

REVIEW ARTICLE

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Systematic review: conceptions and strategies for measuring subjective poverty

Revisão sistemática: concepções e estratégias de mensuração da pobreza subjetiva

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Abstract

Objective

The study analyzes the theoretical and practical perspectives that have been developed concerning the concepts and measurement strategies of subjective poverty.

Method

Thus, a systematic review was conducted, considering a temporal scope of ten years (2011-2021), on peer-reviewed articles in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. Following the analysis, the corpus consisted of 17 articles.

Results

It was identified that the concept of subjective poverty is affected by sociodemographic and analytical characteristics. This has an impact on different approaches, which can be more or less inclusive. The less inclusive ones are defined by exclusively monetary perspectives, while others consider the macrostructural issues of the analyzed realities: the effects of other socioeconomic markers and the psychosocial implications of poverty.

Conclusion

Thus, subjective poverty points out that, in the background of the subjects' discourse, there are psychosocial intersections that impact their ways of life.

Keywords: Measurement; Poverty; Subjective dimension of poverty; Subjective poverty.

Resumo

Objetivo

O estudo analisa as percepções teóricas e práticas que têm sido desenvolvidas em relação aos conceitos e as estratégias de mensuração da pobreza subjetiva.



Método

Deste modo, realizou-se revisão sistemática, considerando o recorte temporal de dez anos (2011-2021), delimitando para textos de artigos revisados por pares, em língua inglesa, portuguesa e espanhola. Após análise, o corpus contou com 17 artigos.

Resultados

Como resultados a concepção de pobreza subjetiva é afetada pelas características sociodemográficas e analíticas. Isto, impacta em diferentes abordagens que são mais e menos inclusivas. As menos inclusivas, são delimitadas por perspectivas exclusivamente monetárias, as outras levam em consideração questões macroestruturais das realidades analisadas: os efeitos de outros marcadores socioeconômicos e as implicações psicossociais da pobreza.

Conclusão

Assim, a pobreza subjetiva aponta que, no plano de fundo das falas dos sujeitos, existem atravessamentos psicossociais que impactam os seus modos de vida.

Palavras-chave: *Mensuração; Pobreza; Dimensão subjetiva da pobreza; Pobreza subjetiva.*

According to Ximenes et al. (2015), poverty, as a multifaceted phenomenon engendered by capitalist and neoliberal structures, needs to be analyzed based on the recognition of the macrostructure of these dominant and oppressive frameworks that exert influence on the lives of people in poverty and their modes of survival marked by social inequalities, exclusion, and the stigmatization of poverty. Such stigmatizing processes foster shame, humiliation, and fatalistic attitudes, which hinder the possibilities of coping. Furthermore, poverty, as a complex and multicausal phenomenon, does not present a single form of interpretation, nor a single way of measuring it (Castillo et al., 2011).

In fact, the discussion about what poverty is and how to measure it is not new. There are works from various fields, especially economics, that have developed discussions about this issue (Crettaz & Suter, 2013). Jiménez and Herrera (2017) also point out that, as a social problem, poverty has traversed history itself, and many governments and international institutions have focused on ways to address it in order to improve the socioeconomic conditions of countries and populations through the implementation of public policies. Thus, it should be noted that the delimitation of poverty also involves an ethical-political perspective, and these can be more or less inclusive. That is, when considering the measure of poverty, one can include only the monetary perspective, which leads to policies that focus solely on income redistribution, or more inclusive perspectives that consider that work and income are two important aspects, but not the only ones to be considered. For it is not just the lack of money, it is the lack of access to health, education, social security, among other aspects, that negatively affect the lives of those living in poverty.

In this regard, it is worth noting that poverty (and its measurement) has generally considered two main concepts for its definition. One approach regards it as unidimensional, meaning its conceptualization and explanatory processes stem from a single factor, namely, the economic aspect. According to this view, individuals are considered poor if they are materially deprived of goods and consumption (Nandori, 2014). The other major conceptual bias has been the multidimensional perspectives of poverty, which, in addition to the economic dimension, include other dimensions related to quality of life and social well-being. These commonly encompass health, education, housing, work, and income (García-Quero & Guardiola, 2017). These perspectives are broader and have been used by national and international organizations interested in analyzing the poverty and social well-being of populations (Filandri et al., 2020). Fletcher and Castillo (2011) point out that the multidimensional nature of poverty allows for numerous possible measurements. Within the multidimensional perspectives of poverty, one of the most utilized is the capabilities approach. It

acknowledges that poverty is a multicausal phenomenon and that the summation of deprivations in the multiple dimensions of health, education, well-being, and housing can infer different levels of multidimensional poverty. The more deprived individuals are in these aspects, the poorer they are. Ximenes et al., (2016) suggest that, in addition to these quality-of-life-related dimensions, the inclusion of a subjective dimension of poverty is necessary, one that encompasses the effects of subjective aspects on the lives of people in poverty.

