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The Correlation Between Housing the Homeless and the Public's Resistance to
Homeless Housing Projects

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By

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Abstract

The Public's Perception on the Homelessness in Los Angeles County

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Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

Currently, the County of Los Angeles is facing a homeless problem. The homeless population continues to grow every year. Policy makers, legislators and the citizens have acknowledged the problem. They have made a conscious effort to solve this problem. There have been numerous efforts to raise funds and pass propositions to fund the homeless problem. However, the problem lies with the public's perception and resistance to fully invest in resolving this problem. This paper will analyze the correlation between housing the homeless and the public's resistance to homeless housing projects. The focus will be on the public's resistance to new housing projects and their reasons why. In contrast, the paper will analyze housing projects that have been accepted by the public. The research design will assess the correlation between the public's willingness and unwillingness to accept homeless housing in their respective neighborhoods.

Introduction

This paper will discuss the correlation between housing the homeless and the public's resistance to homeless housing projects. The public have had concerns accepting the homeless community in their neighborhoods. The variables that have influenced the public's resistance will be analyzed. Also, the situations where communities have shown a willingness to accept the homeless will be discussed. The purpose of analyzing all possible variables is to gauge the public's current political stance on housing the homeless population.

Policy improvements were desperately needed to solve Los Angeles County's homeless problem. The County of Los Angeles has had a long history of unsuccessful attempts with solving the homelessness problem. Los Angeles has a serious problem with people sleeping on the streets (Medina, 2015). Merriam-Webster, describes the homeless as an "individual who has no home or place of residence" (Merriam Webster, 2018). These individuals are without basic needs, the standard living requirements that most people take for granted in their lives (Park & Allaby, 2017). Homelessness is a result of our country's poor social health stories of the homeless (The Observer, 2016). The inability to provide adequate services and shelters to these individuals continues to be a problem. However, policy makers are not entirely at fault. Society as a whole has essentially abandoned our homeless population. The blame can also be spread amongst the public and their reluctance to address the issue.

Homelessness has been an obstacle in Los Angeles County for years. Politicians, lawmakers, and citizens have by and large neglected this issue. Raising awareness and funding for homelessness have shown to be effective. However, there continues to be a steady rise of homelessness in Los Angeles County. Problems that continue go unnoticed will grow into an epidemic. Does the problem lie in the public's acceptance of the homeless population?

Homelessness in the County of Los Angeles is not a new issue or a consequence from a previous issue. The impression is that legislators and policy makers continue to make unsuccessful attempts at solving the crisis. In 1993, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, was formed to solve the homeless problem (Rivera, 2003). The County of Los Angeles has known about the severity of homeless for many years, but nothing has been effective. President Bush appointed elected officials to draft a strategy to “end chronic homelessness in 10 years” (Rivera, 2003). Policy makers have been under scrutiny for many years. Are we correctly placing the blame on the right individuals?

The Change in Societal Views

The causes of homelessness have varied throughout the years. The misconception on the causes of homelessness has led to the inability to solve the issue. In early years, American culture portrayed the homeless population as individuals who depicted laziness, immorality, wanderlust, heavy drinking, and other characteristics one would hold in the lowest level of society’s hierarchy (Bahr 1973). The belief is the individual is at fault if he/she is unable to provide shelter for themselves. (Lee, Lewis, Jones, 1990). The American society has provided everyone equal opportunity to succeed. Culturally people did not pity the homeless and believed it was only the making of their own doing.

David Hulchanski claims that, historically, “society has not tolerated the existence of unhoused persons and that the abandonment of a social philosophy that views shelter as a basic need is to blame” (Hulchanski, 2013). They actively sought to aid these individuals who lacked their basic needs. Their initial reaction was not to condemn and judge them for past and future mistakes. Compassion was a key value amongst the public regarding homelessness. Society at one time was sympathetic to the homeless population.

A “new homeless” has emerged where individuals have widened their perspective on the causes of homelessness such as; housing availability, the economy, mental health policies, welfare provisions, and veteran awareness (Lee, Lewis, Jones, 1990). The public have acknowledged and accepted the different variables that could result in homelessness. However, they are still unwilling to accept them into their community.

Shift in Policy Making

This new profound outlook has led to major shifts in policy decisions in Los Angeles. Recently, Los Angeles passed Measure HHH, “which will raise \$1.2 Billion Dollars towards the homeless cause” (Sterling, 2016). This amount of money has never been raised before to fight homelessness. One can assume that elected officials, advocates, and the public have come to a consensus to address this growing problem. The ratification of this policy has led to creative homeless solutions. Citizens can take a “hands-on approach to end homelessness by building backyard houses for a homeless individual or family” (Holland, 2018). The shift in policy making has led to the perception that the homeless population will be accepted. The public voted and approved a tremendous amount of money to build homeless shelters. However, does the public actually want the homeless in their community?

Why is it Important?

