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# IMPACTS OF POVERTY ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT HOW LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS STUDENTS ARE AT AN ACADEMIC DISADVANTAGE

Farbod Samari

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IMPACTS OF POVERTY ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT  
HOW LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS STUDENTS ARE AT AN ACADEMIC  
DISADVANTAGE

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Farbod Samari  
May 2023

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Approved by:

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## ABSTRACT

Socioeconomic status impacts a variety of mental health outcomes, including language development. Delays in language development have consistently been linked to poverty. Decreases in vocabulary and phonological awareness are among developmental delays in school-aged children living in poverty. This research aims to contribute to the field of human services by examining the negative impacts of poverty on language development from a social worker's perspective. As social workers thrive to serve disadvantaged populations, this research brings awareness to how language development deficiencies occur in school-aged children living in poverty.

To fulfill the purpose of this study, a quantitative, descriptive/explanatory design will be implemented. Descriptive statistics will be utilized to identify the demographic profile of the respondents from the obtained data. Furthermore, multiple bivariate analyses will be used to assess a significant relationship between poverty and language development.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## PROBLEM FORMULATION

### Introduction

Prior research has well established that poverty negatively impacts education outcomes. (Engle & Black, 2008; Jensen, 2009; Lacour & Tissington, 2011; Moore, Redd, Burkhauser, Mbwana, & Collins, 2009). Children from low-income families develop academic skills at a much slower rate than their more well-off peers. Morgan et al., (2008) present that, this is partly because children from low-income households are twice as likely to have behavioral problems that impede their learning than their wealthy counterparts. Moreover, poverty exposes children to factors that further inhibit their learning. For example, children from low-SES households more likely to live in poor neighborhoods and experience domestic violence, abuse, and lack of parental supervision. These factors contribute to low self-regulation, lower reading and mathematical skills, and consequently poor educational outcomes. (Morgan et al., 2008).

Reardon et al., (2013), indicate that when entering high school, children from low-income families are typically five years behind on language skills than their more well-off peers. SES is consistently a predictor of language comprehension in school-aged children. As early as 3 years old, children in high-SES families have twice as many expressive vocabularies as their low-SES counterparts.

On the macro-level, a few attempts have been made by the U.S education legislators to address the SES-related education gap. Policies such as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Act, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, are among efforts put forth by lawmakers to address the achievement gap. ESSA aims to provide equal opportunity to all students including children from disadvantaged backgrounds (California Department of Education, 2021). Periodic assessments to ensure student test scores reflect high expectations, promise for access to high-quality pre-schools, and maintaining an expectation for lowest-performing students and schools are goals that the legislations aim to achieve (U.S Department of Education, 2021).

However, ESSA and NCLB legislation have not proven to be successful. NCLB and ESSA, expect low-SES schools to achieve the same academic performance as high-SES schools. These expectations are absurd, considering that no effort was made to improve students' SES, access to textbooks, after school programs, and quality teachers. The impacts of the NCLB Act have been minimal to non in raising test scores. This is mainly because the policies deny the disadvantages of low-SES students in the first place (Lad, 2012).

Furthermore, the federal government provides only 8 percent of K-12 fundings (US Department of Education, 2021). The insufficient contribution of the federal government leaves an unrealistic expectation onto the state to provide a significant amount of education fundings.

On the micro-level, studies show that parental involvement and teachers have an impact on education outcomes. Parental involvement is an important component in socio-emotional development and academic outcome in school-aged children. However, low-SES is correlated with low parental involvement (Wang et al., 2016). This is partly because low-income parents often do not obtain higher education and therefore are less involved with their children's educations.

Even though the education system today faces many challenges, social workers can play a role in improving the academic gap among low-SES communities. Research shows that higher numbers of social workers in the school districts are positively linked to higher school completers even in poor communities (Alvarez et al., 2013). Furthermore, macro social workers involved in the legislation-making process have an opportunity and the responsibility to advocate for children's equal access to education. Thus, social workers need to be familiar with the mechanisms of poverty that negatively impact education. It is important to note that there are several mechanisms in poverty that negatively impact education outcomes. These mechanisms will be discussed in more detail in the literature review section of this paper.

### Purpose of the Study

This study will focus on the impacts of poverty on language development in school-aged children. Prior research has established the negative relationship between poverty and language development.