It should be noted that, within measures of poverty, there is also a distinction between what are considered objective and subjective measures of poverty. Objective measures consist of absolute and relative poverty lines. These poverty lines are a linear measure that presupposes finding a cutoff point that allows the demarcation of who belongs and who does not belong to groups of people in poverty (Guagnano et al., 2015). To delimit these lines, objective parameters, mainly monetary, and subjective parameters, delineated based on people's self-perception, are used (Bici, 2018). Absolute poverty assumes that it is possible to delimit those in poverty based on minimum income. Thus, a monetary value, considered the minimum for survival, is established; individuals below this are considered poor (Nandori, 2015). The most widely recognized absolute measures are those defined by the World Bank. In 2020, it established that individuals earning less than \$1.90 U.S. dollars per day were considered to be in poverty (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2020). Relative measures identify people as being in poverty if they fall below an average level of goods and consumption determined within a particular society (Nandori, 2014).

Subjective measures of poverty can reflect the subjective well-being associated with poverty. Conceptually, this involves considering people's perspectives on poverty, where individuals are deemed poor if they perceive that they have less than enough to live on (Filandri et al., 2020). Nandori (2014) also points out that subjective measures of poverty, capable of expressing subjective well-being in states and countries where social inequalities are exacerbated, can provide social analyses of the actual living conditions of the population. Commonly, even people above the poverty line, living under such conditions, tend to exhibit high levels of subjective poverty. Thus, it is an important parameter for public policies aimed at the social well-being of populations (Nandori, 2015). Baldini et al. (2018) state that one of the problems in measuring poverty is defining the poverty lines. Although they are established to adequately identify the population in poverty, at times, surpassing the poverty line does not necessarily mean improvements in living standards. It is possible for people to cross this line without achieving a qualitative improvement in their standard of living.

Thus, it is important to highlight that the subjective measure of poverty itself also presents multiple definitions and methods, which share the commonality of people's self-perception as a parameter for measurement (Posel & Rogan, 2014). However, each reality adds different characteristics and measurement strategies to the construct, including perspectives on what is considered representative of the population under study (Castillo et al., 2011). In this sense, there is still no consensus on the best way to measure it. Some problems are revealed in this process, as historically there has been an overlap of the different measures of poverty on the same population (Bici, 2018). That is to say, the same individual can have different poverty statuses depending on the methods used in the measurement and what is considered in the conceptualization (García-Carro & Sánchez-Sellero, 2019). Many studies have noticed these discrepancies, observing different results when comparing objective and subjective poverty within the same population (Castillo et al., 2011). Even when considering a multidimensional perspective of poverty, it is evident that there are significant distinctions between the more objective perceptions of poverty in relation to the subjective dimension (Jiménez & Herrera, 2017).

It is important to consider that there is an intense debate about the measurement of poverty itself, as there are many distinct possibilities for measurement from different dimensions and perspectives (Mahmood et al., 2018). Furthermore, the efforts to measure poverty are also relevant, as they can promote strategies to mitigate this social issue. By quantifying it, one estimates not only the number of people in poverty but especially the reasons why people find themselves in this situation (García-Carro & Sánchez-Sellero, 2019). It is important to consider that the definitions of poverty will directly affect policies for alleviating or eradicating poverty, as they will indicate who the people in poverty are, the forms, and the levels of aid they can benefit from (Ximenes et al., 2015).

Thus, the subjective measure of poverty does not replace the need for measuring more objective aspects (Nandori, 2015). Many studies have understood the necessary inclusion of people's perspectives for measuring poverty, and this is strengthened by the combination of objective and subjective measures of poverty (Jiménez & Herrera, 2017; Posel & Rogan, 2014). Or from a multidimensional perspective, the inclusion of a subjective dimension of poverty (Ximenes et al., 2016). However, given the social context marked by deep social inequalities, the inclusion of subjective measures can also provide important clues about the real living conditions of the population, how they feel affected, and how they perceive the phenomenon of poverty (Nandori, 2014). Thus, the objective of this review is to analyze the theoretical and practical perspectives that have been developed regarding the measurement of subjective poverty.

Method

Data collection strategy

Systematic review was the strategy used. Initially, to construct the review, the following guiding question was formulated: What are the theoretical and practical perspectives that have been developed regarding the measurement of subjective poverty? For this purpose, a search was conducted using the Capes Periodical and the Virtual Health Library (VHL) Regional Portal. These platforms were selected based on their aggregation of other databases, allowing for a greater diversity of sources. The search was carried out on January 6th and 7th, 2022. A temporal scope of ten years was considered, limiting the search to peer-reviewed articles published between 2010 and 2021.