Homelessness has become a recurring issue, a problem that has faced many obstacles. In recent years, the issue of homelessness has grabbed the attention of many individuals. Stakeholders, policy makers and citizens have finally addressed the potential crisis. In 2017, the homeless count in the County of Los Angeles recorded “55,000 homeless individuals, an increase of 17% from the previous year” (Smith, 2018). Homelessness continues to grow and the problem cannot continue to go unnoticed. The issue received the attention of an important

stakeholder. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, proclaimed in his State of the City address that “homelessness isn’t an issue... it is the issue” (Garcetti, 2018). It is one thing for policy makers to identify the problem, but the real dilemma lies in introducing a new policy. For a policy to be successfully implemented many variables need to be established. The problem needs to be recognized, important internal stakeholders need to be introduced, a policy must be popularized, there needs to be support from the voters, and external stakeholders must approve. For many years, the topic of homelessness was an afterthought. With homelessness coming to the forefront a strategic plan must be established. The policy must be “strategically chosen or developed, and must be incongruence with the objectives and outcomes of the planning process” (Fincher, 1972). The public is a key component in this strategic plan. The homeless population must go somewhere and the public have the right to voice their concerns. The solution to fix homelessness can be seen as extremely simple. Los Angeles needs to build more affordable housing units, and homeless housing projects for the homeless population (Business Times, 2017). However, this solution has not been as simple as Los Angeles officials have hoped. The challenge is to “find a place to say ‘yes’” (Business Times, 2017).

How Will it Progress?

Society has changed their stance on homelessness throughout the years. Policy makers, legislators and citizens have all agreed that the homeless epidemic in the County of Los Angeles is a problem. The simple solution is to find affordable housing units for individuals who are without homes. However, this problem does not have a simple solution. The public have shown a resistance to the idea of building homeless shelters in their neighborhoods. The public have shown concerns regarding their public safety, social status, trash, and drug exposure from the homeless community. The citizens simply do not want them living in their community. However,

the entire public community does not feel the same way towards the homeless. There have been scenarios where the public have welcomed the homeless community. The difficulty is finding enough communities to open their doors to the homeless.

Literature Review

Public Resistance

The citizens of Los Angeles have shown a resistance to homeless housing across the county. They continue to fight the development of homeless housing projects in their neighborhoods. The public have formed an opposition to developing housing for the homeless across California, even when there is funding and vacant pieces of land (Business Times, 2017). Recently, there was a proposal to build a 49-unit shelter in Boyle Heights (Business Times, 2017). The City Council had to block the proposal after the committee received immense opposition to the project (Business Times, 2017). Residents simply do not want homeless shelters being built in their community. The majority of people who live around the project were opposed to the proposal, while the people who were in favor lived someplace else (Business Times, 2017). History, has shown that the public's resistance to allowing the homeless reside in their community. Eric Garcetti acknowledged the reoccurring problem of removing people from one community and placing them in another (Abramovitch, 2015).

Los Angeles has a problem with providing housing to the homeless. This is in part to the hostility and neglect the public have toward this community (DeVerteuil, Marr, & Snow, 2013). The public have shown the tendency to exclude the homeless and poor people in general (DeVerteuil, Marr, & Snow, 2013). This resistance usually takes the form of the Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) syndrome, which prohibits homeless services and applies strict policing in public spaces (Wolch and Dear, 1993).

The NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard) syndrome is the organized resistance to controversial neighborhood projects (Takahashi, 1997). The popularity of NIMBY led Peter Hall to describe it as the "populist political philosophy of the 1980's" (Hall, 1989). The NIMBY

syndrome has become more complex than “merely selfish, irrational responses of residents to local controversies” (Takahashi, 1997). The emerging threat to community harmony has been the occurrence of homeless service facilities, such as homeless shelters. (Takahashi, 1997). The NIMBY conflict with the homeless have become increasingly common, as they seek comfortable housing environments (Wasserman & Clair, 2011). Residents continue to exclude street homeless communities and in engage in exclusionary practices to build and sustain a community (Wasserman & Clair, 2011). The homeless population have been excluded from society through the NIMBY syndrome. This syndrome has been the driving force behind the resistance to homeless housing.

There are many possible variables that have resulted in the popularity of NIMBY practices. Social scientists have focused on the public’s perception regarding homeless housing and homeless individuals (Lyon-Callo, 2001). Lois Takahashi claims, “social relations contribute to evaluations that persons and places have less value and are considered abnormal” (Takahashi, 1997). Societies perception on the homeless played an important role in spreading the NIMBY philosophy. U.S. Conference of Mayors reported that opposition to homeless services result from the “hostility and fear, based often on ignorance” (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 1993). One can argue that misinformation and lack of education can contribute to the public’s ignorance. However, there are many studies where the public is aware of the situation and strongly support against homeless services (Lyon-Callo, 2001). For instance, opponents of homeless services believe that these services will attract more homeless from other neighborhoods (Lyon-Callo, 2001). This will cause local businesses to struggle, property values to decline, increase in crime, and the public’s quality of life to depreciate (Lyon-Callo, 2001). The public have made a clear stance to not allow homeless services and housing in their neighborhood.