The participants of this study include students in the K-6<sup>th</sup> grade. The language development gap manifests as early as the first few years of school. Thus, studying students in K-6<sup>th</sup> grade will provide sufficient data to confirm the hypothesis of this study, which concludes that poverty negatively impacts language development in school-aged children.

To conduct this study successfully, it is important to consider problems with agency approval and keeping the students' information confidential. Confidentiality is an essential aspect of this study when approaching agency approval. The school district may not wish to disclose information on the students' performance due to fear of public exposure of educational inadequacies in poor communities. Thus, building rapport with the supervisors, ensuring confidentiality, and presenting the possible benefits of the study can increase the chances of approval. To generate a valid data set, this study will gather information from the school district's database regarding language learning accomplishments for K-6<sup>h</sup> grade students. However, since this study will utilize archival secondary data, obtaining participant consent is unnecessary. A quantitative study will best serve the purpose of this research since archival data will be utilized to understand the relationship between poverty and language development.

## Significance of this Project for Social Work Practice

This research aims to build on what has already been uncovered by other studies with the unique perspective of a social worker regarding the relevant issue. Serving the disadvantaged population is part of the NASW Code of Ethics. As stated in the NASW, the primary goal of social work practice is to promote wellbeing and meet the basic needs of humans with special attention to the underserved and vulnerable populations. (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2017). Therefore, this study will contribute to social work by bringing awareness to the relevant issue and the need for more effective policies and further research on the topic. Moreover, this study is in alignment with social work values of service, social justice, and the dignity and worth of the person for that it will examine how poverty hinders the basic right of quality education for young children.

This research will inform the assessment and planning phase of the Generalist Intervention Model (GIM). The assessment phase of the GIM involves seeking to understand the causes of the problem and what needs to be changed (Krist-Ashman & Hull, 2010). The GIM social workers consider the impacts of the problem not only on the individual, but also on the family, and the community. Thus, this study will assess the impacts of poverty on language development and consider what changes need to be made. Furthermore, the thorough assessment implemented by this study will contribute to the understanding of the

issue of poverty and language development and consequently prompt the planning phase.

The research question of this study is as follows: How Does Poverty Impact Language Development in School-Aged Children.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

To understand the far-reaching negative impacts of poverty on language development, an overview of the impacts of poverty on several aspects of an individual's life must be examined. Thus, this chapter will consist of a comprehensive review of the negative impacts of poverty on, birth weight, cognitive development, mental health and education outcomes, and brain and language development.

#### Poverty Effects on Oral Language Development Birth to Third Grade

Young children first learn vocabulary and sentence structure from the oral language spoken in their home. The quality of language spoken at home impacts children's language skills and consequently influence later literacy skills and school achievement. For example, poor household parents engage less frequently in reading, quality conversations, and sharing emotions with their children (Clark et al., 2021). Moreover, low SES parents have less knowledge about child development, which negatively impacts vocabulary development. Higher SES parents use longer sentences and more vocabulary than parents in low-income households. This could be linked to the fact that low SES parents have lower education and greater stress (Clark et al., 2021).

Several other studies have further demonstrated that low SES children are considerably at a lower level of literacy than their more well-off counterparts

(Buckingham, Wheldall, & Beaman-Whedall, 2013). A longitudinal study by Dolean et al., (2019) presents that Romanian children from low SES households had poorer reading skills at the start of the study and continued to have a lower and slower reading development throughout the study. In other words, Low SES children not only had lower reading skills but also had slower language acquisition (Dolean et al., 2019).

Language development starts as early as infancy from interactions with caregivers. Studies show that infants pay close attention to the caregiver's eye gaze and draw meaning from oral language (Cetincelik, Rowland, & Snijders, 2021). However, empirical research presents that the parents from low SES backgrounds with less than a high school diploma, engage in fewer quality interactions with their children and are less likely to provide encouragement and a warm relationship with their children that promotes language development. Thus, infants and children from low SES households are deprived of exposure to an information-rich environment, which negatively impacts their oral language development (Clark et al., 2022).

