



# Alcohol Use Patterns Among The Homeless Community in Relationship to Willingness to Seek Help and Overall Wellbeing

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## Introduction

- Homelessness is often associated with alcohol consumption, feelings of helplessness, and lack of social support.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2023, over 650,000 people experienced homelessness in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

### Aim

- The purpose of this study is to identify alcohol use patterns in adults in the homeless community and its relationship to the participant's perceived social support (i.e., significant other, family, and/or friends).

## Method

### Sample

- Surveys obtained from 44 individuals living at local homeless shelter in Fort Worth, Texas.

### Measures

- Homelessness: Lived Experience of Homelessness Survey
- Alcohol Dependence: Alcohol Dependence Scale
- Social Support: Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

### Analysis

- Descriptive statistics and correlations were used to determine how alcohol use influenced perceived social support from family, friends, and significant others.

Demographics (N = 44)	Total (n)	Percent (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	12	27.3
Male	32	72.7
<b>Hispanic</b>		
No	26	59.1
Yes	17	38.6
<b>Race</b>		
Asian	1	2.3
Black	18	40.9
White	15	34.1
Other or unknown	5	11.4

## Results

### Alcohol:

- The likelihood of someone receiving treatment for alcohol use in the past 6 months was not significantly related to perceived social support from significant others ( $r = .13, p = .440$ ) or friends ( $r = .25, p = .122$ ), but it was significantly related to social support received from family members ( $r = .32, p = .047$ ).

### Homelessness:

- 55% of participants have been homeless for over six months.
- Obtaining rental assistance was the most difficult type of help to receive (61.4%), followed by shelter (36.4%), and food (22.7%).

### What would be most helpful for ending your homelessness?

	Total (n)	Percent (%)
<b>(N = 44)</b>		
Shelter	18	40.9
Tent	6	13.6
Housing	33	75.0
Hotel Voucher	24	54.5
Food	23	52.3
Hygiene kits	18	40.9
Showers	20	45.5
Bus Pass	23	52.3
Workforce Placement (Job)	20	45.5
Mental Health Treatment	18	40.9
Medical Care	19	43.2
Dental Care	19	43.2
Substance Use Treatment	12	27.3
Identification	21	47.7
Social Security Card	19	43.2
Case Management	19	43.2
Phone	24	54.5

## Correlations with Time in Treatment for Alcohol

Variable	Treatment for Alcohol
1. Significant Other Support	0.13
2. Family Support	0.32*
3. Friends Support	0.25

Note. \*Correlation is significant at  $p < .05$ .

## Discussion

### Alcohol and Support

- Participants who have received treatment for alcohol use are more likely to have a stronger relationship with their family members.

### Homelessness

- Half of the participants have been homeless for over six months.
- Receiving housing assistance was the most challenging type of help to receive among participants.
- Housing, bus passes, and phones were seen as helpful items in ending participants' homelessness.

### Limitations

- Sample not diverse or large enough to represent the entire population.

### Future Directions:

- Examine possibilities for addressing homelessness outside of the shelter environment.
- Further explore the relationship between those receiving treatment for their alcohol use and social support from family.

## References

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