Public Perception

One must look at the public's view on homelessness to see the root of the problem. In 1984, Ronald Reagan said on Good Day America, "homeless, in his administration's view, was a personal failing; homeless people were homeless by choice" (Covert, 2018). The National Coalition for the Homeless, called "Los Angeles as one of the meanest cities (ranked 18 of 20) in treating it's homeless" (Archibold, 2006). Los Angeles City Council approved an ordinance that allows police officers to confiscate homeless possessions, which allows them to clear the sidewalks easier of homeless encampments (Medina, 2015). Mary Grady, of the Los Angeles police department, said the "police simply enforced the city's laws and went after those who are actually victimizing the homeless population and the mentally disabled population" (Archibold, 2006). The public is not only ignoring the homeless, but victimizing them as well. Treating them as if they were criminals, and brought this treatment upon themselves. The perception on the homeless population plays a huge role in their reluctance to house them within their community.

There has been an increase in the homeless population since, "Proposition 47, a 2014 ballot initiative that reduced jail sentences for nonviolent crimes, including shoplifting, theft of less than \$950, and drug use" (Finley, 2018). The police officers have reported, they are hesitant to arrest drug users and thieves, because these offenders often get released shortly after custody (Finley, 2018). The homeless population now embodies more drug users. Approximately, seventy (70) percent of the skid row homeless community are addicted to meth and other illegal narcotics (Ambramovitch, 2015). Community members are outraged by the reality of having their children walk by homeless encampments, with individuals shooting heroin and having syringes attached to their arm (Ambramovitch, 2015). Neighborhoods do not promote drug use within their community. Especially, when there is such a high risk of drug exposure to the youth.

There are more than one million youths experiencing homelessness in the United States of America (Barman-Adhikari, Craddock, Bowen, Das, & Rice, 2017). The homeless youth have been associated with chronic drug use (Barman-Adhikari, Craddock, Bowen, Das, & Rice, 2017). Their reported drug use includes; “street opioids such as heroin, prescription opioids, and stimulants such as cocaine, crack, and methamphetamines” (Barman-Adhikari, Craddock, Bowen, Das, & Rice, 2017). Residents are reluctant to this kind of expose for their community and children. Especially, with individuals who are similar in age with their children.

Steven Berg, of National Alliance to End Homelessness stated, “a lot of people don’t have a real grip of what the homeless population is in real time, and respond only crisis to crisis” (Medina, 2015). The public’s perception on homelessness is a reason why no real solutions have come forth. The public’s perception fuels their resistance to the construction of homeless shelters. There are two distinct perspectives on the homeless population. The first, an individualistic perspective, which focuses on the characteristics of the homeless individual (Stoecker & Tracy, 1993). This perspective translates into "bad people" and "bad luck” (Stoecker & Tracy, 1993). Bad people, are categorized as individuals who display illiteracy, drug abuse, and mental illness (Koch, 1987; Wright, 1987; Sullivan and Damrosch, 1987; Redburn and Buss, 1987; Kaufman, 1984; Bassuk, 1984). Bad luck, are individuals who have experienced a personal crisis, such as a failed marriage, physical injury, health illnesses, and an unanticipated financial disaster (Redburn and Buss, 1987; Kaufman, 1984; Cooper, 1987; Koch, 1987; Sullivan and Damrosch, 1987). The public have not shown to be sympathetic to the individualistic perspective. They refer to the term "blaming the victim" to the individualistic perspective (Stoecker & Tracy, 1993). Blaming the victim has dominated the American perspective on the homeless problem (Stoecker & Tracy, 1993). In victim-blaming the causes of homelessness are

seen as the result of poor decisions in a generally satisfactory system (Stoecker & Tracy, 1993). Thus, individuals who cannot obtain “sufficient income must suffer from a personal deficiency as a bad person, or has experienced an unpredictable calamity of bad luck” (Stoecker & Tracy, 1993). Through this perspective the public lacks sympathy for the homeless. There is a lack of urgency to solve homelessness through this perspective, because they believe the homeless have brought this lifestyle upon themselves.

The second basic perspective is categorized as a critical perspective. Critical perspective, concentrates on the systematic factors. These factors can be categorized as political and economic variables that produce homelessness (Marcuse, 1988; Fabricant and Epstein, 1984; Stem, 1984). This perspective on the homeless place the blame upon external factors. The public may tend to be more sympathetic towards individuals who are faced with homelessness by variables outside their control. The stance on homelessness must continue to shift towards this perspective. Otherwise, this dilemma will continue to grow and the public will continue to oppose homeless construction projects.

