
Impuls - Netherlands Center for Social Care Research



Does the level of social quality differ between homeless women and men before and after shelter exit?

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Women's homelessness is more often hidden

Underrepresented in statistics

Postpone use of shelters

Vulnerable group

Background

Earlier studies directly comparing homeless women and men

- younger
- caretakers of children
- unemployed
- dependent on welfare benefits
- history of abuse
- at risk for violence while homeless
- lack of social support resources
- use of professional support resources

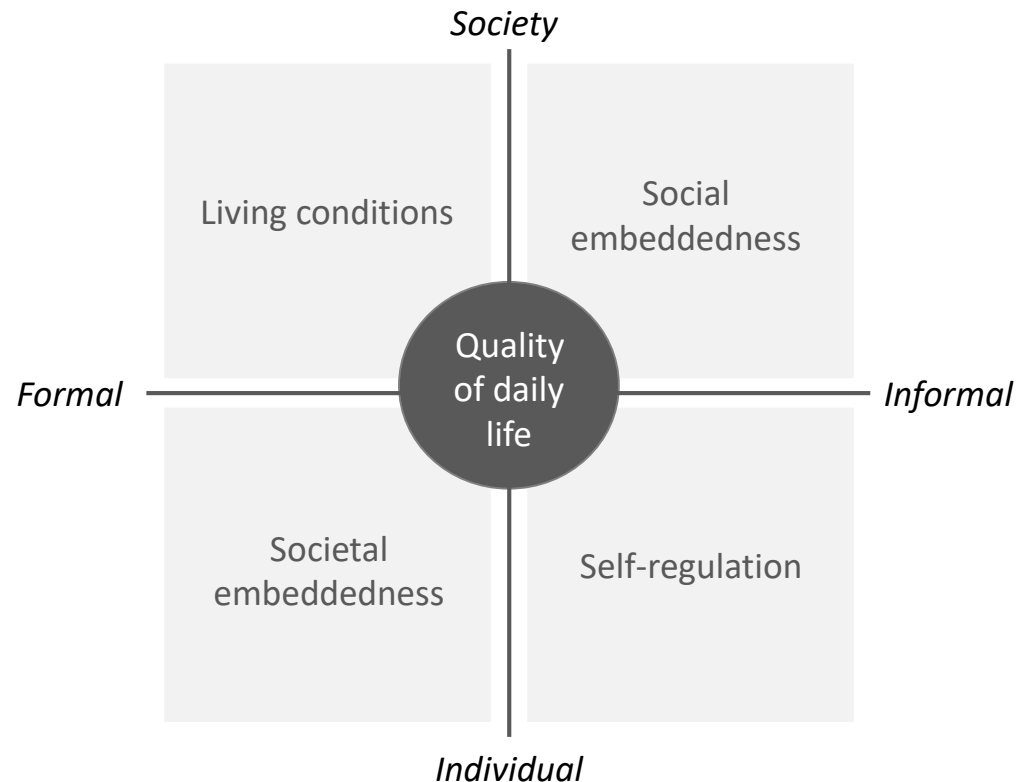
Model of social quality

Van der Maesen & Walker

Extent to which people can participate in social relationships

- enhance their well-being, capacities and potential
- shape their own circumstances
- contribute to societal development

