

## **Understanding the Lived Experience of Homeless Women**

### **Abstract**

Homelessness is one of the most significant social issues encountered in the modern world in most developed and developing countries and has been expanded more particularly in Iran. Understanding the issues and problems of homeless women can help social planners design more effective social policies. Hence, this study examines the life experiences of homeless women with an emphasis on social issues and problems that they have faced during their homeless years. The data for this study were collected using a qualitative method, through interviews and observation techniques. The methodology of this research is phenomenology and the sample size is 18 individuals. The common feature of these individuals is the life experience of homelessness. The thematic analysis method was applied to analyze the data and according to this study, seven main themes were extracted, which represent an organized image of their life experiences. These themes include addiction and continuity of homelessness, applying a strategy of struggling for survival, multiple offenses and harassment, formation of negative emotions, social exclusion, deficiencies in social networks, and concurrency of deprivation. In conclusion, homeless women are in critical, horrific conditions that make them more vulnerable to homelessness and its threats. The negative life experiences gained through homelessness not only lead to the continuity of homelessness but also make it difficult to get rid of the condition.