

**Abstract: Effects of Rental Assistance on Recipients' Living Situations**

The purpose of this research is to find out whether or not the rental assistance program helped low income individuals/families keep their housing. The sample included 11 individuals who applied for and received the rental assistance from December 2011 to November 2012. This study used a mixed method design, which includes qualitative and quantitative aspects. Due to the difficulty in accessing study participants (e.g., out of service phone numbers, tight work schedules or had very limited means of transportation), this study used a convenience sample. Either phone or face-to-face interviews were conducted with study participants. Study participants were asked how the rental assistance helped each person, and how the program could be improved in order to better aid future recipients. In order to understand the participants' financial needs, information about the amount of money for rent, utilities and other expenses were examined as well.

Overall, the participants seemed pleased and very thankful for assistance provided. Seven out of the eleven participants maintained their housing. 18% expressed that they were able to maintain their housing, but experienced trouble in the subsequent months. The majority expressed the need for provision of more money. Findings of the study indicate that there is a significant correlation between the length that an individual had been in their current/previous housing where rental assistance was provided and whether or not they were able to keep their housing. All four recipients who lost their housing had been in their home for 6 months or less. Those who managed to keep their housing had been in their homes for longer than 6 months and the longest was 15 years. In conclusion, this program is indeed one that helps those who know about it and reach out to receive it. Although the general consensus when asked about improvements was to increase the amount of money given, overall, the program is linked with extremely positive connotations.