

In Their Shoes: A Poverty Simulation

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Disclaimer

- » The authors have no conflict of interest or relevant financial relationships to report.

In Their Shoes

Definitions

- » Merriam-Webster online,(2015), defines poverty as, “the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions.”
- » Dictionary.com., (2015), defines poverty as, “the state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support; condition of being poor”.
- » According to the US Census Bureau, (USBS), (June, 2015), there are many characteristics/categories/types of poverty all of which have specific definitions to them.
 - ~ Absolute poverty thresholds vs. relative poverty threshold
 - ~ Annual poverty rate
 - ~ Average monthly poverty rate
 - ~ Chronic or long-term poverty
 - ~ Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

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Definitions 2

Definitions from the USBS (2015)

» **Absolute poverty thresholds vs. relative poverty thresholds**

As explained by a National Academy of Sciences panel, "Absolute thresholds are fixed at a point in time and updated solely for price changes.... In contrast, relative thresholds, as commonly defined, are developed by reference to the actual expenditures (or income) of the population." See Citro and Michael, eds., [Measuring Poverty: A New Approach](#) (National Academy Press, 1995), page 31, "Types of Poverty Thresholds."

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Definitions 3

Definitions from the USBS

» Annual poverty rate

Percent of people who were in poverty in a calendar year. Annual poverty rates from the Current Population Survey and the decennial census long form are based on income reported at an annual figure. In the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), income is reported a few months at a time, several times a year. Therefore, in the SIPP, annual poverty rates are calculated using the sum of family income over the year divided by the sum of poverty thresholds that can change from month to month if one's family composition changes.

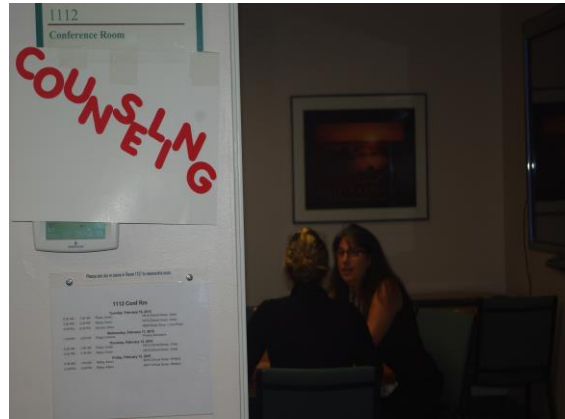
» Average monthly poverty

Average percent of people poor per month in each year of a longitudinal survey panel. [See also longitudinal survey data.](#)

» Chronic or long-term poverty

Percent of people in poverty every month for the duration of a longitudinal survey panel (typically 3 to 4 years).

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The Stations



In Their Shoes

» The simulation.

~ Description

- A planned 4 hour event including pre and post attitude surveys a briefing and a debriefing
- A family to “be”: 10 minutes after all have chosen to make a game plan
 - ~ All family members must stay together (no divide and conquer tactics)
 - ~ A stay or go decision to make
 - Stay equals a 15 minute delay
 - Go equals leave first but the kids get into trouble
 - ~ Stations
 - **The bus:** there are two which can accommodate only five families each. They travel in only one pattern, “route”
 - **TANF (welfare):** for their cash aide and annual medic-aide benefits survey and subsequent counselling- approval/denial
 - **Pay day advance** – fill out loan paperwork



The simulation

In Their Shoes

The simulation 2

» The simulation.

~ Description

~ Stations

- **The grocery store:** two clerks, chatty and one usually in training: WIC, food stamps and cash accepted.
- **The counselor:** families go there for personal reasons, marital strife, child behavioral issues and even court ordered.
- **Bill pay:** the station for the gas and electric, including applications for low income as well as any child support/car payments, etc.
- **Property managers:** two actors who take the rent/mortgage for the family's residents; each family has a "weekly" deadline
- **Pawn shop:** the families are given "family jewels" that they can pawn as needed.
- **Doctor's complex:** the families all need all of their members to see their physicians, some on a weekly basis for medications and court monitoring

In Their Shoes

The simulation 3

» The simulation.

~ Description

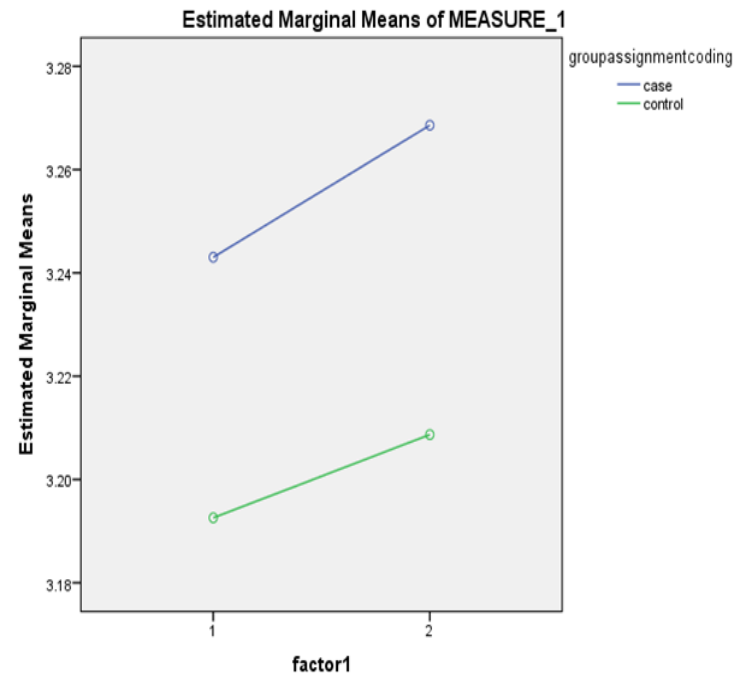
~ Stations

- The school district administrative assistant: most of the families have at least one member who needs to be or is in school. Depending on what the family chose to do at the beginning of the simulation (to stay or go) is how much they need to do here.
- **WIC:** the families that have children 0-5 come here to get their supplemental coupons however like the real WIC office there are classes and their corresponding quizzes to be taken, graded and discussed.
- **The police:** We have a police officer complete with tickets and fines. The officer tickets loitering, j-walking between stations and all other types of illegal behavior.
- **The jail:** sometimes families have a difficult time paying their fines or even become argumentative with the police.

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The findings

- » The unexpected happened.
 - ~ We did not see a change in attitude.
 - Below in blue is the two quarters of the live simulation
 - In green is the control group of 50+ students who simply completed the pre and post survey around the poverty lecture.



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The future

» What happened?

- ~ The literature suggests that nursing students who participate in a poverty simulation improved their attitudes toward people living in poverty; we expected to see a difference in the scores of the ATP scale.
 - That did not happen.
 - In the paired t-test analysis there was little change.
- ~ Is it the student's socioeconomic status?
 - There is limited data as to the student's background or that of their family in the University's data base...FERPA
- ~ Is it the timing of the pre-survey as it was before week seven of the ten week class but after the students were involved with their aggregate.
- ~ Did the students remember what they answered on the pre-survey?
- ~ Because the ATP scale was developed many years ago, is it unable to identify attitude change in today's climate?
- ~ Is the tool a valid measurement for this population?

Conclusion



- » We have more work to do in evaluating a poverty simulation as a learning experience directed toward improving students' attitudes about those living in poverty.
- » However based on student feedback, the simulation was successful in sensitizing PHN students to the experiences of people living in poverty.
- » We will continue to seek answers to our questions.

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