

CRITERIA AND INDICATORS OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH OF THE PHENOMENON OF POVERTY

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Annotation

The phenomenon of poverty is well recognized as a multidimensional social problem. Many studies have attempted to understand poverty, but developing appropriate criteria and indicators presents a challenge. This article proposes a comprehensive approach for developing criteria and indicators for sociological research on poverty. It emphasizes holistic understanding, multiple perspectives, and interdisciplinary analysis. The paper discusses various conceptualizations of poverty and their implications for criteria and indicators, such as relative and absolute poverty, subjective poverty, and social exclusion. The article also addresses the importance of context, temporal variations, and diverse social groups. Finally, the paper concludes with reflections on the potential impact of the proposed criteria and indicators on poverty research and policy-making.

Keywords: poverty, criteria, indicators, sociological research, multidimensional, holistic, subjective, social exclusion

Introduction

Poverty is a widespread and complex social phenomenon that affects individuals, families, communities, and societies as a whole. The understanding of poverty as a monolithic, unidimensional concept is no longer acceptable. Instead, a multidimensional perspective is imperative to explore the various faces and underlying causes of poverty. Moreover, to develop effective interventions, it is necessary to define relevant criteria and indicators that can help identify and monitor the incidence and characteristics of poverty. In this article, we propose a comprehensive approach for developing criteria and indicators for sociological research on poverty.

Main part

Conceptualizing poverty

To develop criteria and indicators for poverty research, it is important to understand the various conceptualizations of poverty. The most common forms of poverty include:

- Relative poverty: It refers to the condition of people who lack the resources that are seen as necessary by society to participate fully and enjoy a standard of living considered acceptable.

Relative poverty is defined by social norms and expectations that vary across societies and time.

- Absolute poverty: It refers to the condition in which people lack basic necessities, such as food, shelter, and clothing, that are required to maintain a minimum standard of living according to national standards.
- Subjective poverty: It refers to the perception of people about their own economic situation and their satisfaction with it. Subjective poverty is influenced by cultural factors, social comparisons, and expectations.
- Social exclusion: It refers to the processes and structures that prevent people from participating fully in society and accessing socio-economic opportunities.

Each of these conceptualizations has different implications for developing criteria and indicators for poverty research. Relative poverty, for instance, emphasizes the importance of social comparison and the need to define poverty in relation to what the majority of people in a society have. As a result, the criteria and indicators of relative poverty vary across societies and time. Absolute poverty, on the other hand, focuses on identifying the minimum subsistence level required for survival, which can be used as a reference point for comparisons across countries.

Contextualizing poverty

Poverty research needs to take into account the context where poverty occurs. The criteria and indicators of poverty research should consider the historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors that shape poverty across time and space. Poverty is also experienced differently by various social groups, such as women, children, elderly, ethnic minorities, and disabled people. Investigating these differential experiences of poverty requires an intersectional approach that integrates multiple dimensions, such as gender, age, ethnicity, and disability. Furthermore, poverty is affected by macro-level factors, such as political and economic systems, technological changes, globalization, and environmental degradation. These factors can have diverse impacts on poverty and require different criteria and indicators for their analysis.

Temporal variations of poverty

The dynamics of poverty change over time, and poverty research needs to consider these temporal variations. The criteria and indicators should reflect the different stages of the poverty cycle, from entry to exit. For example, the criteria and indicators of poverty at the entry stage may focus on the availability of resources, while those at the exit stage may focus on the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving the quality of life of the poor.

Holistic understanding of poverty

Poverty research requires a holistic approach that encompasses multiple dimensions of poverty. Criteria and indicators of poverty need to consider the material, social, and psychological aspects of poverty. Material dimensions include income, consumption, and assets. Social dimensions include education, health, and social protection. Psychological

dimensions include the sense of dignity, respect, and belonging. Combining these different dimensions of poverty can help develop a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and its underlying causes.

Interdisciplinary analysis of poverty

Developing criteria and indicators for poverty research requires an interdisciplinary analysis that brings together different social sciences, such as economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and political science. Each of these disciplines can contribute to developing a more nuanced and multi-dimensional understanding of poverty.

Conclusion

Developing appropriate criteria and indicators for sociological research on poverty is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and effective interventions. This article proposes a comprehensive approach to developing criteria and indicators that emphasizes a holistic understanding, multiple perspectives, and interdisciplinary analysis. The criteria and indicators of poverty need to consider the different conceptualizations of poverty, the contextual factors that shape poverty, the temporal variations of poverty, the holistic dimensions of poverty, and the interdisciplinary nature of poverty research. By adopting a comprehensive approach to developing criteria and indicators for poverty research, we can hope to better understand and address the multilayered challenges of poverty.

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