

Ukraine's Poor Majority: Exploring the Driving Factors of Subjective Poverty



Olha Homonchuk
St. Antony's College
University of Oxford

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Social Policy

Trinity 2020

Supervisor
Fran Bennett

Word Count: 78,305

Abstract

Existing scholarship indicates that there are divergences between objective and subjective poverty; yet subjective poverty remains under-researched and not well understood. This research contributes to addressing this gap by identifying and exploring influential factors contributing to high rates of subjective poverty in Ukraine, where nearly 70 per cent of people self-identify as being poor. This rate is surprisingly high given that the World Bank and the National Statistical Service of Ukraine estimate poverty in the country to be around 30 per cent. To understand the drivers of high rates of subjective poverty, the thesis investigates the questions 'what does self-identification as poor entail in the context of Ukraine?' and 'why does the attribution of subjective poverty not correlate with income and material circumstances?' The questions are explored through a qualitative case study in Rivne city in Western Ukraine, using recognition theory as the main theoretical lens. The analysis draws on data from 50 in-depth semi-structured interviews across low- and high-income groups and across three age groups, with individuals ranging from 20 to 81 years old. Amongst the 50 participants, 39 were subjectively poor, 11 of whom were high-income.

The thesis posits that self-identifying as poor is simultaneously a claim of deservingness for a better life, and an internalization of negative stereotypes associated with low social status. In the context of Ukraine, self-identification as poor also has a strong element of collective identity and is accompanied by a binary understanding of inequality, with a perception of a large poor majority and a small rich elite. Consequently, for subjectively poor participants, the average Ukrainian is seen as poor. Moreover, structural explanations of poverty dominate, making it less shameful to self-identify as poor compared to other contexts, in which poverty is associated with individualistic failure.

The thesis further illustrates that subjective poverty does not correlate straightforwardly with income and material circumstances because the main drivers of subjective poverty affect everyone on the stratification curve, but to varying degrees.

The interview data shows that the feeling of being poor arises from experiencing long-term economic volatility, fears about the future due to vulnerability to shocks, lack of meaningful and secure work, and perceptions of deprivation relative to Western Europe and Ukraine's small economic elite. The combination of these factors leads to shared profound feelings of powerlessness, resentment, and misrecognition due to not being valued by the government. The consequent demands for recognition amongst the subjectively poor include the provision of social protection in the spheres of healthcare and pensions, procedural justice within social institutions, and inclusion in the material standard of living characteristic of EU countries.

Given the above findings, the thesis argues that analysing subjective poverty can provide important insights into policy failures. The thesis also contributes to the literature applying recognition theory to the topic of poverty, provides evidence for the importance of psycho-social dimensions in the conceptualization of poverty, and sheds light on the under-researched topic of the poverty experience in Ukraine.

Acknowledgments

Completing this thesis has been a journey of personal and intellectual transformation, which would have been possible without the generous support of the Clarendon and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundations, to whom I am enormously grateful.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Fran Bennett, who has been incredibly patient, supportive, and encouraging throughout the last four years. I am further grateful to my examiners Professor Mary Daly, Professor Nicolas Duvoux, Professor Joe Wolff and Dr Matthew Donoghue for their constructive and encouraging feedback at the crucial points of this research project.

Many thanks to the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, and especially the poverty research group in the department, which provided a safe space to present drafts of my work. Special thanks to Dr Cleopas Sambo and Dr Rachel Bray, for the intellectually stimulating conversations and guidance. I also extend my gratitude to Professor Robert Walker for including me in the Hidden Dimensions of Poverty project, which sparked the research questions of this thesis. I am also grateful to my DPhil cohort, who have stuck together since the MSc and created a nourishing workspace.

To several remarkable women who believed in me and lifted me up repeatedly on the long journey leading up to this point. I thank Gail Voss for helping me enrol at Normandale Community College; Gloria Robinson, Linda Tetzlaff, Lisa Lindemann, and Natalia Anderson for treating me like family and for unwavering support; Elisabeth Ross and Dr Tahnee Ooms, for navigating academia together.

Special thanks to Paul Brimble for engaging with my often incomplete ideas and asking challenging questions.

Above all, I am grateful to my participants, who have generously gifted me with their time and have trusted me to share their lived experiences. This project quite literally would not be possible without you.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 The Research Puzzle.....	1
1.2 Research Questions	7
1.3 Literature Review	8
1.3.1 Defining Subjective Poverty	8
1.3.2 Subjective Poverty in Post-Socialist Countries	18
1.4 Ukraine Socio-Economic and Welfare State Contexts	23
1.5 Structure of the Thesis	33
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework	36
2.1 Concepts of Poverty.....	37
2.1.1 Poverty as Lack of Resources to Meet Needs or Wellbeing	40
2.1.2 Poverty as Lack of Freedom and Choice	44
2.1.3 Poverty as Oppressive Social Relations	48
2.2 Poverty as a Status-Based Identity	55
2.3 Recognition Theory	62
2.3.1 Recognition Through Social Esteem.....	71
2.3.2 Recognition Through Rights	75
2.4 Conclusion	79
Chapter 3: Research Methodology	81
3.1 Qualitative Approach.....	81
3.2. Sample Design.....	83
3.3 Interviewing	91
3.4 Data Analysis	106
Chapter 4: Manifestations of Subjective Poverty	109
4.1 Introduction	109
4.2 Subjectively Poor Participants.....	111
4.2.1 Low-Income Direct Identification as Poor.....	112
4.2.2 Low-Income Indirect Identification as Poor	117
4.2.3 High-Income Direct Identification as Poor.....	124
4.2.4 Common Features Amongst the Subjectively Poor	128
4.3 Subjectively Non-Poor Participants.....	131
4.3.1 Low-Income ‘Othering’	132

4.3.2 High-Income Non-Empathetic.....	133
4.3.3 High-Income Empathetic.....	134
4.4 Ambiguous Subjective Self-Identification	135
4.5 Conclusion	138
Chapter 5: Subjective Poverty as Lack of Self-Realisation	143
5.1 Introduction	143
5.2 Self-Realisation as Eudaimonic Wellbeing	144
5.3 Experiences of Self-Realisation	149
5.4 Efforts for Self-Realisation	159
5.5 Conclusion	167
Chapter 6: Subjective Poverty Through the Lens of Social Rights	172
6.1 Introduction	172
6.2 Experiencing Social Rights	174
6.2.1 Healthcare	174
6.2.2 Education.....	185
6.2.3 Pension System.....	194
6.2.4 Rightless Majority	200
6.3 Misrecognition and Self-Respect	205
6.4. Conclusion	214
Chapter 7: Conclusion	218
Appendix 1: Subjective Poverty Rates by Decile of Household per Capita Income	241
Appendix 2: Subjective Poverty Rates by Age and Sex Cohorts.....	242
Appendix 3: Ethics Approval	243
Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet	244
Appendix 5 Participant Written Consent Form	247
Appendix 6: Interview Topic Guide.....	248
Appendix 7: Questionnaire	249
Appendix 8: Support Resources & Services Handout	250
Appendix 9: Participants Self-Categorisation Table	252
Appendix 10a: Poverty Beliefs and Self-Conception (All Participants)	253
Appendix 10b: Poverty Beliefs and Self-Conception (Low-Income Participants)....	254
Appendix 10c: Poverty Beliefs and Self-Conception (High-Income Participants) ...	255
Appendix 11: Coding Framework	256
Bibliography	257

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Research Puzzle

Measures of subjective poverty, which focus on the perceptions of individuals themselves about whether they are poor, have not received as much attention in the literature as objective measures. It is argued that those on low incomes are likely to avoid identifying themselves as poor because of preferences adaptation, othering and shameful connotations of being labelled as such. However, these stigmatising concerns are not as relevant in places such as Ukraine where subjective poverty rates are high and people freely discuss the topic in their daily lives.

