range of homelessness with its focus on equal education, providing transportation, meals, healthcare, and academic support. In addition to those key aspects being mentioned by parent participants, equal education, academic support, and success were also vast codes noted during open coding of interview question one.

Children Rights & School Responsibility

Not only was it imperative for parents to have a general understanding of MCKV. It was equally important for them to have a concise understanding of what their child/children's rights were as a student as well as the school's responsibility with the act as it involves their wellbeing. Over 15 codes were assigned to this concept. When asked if the parent knew and/or understood their child/children rights under the Act, Participant 3 stated:

> Prior to being homeless due to situations beyond my control, I had no knowledge of what the program or act was until my child's counselor provided me with the valuable information. I was fearful for my child when we became homeless but knowing that he would be supported both academically and mentally during the process eased my mind.

She constantly spoke on the mental downfalls of her child during the change and the stress it caused her as a parent in addition to their living condition change. Being able

to be assured her child's academic and mental capacity will be supported throughout the process was a positive aspect to her cloudy moment.

Throughout all parent participant interviews, they all were comforted that their child/children were able to remain at their current school where they are comfortable versus having to transfer and not only being removed from their home, but also being removed from their current school environment. All parents made exciting statements in response to their child/children being able to remain at the current school. Participant 1 stated, "Wow, that was awesome that the act law allowed my kids during our current situation stay in school. That was a relief!"

Participant 6 exclaimed, "This was amazing! My child was worried about changing schools if we had moved into a shelter outside of their current school zone. The Act assisted them in feeling more stable." Participant 9 stated, "I was hesitant to reach out to the school about our situation, but finding out that there was a McKinney-Vento liaison made my family feel more comfortable." Participant 2 stated, "Thank you for this information! This is exactly what our family needs right now."

Participant 9 was unaware of the responsibility of the school as it related to their living situation and her child. She emphasized her sentiments about being able to talk to the Liaison on her family's situation and how they could assist her. She stated, "The Liaison was very knowledgeable of the responsibility of the school to homeless children. She provided me with additional resources outside of the school that would assist my family." Participant 2 stated, "The teachers at our school are very understanding and supportive. They've made my child feel welcome and included, despite our situation."

Participant 8 stated, "McKinney-Vento helped my child feel like they weren't alone. The school seems to have a good system in place to support students experiencing homelessness." She later asserted that providing additional assistance outside of school was very thoughtful and it made her feel that she was not alone in her journey.

Participant 6 stated "The school counselor connected us with some helpful resources for dealing with the stress of homelessness. It's a weight off our shoulders."

All participants were aware of the services that are provided by the act that were housed at the school. They were relieved in discussing their child/children still being able to participate in extracurricular activities as prior to their living condition change which also in return aided in maintain their mental mindset of not being able to remain in their activities. Participant 13 stated, "I'm so grateful that McKinney-Vento ensures my child can still participate in extracurricular activities. It helps them stay motivated and engaged in school."

Several parents overcame their fear of changing schools once they heard their child/children could remain at their current school. They then stated that they no longer had to worry about their child/children having to start over building relationships with new people while trying to adjust to their personal life.

Services and Impact on Education

There were over 20 open codes for this selected code. One code that stood out within service was community. Additional codes included family, support and social service that were linked to service.

Each parent interview all involved the services available to homeless children within the act:

- Tutoring

- Counseling

- Transportation

- Meals

- Healthcare

Even though they were not using all services offered by the MCKV, they were using some and expressed their sincere appreciation for the services that they were being provided. Being able to remain at their current school home was a significant factor when being considered homeless. Transportation was one of the many services provided to homeless students with the act. Parent participants spoke highly of their child/children being provided transportation to their home school while being in a shelter outside of their school zone.

Participant 4 said, " We were worried about transportation, but the school arranged transportation so our child could still get to their current school." Participant 10 said, "Thanks to McKinney-Vento, my child can still get to their current school even though we have moved further away. This has been a huge help!" Participant shared, "I am glad the McKinney-Vento transportation program is flexible and considers our unique situation." Participant 6 said, "I am relieved that transportation is covered under McKinney-Vento. It would be a huge challenge for us to get my child to school otherwise."

Parents expressed their appreciation for being provided transportation for their child/children and not having to carry the burden of making sure they made it to the school day.

Having tutoring readily available for homeless kids was another crucial factor during the interviews. Not only did they mention they were offered services at the school, but they were also offered services that were outside of school.

The McKinney-Vento program connected us with tutoring resources, and it has made a significant difference in my child's grades as stated by Participant 12. Participant 3 added that tutoring helped tremendously with my sons' grades, reading skills, and comprehension. Participant 1 stated that they received tutoring services through McKinney-Vento, and it has been a game-changer for my child. Their grades have improved significantly.