The Boolean descriptor "AND" was utilized to retrieve articles from the platform, with quotation marks used between the descriptors to enable the retrieval of compound/entire words. Initially, 186 articles were retrieved based on the English descriptors, and 87 articles were retrieved based on the Portuguese descriptors, totaling 263 articles as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Total number of articles retrieved by descriptors

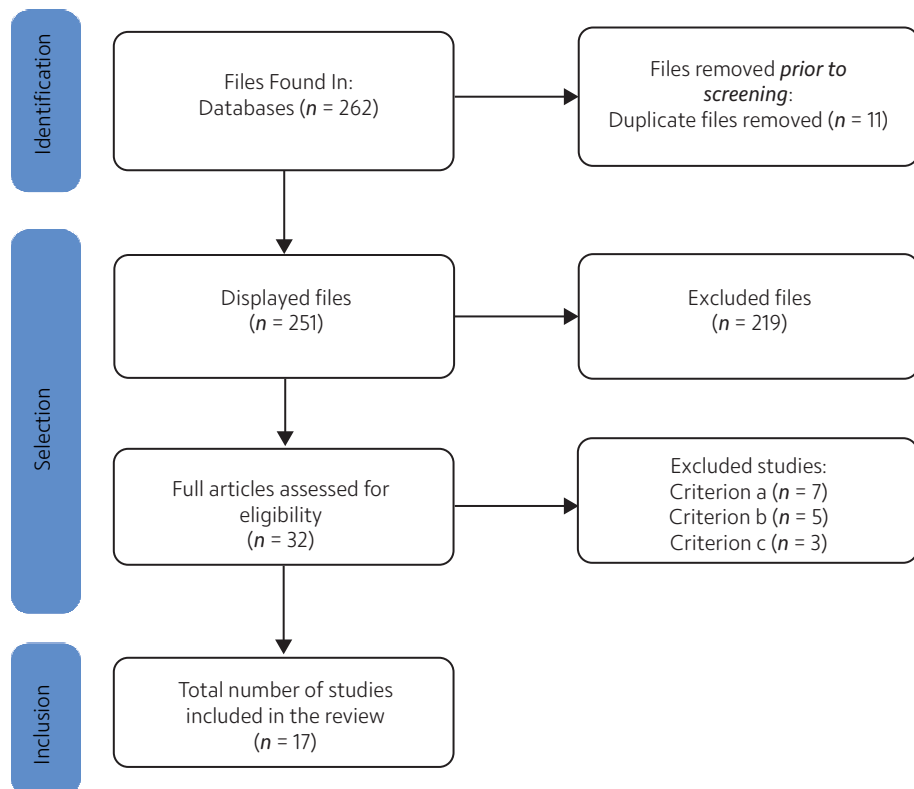
Descriptors	Number of articles <i>Capes Periodical</i>	Number of articles <i>VHL</i>
"subjective poverty" AND "measurement"	173	12
<i>pobreza subjetiva</i> AND <i>mensuração</i>	27	02
"subjective dimension" AND "poverty"	34	07
"poverty" AND "subjective"	-	17
<i>escala</i> AND <i>pobreza subjetiva</i>	-	-
"scale" AND "subjective poverty"	1	-
Total by platform	235	28
Total Number of Articles Retrieved	263	

Study Eligibility Criteria

At this stage of the research, we followed the strategy proposed by the PRISMA recommendation to filter the articles based on their title, abstract, and keywords. As an inclusion criterion, the studies were required to provide empirical analytical contributions on subjective poverty as a central and primary element of the study's discussion. Articles in both Portuguese and foreign languages, such as English and Spanish, were considered eligible for inclusion. The exclusion criteria encompassed the following aspects: (a) mention of "subjective poverty" without conceptualization; (b) studies lacking instruments or theoretical delimitation aimed at measuring subjective poverty and its correlates; (c) emphasis on other dimensions of poverty without a direct connection to subjective poverty. The flowchart in Figure 1 illustrates the number of articles eliminated by each criterion.

Following the analysis, 219 articles were excluded, primarily due to the lack of a central focus on the subjective dimension of poverty. Some of the excluded articles focused solely on people's perceptions of poverty, while others exclusively discussed subjective well-being. Other articles conducted analyses focusing on income satisfaction and other characteristics of poverty measurement. Although relevant, these topics were not pertinent to the proposed analysis. There were 11 duplicate articles, leaving 32 unique articles for full-text examination. Furthermore, in addition to the comprehensive reading, these articles underwent assessment using the Checklist for Assessing the Quality of Survey Studies in Psychology (Q-SSP) proposed by Protojerou and Hagger (2020), which provided cut-off points facilitating the decision on the inclusion and exclusion of research in the systematic review.

Figure 1
Flowchart of the systematic review corpus analyses



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the Prisma flowchart* (Page et al., 2021).

Based on the criteria outlined by Protogerou and Hagger (2020), the studies included in this review met an average of 73% of the requirements, which the authors deemed an acceptable outcome. Thus, following the comprehensive review and assessment using the Q-SSP, 15 articles were excluded for not meeting the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. The main reasons for exclusion included focusing on other aspects related to poverty, discussions on subjective well-being and alternative measures of poverty, as well as significant gaps in information regarding the population and the collected data. Consequently, the final corpus comprised 17 articles for content analysis and presentation of the results. As depicted in Figure 1.