According to the most recent national household surveys, between 2009 and 2017, 67.2 per cent of Ukraine's population on average identified themselves as poor.¹ Averaging across these years, 99.1 per cent of the population identified themselves as being below the middle class, capturing virtually the entire population. Looking at the top income decile, 32 per cent of people on average identify themselves as poor (Appendix 1). The discussions about the experience of feeling poor are frequent enough that there are specific Ukrainian words describing the act of people complaining about being poor. These include 'бідкатися' (*bidktusya*), which means to complain about one's objective hardship, while 'прибіднятися' (*prubidnyatusya*) means to make yourself appear poorer than you are.

¹ Subjective poverty rates are based on the annual household survey by the Ukrainian National Statistics Services. The participants were asked whether they considered themselves 'poor', 'not poor but not middle class', 'middle class' or 'wealthy'.

High rates of subjective poverty are not unique to Ukraine and are a phenomenon of post-communist countries more generally. Based on the data from the European Quality of Life Survey, subjective poverty amongst both non-deprived and deprived respondents looms large in post-Socialist countries (Neuman-Schmidt, Braun and Hofacker, 2018). In Bulgaria in 2003, 86 per cent of people said that poverty was the country's worst problem in 2003 (Krastev and Dimitrova, 2004, p.19). In 2012, 94 per cent of Bulgarians placed themselves as being in poverty or at risk of being poor (Nikolova, 2015, p.44). Similar trends are observed in Hungary (Nikolova, 2015, p. 9-10) - even though it is seen as Eastern Europe's success story based on economic and governance indicators (Milanovic and Ersado, 2012) - and in the Western Balkans(Koczan, 2016, p.19).²

To date there is no clear explanation as to why in post-Soviet countries such as Ukraine subjective poverty rates remain high despite recent economic improvements and poverty reduction. Based on the World Bank upper-middle income country poverty rate, defined as living under \$5.50 per day (2011 PPP), poverty rates fell from 47 per cent in 2002 to 4 per cent in 2018. Similar improvements have been observed using the World Bank's Ukraine country-specific moderate poverty rate,³ which fell from 79 per cent in 2002 to 27.5 per cent in 2015. These trends have also been documented using an unofficial national poverty measure calculated by the National Statistical Services, according to which poverty declined from 51.1 per cent in 2016 to 34.9 percent in 2017 and further to 27.6 per

² Defined in this study as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

³ Due to concerns over the political nature of official poverty rates (they are reviewed and approved annually by the Cabinet of Ministers), the World Bank developed its own moderate poverty measure using a new consumption aggregate and the cost of basic needs methodology.

cent in 2018.⁴ Inequality measures also illustrate sizeable improvements and Ukraine consistently ranks as one of the most equal countries in the world, according to both the Gini index (calculated by the World Bank) and the Palma ratio (UN Human Development Index). On the surface, these achievements appear remarkable.

One could argue that subjective poverty persists because the overall reduction in objective poverty rates was associated with significant economic volatility over the 2000s. While such an argument seems plausible, the analysis of the data provided by the Ukrainian National Statistics Services reveals that there is almost no correlation with economic indicators such as real GDP per capita. Subjective poverty rates have consistently increased during the years in which results from this indicator are available (2009-2017), despite a series of both of positive and negative economic indicators during this period. As noted above, during the years in which subjective poverty rates are available, Ukraine experienced three recessions. In 2009, the global financial crisis hit the country hard before the economy rebounded in 2010 and 2011. However, during this recovery period, subjective poverty rates actually increased (58.7 per cent in 2009 to 62.4 per cent in 2011). In 2012 and 2013, while several consecutive quarters of low negative real GDP growth resulted in a stagnant economy with practically no growth,

⁴ According to the official estimates by the Ukrainian National Statistics Services, the proportion of the total population below the national poverty line fell almost continuously from 87.4 per cent in 2000 to 1.3 per cent in 2018. The official national poverty line underestimates the level of income and material deprivation in the country, however, the reason being that the official Subsistence Minimum level is tied to the provision of social assistance. Given Ukraine's low levels of inequality as captured by the GINI coefficient, an increase in the official poverty estimates would considerably broaden the population which qualifies for these benefits. All data from the Ukrainian National Statistics Services, available at <http://ukrstat.gov.ua> (Specifically the Income and Living Conditions section; *Ukraine Households Self-Perceived of Their Income* statistical publication).

subjective poverty rates increased sharply (62.4 per cent in 2011 to 67.6 per cent in 2013). Following the Revolution in 2014, when the economy collapsed and contracted sharply in 2014 and 2015, there were sequential increases in subjective poverty (70.7 per cent in 2014 and 72.3 per cent in 2015). Additionally, the economic rebound and stabilisation of 2016 coincided with additional increases in subjective poverty, which peaked at 74.0 per cent in 2016. Rather surprisingly, however, despite the fact that the crisis following the Revolution resulted in much more economic deterioration than the 2012 recession, subjective poverty rates actually increased by less, and more gradually. To further illustrate the lack of correlation between subjective poverty and economic indicators, it is worth highlighting that while real GDP per capita was almost identical in 2009 and 2015 (7,479 compared to 7,465 in 2011 PPP dollars), the subjective poverty rates differed markedly, by 13.6 percentage points. Overall, subjective poverty rates have consistently increased against the backdrop of positive and negative economic changes during this period.

Furthermore, the underlying changes over time by income distribution are also very inconsistent (Appendix 1). While there is a uniform reduction in subjective poverty across the population as real incomes increase, it appears that most of the increases prior to the 2014 conflict was driven by low-income households, while the increases after the conflict were driven mostly by high-income households, without a clear explanation of the rise in subjective poverty to date. In the bottom and top decile groups, the average subjective poverty rates between 2009 and 2017 were 83.5 and 32 per cent respectively. However, when evaluating the various shifts in overall subjective poverty rates, the underlying changes by income distribution are very inconsistent. The gradual increases in subjective poverty between 2009 and

2011 were relatively evenly distributed across the various income groups. However, in 2012, the large spike in subjective poverty rates was driven primarily by increases in subjective poverty amongst low-income households, while the increases following the 2014 Revolution were heavily influenced by high-income households. When examining the bottom decile group in the income distribution, 79.5 per cent of households self-identified as poor in 2011, rising to 87.2 per cent in 2012 and remaining relatively stable from then on. In contrast, the top decile group reported relatively little change early on (26.5 per cent in 2011 and 28.0 per cent in 2012). However, by 2016, this rate had increased dramatically, to 44.5 per cent. These imbalances highlight the fact that subjective poverty does not correlate straightforwardly with income or material circumstances, suggesting that changes in different income groups may be triggered by different developments.

Surprising patterns also emerge when exploring differences in subjective poverty rates across age cohorts (Appendix 2). The most noticeable fact is that overall subjective poverty rates are significantly higher amongst the older population, while the rates between the younger and middle-aged populations are more comparable. However, the nature of these differences varies over time. In 2011, subjective poverty appears to increase uniformly with age. In 2012 this pattern changes, with subjective rates amongst the younger population rising above the rates amongst the middle-aged. Additionally, between 2011 and 2012, the increase in subjective poverty amongst the middle-aged population and the older population are much less than those reported amongst the younger population (54.3 per cent to 67.7 per cent for younger, 57.5 per cent to 70.0 per cent for middle-aged and 62.9 per cent to 74.3 per cent for older populations). Strangely, the opposite is true after the 2014 Revolution crisis, with relatively marginal increases in subjective

poverty amongst the younger population (68.3 per cent in 2013 to 69.7 per cent in 2017). This contrasts with the much larger increases reported by the older population (65.3 per cent in 2013 and 79 per cent in 2016). Although from 2012 onwards the trend has been that subjective poverty rates initially fall and then rise with age, contradicting Ravallion and Lokshin (2002) who argue that this pattern should be the opposite (conditional on fixed income levels).