### Poverty and Language Development, Role of Parenting and Stress

Socioeconomic status impacts mental and physical health outcomes, including language development. Poverty has consistently been a factor in decreases in vocabulary, phonological awareness, and syntax for young children. Perkins et al., (2013) present that the brain systems involved in learning language are impacted by poverty, furthermore, the authors argue that parental



stress and behavior are also a factor in language development delays for children. The family stress model states that lower economic status increases parental emotional distress and, therefore results in harsher discipline strategies and fewer opportunities for affection and nurturing interactions, which is essential in brain development (Perkins et al., 2013). In a study of mother-infant dyadic interactions, mothers with harsh and negative discipline strategies had children who used the shortest and less grammatically correct sentences (Taylor & Leavitt, 2009). Second, the family investment model posits that low SES families are more focused on meeting basic needs, and thus have less time to engage in quality language experiences (Perkins et al., 2013).

In another study, Huttenlocher et al., (2010), presented that maternal vocabulary usage and parental literacy were mediated by poverty. Mothers from lower SES were less educated and used less complex syntax, thus low SES was a predictor of vocabulary development for children in low SES homes. For example, the phrase "pick your ball" is very different than "Can you please pick up your red, striped ball quickly and bring it over to me?" More complex and usage of optional words in a sentence increases children's vocabulary, which is correlated with higher SES children (Huttenlocher et al., 2010).

#### Poverty, Cognitive Development and Language Acquisition

Human development is influenced by genetic disposition and environmental factors. Research shows that poverty has a significant effect on child development (De Lo Reyes-Aragon et al., 2016). The study aimed to

assess developmental delays among SES families. The results showed that 36% of children (ages 0-5), had cognitive development delays, and 22% of participants had below-average communication skills. According to Kaiser et al., (2017) inconsistent, uninvolved, and unsupportive parenting style was correlated with low SES families. Furthermore, a longitudinal study showed that cognitive deficits such as lack of attention control and reduced working memory functioning are linked with lower kindergarten reading and math skills. which is also correlated with low SES families (Welsh, et al., 2010).

#### Poverty, Mental Health, and Language Outcomes

Wadworth, (2011), states that income level is directly associated with mental health outcomes. As income declines so do mental health. Financial strains, causes family conflict, effects parents' mental health, and as a result, children's mental well-being is compromised (Wadworth, 2011). Children's experience of poverty-related stress is also related to negative mental health outcomes. Chronic stress linked with poverty leads to dysfunction of the body's physiological response to stress, thus declining cognitive and psychological resources that are needed in coping with stress (Wadsworth, 2012).

Other forms of mental health disorders have been associated with low SES. In a 12- month longitudinal study, Wolf et al., (2009) present that poverty-related stress exasperates Involuntary Engagement Stress Response (IESR), anxiety level, and aggressive behavior in children and youth. In other words, poverty creates excessive IESR, which results in psychopathologies,

specifically anxiety symptoms. Moreover, higher anxiety levels are related to aggressive behavior in adolescents which impedes learning.

As priorly mentioned, early exposure to poverty makes children vulnerable to negative psychological outcomes immediately and long-term (McLaughlin et al., 2011). Moreover, childhood exposure to poverty is associated with conduct disorder and psychological problems such as hyperactivity and inattention. Pryor et al., (2019), further confirms that ADHD in children in some cases is an externalizing manifestation of poverty. Other studies have found out that low income is also associated with ADHD, and substance abuse in adolescents (Bjorkenstam et al., 2017).

The link between poverty and language development can be found in extensive prior studies. Past research has shown a strong correlation between mental health and academic achievement in school-aged children and adolescents (Burnett-Zeigler et al., 2012). Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies show that children with mental health problems are more likely to have lower grades, language development delays, and school dropouts (Fleming et al., 2004; Chenier, 2012). A prior study presented that poor mental health is strongly related to poor language development and consequently grade point average and attendance for first and third-grade students in Chile. Additionally, the study further confirmed that low socioeconomic status is related to negative mental health outcomes and lower academic achievement (Murphey et al., 2017).

## Poverty, Brain Development and Communication Skills

As mentioned in prior sections of this paper, poverty negatively impacts mental and physical health. Another aspect of the impacts of poverty on education extends to brain and language development. Noble et al., (2007) found that differences among children with high and low SES consistently include vocabulary and phonological awareness. Language is closely linked with brain development and evidence shows that children from low-income households, exhibit deficits in areas of the brain that is responsible for language development (Noble et al., 2006). Low SES is also linked with stress and shrinkage in the brain's gray matter, especially in the areas that are responsible for executive functioning. Consequently, the stress response and brain imbalances impact language acquisition in the educational setting (Blair, 2007).