Participant 12 praised the MCKV Liaison stating that The McKinney Vento liaison connected us with a great tutor who understands the challenges of being homeless. It has made a big difference in my child's confidence. I am grateful that tutoring is an option under McKinney-Vento. It helps my child keep up with their schoolwork despite the disruptions we have faced as noted by Participant 4.

The participants spoke on having gained their confidence back in making sure their child was not left behind in education considering their circumstances. Participant 11 stated that this experience has given her children a new outlook on education since being allowed tutorial services at the school. Tutorial services made a more positive impact on their children's education. We could not afford private tutoring, so McKinney-

Vento's tutoring program is a lifesaver for us stated Participant 9. My child needed extra

support in reading. The McKinney-Vento tutoring program addressed her specific

learning needs added Participant 4. Interviewed parents expressed their appreciation for

the additional tutorial services because it removed the current barriers to learning that are

identified with homeless students.

Counseling

Self-confidence and overall morale were codes discovered during selective coding

on the interview data. Participants often worried about the psychological factors of their

children during their current circumstance. They often mentioned ensuring their

child/children were not suffering mentally because of their situation.

The McKinney-Vento program connected us with a school counselor who has

been. They have helped my child deal with the stress of homelessness and feel more

supported at school (Participant 2). I am so thankful for the counseling services available

under McKinney-Vento. It has given my child a safe space to talk about their experiences

and emotions (Participant 4). The counselor helped my child develop coping mechanisms

for dealing with anxiety related to our housing situation (Participant 8). My children are

struggling to adjust to the changes caused by homelessness. Counseling services are a

powerful help for them (Participant 9). We were worried about the impact of

homelessness on our child's mental health. McKinney-Vento provided counseling support

at the school (Participant 1).

Participant 9 continued additional assistance not only within the school but outside

the school as well. Counselors and Liaison offered counseling services to her family via an outside source in a manner that will allow not only her child to receive services but for her family as well. Services outside of education to aid the entire family was a positive aspect to her with the provisions of the act.

Peer support group was also a topic on several interviews. Offering peer support groups for students experiencing homelessness to connect and share experiences in a safe space. Participant 6 stated that her kids attended a session at their shelter with other students and found that they were among others that share the same situation. Being in a group with other kids that are homeless and talking about them experiences and life challenges allowed them to be able to see that they are not alone. They are also not singled out but a part of a group of like friends that have now developed into friendship. The sessions renewed their spirits and brough back their confidence in being able to cope with challenges as they come your way verses letting them bring you down into a dark place.

Successes and Challenges

Each parent participant was able to discuss various successes and challenges that they faced while being homeless. They also discussed how they were assisted with overcoming the challenges they faced. They shared their challenges in all aspects of the services they received on behalf of the MCKV. Thanks to McKinney-Vento, my child was able to stay in their current school despite our family moving several times. This stability helped them maintain good grades and friendships (Participant 9).

My child was worried about graduating on time because of homelessness. The McKinney-Vento liaison connected them with resources and support that helped them achieve their goal (Participant 8). The school ensured my child felt included in extracurricular activities despite our situation. This sense of belonging made a big difference in their overall well-being (Participant 6). We were worried about the stigma of homelessness, but the school created a welcoming and supportive environment for our child. The McKinney-Vento Act along with her counselors and liaison helped with that (Participant 3).

McKinney-Vento provided transportation for my child so they could continue attending their current school, even though it was far from where we were staying temporarily (Participant 10). The McKinney-Vento program ensured my child received free school meals. This helped alleviate some stress and made sure they were well-fed and focused on learning (Participant 5). The McKinney-Vento liaison connected us with community resources for housing assistance and mental health services. This helped us get back on our feet as a family (Participant 4).

Parent praises were limitless, but their success outweighed the few challenges that they faced with the act. Counselors and liaisons were able to quickly address their challenges which made them feel comfortable. The paperwork was a bit complicated, but the school counselor was able to assist me in the process of enrolling my child under McKinney-Vento (Participant 1). We were told transportation assistance is limited. I was then assisted by the liaison which contacted the transportation department, and they quickly resolved the issue (Participant 7).

Mentioned earlier by a couple parents was the acts' ability to connect families with not only school resources but when a challenge arises, they were also connected with outside sources that were able to step in and assist the family. Participant 12 discussed the challenge and how it was overcome to assist her family.

> The counseling sessions offered are during the day when my child must look after their younger siblings. Additional counseling availability was made outside the traditional hours by an outside source, and it not only was offered to my child but to our family as well.

Tutoring was expressed to be a huge demand for all parents not just the homeless. Participant 4 encountered a situation where there was a waitlist to receive services at her children's school.

> We were told there might be a waitlist for tutoring services under McKinney-Vento. The Liaison worked with the counselor and transportation to allow my children to still receive services after school as well as transportation from the after-school sessions.

Seeing that their services do not stop at the school level and extend beyond so that each child's needs are met was very commendable. Not only were my children still able to receive services, but they were also still provided with transportation.

