



НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКИЙ
УНИВЕРСИТЕТ

Determinants of Lay Judgments about Emotional State of the Poor: An Experimental Approach

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POVERTY IS NOT A VICE?

- Demonization of the moral image of the poor in the lay consciousness in modern Russians (Tikhonova, 2014);
- Stigmatization → exclusion which is supported by an inner sense of shame from the side of the poor (Simonova, 2014; Kozlova, Simonova, 2016).



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (1)

- Lay judgments as a form of making sense from outside world (lay knowledge about how the world functions – descriptive judgments) (Devyatko, 2007; Heise, Morgan, 1988);
- Perception of poverty in the eyes of lay experts:
 - Cause of poverty** (individual / structural) (Feagin, 1972; Will, 1993);
 - Economic limitations** (income / deprivation) (Lister, 2004; Townsend, 1987);
 - Type of poverty** (chronic / non-chronic) (Chimhowu, 2009; Barrientos, Neff, 2010).



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (2)

- Cognitive sociology, sociology of morality and sociology of emotions: shame as a moral emotion surrounding poverty (Scheff, 2003; Simonova, 2014).





MOTIVATION

- **Scientific motivation:** in the studies of poverty perception and perception of the poor independent variables as: cause of poverty, economic limitations, type of poverty are seen as determinants of lay judgment about the poor. However, such conclusions are based on correlation analysis which does not allow to build causal relationships.
- **Social motivation:** misinterpretation of the emotional state of the poor in lay consciousness could increase their exclusion.



WHY CONDUCT AN EXPERIMENT?

- High internal validity;
- Possibility of determining cause-and-effect relationships;
- Reducing the sensitivity of the topic through the use of vignettes;
- Possibility of determining main effect and interaction effect of variables.



AIM OF THE STUDY

To build a model of making lay descriptive judgments about the emotional state of the poor, using independent variables of socio-demographic characteristics (gender, economic status, parental education) and manipulated variables of protagonist (cause of poverty, economic limitations, type of poverty).



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) To identify problems in the questionnaire, significant for participants through cognitive interviews, lead vignette scenarios and questions to the semantic relevance, and increase the degree of perceived reality of vignettes;
- 2) Determine whether or not the factors “cause of poverty”, “economic limitations” and “type of poverty” are determinants of lay descriptive judgments about the emotional state of the poor;
- 3) Determine whether or not socio-demographic characteristics “gender”, “economic status” and “parental education” are related to lay descriptive judgments about the emotional state of the poor.



MIXED FACTORIAL DESIGN

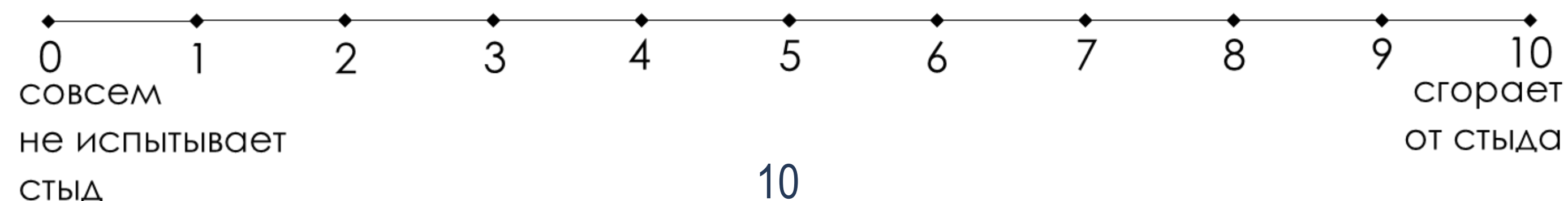
B. Economic limitations: income (B1)		C. Cause of poverty	
		C1. Structural	C2. Individual
A. Type of poverty	A1. Chronical	A1B1C1	A1B1C2
	A2. Non-chronical	A2B1C1	A2B1C2

B. Economic limitations: deprivation (B2)		C. Cause of poverty	
		C1. Structural	C2. Individual
A. Type of poverty	A1. Chronical	A1B2C1	A1B2C2
	A2. Non-chronical	A2B2C1	A2B2C2

EXAMPLE OF VIGNETTE (RUS) A1B1C1

Андрей уже пять лет находится за чертой бедности. Его месячный доход не превышает прожиточный минимум. Он работает на предприятии, где выплачивают низкие зарплаты. Андрей оказался в таком положении, потому что на рынке труда отсутствует спрос на работников его профессии.

Как Вы думаете, насколько сильно Андрей испытывает стыд за покупку самых дешевых товаров, находясь в очереди в магазине «Перекресток», если испытывает вообще? Оцените, пожалуйста, по шкале от 0 до 10, где 0 – «совсем не испытывает» и 10 – «сгорает от стыда».





EXAMPLE OF VIGNETTE (ENG) A2B2C2

Tree month ago Igor found himself below the poverty line. Since then, he cannot afford new things and quality food. Igor works at a company that pays low wages. He is in such position because he cannot find a better job, due to the poor education.

Do you think that Igor feels shame for buying the cheapest commodities while waiting in the queue at the grocery store, if feels at all? Please rate it on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is "not feeling at all" and 10 is "burning with shame".



SAMPLE

- First year bachelor students of HSE (Moscow campus) from all faculties;
- Questionnaires were sent out to randomly selected 4,000 corporate addresses of students out of all first year pupils;
- 396 valid questionnaires as a result (according to the calculation of statistical power, more than 279 observations were needed to see the effect size of 0.25 or higher);
- Gender distribution: 66% female students and 34% male students.



STATISTICAL RESULTS

- Repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (wide-format of data):
 - Only a main effect of “type of poverty” on the assessment of shame was found significant (main η^2 equals 0,261).
- Linear regression with dummy variables (long-format of data):
 - Socio-demographic characteristics: “gender”, “economic status” and “parental education” were found insignificant.
- Interaction effect between variables were also insignificant .



FINDINGS

- **Higher shame is attributed to the non-chronic poverty:**
 - ← shame arises from the lack of adaptation of protagonist to the changed conditions, which is noticeable in public spaces of physical presence;
 - ← conflict of identity in conditions of non-chronic poverty (inconsistency of behavior with social norms) → shame as a signal of the discrepancy between the familiar consumer practices and new economic possibilities.
- **The structural cause of poverty is not associated with chronicity and the inability to get out of it:**
 - ← participants of the experiment have different perception of poverty and poor, in which there is no connection between the duration and the cause of poverty.



DISCUSSION

- The incompleteness of the factors describing the poverty;
- Limitations of external validity;
- There are no studies that distinguish attitudes in relation to poverty, to the poor, and to a single poor individual;
- The importance of conducting further qualitative research to gain a deep understanding of the formation processes of lay judgments about the emotional state of the poor.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!