Public Misconception

The skewed support from the public can be a bi-product from their misconception on the homeless population. A recent survey found that the public have vastly underestimated the number of homeless veterans and the significant causes of homelessness (PR Newswire, 2014). Also, the Los Angeles County residents are uncertain about the regional breakdown of the homeless population (PR Newswire, 2014). There is a misconception on the severity of the problem. Mitchell Netburn, of the Homeless Services Authority, reported the “perception that homeless people come here from other places has allowed a sense that it is really not our problem” (Archibold, 2006). Advocates were extremely surprised to see the public was still

underestimating the homeless issue (Elise Buik, 2014). The public's unwillingness to support various housing projects show a level of misinformation from legislators to the citizens. Los Angeles County has become the veteran homeless capital of the country. This number has grown to 4,618 homeless veterans. (PR Newswire, 2014). Los Angeles County residents are "widely unaware of the veteran homeless problem in the County, as respondents selected Houston (877 homeless vets) and San Diego (1,486 homeless vets) as having more homeless veterans than Los Angeles" (PR Newswire, 2014). Residents also believe Los Angeles Skid Row constitutes as the majority of the homeless population. In actuality, only 8.5% of the homeless population live on skid row in Los Angeles (PR Newswire, 2014). This is "nearly 44 percent (43.62%) of respondents believe over 25 percent of homeless people live on Skid Row, and nearly fifteen percent (14.16%) of those respondents believe that over 50 percent of the county's homeless population lives on Skid Row" (PR Newswire, 2014). The public's view on the homeless have been misconstrued and misinterpreted. The difference in information could have led to the public's unwillingness to address the issue, or their views on the severity of the problem. Not educating the public correctly has also led to their reluctance and hesitation in accepting the homeless into their neighborhoods.

Ethical Issue

For years, the homeless population have been treated like second class citizens. Society has done little to eliminate or address this stigma. However, a major breakthrough occurred on April 14, 2006. The 9th circuit ruled in *Jones vs City of Los Angeles*, "that it's cruel and usual to punish people for sitting, sleeping, or lying on public roads at night" (Laird, 2014). The federal appeals court ruled that "arresting homeless people for sleeping, sitting, or lying on sidewalks and other public property when other shelter is not available was cruel and unusual punishment"

(Archibold, 2006). Legal professionals, believe this is the first ruling to reach the federal level relating to the rights of homeless people (Archibold, 2006). Prior to this legal achievement, police officers in Los Angeles were using immediate force to reduce the largest homeless population in the country (Archibold, 2006). The police department were using this ordinance to arrest and remove the homeless population from public property (Archibold, 2006). This effort was widely used to clean up the treacherous street of Skid Row, a 50-block area in downtown Los Angeles, that has a continuously growing homeless population (Archibold, 2006). An important step in solving homelessness was supplying the homeless population with basic rights and respect. Steven Berg, of National Alliance to End Homelessness stated, “what we’ve learned about homelessness over many, many years is that you have to provide housing, and criminalizing the homeless does not keep people off the streets at all” (Medina, 2015). This problem was becoming an ethical issue. David Hume an ethical subjectivist states, “that right and wrong are relative to the attitudes of each individual - morality is a matter of sentiment rather than fact” (Rachels 1999). A major challenge was changing the ethical stance on the public’s view of homelessness. The ethical decision would be to support any proposition that could provide shelter for those without refuge. If the public viewed this problem as an ethical issue more support could possibly be generated.

The public’s perception on homelessness has grown into an ethical issue. Were the citizens behaving ethically in their methodology to achieve happiness? Consequences based ethics or Utilitarianism “helps individuals make ethical decisions under the basis of the result of his/her action” (Kem, 2006). Confiscating someone’s home and criminalizing them, would not be perceived as ethical. Individuals have the desire to be perceived as ethical. Consequence based ethics would encourage individuals to aid the less fortunate. The Utilitarianism approach

to ethics also encompasses the idea, to “do what produces the greatest good for the greatest number” (Kem, 2006). The public must consider the enormous homeless community in this ethical problem. The Utilitarianism approach could inspire the public to cast aside their doubts and make decisions that is in the best interest of the masses. Allowing them to take actions that can affect the largest number of individuals.

Negative Stigma

The pressure to address homelessness continues to grow. The problem is at the forefront of the public, because of its visual recognition. There are “blocks of streets are lined with tents and shelters, and people sit outside in folding chairs” (Asia News Monitor, 2015). Homelessness has now “increased by about 12 to 15 percent” (Asia News Monitor, 2015). The street encampments have “increased by more than 80 percent” (Asia News Monitor, 2015). Constantly encountering the homeless could possibly shift your willingness to aide them. The constant realization of this problem could become more difficult to ignore. The homeless community have expanded across the County of Los Angeles. The problem of homelessness “reaches far beyond the city, and encampments can be seen alongside local freeways and in undeveloped areas on hillsides” (Asia News Monitor, 2015). The sad realization is Los County residents will have a hard time avoiding a homeless encampment or encounter. This level of exposure should entice the public to make a conscious effort to help these individuals off the streets. Why has the public resisted such an obvious and reoccurring problem?

Although, the homeless population is visible, the public the level of concern is mixed. Homelessness is now seen as a common and standard part of American life” (Blassi, 1994). Previously, there was once a sense of compassion and concern regarding the homeless population, but now the public express frustration with these individuals (Blassi, 1994). Ralph

Nunez, President of Homes for the Homeless states, “people decided that homeless people were affecting their quality of life” (Ratnesar, 1999). The level of compassion for the homeless has decreased tremendously. This level of compassion has translated into their resistance to accept homeless shelters in their community.