> Only a couple parents experienced where they felt the counselors did not have enough time to adequately assist them or they seemed a bit overwhelmed.

The school counselor seems overwhelmed and does not have much time for individual sessions. Are there any other resources available for counseling support (Participant 11)?

Participant 11 was offered additional assistance outside of normal school sessions as a solution. She stated that the counselor was overwhelmed due to other counselors being out for various when making sure all their needs were met.

Future and Overall Impact

Parents that were interviewed echoed each other when it came down to the future and overall impact of McKinney Vento. The commitment of all involved was a blessing to them as their remarks all maintained the same focus.

The McKinney-Vento Act has been a lifeline for our family. It is crucial to continue this program and ensure all homeless students have access to a quality education (Participant 3). I am hopeful that McKinney-Vento can be expanded to provide even more resources for homeless students, such as after-school programs or technology access (Participant 9). More awareness about McKinney-Vento would be great. Schools should proactively inform families about the program and how it can help (Participant 2).

By supporting homeless students through McKinney-Vento, we are investing in their future. Education is key to breaking the cycle of homelessness (Participant 7). McKinney-Vento can help ensure homeless students have a chance at success. This program not only benefits them but also society (Participant 10). The stability and support offered by McKinney-Vento can make a world of difference for homeless students. It can empower them to reach their full potential (Participant 5).

Although the students' living situations were small setbacks for better, parents expressed their sincere gratitude on the overall impact of the implementation of services via the act. Participant 11 stated that the increased moral in her child when it came to

education was impressive and it motivated her to be a better mom and do more to continue to push her child to maintain her level of consistency in education. Several participants that were interviewed for this study were working toward acquiring permanent housing and will soon move from the shelter. Participant 1 stated that she has worked with the liaison at the school on ways they could maintain their assistance until they are at a place mentally and physically to maintain their success.

Shelter Participants

Understanding of McKinney Vento

Shelter personnel participants were also interviewed on their involvement and their utilization of McKinney Vento. Shelter participants shared their general understanding of the act as ensuring that all homeless students children receive the same educational rights as non – homeless children. Participant 3 outlined it as providing additional support needed as a result of their homelessness so that they are successful in school.

Shelter personnel were specially trained to know and conduct the rights of children and families under the act. As shelter staff, we understand the importance of education for children in unstable situations. McKinney-Vento ensures these children can stay enrolled in their school of origin, reducing disruption and fostering a sense of normalcy. This can be a huge weight off their shoulders (Participant 2). The Act guarantees homeless children access to essential services like transportation, school supplies, and healthcare. We often collaborate directly with school liaisons to connect

children with these resources, which can be a major challenge for families experiencing homelessness (Participant 1).

> Shelter personnel see the McKinney-Vento Act as a critical piece of legislation that helps ensure children experiencing homelessness have the opportunity to succeed in school. They play a key role in advocating for these rights and ensuring children have access to the resources they need. (Participant 3)

Rights and Responsibilities

School districts played an essential role in assisting shelters with identifying homeless families as well as providing additional assistance to them. Participant 3 emphasized the importance of schools promptly enrolling homeless children and providing immediate access to services like meals and healthcare. Delays could be detrimental to a child's well-being and education. Effective communication between schools and shelters was crucial. Shelter staff might appreciate schools proactively reaching out to families, informing them of their rights and available resources under McKinney-Vento. McKinney-Vento requires schools to maintain certain records on homeless students. Shelter staff might emphasize the need for streamlined communication regarding documents and record transfers to avoid delays in enrollment or services (Participant 1).

Shelter personnel were at many times the first defense on identifying homeless families as noted by Participant 1. As shelter staff, we cannot assume every child qualifies. We ask intake questions about living situations to identify potential McKinney-Vento students. Shelters collaborate with school district McKinney-Vento liaisons and/or counselors to ensure children are registered and connected with appropriate services. In

addition, Participant 3 added that shelter staff assist families with gathering necessary documents for school enrollment, even if traditional proof of residency is unavailable under McKinney-Vento. Shelter staff are capable of mediating communication between families and schools if any issues arise regarding enrollment, services, or special needs.

Aiding and Impact on Education

Being able to focus on education instead of their current situation is our number one priority stated Participant 2. The less concerns students have associated with homelessness the more likely they will be to perform well academically. They will also be able to overcome the mental aspects as well.

We see ourselves as removing roadblocks to education for homeless children. Advocating for McKinney-Vento rights and navigating bureaucratic hurdles to ensure children stay enrolled and have access to essential services (Participant 3). We focus on building positive relationships with families. We become trusted advocates, helping families understand their rights and navigate the enrollment process (Participant 1).

All shelter participants overall impact on homeless students narrowed down to the same meaning of taking pride in the positive impact they have on children's education through McKinney-Vento. They see themselves as playing a vital role in ensuring these children have a fighting chance to succeed in school. Their work goes beyond simply providing a roof; it is about fostering hope and opportunity for a brighter future.

