Grace Kay

**Topic**

The research question I will be posing is: what is the relationship between the number of homeless individuals by state (sheltered and unsheltered) and

1) the number of nonprofits in the state addressing homelessness

2) the total number of available beds by state (including Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Safe Haven, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Other Permanent Housing)

3) number of beds available in ES

4) number of beds available in TH

5) number of beds available in RRH

6) number of beds available in PSH

**Background**

Homelessness continues to be a social problem in the United States. The rate of homelessness between 2017-2018 increased by 0.3%. To address the issue of homelessness, each state has one or many Continuum of Care (CoC), which are local planning bodies responsible for coordinating the full range of homelessness services in a geographic area, which may cover a city, county, metropolitan area, or an entire state. The CoCs work in collaboration with many nonprofits that work to address homelessness. Each states CoC takes a PIT (Point in Time) count takes place every January to estimate the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals in each state. The HIC (Housing Inventory Count) isproduced by each CoC and provides an annual inventory of beds that assist people in the CoC who are experiencing homelessness or leaving homelessness.

**Method**

The number of homeless individuals by state is the dependent variable. The independent variables with be the number of nonprofits by state, the total amount of beds available per state, as well as comparing the specific types of bed available per state. I will use a data visualization to show these comparisons in python. My hypothesis is: with a greater number of nonprofits and beds in the state, the number of unsheltered homeless people will be lower. This research will be relevant and have could policy implications. If the current way the CoC’s are addressing homelessness is not significantly lowered the rate of homelessness, the current services should be reconsidered. On the other hand, if the research shows that having a certain amount of nonprofits or beds in a state has significant impact on the rate of homelessness, it could mean that the current system is working.

**Data**

The data come from the PIT count and HIC for each state is provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The excel sheet with this data was retrieved and downloaded from <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3031/pit-and-hic-data-since-2007/>. The HIC count includes total number of beds as well as dividing the beds into categories including Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Safe Haven and Permanent Supportive Housing. The excel sheet of for 2007-2018 PIT count and HIC count was retrieved and downloaded from. An excel sheet with the number of nonprofits by state that have a mission to address homelessness was compiled using data from [https://www.guidestar.org/search](https://www.guidestar.org/search" \t "_blank).

**Limitations**

As coming from a social work background, I could have some bias toward social services. I think that states should provide as many services as possible to the homeless and so this could influence my research. The population in each state varies widely and so researchers would assume that the population of homeless persons would vary greatly between states as well. Furthermore, the issue of solving or addressing homelessness is very complex, and so there are many other factors that could influence the rates of homelessness in each state. Looking at the rate of homelessness compared to the number of nonprofits related to homelessness and the number of beds available only gives a small part of the picture.