Theories Guiding Conceptualization. According to De Los Reyes-Aragon, (2016) to get a clear and comprehensive understanding of poverty, child development, and education outcomes, it is necessary to utilize Bronfenbrenner Ecological Model (BEM). The ecological model highlights the importance of the exchanges between an individual and the social environment. BEM focuses on four levels of interaction described as the Micro, Meso, Exo, Macro levels. The microsystem involves an individual's biological, psychological, and social settings. This includes exchanges between family, peers, and school (Hessenauer et al., 2017). The mesosystem contains interactions between two parts of the microsystem – for instance, a young person engaging in play with

peers, or relatives visiting a person's home. According to Bronfenner (1997), the exosystem consists of environments where the person may not directly be involved but is impacted by it. An example includes the mass media. Moreover, the macrosystem encompasses the social, cultural beliefs, and ideologies that impact all systems (Bronfenner, 1998). Policies, resources, and economic conditions are all examples of the macrosystem.

Myers, (1993) further confirms that child development is fully understood only by considering the complex social interactions of the child. Moreover, the study focused on how certain characteristics in the physical, socio-emotional, cognitive, and linguistic ecological systems affected children's education outcomes. Thus, by evaluating each dimension, successful interventions can be possible (Amar & Martinez, 2011).

Furthermore, utilizing the ecological model as a theoretical framework is important because it emphasizes that the education outcome of children is highly dependent upon the behaviors of both self and others (Howie, 2013). Thus, to prevent and correct developmental delays in children from low SES all dimensions of nutrition, family dynamics, environmental stimulation, mental and physical health, language deficits, school systems, and welfare and educational policies must be considered (Aboud & Yousafzai, 2015).

### Summary

This study will explore the impacts of poverty on language development in school-aged children. Language delays are evident in low SES children as early

as three years old. Poverty negatively impacts languages development including vocabulary and syntax. The family stress and family investment model explain how high stress and low engagement with children in low SES homes lead to a lack of brain development and consequently negatively impact language development. Low SES parents engage in reading with their children less frequently, have less vocabulary, and have less complex and quality conversations with their children. This is due to low-income parents having less education and greater stress, which contributes to language development delays in their children. This study aims to further explore the negative impacts of poverty on language development and contribute to the relevant literature through a social worker's perspective.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

This study will explore the impacts of poverty on language development in school-aged children. The following chapter will demonstrate in detail, how this study will be carried out. The sections of this chapter will include, the study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects, and data analysis.

#### Study Design

The purpose of this study is to identify the negative impacts of poverty on language development in school-aged children in San Bernardino County. Since there already exists an adequate amount of research on the subject, this research project will take on a descriptive/explanatory research design. As hypothesized, this study will demonstrate that poverty negatively impacts language development in school-aged children. The goal of this research project is to attain greater knowledge on how poverty affects children's language development. This study will utilize secondary data from student behavioral files. Thus, a quantitative research design will be appropriate.

A methodological strength of this approach is that the results will be consistent, precise, reliable, and scientifically sound. This is necessary because the findings of this study leave no doubt that poverty negatively impacts children's language development. It is important to bring attention to the relevant

subject as the result of this study will infer the devastating impact. Thus, this scientifically sound research design aims to add a social worker's point of view to current research and further contribute to future intervention and policymaking.

A limitation of quantitative, secondary data is that it will not explain in detail why and how poverty impacts language development in school-aged children. It is useful to know the mechanisms in poverty that lead to language deficit in school-aged children, however, this is a limitation of this study.

### Sampling

This research project will utilize, simple random sampling from secondary data from a school district in San Bernardino County. English Language Development scores for students receiving free school lunches will be collected for this study. Students who receive free school lunch have already been evaluated by the district for income and meet the poverty criteria for this study, and student scores in English Language development for reading, writing, listening, speaking, and overall test scores will be the tool in measuring language development. There will be a sample size of 100 participants in this study to assure generalizability.