Strategies

The key strategy to maintaining and providing the best educational services to homeless students and families is to continue to build awareness and knowledge.

Participant 3 stated that They regularly train staff on McKinney-Vento eligibility criteria, procedures, and available resources to ensure everyone can identify and support qualified children and they also attend trainings as well. They also developed clear and accessible brochures or handouts explaining McKinney-Vento rights and services in multiple languages for families residing in the shelter as well as keeping them updated yearly.

Participant 1 added that they developed a system. They created a clear and efficient system for identifying potential McKinney-Vento students during intake and throughout their stay at the shelter. Building strong relationships and establishing formal agreements with schools outlining procedures for communication, record transfers, and dispute resolution regarding homeless student education.

Participant 2 suggested that they organize workshops and aid families in preparing for and attending parent-teacher conferences, helping them advocate for their child's needs. Form partnerships and collaborate with local businesses for school supply donations or discounted educational materials for shelter residents.

Successes and Challenges

Participant 2 addressed many successes and challenges they have faced in dealing with homeless families. She added that they run into challenges at times providing services when there is a lack of funding for housing agencies and trying to support families who are not as forthcoming and open about what they are experiencing. Families experiencing homelessness are at times reluctant to disclose their situation due to shame or fear of judgment. Initiative-taking questioning and building trust are crucial for identifying all potential McKinney-Vento students. The ever-changing nature of

shelter stays can make it difficult to track down all relevant information and ensure continuous educational support, especially during school transitions.

> *Shelter staff often juggle multiple responsibilities with limited time. Providing in-depth educational support or advocacy for each child can be challenging. Ensuring smooth communication and collaboration between shelters, schools, and various social service agencies can be difficult, leading to confusion and service gaps.* (Participant 1)

McKinney-Vento is a crucial tool, but it does not address the root causes of homelessness, such as poverty or lack of affordable housing. These factors can significantly impact a child's ability to focus on school (Participant 3).

The success of shelter personnel is contributed to hard work and dedication to the homeless families stated Participant 1. We often gather feedback from families about their experience with MCKV support at the shelter. Positive testimonials highlight the value of the services provided thus making our job more rewarding. Celebrating each success stories of children who graduate high school or pursue higher education, parents who have become independent and now living on their own. These achievements showcase the lasting impact of the shelter's support on the family's life trajectory. By tracking similar metrics and celebrating successes, we can demonstrate the effectiveness of our MCKV efforts. Continuous dedication can make a significant difference in the lives of homeless children, giving them a fighting chance to succeed in school and reach their full potential.

Future and Overall Impact

Shelter personnel view one aspect of the future of MCKV on the availability of funding from the federal government. As long as there is available funding Participant 2 stated that they see MCKV as a vital safety net, ensuring homeless children have access to education, a key factor in breaking the cycle of homelessness. The Act fosters collaboration between shelters, schools, and social services, which can be further strengthened in the future to create a more seamless support system.

Technology could play a role in streamlining communication, record transfers, and resource access under McKinney-Vento in the future (Participant 3). McKinney-Vento raises awareness about the challenges homeless children face, potentially leading to increased advocacy for resources and solutions to address homelessness itself (Participant 1).

The overall impact of McKinney Vento Shelter personnel likely views McKinney Vento as a positive but incomplete solution. It provides essential support for homeless children's education, but a truly lasting impact hinges on addressing the root causes of homelessness as noted by Participant 2.

> More funding for shelters and schools would allow for more comprehensive support services for homeless students. Efforts to prevent homelessness, such as affordable housing initiatives and rental assistance programs, could reduce the need for McKinney-Vento in the long run. (Participant 3)

Overall, shelter personnel view MCKV as a positive force with a significant impact. All shelter participants shared the commonalities as the overall impact of MCKV as:

- Increased identification of eligible children.

- Consistent school enrollment and attendance for children in the shelter.

- Positive feedback from families and schools.

- Stronger partnerships with schools and social services.

By playing an initiative-taking role in advocating for MCKV rights and navigating its complexities, shelter personnel can make a real difference in the lives of homeless youth.

ATLAS Word Frequency Analysis

A word frequency query was conducted in ATLAS on the group of 16 interviews, following the manual coding to check for any additional themes. Word frequency queries were performed at different ranges to see if any differences existed regarding queries that search for the exact same word, queries that searched for similar word groups, and a search frequency in between these two extremes. Figure 1 indicates the results of the word frequency query.