Results

In this study, it was observed that the articles highlight a clear prevalence of studies focusing on the more objective aspects of poverty. This trend is believed to be influenced by the greater consolidation of objective measures of poverty (García-Quero & Guardiola, 2017). Another issue raised by Filandri et al. (2020) in their analysis, is the limited inclusion of the subjective measure of poverty in the official poverty measurement of only a few countries. According to Posel and Rogan (2014), one of the challenges in incorporating subjective measures into countries' poverty measurement lies in conceptually defining the construct and the pertinent aspects. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the subjective analysis of poverty is influenced by cultural aspects, rendering it challenging to employ the same measure across different locations and time periods (Nandori, 2015). Thus, another observed aspect is the use of this measure as complementary to the objective measure of poverty, contributing to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon of poverty (Castillo et al., 2011). The analysis of the findings also underscores a variety of scenarios and contexts in which these studies are conducted; Colombia emerged as the most prolific country, with the years 2011, 2015, and 2017 demonstrating the highest publication rates. Table 2 presents the representation of the studies by their origin, accompanied by a brief description.

Table 2 indicates that Colombia has produced the most related works on the topic. One possible reason for Colombia's prominence in this production is the country's political organization system. With no re-elections, political representatives tend to invest in research that demonstrates aspects of the quality of life during their term (Jiménez & Herrera, 2017). However, this remains a hypothesis and does not alone justify the production. Another aspect to consider in the study is that the research is primarily conducted by economists, with the exception of two studies authored by psychologists, which also represent the two national productions found (Ximenes et al., 2015; Ximenes et al., 2016). This aspect may be of interest because, conceptually, studies on subjectivity have been consolidated within the field of psychological science, prompting an analysis of what the economics authors have indicated as subjective poverty (Borsboom, 2005).

Furthermore, an initial lack of instruments dedicated to measuring subjective poverty or the subjective dimension of poverty was identified. Most studies base their analyses on national surveys that broadly investigate poverty, quality of life, or household living conditions. These studies retrieve items or questions from comprehensive instruments that are considered to be part of this construct. Additionally, some works included specific dimensions related to the subjective dimension within their poverty measurement instruments. Table 3 below presents the construct in the analyzed articles.

Table 2*Origin and brief description of the study*

References	Origin and Brief Description of the Study
Castillo et al. (2011)	Examine Colombian families with children to determine whether the objective and subjective poverty situations of these families are exacerbated due to childcare.
Jiménez and Herrera (2017)	Examine the Colombian reality by comparing objective and subjective measurements.
Arroyo-Mina and Ruiz-Cardona (2016)	Analyze the Colombian reality, focusing on the perceptions of impoverished Black individuals regarding their own living conditions.
Fletcher and Castillo (2011)	Investigate, based on survey data on poverty and quality of life in Bogotá, Colombia, the relationship between income-based poverty concepts and the concept derived from people's assessments of their living conditions.
Ahamdanech-Zarco et al. (2011)	Seek to analyze the equivalence of subjective poverty line scales in the 15 Eurozone countries.
Guagnano et al. (2015)	Analyze the effect of social capital on the subjective poverty of families in the Eurozone using data obtained from the EU-SILC 2009 Survey.
García-Carro and Sánchez-Sellero (2019)	Examine the distinctions between "being poor" (objectively) and feeling poor (more related to subjective poverty) in Spain based on data from national surveys on living conditions in the general population.
Ximenes et al. (2016)	Analyze the subjective aspects of poverty in the urban and rural Brazilian context from a multidimensional perspective.
Ximenes et al. (2015)	When analyzing the reality of people in poverty in urban and rural communities in the state of Ceará, Brazil, they point out that the subjective aspects of poverty are constituted by various explanations of poverty and its causes, the individual's self-perception of their poverty situation, the moral dimension of poverty, and coping mechanisms.
Nandori (2015)	Considering subjective well-being and the financial crisis, it examines the subjective assessment of poverty in Hungary over two periods (the years 2007 and 2011).
García-Quero and Guardiola (2017)	Examine, in rural Ecuador, a subjective poverty line based on well-being to investigate the effects of having or not having a good life even in conditions of poverty, based on the concept of "buen vivir."
Posel and Rogan (2014)	Analyzed the distinctions between the results obtained from a survey on living conditions in South Africa (in 2008 and 2009).
Nandori (2014)	Examine the perception of poverty in St. Louis County, Minnesota, United States, aiming to identify what the population considers to be the causes and consequences of poverty.
Filandri et al. (2020)	Analyze a national survey in Italy on the subjective poverty of working people and the impact that work intensity and job instability have on this type of poverty.
Mahmood et al. (2018)	Based on a comparison obtained from a national household sample survey in Pakistan, they pointed out in their findings the necessary inclusion of subjective poverty in complementing objective poverty measures.
Bici (2018)	From their study on subjective poverty measurement in Albania, the author suggests that this construct offers a possibility for non-monetary poverty assessment, considering both monetary and non-monetary measures.
Crettaz and Suter (2013)	Examine, based on a national survey on families in Switzerland, whether subjective poverty indicators are affected by two factors: social comparison and adaptive preferences.