Self-reported subjective poverty correlates quite closely with socially defined poverty lines, showing that subjective poverty is not driven by individual misperceptions of the average standard of living in the country, whereby individuals incorrectly assume that many other people are better-off than them. Specifically, in 2016, 89.6 per cent of households responded that an average individual would require a monetary income exceeding UAH 3,000 per month to not feel poor. Based on the distribution of population by per capita income, 64.4 per cent of the population lived on less than that amount, close to the 74.0 per cent subjective poverty rate in 2016. There appears to be a considerable societal consensus about the minimal income required to not be poor and the proportion below that threshold is close to the proportion of subjectively poor households. Yet both the socially defined poverty line and self-reported poverty rates are considerably greater than even the highest official poverty estimates. This is in addition to the fact that Ukraine often ranks very low on the Happiness Index (Djankov, Nikolova and Zilinsky, 2015) and, since the 2014 Revolution, has appeared frequently amongst the group of countries highest on the Misery index⁵. According to the national household survey in 2016, 44.1 per cent of households expect their material wellbeing to worsen, while 50.2 per cent of

⁵ The misery index is an objective economic measure which combines unemployment and inflation.

households believe that there will be no favourable improvements in the economic development of the country.

Given the widespread rates of subjective poverty, the question remains as to what extent Ukrainians are actually poor. There appears to be a social consensus that most of Ukraine's population is poor, yet based on the official poverty thresholds, such as those from the World Bank and government agencies, poverty rates are rather low. Furthermore, it seems that there is more to self-labelling as poor in Ukraine than is currently discussed in the literature, which tends to highlight the negative aspects of labelling. Specifically, the literature discusses how being labelled as poor implies 'the feelings of marked social inferiority' (Duvoux and Papychon, 2019, p. 8), a 'deficient identity' centred around a lack of something (van de Mieroop, 2011), and an unworthy life (Gordon and Townsend, 2000; Lötter, 2011). Poverty is an emotive word (Wolff, Lamb and Zur-Szpiro, 2015, p. 15), which often suggests that one is living in a negative situation that no one would voluntarily choose to be in (Alcock, 2006). However, while the word is still emotive in Ukraine, the overwhelming use of the label suggests that it might be a meaningful category to people, which contributes to a rather perplexing research puzzle.

1.2 Research Questions

The overarching research question for this thesis is:

- 1) Why do so many people in Ukraine regard themselves as poor?

To answer this question, it is important to address the following sub-questions:

- 2) What does self-identification as poor entail in the context of Ukraine?
- 3) Why does the attribution of subjective poverty not correlate with income and material circumstances?

1.3 Literature Review

1.3.1 Defining Subjective Poverty

Whether someone is poor is typically assessed against an objective criterion such as income, spending or consumption. Subjective poverty, in contrast, is based on a personal self-assessment as to whether one is poor. The interest in subjective poverty measurements originates from the debate about the validity of poverty thresholds set exclusively by academic or policy experts. It has been argued that ordinary people are best at estimating what is necessary for a decent standard of living, therefore poverty definitions should not be left to experts alone (Townsend, 1979; Mack and Lansley, 1985; Abe and Pantazis, 2014). Subjective poverty is often measured in three different ways: direct questions as to whether an individual sees themselves as poor or not, subjective economic stress questions about the ability to make ends meet, and self-ranking questions about the perceived position on the scale from poor to rich (Duvoux and Papuchon, 2019). However, these measures capture slightly different underlying concepts that are not perfectly equivalent. Specifically, the literature often draws an equivalency between felt poverty and subjective economic stress, which is an assumption that has very limited empirical support (Spicker, Leguizamon and Gordon, 2007, p. 199).

Analyses which measure subjective poverty using direct questions are quite rare compared to the other two approaches. A noteworthy exception is a recent study by Duvoux and Papuchon (2019) in France, which uses data from a survey question in which participants were asked 'is there a risk that you, personally, could become poor in the next five years.' The respondents were offered two options: 'yes, a fairly high one' and 'no, probably not,' however, if respondents spontaneously reacted to the question with 'I'm already poor,' this answer would be recorded in the

survey. A total of eight and 13 per cent of respondents, in 2014 and 2015 respectively, said that they are already poor without being offered this answer option (p. 10). Five per cent of those who self-identified as poor were individuals in the 4th and 5th standard of living quintiles, showing that even those who are not objectively poor, based on income and material deprivation measures, self-identify as poor. This study also found that subjective poverty is strongly associated with lasting socio-economic insecurity, an inability to envision the future positively, and the feeling of being left behind.

More commonly the term subjective poverty is associated with the second methodological approach, in which individuals report on their level of subjective economic stress by answering questions of whether they can make ends meet. Survey questions of this type might ask: 'Can you make ends meet with the actual net income of your household?' with the following answer options: 'with great difficulty/ with difficulty/ with some difficulty/ rather easily/ easily/ very easily' (Spicker, Leguizamon and Gordon, 2007, p. 200). Those who answer 'with [some/great] difficulty' are then categorised as subjectively poor. In this approach, subjective poverty is essentially treated as a proxy for objective income poverty or material deprivation (for examples see: Van Praag, 1971; Vos and Garner, 1991; Hallerod, 1995; Nolan and Whelan, 1996; Gustafsson, Shi and Sato, 2004; Bishop, Luo and Pan, 2006; Whelan and Maître, 2010; Angelillo, 2014; Ravallion, 2014; Morawski and Domitrz, 2017). At its core, this measure is based on the assumption that one feels poor when they are unable to meet the social norms of material living standards, reflecting the commonly used relative definitions of poverty.

Measures capturing subjective economic stress are often used for triangulation (i.e. at the same time) with measures of objective relative income and

material deprivation poverty. Subjective poverty can capture cases of transition in and out of poverty that may not be reflected in static income measures. For instance, people who are income poor might not be in material deprivation because they live on acquired assets. There might also be households that are technically not income poor and yet are unable to cover their expenditures on necessities because of the level of their needs. Additionally, triangulation of objective measures with a subjective measure can help identify the most deprived populations more accurately (i.e. those who are consistently poor across subjective, material deprivation and income measures) (Bradshaw and Finch, 2003). Given these nuances, triangulation of objective measures with a subjective measure reflects the fact that poverty is not static, but rather a dynamic phenomenon with different configurations of deprivations that can lead to being poor. Overall, the use of this method highlights the importance of economic vulnerability and macro-economic contextual factors for poverty dynamics (Mau, Mewes and Schöneck, 2012).

Despite the potential benefits, very few countries collect data on subjective economic stress, as researchers and policy-makers remain suspicious of their usefulness (Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007). The difficulty with using subjective measurements is that there is uncertainty about how to interpret them, and empirically, there is little overlap between this measure and other income and material deprivation measures. We frequently observe cases in which individuals report economic stress yet do not see themselves as poor, as well as cases in which individuals perceive themselves as poor but are not experiencing economic stress (Van Praag and Ferrer-i-Carbonell, 2008). Such is the case in the Philippines, where 22 per cent of middle-class households report that they are poor even though they are not excluded from the average standard of living in their society (Mangahas,

2001). In the study by Bradshaw and Finch (2003), the overlap between subjective poverty, material deprivation and income poverty is only about 30 per cent. Evidence also shows that an individual's income has varying effects on subjective poverty across EU countries (Buttler, 2013).

The third common use of the term subjective poverty is in reference to individuals placing themselves at the bottom of a self-rating social stratification scale. In this approach, researchers relax the assumption that it is mostly the material circumstances that underpin felt poverty suggesting that there are many factors that might lead one to perceive themselves as poor. As will be shown in the table below, there is variation in the scales used to represent social stratification. While some use a simple three-step ladder (Alem, Köhlin and Stage, 2014), others rely on a nine- or twelve-point ladder from 'poor' to 'rich'. The threshold, below which one is categorised as in poverty, will often depend on the size of the ladder. The table below also summaries the key findings from studies which measure subjective poverty though self-rating scales:

Table 1 A Comparison of Subjective Poverty Correlates (compiled by the author)