In context, the same frequency analysis was conducted on codes that were determined based on the interview context of the 16 participants. Figure 2 indicates the results of the code frequency analysis.
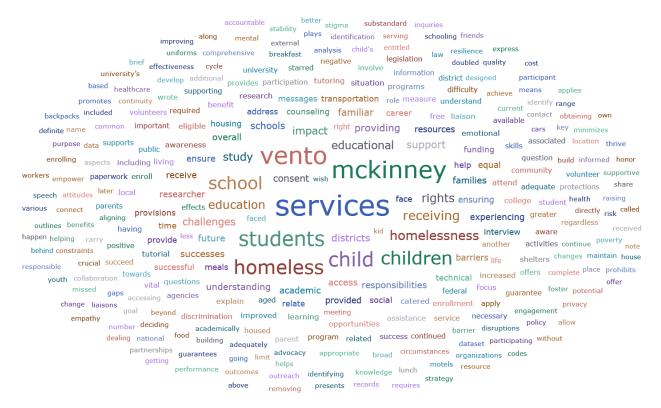
Figure 1

ATLAS Word Frequency

Figure 2

ATLAS Code frequency

The significance of Figure 1 is to show how word frequencies hold importance in the initial stages of data analysis, particularly when developing my initial codes. Word frequencies are beneficial in many ways, first by assisting me to identify salient terms. By looking at word frequencies, I saw which words or phrases appear most often in interview data. These frequent terms might point to important concepts or themes emerging from my data and were the starting points for developing my initial codes.

I explored the general understanding of high frequency words since they can indicate what my participants consider important or keep mentioning to get their point across. This assisted me in identifying key areas of focus for my analysis. Thirdly, I grouped similar concepts together which appear to have suggested or related ideas. This informed how I categorized my data and potentially lead to the development of related codes.

However, not only is word frequency important, context and phrases are equally important. Just because a word is frequent doesn't mean it's inherently significant. I considered all related contexts in which words appear to understand their true meaning and importance. Insightful words or phrases were also considered as factors in which they uncovered various unique perspectives or nuances in my data. All factors of word frequencies outside the realm of the general words aided me in identifying potential themes and developed a foundation for my coding scheme.

Summary

This chapter contained the results of the analysis, connects the analysis back to the research questions and demonstrates consistency of the analysis with CAS. Sixteen participants were interviewed for this study. Interview questions were structured what aspects the MCKV had on homeless students. Parent participants' qualifications for selection were based on them first being classified as homeless parents as well as shelter personnel. Students were classified as homeless during their enrollment process which in fact documents their parents. They were classified as homeless under MCKV if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Participants met the criteria based on school records that will verify their living status.

In remaining consistent with CAS theory, coding was conducted based on responses to each interview question. Seventy-three codes emerged from the interview response data and collapsed into emergent themes. Codes represented were generated based on word frequencies that were in terms related to context.

There was substantial data that supports that there is a critical need for MCKV designed to provide services for homeless students. Data that emerged on a more personal level from parent participants show all aspects of the positive impacts the act creates for not only the students but also for their families. Shelter personnel data supported parent data depicted all positive impact of the act on a more professional level by involving not only the school but the community and outside sources as well. This essential collaboration maintained a centralized trajectory and it was evident in the research results that MCKV positively impacts homeless children. Chapter V includes the summary for the critical analysis and discussion on the positive effects of MCKV.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain a deep understand homelessness affects children and how they experience formal and informal school outcomes. This chapter includes a discussion of findings and how the data were related to the literature on homeless students in primary education. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study, areas for future research, and a comprehensive summary. This chapter contains discussion and future research possibilities to assist and answer the research question: What are the outcomes of implementing pertinent changes to MCKV with homeless students?

The key for homeless students' educational success is all entities working together. All involved in the homeless students' process includes the parent, school officials, shelter personnel, and related paraprofessionals are vital in the students success. It also takes constant communication and openness of the parents so that all available opportunities and resources are made available to them. All these factors contribute to successful educational outcomes of homeless students.

Interpretation of the Findings

I determined that there are various paths available to assist homeless students in academic success. Each path is described in detail in the following sections.

Understanding McKinney Vento

This study's conclusion was for each homeless student to have educational success and positive outcomes and to ensure that all available avenues are utilized for each homeless student. Although they all have unique circumstances, it is important for

the parents to be open about their situation so that the appropriate assistance can be provided.

Having a general understanding of the McKinney Vento Act is vital to the impact of educating homeless students. Many parents had a general understanding but were not sure of the in-depth aspects of the Act. When family situations change and parents are in temporary housing or an unstable living situation, they should know their child's educational rights are protected. Blackburn (2006) states that MCKV ensures students can stay enrolled in their current school, reducing disruptions during a difficult time.

Knowing about the act allows parents to advocate for their children education from the start. They can inquire about the school's MCKV liaison and any resources available for homeless students. Understanding the process of enrolling a homeless child in school can ease anxieties during a stressful time. Parents know what documents are needed and what support services are available. By understanding students' rights under MCKV, parents can approach the school system with confidence, knowing they can serve as an advocate for their educational stability.

Children Rights and School Responsibility

The MCKV ensures educational stability and equal opportunity for homeless children. Here are a few key interpretations of their rights from the findings:

- Enrollment and Continuity: Homeless children have the right to immediate enrollment and continued education in their current school, regardless of their housing situation or lack of documentation. This minimizes disruption in their education during a difficult time.