Two basic tensions

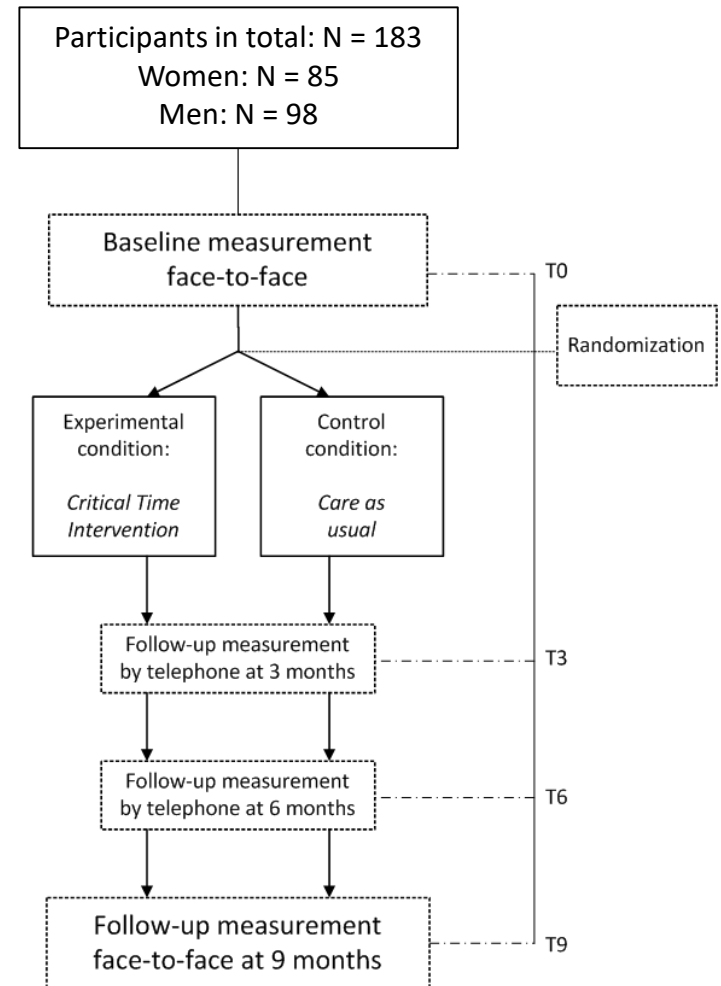


Model of social quality

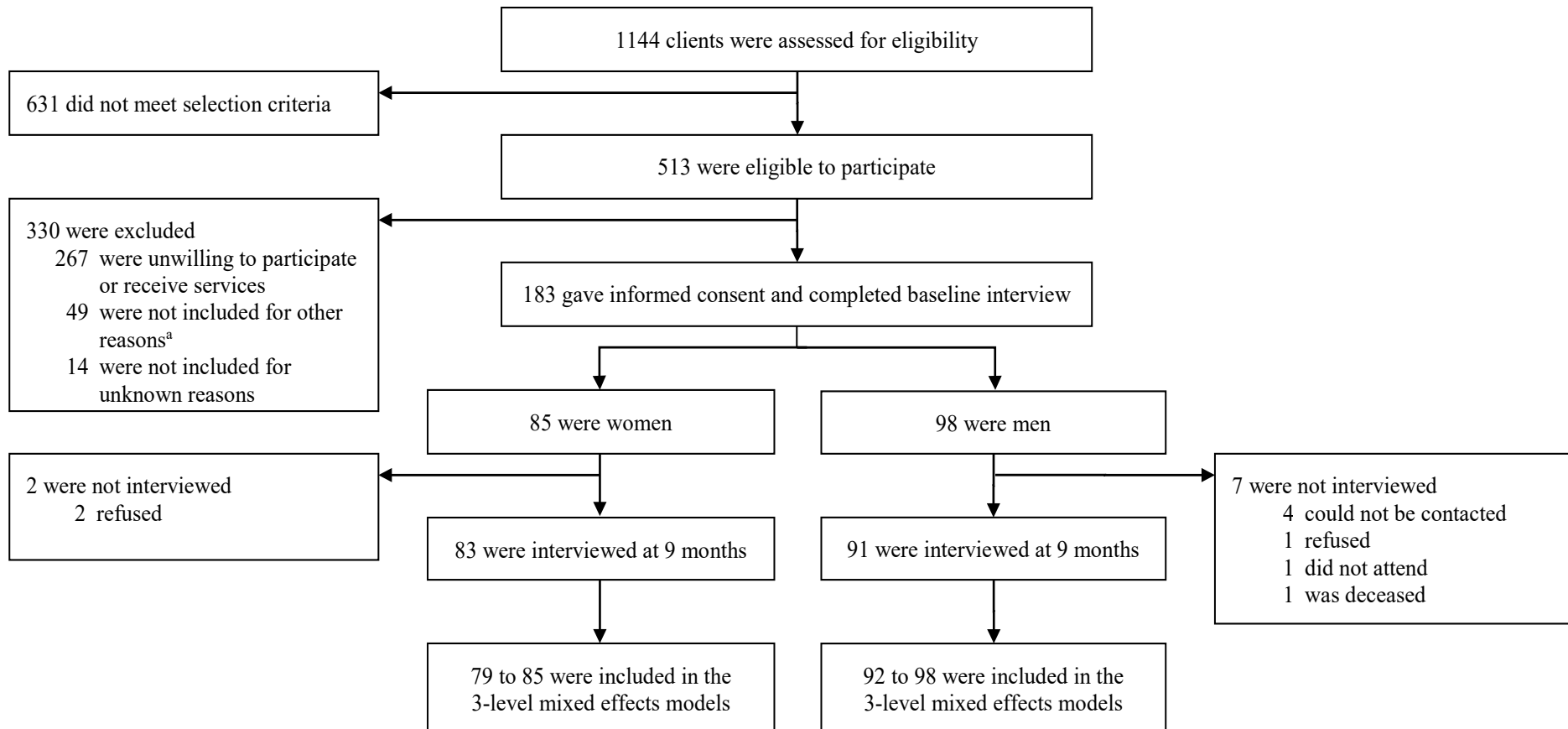


Design and participants

- Multi-center randomized controlled trial to test the effectiveness of Critical Time Intervention (CTI) for homeless people
- Selection criteria:
 - 18 years or older
 - about to move **from shelter to housing** in the community
 - willing to accept case management services
- Attrition: 6% at 9-month follow-up