Table 3*Measurement of subjective poverty in the analyzed articles*

Construct	Reference
Subjective Dimension of Poverty	Ximenes et al. (2016); Ximenes et al. (2015)
Subjective poverty line	García-Quero and Guardiola (2017); Ahamdanech-Zarco et al. (2011); Nandori (2014); Filandri et al. (2020); Jiménez and Herrera (2017); Bici (2018); Crettaz and Suter (2013)
Subjective approach to Poverty	García-Quero and Guardiola (2017)
Subjective Poverty	Fletcher and Castillo (2011); Guagnano et al. (2015); Mahmood et al. (2018); Nandori (2015); Castillo et al. (2011)

According to Table 3, it is possible to consider that most of the works present the construct from the idea of a poverty line, implying a measurement that aims to define it based on monetary criteria, while also incorporating people's self-perception of the minimum income needed to cover household expenses (Filandri et al., 2020). In this sense, considering subjective poverty as a measure of the poverty line implies understanding that this is one of the possible strategies for measuring poverty, essentially characterized by the inclusion of people's perceptions of poverty based on their social, cultural, and economic criteria (Nandori, 2015). With this in mind, these works present a specific

cutoff point, where people can be considered subjectively poor or non-poor (Posel & Rogan, 2014). Other works, such as that of Ximenes et al. (2016), present the construct as a dimension of poverty, relying on a multidimensional perspective of poverty where subjective aspects of poverty are one of the dimensions used to analyze the phenomenon of poverty. Furthermore, Ahamdanech-Zarco et al. (2011) and Fletcher and Castillo (2011) point to the subjective poverty construct and consider for analysis questions and inquiries stemming from the sociodemographic issues of the studied population, which would constitute the subjective poverty construct. This implies different criteria and variables used to identify the subjective poverty construct (Arroyo-Mina & Ruiz-Cardona, 2016). Additionally, a common characteristic among the analyzed works is that regardless of considering the construct as a line or dimension, they all take into account people's self-perception of poverty. This self-perception considers what people deem to be poverty and how they perceive themselves in relation to it (Bici, 2018; Nandori, 2014).

Thus, it is evident that the delineation and understanding that the authors had about the phenomenon shape the measurement approach and the possible results obtained from various perspectives. Moreover, countries have varying levels of poverty. Therefore, while for some realities, the poverty threshold is more extreme (Posel & Rogan, 2014), for others, living conditions are less disparate and effectively less impoverished (Bici, 2018). This, in turn, affects the very constitution of the construct.

Discussion

Conceptualization of the Construct

Primarily, it is essential to note that most studies consider the subjective measurement of poverty as a self-report measure. As Borsboom (2005) frequently points out, the implications of this can be problematic when other sciences, aside from psychology, aim to measure psychological or subjective aspects. This often results in the inclusion of self-reporting or the use of open-ended questions in an attempt to measure these aspects. However, subjective questions do not necessarily measure subjective aspects. Thus, when analyzing the studies, it becomes apparent that they do not always refer to a subjective analysis of poverty. Instead, what is sometimes found is the reduction of this analysis to the self-reporting of the subjects involved in the research. However, this is not a unique characteristic to this review. Welfare economics studies, which form the basis of the conception of subjective poverty measurement, inherently define self-reporting or self-perception of poverty as their main characteristic (Nandori, 2014, 2015). This finding is significant because, to some extent, it mediates the analysis of the findings through the epistemological limitation of the lack of depth in a subjective perspective, as proposed by studies analyzing the psychosocial implications of poverty (Ximenes et al., 2015; Ximenes et al., 2016).

Therefore, one of the important observations related to the findings of this review is the recognition that subjective poverty, as a construct, varies depending on the definition of poverty being advocated. While this may seem like an obvious conclusion, it is also fundamental for reflecting on this discussion. In general terms, subjective approaches to poverty align with the perspective that individuals' self-perception is essential for understanding poverty, and they attribute the sense of subjective poverty to this self-perception. However, self-perception is assessed through various measurement methods, ranging from directly asking individuals whether they consider themselves in a situation of poverty to conducting subjective measurement through questions related to well-being and quality of life (Fletcher & Castillo, 2011; Posel & Rogan, 2014). The influence of other aspects

of this perception, such as social comparison and adaptability to income/financial conditions experienced, must be considered (García-Quero & Guardiola, 2017). This is because there are many nuances to consider when defining what poverty is, directly impacting the construct of subjective poverty or the subjective dimension of poverty. Furthermore, if the advocated perspective of poverty is monetary, subjective poverty is also delineated based on perceptions of economic status (Crettaz & Suter, 2013; Guagnano et al., 2015). If the poverty measurement is based on the deprivation of basic needs, the delineations of the subjective dimension of poverty will revolve around satisfaction with basic needs and life (Bici, 2018; Nandori, 2014, 2015).