- Reduced Barriers: Schools must waive fees associated with enrollment and participation in school activities. They must also provide transportation assistance to ensure students can get to their school of origin, even if they move locations.

- Support Services: The Act encourages schools to identify homeless students and connect them with appropriate support services. This can include mental health counseling, tutoring, and access to healthcare.

MCKV places important responsibilities on schools to ensure homeless students have an equal opportunity to succeed. Here are a few key interpretations of their rights from the findings:

- Immediate Enrollment and Continued Education: Schools must by law enroll homeless students immediately, regardless of their housing situation, documentation status, or ability to pay any related fees. They must also allow them to continue attending their current school, even if frequently move to various shelters or housing.

- Identification and Outreach: Schools have a responsibility to identify students experiencing homelessness. This can involve training staff, raising awareness among students and families, and actively seeking out students who might be reluctant to disclose their situation.

- Removing Barriers to Participation: Schools must waive fees associated with enrollment, textbooks, and participation in school activities. They must also provide transportation assistance to ensure homeless students can get to their school of origin.

- Support Services: Schools are encouraged to collaborate with other agencies to connect homeless students with support services. This can include mental health counseling, tutoring programs, access to healthcare, and assistance with obtaining immunization.

- Designation of McKinney-Vento Liaison: The data indicated that each school should designate a staff member as the McKinney-Vento liaison. This person acts as a point of contact for homeless students and their families, ensuring they understand their rights and can access available resources.

Knowing children's rights and schools' responsibilities under MCKV are key components to providing exceptional service to homeless students. Parents must know what their children's rights are to ensure all services are used. It is also important to understand the schools' responsibilities to each homeless student.

School personnel must be provided training and overall knowledge of the Act as mandated by law. Schools are at many times the first line of defense when it comes to providing services (Blackburn 2006). Ensuring that they are properly trained and knowledgeable is key. Once they are trained and knowledgeable, their responsibilities become second nature in being able to provide the best service ever to each homeless family. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act offers a critical framework for providing services that empower homeless students to succeed in school.

Collaboration

The Act fosters collaboration between schools and service providers. This combined effort leads to a more holistic approach, offering a wider range of services that

address students' academic, social, and emotional needs. The collaboration will not only open more doors to homeless parents, but it will also make more resources and services readily available to them whereas there may be limitations at the school level.

Reduced Burden, Increased Impact

Collaboration streamlines the process for homeless students seeking assistance. By eliminating duplication of efforts and sharing expertise, schools and service providers can deliver a more impactful and efficient system of support.

Stability and Opportunity

At the heart of the Act lies the right to a stable education. Homeless students can stay enrolled in their current school, minimizing disruption and fostering a sense of normalcy during a challenging time. Early identification allows for quicker access to support services, addressing potential roadblocks to academic success.

The Act empowers not only students but also parents, educators, and service providers. Parents gain the knowledge to advocate for their child's rights and access available resources with confidence. Educators and service providers can work together more effectively with a shared understanding of the Act's provisions, creating a supportive system for homeless students.

Investing in the Future

Providing services under MCKV goes beyond simply addressing immediate needs. It's an investment in the future. By ensuring educational equity for homeless students, the Act empowers them to reach their full potential and break the cycle of homelessness. The MCKV serves as a powerful tool for positive change. By providing a

framework for collaboration and comprehensive services, it paves the way for homeless students to achieve academic success and build a brighter future.

Counseling

MCKV doesn't directly mandate counseling for homeless students. However, it creates an environment where counseling services can be more accessible and impactful. This study included multiple findings related to the indirect support for counseling.

Indirect Support for Counseling

Indirect supports for counseling include:

- Identification: By raising awareness of the Act, schools can better identify students experiencing homelessness who might also benefit from counseling.
- Reduced Barriers: Schools may be more likely to offer or connect students with counseling services if they understand MCKV emphasis on removing barriers to educational participation.
- Holistic Approach: The Act encourages collaboration between schools and service providers, which can lead to a more holistic approach to student well-being, potentially including counseling services alongside academic support.

While the Act does not require counseling, it lays the groundwork for a supportive environment where homeless students can access mental health services that can significantly benefit their academic success and overall well-being. It's important to note that funding for counseling services might come from sources outside MCKV. However, the Act's focus on collaboration can support bridging the gap and connect students with these vital services.

Successes and Challenges

MCKV plays a vital role in ensuring educational equity for homeless students. There were a variety of successes and challenges outlined in the findings.

Successes

Successes included:

- Stability and Opportunity: The Act guarantees homeless students the right to a stable education in their current school, minimizing disruption and fostering a sense of normalcy during a difficult time.

- Early Identification and Support: By raising awareness of the Act, educators can better identify homeless students who might be hesitant to disclose their situation, allowing for quicker access to crucial support services.