Attention to the homeless population has definitely grown. However, the attitude towards the public have not garnered as much traction. The public “don't want the homeless living on their streets, but they don't want homeless shelters in their neighborhoods either” (Finley, 2018). Allysia Finley, described a vivid picture of the homeless community. She wrote that “hundreds of vagrants had pitched tents made out of tarps. The affluent among them set up canopies, the kind that are sold in camping stores. Some even had cots. They stored their belongings in suitcases, bins, strollers and shopping carts. Jugs of water and cans littered the area. Dozens of presumably stolen bicycles were piled on top of each other like abstract art” (Finley, 2015). Her depiction of the homeless community was entirely negative. She addressed them as vagrants and presumed they stole some of their belongings. Many people have this perception of the homeless. They constantly view them as a nuisance and criminals. It becomes an incredibly hard task to persuade individuals to aid the homeless, when they continue to view them in this perspective.

The residents of Los Angeles have a daunting task of accepting the homeless and all that comes with them. Residents experience the garbage and filth that the homeless leave. Residents see skid row and “it's the bottom of anything you can think of. The smells - that's the part that will get you” (Marshall, 2015). Residents want to live in a clean and established environment; “tent cities, open air drug markets and public defecation are an anathema to a well-functioning urban environment” (Vitale, 2010). A local shop owner in downtown Los Angeles Jinsoo An, described his street with a layer of “garbage, piss, shit - everything combined together... I never

used to look forward to the rain, but now I enjoy walking back to my place most after a storm. It lets me breathe" (Marshall, 2015). Property owners do not want this unwelcome experience. The smell and garbage are not the only thing local residents have experienced. The homeless use the "public library's restrooms to relieve themselves--and to shoot up with heroin, often leaving their needles behind" (Finley, 2018). The matter could potentially lead to a public safety concern. There is concern about the unpredictable behavior of the homeless population when involving drug use. Policy makers are asking a lot from local neighborhoods to accept the homeless and all the filth that are associated with them. Thus, the reluctant behavior from the citizens to accept the homeless population with open arms.

In addition to the sanitation concerns that follows the homeless population, residents also fear for their public safety. Los Angeles residents, "sometimes have a well-founded fear of violence, thanks to some high-profile crimes" (Laird, 2014). In 2011, a homeless man attacked an elderly woman with a two-by-four, she received medical attention for stitches and a broken arm (Goldstein & Moynihan, 2011). In 2014, a 30-year-old homeless man attacked and terrorized local woman. He knocked one woman down, kicked another in her stomach and attempted to spit on another woman working at McDonalds (Drogheda, 2014). Lastly, in 2016, a Georgia man slashed a woman who took him in while he was homeless (Foreman, 2018). This level of violence would be unwelcoming in any community. Hence, the public attempts to maintain their level of security against the homeless.

Local Businesses

Los Angeles has an obligation to protect their residents and local businesses. Los Angeles do not want the homeless population in their city. They have passed laws to clean up their streets. Rosen of D.C. states, "cities are seeing more of this than they ever saw before. They

don't like it and so they're passing these laws rather than coming up with a productive way to deal with it" (Laird, 2014). Cities support these laws by citing concerns that a homeless presence will scare customers away (Laird, 2014). Business owners need to protect their livelihood, and will support any laws that are in their best interest.

The homeless population may have a negative impact on local businesses. Businessmen claim, "it is difficult to do business with people camping in front of your business. It intimidates customers and your employees" (Decker, 2000). Police and security officers many times patrol skid row and thwart skid row residents from entering nearby neighborhoods (Marr, 2009). Businesses have the impending need to act in the best interest of their business. They will support the resistance to allow homeless in their community, if it improves foot traffic and revenue.

Homelessness was thrust to the top of the political agenda, when the location of skid row became an issue. Previously, corralling the homeless onto skid row made sense, with all the homeless and homeless encampments already there (Marshall, 2015). Skid row is located far from beach cities like Redondo Beach and suburban neighborhoods like the Pasadena. which is home to more politically aggressive and outspoken residents (Marshall, 2015). Brigham Yen described "downtown, as a big rug to sweep the county's homeless problem under, but now downtown has become one of the most desirable areas in the region" (Marshall, 2015). A few bold businesses have opened, but skid row has actually pushed many companies outside of the skid row territory (Marshall, 2015). There would already be existing big chain stores in downtown Los Angeles, if there was not a Skid Row (Marshall, 2015). The new local businesses have put homelessness back on the political radar (Marshall, 2015). If not for the new political

agenda, homeless individuals would continue to be an afterthought and live as forgotten people (Marshall, 2015).

Financial Support

The County of Los Angeles has had their fair share of obstacles when tackling the homeless issue. Recently, they have made considerable financial gains in their efforts towards solving homelessness. Internal and external stakeholders have concentrated their efforts to raise funding for homelessness. In 2015, Foundations such as Home for Good Funders Collaborative and United Way of greater Los Angeles raised \$280 million dollars to end chronic homelessness. (PR Newswire, 2015). The funding covers over “\$280 million awarded this year is an investment over a period of 15 years; which breaks down to \$40.7 million in the first year, \$17.4 million the second year, and \$17.1 million a year in subsequent years” (PR Newswire, 2015). Foundations have raised considerable awareness and funds to supplement housing projects. Homelessness is a solvable problem with “very tangible solutions” (Steven M. Hilton, 2015). Yes, money will greatly aide in the solution to homelessness, but it does not make up the entire formula. The foundations view homelessness as a simple fix, a problem money can easily fix. Although, money is an important part of the solution, the public’s resistance to the housing projects is the main concern.