Even though there is a consensus on the relevance of asking individuals about their thoughts on poverty and how they perceive themselves in the face of this phenomenon, it is understood that there are reasons why they may not respond based on their actual conditions (Bici, 2018). Among these reasons are shame and humiliation that can be linked to the experience of poverty (Ximenes et al., 2016). Similarly, the effects of social comparison and adaptation to living conditions, even if these are below what would be considered adequate for a certain context and country's quality of life, are also significant factors (García-Carro & Sánchez-Sellero, 2019; Mahmood et al., 2018).

Thus, it reaffirms the understanding that poverty is not just material or demarcated by the lack of access to goods and services, but also involves symbolic and cultural processes that constitute and maintain these oppressive realities, impacting the subjective expressions of the individual (Ximenes et al., 2015). This is important because, concerning the subjective aspects of poverty, it is essential not to psychologize the phenomenon (Ximenes et al., 2016). Therefore, conceiving a subjective analysis of poverty does not mean finding within the individuals in situations of poverty the causes of their own poverty, but recognizing the effects of living in deprivation on them, and primarily, the traps produced by processes of domination and oppression that operationalize forms of existence curtailed by social inequalities (Martín-Baró 2017).

Mahmood et al. (2018) also corroborate what other authors have pointed out, that poverty is also a subjective feeling, as individuals objectively in poverty may not feel poor, just as the opposite can be true, where objectively non-poor individuals may feel poor. Based on this reflection, Fletcher and Castillo (2011) consider that there are many cases in which a person is considered poor by experts but does not consider themselves as such, and vice versa, where the person is not considered poor, yet perceives themselves as poor. This is because the subjective approach to poverty is, in essence, an analysis of the social context experienced by individuals. This analysis takes into account the effects of the social position occupied by individuals, their socioeconomic contexts, family configuration, social comparison with peers, social adaptability, social capital, race/ethnicity, perspectives on happiness, satisfaction and well-being, experiences of oppression, shame, and humiliation related to social status, among other factors (Arroyo-Mina & Ruiz-Cardona, 2016; Bici, 2018; Jiménez & Herrera, 2017; Ximenes et al., 2015).

However, there are multiple possibilities for conceptualization, even though in its historical constitution, the subjective measurement of poverty, primarily, is defined by its main characteristic, which is to be a self-report measure (Mahmood et al., 2018). Nevertheless, many concepts are proposed; some are based on questioning the adequacy of consumption, while others, more comprehensive, understand the construct in relation to subjective well-being, thus including questions about happiness and life satisfaction (Nandori, 2014, 2015). Others propose classification levels that range from the poorest to the wealthiest (García-Quero & Guardiola, 2017).

One of the main contributions regarding the approach to subjective poverty is the understanding that people's self-assessment is influenced both by economic/monetary factors

and by affective and emotional factors, as these impact quality of life. Furthermore, well-being is also related to the satisfaction derived from the consumption of certain goods and services and, indirectly, to income (Arroyo-Mina & Ruiz-Cardona, 2016). Thus, it is important to consider that a subjective approach to poverty can provide valuable insights, as objective measures tend to ignore the influences of living in society, which affect what people perceive as poverty and the ways to address it (Fletcher & Castillo, 2011). Poverty measurement in countries often only considers aspects related to people's income and does not include the quality and availability of public services. These are important because they directly affect the well-being of the population. Even people with better income conditions feel they have a better standard of living when they can rely on government support for certain services (Baldini et al., 2018).

As per the nomenclature, whether subjective poverty line or subjective dimension of poverty, the findings suggest that both are possible, and the choice is demarcated by the poverty measurement framework. Multidimensional measures commonly consider subjective poverty as a dimension of the poverty construct, such as education, health, work, and income (Ximenes et al., 2016). Studies that adopt a linear poverty measurement perspective categorize the concept as a line, where classification between poor and non-poor individuals is made based on specific cutoff points (García-Quero & Guardiola, 2017). However, it is worth noting that even within a multidimensional poverty perspective, it is possible to include questions solely about the monetary perception in this dimension (Filandri et al., 2020). In a linear perspective, it is also possible to include constructs more related to subjective well-being delimited by the intersubjective reality of the population (Arroyo-Mina & Ruiz-Cardona, 2016; Castillo et al., 2011).

As Bici (2018) points out, subjective measures of poverty can stem from both monetary and non-monetary aspects. In other words, including people's self-perception of poverty does not necessarily encompass discussing all the aspects involved in the experience of poverty. The analysis of the studies indicated the existence of more and less inclusive perspectives on the phenomenon. Jiménez and Herrera (2017) point out that there is a relationship between subjective poverty and the quality of governance; good governance reduces the likelihood of the population being subjectively poor, whereas the inefficiency of public institutions affects the entire population. According to Nandori (2015), the subjective perspective can also include what people think about the causes of poverty, and depending on this stance, poverty measures can be more or less supported, with distinct objectives, from alleviating to tackling poverty. Thus, the understanding is that the subjective approach to poverty needs to foster strategies for social change that can not only unveil the conditions of poverty but also bring to light the mechanisms of oppression and subjugation, strengthening perspectives that consider poverty as a product of an unequal society (Martín-Baró, 2017).