- Reduced Barriers: Schools must waive fees and provide transportation assistance, ensuring homeless students can fully participate in school activities.

- Collaboration: The Act fosters collaboration between schools and service providers, leading to a more holistic approach that addresses students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

- Empowerment: The Act empowers not only students but also parents, educators, and service providers. Parents gain knowledge to advocate for their children's rights, and professionals can work together more effectively to create a supportive system.

Challenges

Challenges included:

- Funding: Schools may face financial limitations in providing all the support services envisioned under the Act. Additional funding streams might be necessary to fully implement all its aspects.

- Staff Training: Educators may need more training to effectively identify homeless students and understand the nuances of the Act.

- Public Awareness: Greater public awareness about the Act and the needs of homeless students is crucial to garner support and resources.

- Data Collection: There may be challenges in accurately identifying and tracking homeless students due to data collection limitations.

Despite the challenges, MCKV remains a powerful tool for positive change. By promoting collaboration, removing barriers, and ensuring stability, it paves the way for homeless students to achieve academic success. With continued efforts to address funding limitations, raise awareness, and improve data collection, the Act's impact can be further strengthened.

The future of MCKV will also be strengthened if the following strategic initiatives are followed and adhered to:

- Future and Overall Impact: The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act serves as a critical piece of legislation for ensuring educational equity for homeless students. Here's a look towards the future and its potential impact:

- A Foundation for the Future: The McKinney-Vento Act establishes a strong legal framework that guarantees homeless students' right to a stable education. This foundation can serve as a springboard for further progress in several ways:

- Expanding Services: Increased funding and collaboration could lead to a wider range of support services offered under the Act, potentially including on-site counseling, after-school programs, and access to technology.

- Improved Data Collection: With better data collection methods, schools can more effectively identify homeless students and target resources to better meet their needs.

- Heightened Public Awareness: As public awareness grows, there could be increased advocacy for additional resources and funding to support the Act's goals.

Overall Impact

MCKV already had a significant impact on ensuring educational opportunities for homeless students. Looking ahead, the Act's potential lies in its ability to:

- Bridge the Opportunity Gap: By continuously improving its implementation, the Act can work towards closing the achievement gap between homeless students and their peers.

- Empowerment Through Education: A strong foundation in education empowers homeless students to break the cycle of homelessness and achieve their full potential.

- A Brighter Future: The Act serves as an investment in the future. By ensuring homeless students have access to quality education, it paves the way for a brighter future for them and society.

The future of MCKV is one of continued progress. With ongoing efforts to address existing challenges and expand its reach, the Act can become an even more powerful tool for ensuring educational equity and opportunity for all students, regardless of housing status.

Implications for Theory and Research

Chapter II included aspects of (CAS). MCKV and (CAS) theory seemed like unrelated concepts at first glance. However, taking a deeper look into the theory offers interesting insights into how the Act functions within the complex educational system and how it can be improved.

MCKV can be viewed as a set of rules or interventions introduced into a CAS, in this case, the educational system. This system consists of various agents interacting with each other, including students, teachers, administrators, social workers, and homeless student liaisons. The act aims to achieve specific goals like educational stability and equal opportunity for homeless students. However, the complex interactions between all the agents in the system can lead to emergent outcomes, both positive and negative.

The positive outcomes include collaboration between schools and service providers could lead to the emergence of new support programs or a more streamlined process for homeless student enrollment. The negative outcomes include unforeseen challenges in implementing the act, like lack of funding or communication gaps between schools and social workers, could hinder its effectiveness.

Schools and service providers can be seen as adaptive agents within the CAS. They can learn and adapt their practices based on their experiences working with the

MCKV. For instance, a school might develop a more efficient homeless student identification process over time. It can also be viewed as a system capable of self-organization. As stakeholders learn and share best practices, the overall implementation of the Act can become more effective over time.

The Act can co-evolve with the educational system. As the needs of homeless students change, the act might need to be amended or supplemented with additional resources. Additionally, small changes in funding or policies can have non-linear effects on the act's overall impact.

By understanding CAS concepts, stakeholders involved in the MCKV can anticipate emergent outcomes by considering both potential benefits and unforeseen challenges that might arise from implementing the Act. It can also promote adaptation by encouraging schools and service providers to adapt their practices to better meet the needs of homeless students. Finally, it can facilitate co-evolution by advocating for improvements to the Act and the educational system to better serve homeless students.

In conclusion, CAS theory offers a valuable lens for examining the complex dynamics at play within the Act and the educational system. By understanding these complexities, stakeholders can work together to ensure the Act reaches its full potential in creating a supportive and equitable learning environment for all students.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While the researcher believes that qualitative research was the right choice for this study, qualitative research tools, such as interviews, are not designed to capture hard facts. More credibility could be given to this study if coupled with quantitative research.