### Data Collection and Instrument

Quantitative data will be collected via secondary archival data of a school district in the San Bernardino area for school years between 2015-2019. Utilizing prior school years' data protects the outcome of this study because the current school year's data may be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty



will be measured as the independent variable with the nominal dichotomous level of measurement. Students who are receiving free lunch at the schools have been assessed by the district and meet the poverty criteria for this study, thus students living in poverty will be defined as those students receiving free school lunch. Moreover, language development will be examined as the dependent variable with an interval level of measurement. To examine language development, the district's student profile charts the Q-system will be utilized. The Q-system is an online information system that contains each student's demographic, academic, behavioral, health, transcripts, GPA, test score, and attendance status. The charts from the school district include the data gathered by different schools within the district. Thus, derived from the Q-system, the scores in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language achievement are posted on the Q-system as either a (+), which means meets grade-level skill requirement or a (-), which means does not meet grade-level skill requirement and needs improvement. This + or – score will be obtained as the measurement for language development. Additionally, demographic information such as gender, age, ethnicity, immigration status, and primary language is spoken at home will be collected. To collect the necessary data, the Q-system will be utilized.

#### Procedures

A Microsoft Excel sheet will be created to input data collected from the district's archival charts and the Q-system. To obtain permission to access students' data, the researcher will contact the district's official. A meeting will be

held to discuss the parameters of accessing students' data and confidentiality. Each student's file will be researched to identify demographics, immigration status, and primary language spoken at home. Furthermore, the Q-system will be utilized to gather language development scores for reading, listening, writing, speaking, and overall test scores. The researcher will compare the district's archival and the Q-systems' data to assure consistency between the data sets.

#### Protection of Human Subjects

This research implements a systematic approach that intends to generalize the knowledge gained from the study. However, this research will not establish interaction with human subjects and instead, it will utilize archival data. Moreover, this study will not disclose students' identifiable information, such as name, address, or student identification number. According to the IRB guidelines, based on the aforementioned information, this research falls under the Not Human Subject Research (NHSR).

#### Data Analysis

To fulfill the purpose of this study, a quantitative, descriptive/explanatory design will be implemented. Descriptive statistics will be utilized to identify the demographic profile of the respondents from the obtained data. Furthermore, multiple bivariate analyses will be used to assess a significant relationship between poverty and language development.

## Summary

This study will apply a social worker's viewpoint and explore the negative impacts of poverty on language development in school-aged children. The focus of this study is to utilize the archival data of students' information such as poverty level and scores in English language development to determine the relationship between the two variables. Quantitative methods will be utilized to conduct this research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

Descriptive statistics were generated for demographic characteristics of the sample along with composite scores on the standardized early literacy test (DIBELS) for the beginning of the year, end of the year, and change of scores over time. Table 1 displays these descriptive statistics.

Table 1. Population Demographics and Composite and Growth Literacy Test Scores by Homeless and Non-Homeless Groups

	Homeless		Non-Homeless				
	n	%	n	%			
<b>Grade</b>							
1	57	57.0%	1	1.2%			
2	32	32.0%	0	0.0%			
3	11	11.0%	40	47.0%			
4	0	0.0%	41	48.8%			
5	0	0.0%	2	2.4%			
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	48	48.0%	8	9.5%			
Female	52	52.0%	76	90.5%			
<b>Max</b>							
	M	SD	Min	Max	M	SD	Min

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Age	6.9	.822	6.0	8.0	8.8	.782	7.0
10.0							
Composite Scores							
BOY	323.8	34.9	258.0	520.0	323.6	30.4	260.0.
391.0							
EOY	420.2	41.7	341.0	563.0	428.8	37.3	346.0
502.0							
Growth	96.4	46.8	-96.0	224.0	105.2	30.8	44.0
187.0							

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The sample of this quantitative study consisted of 100 elementary students experiencing homelessness and 84 not experiencing homelessness, for a total sample size of 184. The majority (70%) of the total sample was female. Students' ages ranged from six to 10 years old, with students in the housed sample being older on average than those in the unhoused sample. Students represented grades one through five. The composite scores of the standardized early literacy test, DIBELS, were considered for each student to measure language development. Data included the Beginning of the Year (BOY), End of the Year (EOY) scores and the change in scores over the course of the school year (Growth).

To compare the housed and non-housed students on the pre-post DIBELS scores, a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted using the

“Growth” scores as the dependent variable. A non-parametric test was chosen because scores on the literacy test were not normally distributed. Table 2 displays the results of this analysis.