Reference	Country	Self-ranking scale (SP threshold)	Subjective Poverty Correlates
Mangahas (2001)	Philippines	3 (1)	Self-reported poor are twice as many as official poverty rates. Strongest correlates with subjective poverty are educational attainment of household head and household size.
Ravallion and Lokshin (2002)	Russia	9 (2)	Subjective poverty captures past income, relative income, expectations about future income and a variety of attitudinal variables. Controlling for past and present income, health and education are important. The unemployed are more likely to be SP even with income replacement. Individual income matters independently of household income.
Carletto and Zezza (2006)	Albania	10 (2)	Objective measures of poverty are strongly correlated with SP, both lead to similar poverty headcounts. Divergence is driven by household size and satisfaction at work, relative position, household

			wealth, and income dependence or vulnerability amongst pensioners. The study also highlights the importance of education infrastructure, public education expenditure and work opportunities for not feeling subjectively poor.
Wagle (2007)	Nepal	n/a	Educational attainment and living in substandard dwellings appear to be consistently the strongest predictors of both objective and subjective poverty. Less likely to be subjectively poor: larger households, Buddhist population (most likely due to lower expectations), self-employed householders (even if they display inadequacy in income and consumption).
Sy (2013)	Senegal	5 (n/a)	Besides the traditional factors - age, sex, residence environment (urban or rural) and educational level of the head of the household, subjective poverty is largely explained by factors such as the district of residence, receipt of state-funded support by the household, and the extent of corruption in the community.
Alem, Kohlin and Stage (2014)	Ethiopia	3 (1)	Previous experience of material deprivation (even after their material consumption improves), relative position. Being employed mitigates felt poverty even if a household is poor by objective and income measures.
Posel and Rogan (2016)	South Africa	6 (2)	Where subjective and objective poverty measures do not overlap, the influential factors are household size, the share of children and the elderly in the household, homeownership and housing type, access to piped water and electricity, and access to farming land.
Koczan (2016)	Western Balkans	10 (2)	Amongst objectively poor households, 38 per cent see themselves as poor. Uncertainty related to future income and vulnerability to shocks appear to be key in addition to health, education, employment status.
Mahmood et al. (2018)	Pakistan	10 (2)	SP is associated with lower education, household size, own residence, and physical security.
Neuman-Schmidt, Braun and Hofacker (2018)	EU (European Quality of Life Survey)	10 (4)	5.4 per cent are not in deprivation but see themselves as poor; 15.8 per cent are in material deprivation but not subjectively poor. SP people are more likely to have lower or medium education level, be in atypical employment and unemployed, live in a parental home (associated with the lack of autonomy, irrespective of the economic standard of living). In a time of crisis, objectively non-poor have a higher risk of subjective poverty. SP is lowest in the Mediterranean welfare states; highest in post-socialist countries.

The trendsetting study in terms of this approach was a paper by Ravallion and Lokshin in the early 2000s, which shed light on the mismatch between those reporting felt poverty and those who fall below income and material deprivation lines in Russia. In their study, which is contextually similar to the case study of Ukraine, subjective poverty captures not just current relative income, but also past and anticipated future levels of income. Subjective poverty is also more probable amongst those who rely on family or benefits for income and have poor health. Looking across all papers presented in Table 1, the key factors correlating with subjective poverty are low educational attainment, living in a large household (independent of material deprivation and income levels), quality and availability of employment, position relative to others, the availability of state social security, and the quality of social institutions. Interestingly, corruption, which is likely to feature in the context of Ukraine, is mentioned only once by Sy (2013).

One of the key questions regarding the interpretation of the results from self-rating scale measures is to what extent subjective poverty is a distinct concept from subjective wellbeing. Many authors use the two terms interchangeably, suggesting that they are synonymous. The self-ranking method was originally derived from the economic literature measuring wellbeing and happiness (Duvoux and Papychon, 2019), which partially explains why subjective poverty is often used interchangeably with subjective wellbeing. For example, Nándori (2011, p. 538) suggests that 'subjective wellbeing can be reflected by the so-called subjective poverty concept.' The reason for treating the two synonymously is because they both can capture certain non-material dimensions of the experience of poverty. Some argue that if the concept of poverty is to be expanded beyond a lack of income, then poverty is best interpreted as a lack of wellbeing though low happiness, utility, or satisfaction

with life as a whole (Razafindrakoto and Roubaud, 2006; Van Praag and Ferrer-i- Carbonell, 2008). Given this way of thinking about poverty beyond income, measures of subjective poverty are assumed to capture subjective wellbeing. Lastly, there are also similarities around the thematic content of discussions on subjective poverty and wellbeing. Both literatures discuss the extent to which income matters, how people evaluate circumstances that are objectively similar differently (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2002; Powdthavee, 2010), and the importance of factors such as health and employment status.

That said, despite the ideas of subjective poverty and wellbeing being closely linked, it is possible to distinguish between the two because someone's self-ranking from poor to rich, is a much narrower concept than self-rated happiness or life satisfaction (Ravallion and Lokshin, 2002). When one says that someone is 'poor', one typically does not mean that they are unhappy. While subjective wellbeing evaluations are based on the frequency of experiencing positive emotions on a daily basis (Diener *et al.*, 2010), subjective poverty is typically based on evaluations of life-long accomplishments.

The distinction can also be drawn looking at the differences in trends underlying subjective poverty and low subjective wellbeing. Research on subjective wellbeing often finds a U-shaped pattern from early adulthood through the 60s and 70s (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2008), with happiness reaching the lowest levels sometime in the 40s. However, subjective poverty often has an inverse U-shape, as is the case in Ukraine's research puzzle. An inverse U-shape is likely to be driven by higher levels of economic vulnerability and dependency in early and older years. Subjective poverty persists even if income replacement occurs. Given that we are seeing two divergent trends concerning age, the two concepts are unlikely to be

synonymous. Similar observations can be made about the variables of strong social ties and marriage. It is well established that the two factors contribute positively to subjective wellbeing and life satisfaction (Diener, Lucas and Oishi, 2018). Yet being married and living in large intergenerational households is often one of the strongest predictors of being subjectively poor. Religion does not feature as a mediating factor for subjective poverty yet typically leads to higher levels of subjective wellbeing. This distinction will be crucial in understanding the lived experiences of participants introduced in Chapter 4, many of whom reported being satisfied with their life yet also having strong feelings about being poor.

Given the methodology of self-ranking on a social stratification ladder, subjective poverty is also closely linked to the idea of subjective social status, which refers to people's self-location in a social hierarchy more generally. Low and uncertain subjective positions in a social hierarchy have been long associated with poor outcomes in terms of physical and mental health (Marmot, 2004) as well as being one of the main drivers of political attitudes (Walter, Van der Brug and van Praag, 2014). Countries with higher income inequality tend to have higher status anxiety for all people compared to those in countries with lower rates of inequality (Layte and Whelan, 2014; Lindemann and Saar, 2014). It is thought that subjective social status is the psychological causal mechanism that links inequality and wellbeing (Schneider, 2019). In other words, the extent to which inequality affects individual wellbeing is moderated by one's subjective social status. In societies with higher rates of inequality, status is more detrimental in terms of resource access and wellbeing. In these settings, status differences are more obvious to others, as there are greater gaps between different status-associated cultures in Bourdieusian terms (Maton, 2012), and there is also more status competition at each level of

inequality. These factors combined lead to status anxiety which provokes harmful emotional stress responses even amongst those who are well-off (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009, 2018). This idea of status anxiety closely resembles Marmot's (2004) notion of a status syndrome which affects everyone on the status gradient, but to varying degrees, with the greatest impact on those at the bottom of the status hierarchy. Status is detrimental to an individual's level of control over their life circumstances and consequently, their mental and physical health. Insights from this subjective status literature might be helpful in understanding high-income subjectively poor participants in the sample of this thesis.

There are several further concerns regarding subjective poverty measurements worth highlighting. Firstly, subjective poverty might not reflect actual feelings of poverty, therefore focusing on felt poverty might be misused to downplay the importance of income. Secondly, felt poverty is driven by one's relative position which varies from local to international comparisons. Lastly, it is difficult to interpret subjective poverty given that it correlates with several factors ranging from past experiences of material deprivation to the quality of the government and social institutions (Baldini, Peragine and Silvestri, 2018).