For example, a survey designed for quantitative research, and subsequent statistical analysis, may offer more evidence to strengthen the data discovered using qualitative research tools.

Several areas for future research on targeted numerical results such as grades and statistical data could add to the findings in this study. A quantitative study could be developed to understand what role tutoring plays in grade improvement versus overall improvements, since several participants in this study cited high school students, other grade levels are an added factor to research. A broader demographic of participants may give more insight into if the development of the impact of MCKV as this study is. Additional topics that can be studied that will add to the impact can include medical aid, additional funding initiatives as well as aid for career and home placement for homeless parents. MCKV does in fact address the additions, but there has been no proven statistics to address the impact and overall success of the additions.

Additionally, future research includes analyze the effectiveness of different strategies used by schools and districts to identify and support MCKV students outside of the current area. Research the long-term educational outcomes of students who receive MCKV services as well as explore the impact of funding levels on the quality of services provided to MCKV students.

In order to strengthen the act, researchers can investigate specific student populations to be able to investigate the unique challenges and needs of specific student populations within the MCKV category, such as LGBTQ+ youth, students with disabilities, or very

young children. Research best practices for supporting the mental health and well-being of MCKV students.

Evaluate policy and implementation by examining how different states or regions implement the Act and identify successful models. Analyze the role of community partnerships in supporting homeless students. What partnerships are formed to better assist the homeless population? What do they have to bring to the table as an aid? Research ways to increase public awareness of the MCKV and the rights of homeless students. Research is needed to see how to get the public more aware of the provision so that more opportunities will open to support our homeless families.

Conclusion

The evidence regarding the Act's impact on homeless students' academic achievement is mixed. This dissertation examined the effects of the MCKV on academic achievement of homeless students. The research found that students received services that aided in the academic, mental, and overall achievement of homeless students. These results contribute to our understanding of the MCKV role in supporting homeless students by allowing them to remain at their home school, provide transportation to students that are provided temporary housing outside of their home school, assist with academic and extra-curricular fees, provide counseling and tutorial services as well as positively improve their overall well-being and outlook on being homeless.   While limitations such as lack of statistical data this study highlights the need for looking into student grades and records to form more accurate findings. Overall, this research underscores the importance of effective strategies to ensure educational equity for homeless students.

Overall, the Act plays a vital role in ensuring educational access for homeless students. However, further research is necessary to determine its effectiveness in boosting academic performance. Focus could be placed on successful implementation strategies and tailoring support to specific student needs.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Participate in Research Study

Subject: Invitation to participate in research study

Dear [Name],

My name is Denetra Kendrick, and I am a Student at Walden University. I am currently conducting a research study on the effects of McKinney Vento with homeless students, and I would be honored if you would consider participating.

The purpose of this study is examining the McKinney Vento Act to determine if homeless students are receiving adequate services that are provided within the Act. The study will involve your participation in an interview that will be conducted by me to address the various services offered within the Act as well as your views on any effectiveness and /or ineffectiveness. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you will not be compensated for your time.

The study is expected to take a maximum of 30 minutes. All data collected will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me at XXXXXX@yahoo.com or via phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Denetra Kendrick

Denetra Kendrick

Appendix B: Sample List of Interview Questions

Shelter Personnel:

1. What is your general understanding of the McKinney Vento Act?
2. Homeless students have rights under the McKinney Vento Act, what are the rights of students experiencing homelessness under the Act?

3. What are the responsibilities of school districts under the McKinney-Vento Act?

4. How do you help students experiencing homelessness access the services they need?

5. How can you explain how the McKinney Vento Act's provisions impact the education of homeless students.

6. What are some of the strategies that have been successful in providing educational services to homeless students.

7. What are some of the challenges you face in providing services to students experiencing homelessness?

8. What are some of your successes in providing services to students experiencing homelessness?

9. What are your thoughts on the future of McKinney Vento services?

10. As an overall measure, what impact do you feel the McKinney Vento Services has and/or will have on homeless students?

Parents:

1. What is your general understanding of the act catered to providing services to homeless students (McKinney Vento Act)?
2. Homeless students have rights under the McKinney Vento Act, are you familiar with your child/ children rights under the McKinney Vento Act?

3. What are the responsibilities of school districts under the McKinney-Vento Act? How does it relate to your child/children?

4. What services (counseling, tutorial, career /college technical services) if any are your child/children receiving as a result of the McKinney Vento Act?

5. If your child is receiving services, which services are they receiving? If not, are you familiar with the process of ensuring that they receive services?

6. How can you explain how the McKinney Vento Act's provisions impact the education of your child/ children?

7. What are some of the areas that have been successful in providing educational services to your child/children?

8. What are some of the challenges, if any do you face in receiving services for your child/children?

9. What are some of your successes you've seen, if any, for your child/children?

10. What are your thoughts on the future of McKinney Vento services?

11. As an overall measure, what impact do you feel the McKinney Vento Services has and/or will have on homeless students?