The goal has always been to implement a policy, Los Angeles County residents would support. Los Angeles City Council “voted 12-0 to place a \$1.2 billion bond on the November ballot” (Webster, 2016). Measure HHH was approved by Los Angeles County residents in November 2016. Measure HHH, “will build permanent supportive housing in Los Angeles” (Scherling, 2016). Measure HHH will be “providing \$1.2 billion in funding for the construction of 10,000 units of permanent supportive housing (PSH) for the homeless” (Scherling, 2016).

Measure HHH would also fund projects to build affordable housing units, temporary shelters, and amenities that service existing homeless individuals (Targeted News Services, 2016). This policy implementation is a huge victory for the fight to end homelessness. Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson said, "without this bond, we would be stuck at about 3,000 units of permanent supportive housing, with Proposition HHH, we can more than triple that number" (Targeted News Service, 2016). The problem that continues to be ignored is where will these permanent supportive housing units be built. Residents understood the severity of the rising homeless population and showed their support through the November 2016 ballot. However, was their support through the ballot really genuine. Do they understand that these homeless shelters may possibly be built in their neighborhood?

The city of Los Angeles deserves admiration for taking homelessness seriously (The New York Times, 2017). City officials prioritized the problem and raised considerable funds to strongly untangle the frustrating problem. (The New York Times, 2017). However, this problem will require consistent political pressure to manage the inevitable public opposition to building homeless shelter across Los Angeles (The New York Times, 2017). Identifying the problem and collecting the substantial funding was only the beginning in tackling homelessness. Leaders of the homelessness initiative believe "the funding will allow existing programs to scale up their production" (Herbst, 2017). The concentration at the moment is "not to create new programs, but fund existing ones" (Herbst, 2017). The Director of the County of Homelessness Initiative, "plans to enhance the emergency shelter system and convert neglected motels into homeless shelters" (Herbst, 2017).

City Council and the legislators continue making a concentrated effort in funding the homeless initiation. The Los Angeles mayor's budget "sails through City Council" (Webster,

2017). Mayor Eric Garcetti has increased his efforts in finding a solution for the homeless, the mayor's budget is slated to include "\$430 million to take this crisis on" (Webster, 2018). Previously, it was approximately "\$20 million in the budget four years ago" (Webster, 2018). The amount of financial support for the homeless epidemic is extremely optimistic. The City Council's willingness to accept these projects makes the solution to end homelessness look extremely encouraging.

Measure HHH was a huge victory in winning the battle against homelessness. The public voted and approved this proposition. However, does the passing of Measure fully depict the unwavering support to solve the homeless epidemic. Where are these affordable housing units being built? Has the public been counseled about the future projects? The legislators are making a conscious effort amongst themselves to throw money at the problem. They do not have an innovative or new approach to solving homeless. They mentioned the funds would support already existing projects. The public's perception and resistance remain the same. Thus, there will be continued push-back against the homeless population. The voters wanted to fix homelessness, but not at the expense of their comfortable lifestyles.

El Pueblo District

The passing of Proposition HHH has led to Mayor Eric Garcetti rolling out a \$20 million initiative to provide temporary homeless shelters known as "bridge homes" (He, 2018). Mayor Garcetti supported bridge homes by saying, "there's no question that homes are the cure for homelessness" (He, 2018). The first temporary shelter will be located in the El Pueblo district (He, 2018). Rick Coca, a spokesperson for councilmember Jose Huizar said, "it's extremely important that the El Pueblo shelter succeeds because it's the first one and acts as a model that will be replicated across the city" (Carrillo, 2018).

Koreatown District

The Los Angeles City Council committee approved a Koreatown parking lot to provide temporary shelters for the homeless (Los Angeles Sentinel, 2018). This move sparked hundreds of local residents to oppose and protest in the council chamber (Los Angeles Sentinel, 2018). Koreatown is among two dozen locations that have been proposed for homeless shelter construction. (Los Angeles Sentinel, 2018). This citywide program has been crafted by Mayor Eric Garcetti after Measure HHH was approved. This particular site on the city-owned parking lot at 682 S. Vermont has received significant opposition from the residents (Los Angeles Sentinel, 2018). Critics claim the shelter will be built too close to schools and businesses (Reyes, Smith, & Kim, 2018). They are concerned the shelter will attract crime, more homeless individuals, and essentially kill Koreatown (Reyes, Smith, & Kim, 2018).