Focusing on the first critique, felt poverty measures might be biased because there are several factors which lead people to not identify themselves as poor, even though they may in fact feel poor. The literatures on the centrality of shame and stigma in the experience of poverty (Chase and Walker, 2012; Walker, 2014) and on othering (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005) suggest that for some people, even if they feel poor, they are unlikely to identify as such because of the negative connotations often associated with the label (Beresford *et al.*, 1999; Novak, 2001). One of the main mechanisms driving this apparent 'misreporting' comes from the

shame and stigma associated with the label 'poor' (Lister, 2004a). Shaming the poor arises from beliefs about poverty and wealth more broadly. In particular, when people believe in individualistic explanations of poverty, the result is that the poor are 'othered' as different and that even those who are objectively poor will resist being labelled as such (Gough, Eisenschitz and McCulloch, 2006; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013). In highly individualistic countries, such as the US, people living in poverty are more likely to define themselves with other social identities such as race, ethnicity, or geographical location in order to avoid conversations that draw attention to their marginalised status (Mantsios, 2010).

The literature on adaptation of preferences raises another concern – that of cases in which individuals might not feel or self-identify as poor, while living in material and income deprivation. This literature points out that people living in deprivation sometimes do not feel poor because they adapt to adverse circumstances as a means of coping (Shropshire and Middleton, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2017). It is therefore argued that subjective assessment should be used with caution, especially in developing country contexts, where people often downplay their hardship simply because they have adapted their expectations and aspirations to correspond with the restricted opportunities available to them. In other words, just because someone does not feel, and therefore does not self-identify, as poor does not mean they are not actually poor and in need of support.

Moving on to the second critique, it can be argued that an individual's self-assessment in terms of feeling poor is problematic as it is inherently relative and changes depending on which specific reference group is used (Runciman, 1989; Luttmer, 2005; Kingdon and Knight, 2006; Knight, Lina and Gunatilaka, 2009; Bookwalter and Dalenberg, 2010; Zeidan, 2015). In the case of local comparison

there are two potential opposing effects. On the one hand, those living in income poverty might not feel poor if they compare their living situation with individuals who are equally deprived (Bottero, 2004, p. 998). On the other hand, the higher earnings of others in one's community, which are associated with a lower level of wellbeing, might lead one to feel poor even if they are not materially deprived (Frey and Stutzer, 2002; Luttmer, 2005). With cross-national referencing, individuals may be comparing their situation not only with those in their neighbourhood, but also with those living abroad (UNICEF, 2000). In the case of cross-national relative comparison, the implications of felt poverty rates for national social policy are not clear, and therefore might not be useful for national policymakers. Furthermore, there is an additional layer of distinguishing between privately oriented and publicly oriented reference groups (Goedemé and Rottiers, 2011). Privately-oriented outcomes focus on personal outcomes, such as the level of pay for doctors in Ukraine relative to Western Europe, while public-oriented focuses more on generalised outcomes such as a minimal acceptable standard of living. All of these reference groups potentially can potentially shape self-identification, making it difficult to interpret subjective poverty rates.

1.3.2 Subjective Poverty in Post-Socialist Countries

To date there is very little research on the issue of high rates of subjective poverty in post-Soviet countries and there are no studies specifically examining subjective poverty in Ukraine. Currently there are only four studies investigating the topic. The most widely known is the paper on subjective poverty in Russia by Ravallion and Lokshin (2002), which was discussed earlier. Carletto and Zezza (2006) explore subjective poverty in Albania, finding that while the poverty headcounts by subjective and objective poverty are similar, there is low overlap

between the two. This is primarily driven by differences in household size, whereby larger households are less likely to be subjectively poor because of economies of scale which are not accounted for in the objective per capita measure. A doctoral thesis by Nikolova (2015) on the Bulgarian case called *Poor, Poorer, Bulgarian*, which had two key findings. First, the poor are a very broad category capturing the losers of the transition that are compared to the corrupt elite who took advantage of the transition. As such, the word poor is synonymous with regular people. Second, the EU is a strong point of reference which leads to a profound sense of marginality. Finally, the IMF Working Paper (Koczan, 2016) called *Being Poor, Feeling Poorer* similarly finds that in the Western Balkan countries⁶, subjective poverty rates are significantly higher than rates based on income-based. The author finds that this discrepancy is driven by uncertainty about future incomes and vulnerability to economic shocks.

Within Ukraine, the topic of subjective poverty is often discussed in terms of nostalgia for socialism (Symonchuk, 2003; Zlobina, 2004) or as part of the Ukrainian performative identity constructed around the notions of victimhood and oppression (Moore, 2012; Budryte, 2016). These explanations of subjective poverty lead to pervasively exclusionary welfare politics which direct the attention away from the issues surrounding pensions, social insurance and labour policies, and instead stigmatise the most disadvantaged groups (Kovács, Polese and Morris, 2017). Furthermore, this transforms the topic of poverty, and especially subjective poverty, into an individual pathology and a matter of culture, disconnected from the economic

⁶ Defined in this study as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

sphere (Riabchuk, 2009) and the fact that a substantial proportion of Ukrainian households are in a precarious situation (Whitefield, 2002).

The literature on the experience of post-Soviet transition unintentionally supports these explanations. It is argued that in Ukraine, like elsewhere in Eastern Europe (Hegedûs, 1999), the ideas about a post-socialist future were built around idealised and unrealistic imaginations of present-day life in Western Europe (Bulakh, 2014) driven by the evolutionary logic of post-communist transition, which unleashed 'great expectations' in the popular imagination (Aleksievich and Shayevich, 2016). The expectations of transformation revolved around ideas of democracy, travel, boundless opportunities for acquiring property and wealth. This transformation was portrayed as dependent on the evolution of the supposedly 'backward' Homo Sovieticus to a new, 'developed' form of personhood (Hartman, 2007).

However, starting in the late 1990s, there was a widespread sense of disappointment and disillusionment with the negative political and economic developments (Wanner, 1998). The general public was not prepared for the upcoming challenges of economic transformation and felt that they had been let down by the new system (Ryabchuk, 2012). It is argued that it is the unrealised expectations that led many people to feel poor despite objective improvements in their economic wellbeing and standard of living since independence. These unmet expectations live on in the idealisation of the 'Imaginary West' (Fehérváry, 2002; Yurchak, 2005, pp. 158–160) and continue to perpetuate the feelings of relative impoverishment.

A more neutral perspective on the topic of high rates of subjective poverty is available in the literature on beliefs about stratification (Hunt and Bullock, 2016; Bullock and Repond, 2018). A stratification ideology 'represents a stable, comprehensive system of opinions on the structure of opportunities, the causes of social inequality, and justice' (Kreidl, 2000, p. 152). This concept is closely related to attribution theory, whereby the dominant ideology (Huber and Form, 1973) involves society accepting individualistic explanations of poverty and the current system of inequalities, while the challenging ideology (Kluegel and Smith, 2017) involves society rejecting these individualistic explanations. The challenging ideology is built on structural explanations which strongly emphasise the injustice of the current socio-economic order and stress the need for action to change it (Kreidl, 2000). Compromise attributions will occasionally 'combine [some] individual blame with structural reasons and see the poor as active agents who operate in a web of social constraints' (Kluegel, Mason and Wegener, 2011; Pian Ka, Van Oorschot and Gelissen, 2019).

The types of poverty beliefs that are prevalent amongst individuals have strong implications for the stratification ideology of a society. In Western European and North American countries, dominant ideologies are more prevalent. Supporters of a dominant ideology tend to perceive that material deprivation rates are low and explain the incidence of poverty in individualistic terms. The aspect of shaming the poor in this context is strongly fuelled by the individualistic explanations which people hold about poverty and wealth more broadly. When people believe in individualistic explanations of poverty, the result is that the poor are blamed for their poverty and 'othered' even by those who themselves live on low incomes and in

material deprivation (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005; Gough, Eisenschitz and McCulloch, 2006; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013).

By contrast, in many post-socialist countries, the majority of the population uphold a challenging stratification ideology, which involves the perception of high levels of inequality and the belief that material poverty is caused by 'structural failings' (Rank, 2010). This view reflects two opposing and conflicting groups of 'the poor' (most of the population) and 'the rich' (oligarchs)⁷ (Rosling, Rönnlund and Rosling, 2018). Habibov *et. al* (Habibov *et al.*, 2017) show that Ukraine has the highest support for structural explanations of poverty amongst CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries, with 65.5 per cent of people leaning towards structural explanations in 2010. The psychology literature on poverty beliefs provides a broader framework to understand subjective poverty compared to the narrow individualistic explanations based on Soviet cultural legacies and victimhood identity.