Recruitment and follow-up flow



Socio-demographic characteristics

Baseline differences		Women (N = 85)	Men (N = 98)	p-value
Years of age		37.90 (11.22)	42.93 (11.40)	.003
Migration background				.403
	Dutch native	53 (62.4%)	70 (71.4%)	
	First-generation migrant	23 (27.1%)	19 (19.4%)	
	Second-generation migrant	9 (10.6%)	9 (9.2%)	
Married or in civil partnership		11 (12.9%)	12 (12.2%)	.887
One or more children		75 (88.2%)	52 (53.1%)	<.001
History of literal homelessness		47 (55.3%)	67 (68.4%)	.069
Education level				.009
	Low education level	60 (70.6%)	55 (56.1%)	
	Intermediate education level	21 (24.7%)	24 (24.5%)	
	High education level	4 (4.7%)	19 (19.4%)	

Living conditions

Baseline differences	Women		Men		Baseline difference
	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD) or no. (%)</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD) or no. (%)</i>	
Satisfaction with financial resources	83	2.93 (1.50)	96	2.92 (1.54)	0.00 [-0.45 – 0.45]
High amount of debt (\geq €10,000)	70	32 (45.7%)	89	47 (52.8%)	0.75 [0.40 – 1.42]
Currently employed	84	16 (19.0%)	98	37 (37.8%)	0.39** [0.19 – 0.78]
Satisfaction with housing	85	4.75 (1.42)	97	4.88 (1.51)	-0.18 [-0.61 – 0.25]
Satisfaction with safety	84	5.43 (1.04)	98	5.45 (1.05)	-0.08 [-0.39 – 0.23]
Victimized	85	32 (37.6%)	98	18 (18.4%)	2.92** [1.44 – 5.91]

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Social & Societal embeddedness

Baseline differences	Women		Men		Baseline difference
	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD) or no. (%)</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD) or no. (%)</i>	
Support from family members	83	2.94 (1.45)	93	2.97 (1.32)	-0.03 [-0.44 – 0.39]
Support from friends or acquaintances	83	3.37 (1.12)	94	3.16 (1.10)	0.21 [-0.12 – 0.54]
Minor children staying with participant	82	38 (46.3%)	89	3 (3.4%)	16.92*** [5.82 – 49.18]
Number of unmet care needs	76	1.96 (2.08)	85	1.87 (2.25)	1.04 [0.74 – 1.47]
Number of types of services used	83	2.77 (1.71)	92	2.02 (1.33)	1.39** [1.14 – 1.69]
Involved in criminal activity	85	5 (5.9%)	98	14 (14.3%)	0.43 [0.15 – 1.20]

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Self-regulation

Baseline differences	Women		Men		Baseline difference
	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD) or no. (%)</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD) or no. (%)</i>	
Self-esteem	84	30.36 (5.77)	95	32.13 (5.33)	-1.77 [-3.41 – -0.13]*
Psychological distress	82	0.68 (0.53)	94	0.51 (0.54)	0.16 [0.00 – 0.32]*
Satisfaction with health	84	4.43 (1.26)	98	4.84 (1.21)	-0.41 [-0.78 – -0.05]*
Satisfaction with empowerment	85	5.11 (1.49)	98	5.53 (1.33)	-0.42 [-0.84 – -0.01]*
Excessive alcohol use	81	6 (7.4%)	91	29 (31.9%)	0.18 [0.07 – 0.46]***
Cannabis use	80	6 (7.5%)	89	22 (24.7%)	0.26 [0.10 – 0.69]**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Changes after shelter exit

- After shelter exit, the rate of change did not differ between women and men on any factors
- Gap in social quality remains after shelter exit



Conclusions

- Before shelter exit in the Netherlands, homeless women differed from men on many of the social quality factors
- Factors are similar as identified in earlier research, except:
 - proportion of women and men involved in criminal activity was similar
 - homeless women had more health-related problems than men
- Women in homeless shelters are a particularly vulnerable group
- Opportunity remains for shelter services to improve women's social quality during and after their shelter stay

Recommendations

- Attenuating residential and follow-up services more to the needs of homeless women
 - Access to conditional resources
 - Good cooperative links with services for women fleeing domestic violence, as well as police and other law enforcement services
 - Trauma-informed care
- Stable housing in the community as soon as possible

Thank you!



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