Opponents of the Koreatown shelter have expressed concerns this project will attract more homeless people to the neighborhood (Los Angeles Sentinel, 2018). Other residents acknowledge that shelters should be constructed, but not at the Koreatown site (Los Angeles Sentinel, 2018). Other residents feel disrespected in the council's way of approving certain locations, in a seemingly undemocratic way (Reyes, Smith, & Kim, 2018). John Kim, a local Koreatown resident said, "we're not opposing it just to oppose it. They didn't give us a choice, and time to consider" (Reyes, Smith, & Kim, 2018).

Innovative Approach

I previously mentioned that Los Angeles County had existing programs to build affordable housing. These programs have become problematic, because of the sheer number of homeless residents and the public's resistance to housing projects. A new experimental project contradicts the public's pre-existing stance of not allowing the homeless in their neighborhoods.

The innovative approach has come with the concept of backyard shelters. Los Angeles residents have agreed to a tax that funds a \$1.2 billion project for homeless housing (Holland, 2018).

However, these homeless housing units can cost \$350,000 each. (Holland, 2018). The anticipated amount of money and time will take years for the city to reach their goal of 10,000 new housing units (Holland, 2018). This forecast of problems led policy makers to take a different approach in affordable housing. The shelters would cost the government “approximately \$15,000 annually for three (3) years” (Holland, 2018). A significant reduction in the proposed amount for affordable housing. The residents supported and trusted our officials to make a significant change for our homeless. Policy makers want to avoid asking for additional funds.

Policy makers are using an innovative approach to tackle this issue. The tactic is for home owners to build homeless units in their backyard (Holland, 2018). The home owners will be compensated for allowing a homeless individual or family reside on their property. The Board of Supervisors, approved a “\$550,000 pilot project to build small backyard houses for homeowners who agree to host a homeless family or person” (Holland, 2018). The Los Angeles County pilot program will lend homeowners \$75,000 to build a homeless shelter in their backyard (Holland, 2018). Another option would be to lend \$50,000 for a lower quality renovation (Holland, 2018). This loan will be reducing every year their unit is occupied by a homeless individual (Holland, 2018). The entire loan will be waived after 10 years (Holland, 2018). After the 10-year milestone the property owner can use the homeless unit as they wish. County has provided an incentive for the property owners to participate in this program. This innovative approach has put added pressure on residents regarding homelessness. They not only passed a proposition to financially support the homeless, but now the County of Los Angeles is asking residents to house them. The County of Los Angeles is traveling to uncharted territories

with this program. William Pollard once said, “learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow” (Pollard, 2015).

The problem with introducing a new policy is the unpredictable level of acceptance from the recipients. Los Angeles County has no data or research to analyze before introducing this policy. They were asking the residents to take a hands-on approach into solving homelessness. The results were thankfully positive. Larry Newman of the County’s Community Development Commission said, “we were overwhelmed with the interest” (Holland, 2018). The positive interest from Los Angeles County residents go against the narrative that Los Angeles County residents do not want the homeless in their neighborhoods. They have not only accepted them into their neighborhood, but in their backyard.

This innovative program has not been fully implemented in Los Angeles. Data has not been collected regarding the success of this project. A correlation has not been established with the property owners who are interested and those who actually commit. The interest in this pilot program has garnered optimism in the public’s commitment. If successful this innovative approach would show the tremendous strides in the public’s perception on homelessness. If local residents are housing a homeless individual on their own property, then neighboring shelters seems feasible.

Methodology

Research Design

This research design will help analyze the correlation between building housing units for the homeless, and the public's resistance to the construction in their respective neighborhoods. The research design will be a case study of a city who approved and accepted homeless housing units, and one who resisted the construction of homeless housing units. This research design will provide as a guide and framework for future legislators when future homeless housing projects are being discussed. This research will be completely non-experimental. The data gathered will not be controlled, manipulated, or altered in any way.

This study will also seek to identify the different variables that affect the construction of homeless housing projects. The success and mistakes from past policy implementations will help establish future policies.

Research Questions

R1: What is the correlation between housing the homeless and the public's resistance to homeless housing projects?

R2: What is the correlation between housing the homeless and the public's acceptance in homeless housing projects?

R3: How does the public's resistance to homeless shelters affect the construction of homeless shelters in their respective neighborhoods?

R4: How does policy implementations on homeless shelters affect the public's acceptance of homeless housing projects in their respective neighborhoods?

Data Collection Methods

The research will be of qualitative nature. The corresponding data collected will be a collection of secondary data. The data collected will consist of scholarly articles, past policies, legislative documents, news articles, surveys, and interviews. The data collected will be categorized into two subsections. One section will consist of a city's successful implementation of a homeless housing project. The other section will comprise of a city's resistance to a homeless housing project. This research will hopefully explore the different perceptions and variables residents have on the homeless population and their willingness to welcome them into their neighborhoods. The data collected will provide a framework for future policy makers in regards to the homeless problem.

The research will also consist of a survey for the two experimental city's residents. The series of questions will be provided via www.surveymonkey.com. All registered voters in the respective cities will receive the survey anonymously. The survey will consist of a list of questions that pertain to their personal viewpoints on the homeless population. The following sample questions can be seen in (Appendix A).