This literature review shows that knowledge on the topic of subjective poverty is relatively scarce, especially in the context of post-socialist countries. Given how high the subjective poverty rates are in these countries, including Ukraine, there is a need to address this knowledge gap. The lack of a clear and precise definition and interpretation of subjective poverty in these contexts makes it easy for policy makers and academics to dismiss these high rates. Moreover, the empirical evidence in the literature has been mostly quantitative, lacking a clear conceptual framework and narrative linking all of the various individual findings. The existing

⁷ Oligarchs are owners of large sectors of Ukraine's economy, most 'notably energy, metallurgy, mining and chemical industry' who sponsor various political parties across ideological spectrum (Anders, 2014, p. 64).

body of knowledge could thus benefit from qualitative insights into the meaning of subjective poverty, especially with respect to the materially well-off but subjectively poor individuals.

1.4 Ukraine Socio-Economic and Welfare State Contexts

Ukraine is a lower-middle income country in Eastern Europe and is best described as a hybrid political regime combining elements of democracy and competitive authoritarianism (Matsiyevsky, 2018). Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, inheriting a plethora of structural and social problems, including poverty. According to 2018 World Bank estimates, the population of Ukraine is 42.5 million, of which 78 per cent are ethnic Ukrainians. Russians are the second largest ethnic group, comprising approximately 17 per cent of the population. Ukrainian is the official language, although Russian remains widely spoken.

Looking at the first decade of independence, most of the Ukrainian population lived below the national poverty line due to severe economic shocks, hyperinflation and a government budget collapse (Haggard and Kaufman, 2009; Offe, 2009). The early 1990s were characterised by mass unemployment (Standing, 2010), the emergence of new social risks (Bonoli, 2005), changing gender roles (Emigh and Szelényi, 2001), rapidly rising levels of inequality, and restructuring of the welfare state (Viebrock and Clasen, 2009). By 1999, real GDP had been reduced to only 38 per cent of the 1989 level. To put Ukraine's situation during the 1990s in a comparative perspective, the proportional output and income losses for Ukraine were much greater and more sustained than those experienced by the USA and Germany during the 1930s Great Depression (Milanovic, 1998; Simai, 2006; Milanovic and Ersado, 2012). Looking comparatively at all the former Soviet

countries, Ukraine's drop in life expectancy between 1989 and 1996 was the largest in the region (Ivaschenko, 2003), which speaks to the fact that the routes and outcomes of post-Soviet transformation varied by country, even though they seemingly all started from the same point (Manning, 2004).

In the early 2000s, the country experienced robust economic growth, growing at 7 per cent per annum between 2000 and 2007. These improvements were halted by the global financial crisis in 2008 which caused Ukraine's real GDP to contract by 14.8 per cent, resulting in unemployment, reduced real earnings, and high inflation for essential goods and services. A steady growth in consumer prices was observed in all regions and felt by all segments of society (Center of Social Expertise, 2011, p. 79). The significant economic effects were due in part to the country's high dependence on external funding and investment (Mayhew, 2010). Following the short post-crisis recovery in 2010-2011, there was a period of economic stagnation as Ukraine entered a mild recession at the end of 2012, which lasted until the second half of 2013.

In 2014 Ukraine experienced a further economic shock following the Revolution of Dignity, also known as Euromaidan. The initial protests started after Yanukovych's government's announcement that they would not be signing the Trade Association Agreement with the European Union in favour of signing a trade agreement with Russia instead. For many Ukrainians, the agreement with the European Union was associated with the potential for future economic development. The initial small-scale demonstrations turned into a revolution after the peaceful student protesters and media were violently attacked by the police. The momentum for the 2014 revolution had been building for the better part of a decade since the 2004 Orange Revolution, the violence against the peaceful

protestors became the tipping point as it symbolised the oppression of ordinary people by the government. Research on the motivations of the Revolution of Dignity, based on interviews with protestors at the time, shows that while there were slight variations in demands by age groups, ordinary protestors predominantly wanted a better economic and democratic future in Ukraine (Onuch, 2014). The average age of protestors in Kyiv was about 36 with middle-aged protestors (aged 30 to 55), demanding 'economic security and opportunities for their children, and [expressing a] desire to live in a normal European democracy' (Onuch, 2014, p. 243).

The overthrowing of the Yanukovych government was followed by an annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the breakout of armed conflict with Russia, which was hugely disruptive both economically and socially. Consequently, Ukraine lost nearly a quarter of its economic potential (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2015, p. 3) and there were sizeable contractions in real GDP of 6.6 per cent and 9.8 per cent in 2014 and 2015 respectively. Maintaining basic living standards became more difficult with increasing inflation (24.9 per cent and 43.4 per cent in 2014 and 2015 respectively) and decreasing real incomes which fell by 7 per cent in 2014 and a further 20 per cent in 2015. The conflict has also led to the internal and external displacement of people (UNHCR, 2017).

The war on the Eastern border of Ukraine was still ongoing at the time of my fieldwork. Inevitably, many participants commented extensively about the war without prompting. Even though Rivne is located far away from the front lines, the participants' lives were touched by the conflict as many had friends and family members who have volunteered to serve in the army on the eastern border. The topic of war was not included in the analysis as it is outside the scope of the study.

With regard to the welfare state structure, Ukraine's welfare system started to undergo 'retrenchment' or 'restructuring' following independence (Pierson 2001), which pushed the configuration of the welfare mix in the direction of a liberal welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990). At the time, all transition economies were advised by international organisations to take on the neoliberal reform agenda of fiscal stability by means of drastic spending cuts and privatisation (Orenstein, 2009). Foreign experts argued that the Soviet welfare state was premature, in that its excessive expenditure on welfare as a share of the state budget held back Ukraine's economic growth.

The proposed reforms were strongly supported locally. In the Soviet welfare structure, the linkage of welfare provision to the prestige of one's job channelled a disproportionate amount of funding to well-off parts of society, therefore exacerbating, rather than moderating, existing inequalities (Szalai, 2012). Targeting of benefits and a reduced role for the state promised to make the new system more just.⁸ Consequently, the previous universal welfare system, with relatively stable provisions offered for a wide stratum of society, was to be replaced by a more segmented system with different tiers of deservingness based on need (Cerami, Alfio; Vanhuysse, 2009).

It is worth noting that in the Soviet Union, the universal welfare provision was linked to compulsory full employment; universality did not imply a lack of contribution or means testing. Similarly to the context of the Golden Age in rich democracies when the welfare state flourished, in the Soviet Union, unemployment was low. This

⁸ However we now know that welfare systems which emphasise targeting tend to have higher rates of poverty compared to welfare systems with universal provision (Korpi and Palme, 1998; Brady, 2009).

made it possible to have a 'universal' entitlement to benefits via employment contributions. Despite being more of an ideal rather than a reality in Soviet countries, the idea of universality in terms of entitlement to social welfare provision is still shaped by the notion of contribution to society through labour. More specifically, those who have a long-standing employment record feel more entitled to reciprocity from the state in the form of pensions.⁹

At the onset of independence, it was assumed that democratisation would facilitate welfare state reform by providing citizens with the means to hold the state to account and thereby, safeguard individual rights to a healthy life and a minimum standard of living. More specifically, it was assumed that democratisation would lead to the fast emergence of strong and well-run civil society organisations to facilitate the ongoing dialogue and negotiation between citizens and the state. While the extent to which civil society is weak in the post-communist context is debated (Foa and Ekiert, 2017), it has clearly not been strong enough to steer welfare reforms in a progressive direction. Without democratic oversight by citizens, the transformation did not culminate in a meaningful reform of the welfare state, leading to desertion of social guarantees by the state (Standing, 1997) resulting in a hybrid welfare system in Ukraine (Cook, 2010). Contrary to the aspirations underpinning the push for drastic reforms, Ukraine has been left with a welfare structure characterised by remarkable divergences in social rights for different strands of society.