Considering the delimited analyses, it is possible to infer that the choice of nomenclature is determined by the data sources, constructs involved in the measure, and theoretical and ethical-political perspectives. Most research is based on national surveys, so terminologies also stem from the reference instrument. Therefore, considering that the subjective approach to poverty to be assumed in this study is intertwined with the recognition of it as a complex, multiple phenomenon with objective and subjective consequences, especially in a society like Brazil marked by profound social inequalities, it is understood that we cannot proceed from an exclusively monetary perspective. Rather, a perspective that includes the psychosocial implications of poverty in individuals' lives, which are also traversed by other social markers and the unequal and unjust societal structure itself (Ximenes et al., 2015).

Measurement of the Construct

Concerning measurement, a crucial aspect to highlight is the ongoing lack of consensus on the variables or characteristics constituting subjective poverty. The influence of the concept of poverty itself on the measure is evident. However, given the dominance of objective measures and the prominence of visible effects of poverty on populations, a gap exists in the subjective measurement of poverty (Bici, 2018; Jiménez & Herrera, 2017). However, Castillo et al. (2011) consider that the objective indicators of poverty (absolute and relative) do not include aspects related to well-being in their analyses, such as bodily, social, and psychological well-being, security, and freedom of choice and action. Therefore, studies of subjective approaches to poverty have gained more relevance.

Posel and Rogan (2014) argue that subjective measures of poverty offer advantages as they do not necessitate a predetermined poverty line and present a more accurate depiction of the reality experienced by individuals. Moreover, subjective measures of poverty can offer insights into individuals' long-term living conditions, allowing observation, for instance, of wealth accumulation or improvements in life over the subjects' lifetimes (Fletcher & Castillo, 2011) and how this can reflect on future generations (Bici, 2018). However, Nandori (2014) points out that there is no intention to replace objective measures with subjective ones. What is proposed is the complementarity of measures, asserting that subjective measures facilitate the assessment of families' economic well-being. This, in turn, enables comparisons to be made with objective results, thereby enhancing the poverty measurement process (Arroyo-Mina & Ruiz-Cardona, 2016).

Jiménez and Herrera (2017) understand that the complementarity of measures, especially the possibility of establishing a subjective measurement of poverty, can foster a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. For public policies, this means having tools that can more efficiently allocate public social spending, based on the needs identified by the individuals themselves. Filandri et al. (2020) also consider that there are differences between the results obtained from objective and subjective measures of poverty, occurring mainly for two reasons: first, individuals in objective poverty may not feel poor, and second, non-poor individuals may feel that they have less than they would like to meet their needs.

Furthermore, the review indicates that poverty measures, especially subjective ones, are heavily influenced by the socioeconomic context in which they are situated. Studies from affluent countries focus more on social well-being (Ahamdanech-Zarco et al., 2011; Nandori, 2014), while studies from developing countries consider other factors such as access to healthcare and education, public policies for alleviating or combating poverty, and the effects of social comparison and adaptive preferences (Castillo et al., 2011; Fletcher & Castillo, 2011). Studies involving impoverished individuals explore perspectives related to human dignity, access to and guarantee of basic rights (Arroyo-Mina & Ruiz-Cardona, 2016; Ximenes et al., 2015; Ximenes et al., 2016). Studies in poor countries focus on the importance of combating social inequality and strengthening poverty-related public policies (Castillo et al., 2011), while those in affluent countries, with populations not in a state of deprivation, focus on improving consumption patterns (Crettaz & Suter, 2013). The studies also highlight the importance of presenting results in a way that does not attribute blame to individuals for their poverty conditions (Nandori, 2015; Mahmood et al., 2018; Ximenes et al., 2016).

Authors such as Guagnano et al. (2015) contend that subjective poverty is influenced by a combination of socioeconomic factors and the impact of the endowment of social capital within the household or community aggregate. They also highlight the prevailing concept of social capital, Guagnano et al. (2015), which defines social capital as comprising relationships, attitudes, institutions, and values that govern interactions among individuals and contribute to socioeconomic

development. These authors understand that there is evidence that social capital is strongly related to poverty, as the more social capital available, the more resources are available for poverty alleviation (Guagnano et al., 2015).

Bici (2018) considers that the subjective approach to poverty includes different aspects, such as life satisfaction, income level, food consumption, finances, family size, connections, and relationships, and therefore, they can also be formulated by different methods. Furthermore, the current and past context of individuals, as well as their expectations for the future, must also be considered, and whether these indicate negative or positive trends, whether qualitative or quantitative. It is also relevant for these subjective measures of poverty to consider cultural characteristics, even if this implies drawbacks for comparison with other realities. Thus, the subjective approach to poverty and political choices should be inspired by what each society deems the appropriate quality of life for the people living in that space (García-Quero & Guardiola, 2017).