Individuals will answer each question based on their perception in the present time. Participants will be allowed to check only one box per question. The boxes range from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Participants are encouraged to answer each question truthfully and without bias. Their answers will remain confidential and unanimous. There will be no repercussions based on the individual's answers. The survey question and answers will be sent to the database for analysis. The collected data will be recorded and the totals will be tallied. Questions and answers will remain confidential and not public information.

Data Analysis

The data will be collected and stored onto an Excel spreadsheet. Such as, the data collected from public resistance and protests, policy implementations, financial support, and survey results. The sampling size will be limited to only the two participating cities. The two sampling cities will consist of downtown, Los Angeles and Koreatown, Los Angeles.

The controlled variable will represent Koreatown, Los Angeles and their resident's resistance to the construction of homeless housing shelters. The second location is downtown, Los Angeles who have successfully built a homeless housing shelter. The data collected will be categorized by examining the public's resistance or acceptability to the construction of homeless shelters.

Limitations/Threats to Validity

The purpose of this case study is to understand and analyze the different variables that affect the construction of a homeless housing project. There is always risk of inaccuracy with the data recorded. In order, to ensure the accuracy of the data collected, the data will be analyzed for replication and inconsistencies. The collected data will need to be limited and must focus on the primary area of research. Unrelated data may dilute and compromise the data research.

The secondary data collected may become unrelated and unfeasible over time. Legislative laws and policy implementations can alter the validity of the data collected. Current events can also affect the accuracy of the researched data. The collected data may become time sensitive in order to protect the legitimacy of the data.

In regards to the survey, the survey questions inquire about personal viewpoints. Emotions and personal experiences may threaten the validity of the survey. Survey participants

will be instructed to not allow their personal emotions to affect their survey answers. The emotions during the survey submission may also influence an individual's answer.

Ethical Considerations

This research design will not be reviewed or recorded, due to limited resources and time constrictions. If this research design were to be implemented the results must be anonymous. Releasing the results would be unethical. Confidentiality will allow this case study to perform ethical practices. The data collected must be through anonymous sources and must be obtained in an ethical behavior.

Policy makers could also choose to ignore the data collected. They could presumably continue with their planned proposals, without including the resident's answer in their plans. They would not be acting ethically and not incorporating the consequence-based approach. Ignoring the consequences in an ethical problem will lead to an unethical dilemma.

Background

The homeless population has become a problem for many years. There is plenty of blame to go around in regards to the causes of homelessness. Secretary Ben Carson, said “rents are rising faster than incomes in major cities, forcing too many of our neighbors into our shelters and onto our streets” (Lazo, 2017). The cost of living in Los Angeles continues to grow. According annual salary calculations set by HUD, individuals grossing \$50,500 a year is now considered low income in Los Angeles County (PR Newswire, 2017). Herb Smith of the Los Angeles Mission, “says the problem is partly economic, as low-income residents are priced out of the housing market” (Asia News Monitor, 2015).

Nonetheless, the problem is here and affecting everyone. Mr. Carson states, "this is not a federal problem--it's everybody's problem" (Lazo, 2017). According to the 2005 Census, there are 83,347 homeless individuals who currently live on the streets and in shelters, and 224,203 annually in Los Angeles County (Census, 2005). This number does not include Long Beach, Pasadena and Glendale (Census, 2005). Including “Long Beach, Pasadena, and Glendale, the total homeless population is approximately 91,000 homeless individuals in Los Angeles County (Census, 2005). The homeless population has increased to “83,347, of that there are 34,898 who are chronically homeless” (Census, 2005). The chronically homeless are individuals who have lived on the streets for a year or more (Census, 2005). They also have experienced four (4) phases of homelessness in the past three (3) years (Census, 2005).

Conclusion

On the surface homelessness seems like a solvable issue that should have already been resolved. It took many years for a major policy implementation. Measure HHH will not immediately solve the issue, but it is a significant step in potentially solving the problem in Los Angeles. This policy gained the support from the public, who voted to approve this policy. However, the public's support of Measure HHH does not completely depict their willingness to help the public. The problem lies in the public's willingness to accept them in their community. NIMBY is a major advocate for the public's resistance to local homeless shelters. The research design compares and contrasts to major cities in Los Angeles. One whose residents accepted the construction and the other who strongly opposed the homeless shelters. The homeless have a negative stigma surrounding them, it makes residents reluctant to welcome them. This includes criminal activity, drug use, filth, and garbage. The public have identified the need to help the homeless population, but not at the expense of their quality of life. Fernando Chacon, Director of Youth and Family Services, perfectly depicts the general consensus by saying, "it's just that this is not the right location" (Reyes, Smith, & Kim, 2018).

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Appendix

Figure #1

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Would you consider the homeless problem a top priority?					
2. Overall, how would you rate the passing of Measure HHH?					
3. Do you sympathize with the homeless population?					
4. Would you consider the homeless population a liability towards your public safety?					
5. Do you consider yourself a supporter for solving the homeless crisis?					
6. How would you feel about shelters/affordable housing being built in your neighborhood?					
7. Would you wish all homeless individuals found a permanent home?					
8. Would you consider housing a homeless individual?					