The healthcare system is the most striking example of Ukraine's enduring struggle to reform its social institutions. Healthcare systems are generally difficult to

⁹ For an in-depth discussion on the issues of using the criteria of reciprocity as the basis for social rights, see (White, 2000; Griggs and Bennett, 2009).

reform, and across all post-Soviet countries, were the slowest of all public institutions to reform (Kornai and Eggleston, 2001). However, Ukraine's healthcare system has remained virtually unchanged since the collapse of the Soviet Union. On the surface, Ukraine has an extensive public health system, in which all citizens are by law entitled to free care. In practice, care must be paid for in cash at the time of service provision (Karklins, 2005b; Morris and Polese, 2016). Furthermore, the healthcare system focuses mostly on acute treatment, with less emphasis on preventative care and since most of the care is provided through a large hospital infrastructure, there is a very minor role for primary health-care services. In addition, there are systematic organisational and financial inefficiencies, and a lack of innovation in workforce training and facilities maintenance (Romaniuk and Semigina, 2018).

Given these problems, it has long been argued that Ukraine should switch from central planning to a decentralized system (Stepurko and Belli, 2018) as there is a disproportionate amount of power in the central government, inherited from the Soviet Union, and a lack of administrative capacity to effectively deliver public services (Romanova and Umland, 2019). There have also been several discussions about introducing social health insurance but these have not resulted in policy implementation. Unfortunately, due to the lack of early reforms, the void of a dysfunctional and underfunded central system has been filled by an informal self-regulatory system with quasi-market principles, operating on the premises of public health services such as state hospitals.

The contradictory influences of both Soviet and neoliberal ideologies inevitably led to people questioning the balance between the rights and responsibilities of the state versus those of its citizens (Bazylevych, 2009). With

neoliberalism came a strong emphasis on eradicating dependency on the state and a shift in focus towards the material contribution of claimants, away from their lack of resources. At the same time, social rights continue to be rhetorically framed in ways consistent with the previous socio-political regime. Contrary to Western European and North American countries, in post-Soviet countries the rights to social security, education and health care are constitutional (Kornai and Eggleston, 2001, p. 141; Jung, Hirschl and Rosevear, 2014, p. 1074). In line with social rights being constitutional rights, citizens see social rights as a matter of principle, not just social policy that changes depending on what political party is in power (Ibid, p. 54). In many ways, the rhetoric of being a constitutional right frames social rights as fundamental and important, providing citizens with an 'agreed normative standard for public criticism' of welfare provision (King, 2019, p. 51). Unfortunately, given the high rates of corruption, only those who have privileges in the judicial system have the privilege of being able to enforce their social rights (Ferraz, 2009).

The discrepancy between social rights in principle versus social rights in practice can be further illustrated by looking at Ukraine's pension system. The retirement age is 60 for men (with an average life expectancy of 66 years) and 57 for women (with average life expectancy of 76). People over the age of 60 constitute about 23 per cent of the population and for most of them, their main source of retirement income is from state pensions. A voluntary private pension system arrangement was first introduced in 2004 (OECD, 2009) but as of July 2019, only about five per cent of the labour force had enrolled in it (USAID, 2019, p. 21). Lack of participation is explained by the general scepticism of the program and an inability to save due to lack of disposable income. One of the most common ways people in Ukraine save money is by keeping cash in foreign currency. State pensions are

financed by a solidarity insurance system on a pay-as-you-go basis such that people who are currently working and making contributions are financing pensioners.

Because of the ageing society, the current ratio of employed people to pensioners is about 1.3 to 1, which is not sustainable in the long term. This is exacerbated by high rates of tax avoidance and the costly expense of special privileged occupational pensions (such as those provided to civil servants, military personnel and judges). It is crucial to point out that, contrary to Western European neighbours, Ukrainian society is ageing without living longer. In Ukraine, the population is ageing from the bottom due to a decline in fertility rates since the 1980s and a significant increase in emigration starting in the 1990s, both of which led to considerable shrinkage of the younger population (Botev, 2012). Apart from AIDS-afflicted countries in Africa, this trend in post-Soviet countries stands in sharp contrast with the rest of the world, which suggests that the 'solution' to an ageing society of working longer will not succeed in Ukraine.

The minimum pension in Ukraine is around 65-70 USD per month, which is below the minimum subsistence level of 80 USD per month. To qualify for a minimum pension, men must have a record of 25 years of official employment, while women must have 20 years (to be increased to 35 and 30 by 2021). Even though pensions are very low, and do not cover basic needs, the expectation of receiving a state pension remains. This might be because the state pay-as-you-go system stayed intact, and there are no alternatives. Furthermore, the idea of pensions continues to have a strong symbolic component as people maintain a socialist understanding of pensions, whereby it is the state's obligation to reward people for their years of service to society through work (Padvalkava, 2011).

To further contextualise the experience of the study's participants, it is also important to have insights into Ukraine's labour market. Nearly 50 per cent of all economic activity in Ukraine is informal (Ryabchuk, 2014, p. 12), leading to frequent violations of labour rights. The official unemployment rates have been about nine per cent of the total labour force since 2014¹⁰, although because of the high levels of informality, many people who are not officially employed are working in the informal economy. Moreover, even those who are officially employed may only earn very little income leading to in-work poverty. Ukraine's labour market is further characterised by a large mismatch between formal education and employment status. At least 40 per cent of those aged 15–70 are currently over-educated for their jobs (Kupets, 2016). According to ILO estimates, at least 60 per cent of higher education graduates are unable to 'find jobs in the field of knowledge they have been taught' (2016, p. 6). As of 2016, '40 per cent of employees in Ukraine perform predominantly low-skilled manual work,' highlighting the low demand for highly-skilled workers (ILO, 2016, p. 12).

The labour market mismatch is driven by two factors. Firstly, prior to the 1990s, the basis of urban employment was heavy industry, which required a labour force with predominantly high technical skills. Educational attainment and literacy were high for both genders, tuition and associated costs were free, and dropout rates were relatively low. The rapid move to privatise industry following the fall of the Soviet Union led to the shutting down of many inefficient factories and a shift in the types of jobs available (O'Neill, 2014). The specific technical skills of the adult population became obsolete as technical occupations were replaced by services,

¹⁰ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=UA>

sales, and elementary occupations. Secondly, the emergence of private universities as an alternative to the state-run, tuition-free education, led to an increase in higher education attainment during the first decade of Ukraine's independence which further exacerbated the mismatch between formal education levels and employment status.

Looking at the average structure of household expenditures in Ukraine, 50.4 per cent of total household income is spent on food while in more economically developed countries, such as Germany, this is only about 10 per cent (Shavalyuk, 2012). When compared with other countries at a similar level of GDP per capita, Ukraine's proportion of total income spent on food is almost double that of countries such as Georgia, Guatemala and El Salvador (Ibid). Additionally, many households in Ukraine are unable to cover the costs of services such as water, gas, and electricity with these utilities making up about 20 per cent of household expenditures (Ryabchuk, 2014).

In lieu of the current economic circumstances, people have adopted several coping mechanisms and developed a strong culture of survival and resourcefulness. Typical survival strategies include exchanging goods and services with neighbours and relatives (Ryabchuk, 2012), working in multiple jobs and the informal sector, and resorting to short-term migrant work overseas (Kuruchenko, 2005). According to ILO estimates, in the early 2000s, 3.5 per cent of Ukrainians (1.2 million) 'migrated out of the country to work or to look for work' in a two-and-a-half year period (ILO, 2017, p. 1). It is likely that these rates increased following 2014. Furthermore, the family became a fundamental institution for survival based on mutual support and solidarity during the transition and the subsequent economic crises (Zhurzhenko, 2004). Intergenerational co-residence is therefore driven as

much by relationships of affection, as they are by need and cultural expectations about intergenerational obligations (Saraceno and Keck, 2008).

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis has seven chapters. This first chapter has introduced the research puzzle, reviewed the literature review on subjective poverty, and provided an overview of Ukraine's socio-economic background.

The second chapter is a theoretical chapter which begins by situating the topic of subjective poverty within the broader discussion on poverty concepts, definitions, and measurements. The discussion of poverty definitions and measurements includes the topics of relative poverty, social exclusion, and the capabilities approach. The chapter also discusses subjective poverty through the lens of status-based identity, highlighting the importance of past and future imagined identities. Lastly, the chapter introduces recognition theory as an appropriate analytical framework for the investigation of the experience of subjective poverty as it bridges the literatures on identity and different concepts of poverty.