Hence, questions regarding socioeconomic organization, race, gender, family composition, life satisfaction, subjective well-being, social comparison, social adaptability, and the social inequalities experienced by populations should be considered in the elaboration and conception of subjective poverty. Obviously, the territory and the target population of the research also strongly influence the construct. This can weaken comparisons with other realities, but it also strengthens the recognition of the real living conditions, especially in societies marked by social inequalities and poverty (Mahmood et al., 2018). It is also necessary to consider in the analysis that macrostructural societal structures influence what people think poverty is and its causes, and this directly affects actions to alleviate or confront poverty (Nandori, 2014).

In this way, there is no ready-made recipe for the best way to measure subjective poverty. Nevertheless, an effective approach must consider the specific living conditions of the society under examination. Therefore, it becomes imperative to devise strategies that allow the population to articulate their understanding of poverty, recognizing that their judgments are intricately linked to concrete socioeconomic conditions. Consequently, an analysis of the psychosocial processes associated with the phenomenon of poverty becomes paramount, particularly in societies characterized by pronounced social inequalities, where these processes can be magnified for certain societal groups.

Conclusion

Primarily, it is important to emphasize the relevance of studies that delve into the definition and measurement of the construct, surpassing the perspective of self-report. Although a relevant aspect of the measure, it cannot be presented as its centrality because self-reporting does not capture the complexity of the construct. This requires theoretical-methodological efforts, and psychology can provide effective strategies for this to occur. However, the studies presented analyses that allow us to extrapolate this limitation and engage in dialogues with other categories that facilitated the interpretation of the subjects' reality. This includes recognizing the genuine needs identified and understanding the effects of sociodemographic markers on the delineation of subjective poverty. This may serve as an indicator of the intersections experienced by the construct with other subjective indicators.

Also, a subjective approach to poverty requires a commitment to enabling people to be spokespersons for their own living conditions. Furthermore, the conceptualization and measurement of the construct should be mediated by concrete and abstract factors of lived social realities. Thus,

both issues related to work and income (access to goods and services, quality of life, well-being, access to education, health, social security, family composition, the type of employment), as well as the more subjective aspects of this experience (social comparison among peers, social adaptability, psychosocial implications of poverty such as fatalism, shame, humiliation related to poverty, and social support), are important indicators of subjective poverty. It is emphasized that the choice of which and how many indicators will be proposed is entwined with the theoretical-methodological framework itself. More inclusive perspectives, which consider poverty beyond the realms of work and income, will incorporate indicators enabling a more critical understanding of the reality experienced by populations. On the other hand, more conservative perspectives, concentrating solely on monetary aspects, will suggest merely adding what people perceive as poverty, without delving into the biases inherent in their responses.

In addition, an analysis of the social context for this delimitation is indispensable. This can be achieved by referring to previous discussions and consulting official data obtained from surveys on the quality of life of the population. The rationale behind this is the need to mediate this delimitation carefully, as an erroneous choice may lead to distorted perceptions of the construct by individuals. When analyzing a society experiencing extreme poverty situations, consumption needs extend beyond the acquisition of goods and basic necessities, encompassing essential elements like access to food and sanitation. If individuals are subjected to questions that consider issues far removed from their reality, they may define themselves as more or less poor based on these inquiries, and not on the actual conditions experienced. The same applies to realities with better living conditions. In this way, one of the strategies is to define a set of questions a priori and ask a small number of people what they think about them. Only then can an instrument be developed that is applicable to a broader segment of the population. There is also a need for a discussion on public policies directed at poverty alleviation or eradication, social inequality, and macrostructural aspects, especially in capitalist systems, where social injustice is fundamental to societal organization and affects the possibility of life.

Finally, the subjective measurement of poverty does not exclude the existing objective measures. On the contrary, the complementarity of measures can broaden the possibilities for social analysis and bring measures for poverty eradication and relief closer to the real needs identified by populations. It can also reveal psychosocial processes of poverty stigmatization by unveiling classist, racist, and patriarchal macrostructural societal structures that, in highly unequal countries such as Brazil, produce forms of oppression and submission to a majority of the population. Furthermore, the main limitation of the research is the impossibility of conducting a meta-analysis of constructs, which would facilitate the identification of variables more important for the subjective measurement of poverty. However, due to the multiplicity of measures, it was not possible to outline a meta-analytic study, as comparative variables were lacking to develop the method. Another limitation is the underutilization of the search databases, as the inclusion of social science journals could enhance the scope of the findings. Moreover, it is believed that future reviews incorporating material analyses from reports and technical products of national surveys can expand the possibilities for analysis. It was evident that most articles used data from national and international reports measuring poverty and quality of life. Access to primary documents can stimulate additional avenues of analysis.

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