Table 2. Comparison of Composite Pre-Post DIBELST Test Scores Between Housed and Non-Housed Students

Housed Status	n	Rank Average	Z	U	p
Housed	84	97.45	1.156	4616.00	.248
Non-Housed	100	88.34			

Results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicates that changes in the pre-post DIBELS scores were not significantly different between the homeless and non-homeless students. Because the unhoused students were, on average, younger than the housed students, a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was computed to determine if age may be acting as a covariant on growth scores between the two groups. Results indicated that age was not contributing to any differences in scores [ $F(1.182)=0.164, p=.686$ ].

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

This study hypothesized that poverty, as indicated by homelessness, negatively impacts language development in school aged children; however, the outcome of this study indicates no significant impact of poverty (homelessness) on language development. Students experiencing homelessness had similar improvement and outcomes between BOY and EOY scores as their non-homeless counterparts. The findings of this study diverge from the findings of previous research. Prior studies have established that poverty, specifically homelessness, lowers the quality of parent-child interaction, increases parental stress, impacts brain and cognitive development, and leads to negative mental health outcomes. Consequently, children who are homeless have worse language development outcomes than their non-homeless counterparts. Unlike the current study, past research considered income as a measurement for poverty rather than housing, which could impact the outcomes of the study. Poverty is complex and impacts people from low SES in all areas of life functioning, not just housing.

One possible reason this study did not find differences in test scores between housed and non-housed students may be since non-housed students came from a school district's that provides extensive academic, psychological, and counseling services to disadvantaged students. Consequently, provision of services could be an explanation for higher scores of students experiencing homelessness compared to other typical school districts that do not provide

similar services. In fact, two students who were houseless showed significantly higher gains in test scores over the year than students who were housed, and only three showed a decline in scores. It would be expected that more houseless students would show a decline in scores given the stress of their situation.

Another possible reason for no differences in test scores between the groups could be that majority of students were female, and female students typically outperform their male counterparts in scholastic achievements (Voyer & Voyer, 2014), and this may hold true even when these students are houseless.

#### Limitations

The present study concluded that poverty has no impact on language development in school-aged children. However, the data did not screen for English as Second Language (ESL) students, which could have impacted the results. Furthermore, other variables such as the amount of psychological and academic support provided for homeless vs. non-homeless students could be affecting literacy test scores; however, these variables were not accessible in the database that was used for this study. In addition, children in the unhoused group were younger than students in the housed group. It may be that age, specifically cognitive development, could be affecting the literacy test scores beyond the effects of being housed or unhoused, even though an analysis covariance, using age as the covariate, yielded no significant differences in growth scores between housed and unhouse groups.

#### Implications for Social Work and Future Research



An assumption of this study is that the supportive mental health counseling that homeless students received positively impacted their language development, thus it may be that psychological services could act as a protective factor for homeless students. This is an important finding for policymakers and school social workers because they can help homeless students have a better chance at language acquisition by providing supportive services. Moreover, despite the results of this study, past research has established the negative impacts of poverty on language development; however, it is still unclear what mechanisms through which poverty impacts literacy development. For example, is parental stress due to poverty or lack of education a factor, or could it be parenting and discipline style impact language acquisition? Thus, future studies should consider implementing research on the abovementioned factors to shed light on the factors within the micro-system of school-aged children that impacts language acquisition.

The results of this study may differ from past research due to the fact that the school district in which the data was collected provided mental health services to students who were experiencing homelessness. The program consisted of weekly check-in with students and providing mental health services such as coping with depression, anxiety, and other stressors that the students may be experiencing. By being able to cope with the stressors that homelessness and poverty cause, students at this particular school district may have been better able to tend to their academic endeavors. Thus, score higher

than students in school districts that did not provide mental health services.

Hence providing mental health services for students, especially for those experiencing homelessness and poverty, can be utilized by policy makers and school social workers to enhance the academic performance of students in need.

## APPENDIX A

### DATA COLLECTION GUIDE OF THE Q-SYSTEM

- Age
- Grade
- Gender
- DIBELS Scores BOY
- DIBELS Scores EOY
- Homelessness and Non-homelessness Status

APPENDIX B  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

IRB #: IRB-FY2022-86

Title: Impacts of Poverty on Language Development

Creation Date: 9-10-2021

End Date:

Status: **Approved**

Principal Investigator: Armando Barragan Jr.

Review Board: Main IRB Designated Reviewers for School of Social Work

Sponsor:

## Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	Exempt
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## Key Study Contacts

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