



Qualitative Poverty Research Methods

University of Bristol, 16th July 2019

Class Exercises

Class exercise 1: Understanding poverty definitions

Aim: To develop participants' skills in exploring public views on poverty definition in the UK using the PSE-UK approach

Duration: 30 minutes including reporting

Reporting: On completion of this task, one participant from each group will be asked to report back verbally to the group. Dr Fahmy will collate participant's suggestions using a flipchart.

TASK: Working in groups of SIX, conduct a mini-focus group to explore participants' views on poverty definition in the UK

The PSE-UK interview protocol for this exercise is described below. Please adopt this approach in exploring participants' views on necessities in the UK.

One participant will need to adopt the Interviewer role and one participant will need to act as Observer. These should be assigned to different participants to Exercise 2. Remaining participants will comprise the focus group.

In reporting back on this exercise, you will need to consider the following issues:

Which of these perspectives is most widely supported? How if at all do participants explain their responses? Is there evidence of a consensus on poverty definition here? What does this tell us about the nature of poverty?

NOTES

Class exercise 2: Determining the necessities of life

Aim: To develop participants' skills in using brainstorming and card sort methods to explore public views on poverty in the UK using the PSE-UK approach

Duration: 30 minutes including reporting

Reporting: On completion of this task, one participant from each group will be asked to report back verbally to the group. Dr Oloya will collate participant's suggestions using a flipchart.

TASK: Working in groups of SIX, conduct a mini-focus group to explore and report back on participants' views on necessities using either brainstorming or card sort methods.

Class groups will be randomly assigned to either Phase 1 (brainstorming) or Phase 2 (card sort) exercises. The PSE-UK interview protocols for this exercise are described below. Please adopt this approach in exploring participants' views on necessities.

One participant will need to adopt the Interviewer role and one participant will need to act as Observer. Remaining participants will comprise the focus group.

In reporting back on this exercise, you will need to consider the following issues:

What are the specific items and activities that participants have suggested? What rationales (if any) are offered in support of these suggestions? Are these items easy or difficult to phrase? Do they involve difficult decisions about 'how much is enough'? If so, how do participants make these decisions? Is there evidence of a consensus on necessities of life in the UK amongst participants?

Was the group easy to moderate? Are there dominant views or participants? How did you address this?

NOTES

2012 PSE-UK brainstorming protocol

“We do not want to discuss what you personally need, but rather what you think everyone in the UK should be able to afford. Remember that we used the following example of an imaginary household:

SCENARIO 1: Tom (aged 38) and Jenny (aged 35) are a married couple with two children, Jack (aged 12) and Lizzie (aged 8). They live in the suburbs of Manchester. Tom works at a local hospital and is the sole wage earner within the household. Both parents are in good health but their younger child (Lizzie) is disabled.

Remember, too, that we are looking for what is a necessity for this household, where people in the household (adults or children) will be missing out on something that’s essential in the UK today if they lack it.

Begin with free discussion. Note participant suggestions on flipchart. Probe how important various factors are in reaching a collective decision”

“Necessities: Things which are essential and which everyone should be able to afford if they want them in our society today

Desirables: things which many or most people have access to today but which are not essential in our society today

Luxuries: things which are quite costly and exclusive and which fewer people have in our society today”

2012 PSE-UK poverty definitions protocol

Households living in the UK today are poor if:

Subsistence

“They do not have enough money to meet physical needs for food, shelter, warmth, light and sanitation for all members of the household”

Basic Needs

“They do not have enough money to meet their physical needs *and* to provide for education, access to information, and health and social care for all members of the household”

Relative Poverty

“They do have enough money to meet their basic needs *and* to fully participate in activities and living patterns which are customary in the UK today”

Class exercise 3: conducting cognitive interviews

Aim: To develop participants' skills in using cognitive interviewing techniques to understand survey responses on living standards

Duration: 30 minutes

Reporting: On completion of this task, one participant from each group will be asked to report back verbally to the group. Dr Fahmy will collate participant's suggestions using a flipchart.

TASK: Working in groups of THREE, conduct a short cognitive interview to test survey items on drawn from the 2012 PSE-UK study.

The PSE-UK cognitive interview protocol for this exercise is described below. Please adopt this approach in examining participants' responses on these items.

One participant will need to adopt the Interviewer role, one participant will need to act as Observer, and one participant will act as Respondent.

In reporting back on this exercise, you will need to consider the following issues:

What do respondents understand by terms like 'standard of living' and 'satisfied'? How do respondents go about answering questions of this type? Are probing and think aloud methods effective in investigating these issues?

NOTES

2012 PSE-UK Cognitive interview protocol: standard of living

Item(s): SolRate, SatSol

Survey routing: All respondents

Measurement Objective: Measurement of subjective perceptions of living standards

Issues to investigate: What do respondents understand by 'standard of living'? Can standard of living be measured on a one-dimensional scale? What does to respondents to be 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied'?

Supporting Materials

Showcard 10

[SolRate] *Generally, how would you rate your standard of living?*

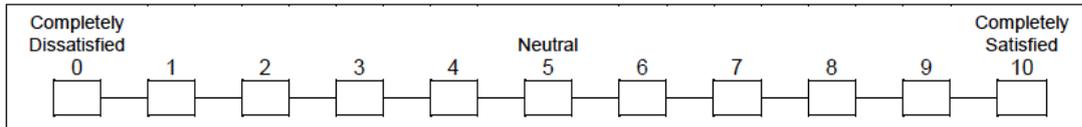
(SolRate)

CODE ONE ONLY

1. High
2. Fairly high
3. Medium
4. Fairly low
5. Low
6. Don't Know/ Refused

[SatSol] *how satisfied are you with your standard of living?*

(SatSol)



THINK ALOUD (concurrent)

If respondent needs encouraging: What's going through your mind?

PROBES (retrospective):

- *Cognition:* What did you understand by the term 'standard of living'? What does it mean to you to be satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living?
- *Judgement:* Did you have any difficulties in deciding what were *main* reasons for answering in the way that you did?
- *Response:* Are there any other answers to these questions which you would like to give which are missing from the options provided? What is missing?