The third chapter describes the methodology of the thesis, discussing the choice of case selection, sample design, participant recruitment, interview procedures, data analysis, and ethical concerns that arose throughout the research project. Chapters four to six are the empirical chapters presenting the research findings by answering the two research sub-questions outlined in the first chapter.

The first empirical chapter, chapter four, answers the first research sub-question and illustrates different manifestations of subjective poverty observed in the data. In doing so, the chapter also contextualises the participants' lived experiences in the wider socio-economic context of Ukraine. The chapter organises

all participants into three groups based on their subjective relationship to poverty showing that while there are no clear patterns of subjective poverty identification with regards to income and age, these dimensions do determine the relative importance of different factors which contribute to subjective poverty. This chapter also confirms that dominant beliefs about poverty influence whether and how people identify as poor. Furthermore, the analysis shows that subjective poverty is influenced by relative standing to specific reference groups, such as the rich elite in Ukraine and Western Europe. Finally, the data indicate that self-identifying as poor has both empowering and disempowering elements that reinforce each other.

This last finding sets the stage for presenting further results and answering the second sub-question of the thesis: why subjective poverty does not correlate with income and material circumstances. The two-chapter answer to this question is structured around the themes laid out in recognition theory. More specifically, the second empirical chapter, chapter five, analyses why participants explain their self-perception and feelings of being poor through the idea of a lack of self-realisation. Throughout the interviews, both high- and low-income subjectively poor participants reported that they lack the opportunity to realise their potential, while in contrast the subjectively non-poor were quite proud of their life progression or accomplishments. This lack of self-realisation was associated with stagnation, unfulfilling and insecure work, financial inability to start a family, and living a routine life without meaningful memorable experiences. Overall, lack of self-realisation can be conceptualised as lack of capabilities to live a fulfilling life, and the consequent feelings of misrecognition in the sphere of social achievement and self-esteem, which contribute to the subjective feeling of being poor.

The last empirical chapter, chapter six, analyses how misrecognition in the sphere of social rights contributes to high rates of subjective poverty across income and age groups. Participants frequently explained that their self-perception of being poor is based on their vulnerability in the context of accessing healthcare, education, and ensuring minimal subsistence levels upon retirement. Lack of security in these spheres was understood by participants as a systemic infringement on their rights, leaving them feeling disempowered, undervalued, and angered. Most subjectively poor participants explained the failures of social institutions as purposeful oppression of the population by the state. These profound feelings of moral injury were accompanied by demands for the recognition of all citizens' value by the state through the guarantee of procedural justice and the provision of meaningful social rights. This chapter highlights the importance of social institutions with regards to subjective poverty as they can perpetuate social exclusion.

The concluding chapter summarises the main findings of the thesis and draws connections between the factors contributing to high rates of subjective poverty that were outlined in the empirical chapters. It also reflects on the contributions of this research to the wider literature and the use of subjective poverty in the field of social policy. Lastly, the limitations of the study are discussed and ideas for future research are suggested.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

To explore the reasons behind the high rates of subjective poverty in Ukraine it is necessary to first discuss what poverty is, as well as the mechanisms through which individuals come to see themselves as poor. The chapter starts by distinguishing poverty concepts, definitions, and measures (Lister, 2004a; Nolan and Whelan, 2011).

To distinguish between concepts and definitions, Section 2.1 builds on the philosophical 'currency of justice' debate (Wolff, Lamb and Zur-Szpiro, 2015) and identifies three key approaches to conceptualising poverty: as a lack of resources to meet needs; as a lack of freedom (opportunities) to pursue a life one finds worth valuing; and as unequal (oppressive) social relationships. The most widely used definitions of poverty stem from the first conceptualisation, where the focus is sometimes on either the needs or the resources part. The concepts of poverty as lack of capabilities or oppressive social relations provide different perspectives on what poverty is, although the implications of these concepts for definitions and measures of poverty are not clear.

In Section 2.2, the chapter explores subjective poverty as a status-based identity and the psychological mechanisms through which individuals come to understand their socio-economic position as one of being poor. While there is limited knowledge about the self-concept (or identity) of being poor specifically, the overall psychological principles behind the development of a self-concept are relevant. Section 2.3 presents recognition theory as a framework through which it is possible to conceptualise subjective poverty and to bridge the insights from the previous two sections on the theoretical concepts of poverty and the process of identity formation. Section 2.4 concludes the chapter.

2.1 Concepts of Poverty

Lister (2004a) argues that it is crucial to distinguish between concepts, definitions, and measures of poverty, especially because the last two are often criticised wrongly for not being concepts. Lister's examples of conceptualisations of poverty are broad-ranging and include all the elements which make up the experience of living in poverty, including the causes and consequences. In contrast, measures are narrower in focus and do not include everything that is part of poverty. Nolan and Whelan (2011) argue that in the poverty literature the transition from poverty concepts to measures is rarely well articulated. Researchers have often explained that the break between concepts and measures occurs because the indices of poverty are usually data-driven and thus are not rooted in the theory (Ravallion 2011; Beduk 2018). Another noteworthy reason for the lack of clarity of transition between the three is that there is no obvious distinction between poverty concepts and definitions. With the focus being largely on distinguishing between poverty definitions and measures, poverty concepts and definitions are often collapsed into each other.

Poverty definitions aim to identify the core difference between the poor and the non-poor, such as a lack of resources to meet needs. Poverty measures are operationalisations of poverty definitions and are often narrower in scope because of data availability. These definitions and measures are highly political as they have implications for the distribution of resources within and across societies (Piachaud, 1987). Moreover, they are also highly contested since there is rarely one distinct group of 'poor people' and there is often little overlap between people identified as poor by different measures (Bradshaw and Finch, 2003). Due to the lack of a single unified group of people who are consistently classified as poor, some argue that

'people in poverty' is an abstract idea which is different from actual people (Aparandi, 2004). Furthermore, setting a poverty threshold is somewhat arbitrary, as it requires determining the point at which deprivation is extreme enough to be deemed unacceptable. Even seemingly indisputable poverty definitions and measures, such as the two dollar per day measure of absolute poverty, are inevitably a matter of judgement (Reddy and Pogge, 2005). This inherent arbitrariness provides a reason in favour of having the poverty threshold be set by the society itself, through socially consensual or democratic methods (Ringen, 2009, p. 7).

When writing about concepts of poverty, Lister (2004a) explains that they are the meanings and underlying notions of what poverty is, providing the contextual background for definitions and measures. She suggests that across people and countries concepts of poverty differ because they are inseparable from a society's history and contextual references. Concepts of poverty are therefore broad, complex and imprecise as they incorporate society-wide discourses on poverty, embracing the language and imagery that people use to discuss and visualise poverty. This implies that the concept of poverty reflects the full reality of what poverty is and what are the consequences of living in poverty, but also makes it difficult to articulate. The key concern is that different concepts may each be credible for various reasons, meaning that there is a multitude of ways in which poverty can be defined and measured (Atkinson, 2019).

Unfortunately, the lists of poverty concepts, which group together poverty definitions, vary markedly. Nolan and Whelan (2011, p. 18) list two concepts of poverty: 'lack of control to consciously direct one's living conditions' and an inability to participate fully in society. Spicker (2007, p. 4) argues that there are three main

concepts: material need (specific need, pattern of deprivation and low standard of living), economic circumstances (lack of resources, economic distance and economic class) and social relations (social class, dependency and social exclusions). Smeeding (2018) treats concepts of poverty as different schools of academic thought, listing economics, social statistics, social policy and sociology as different conceptual underpinnings of poverty. Furthermore, an analysis of 159 definitions of poverty¹¹ over a 30-year time period shows that the concepts which dominate poverty definitions have changed over time (Misturelli and Heffernan, 2010). This lack of coherence makes it difficult to fully understand what exactly is meant by the concept of poverty.

Another reason why it is difficult to articulate the concept of poverty is that poverty, as a central focus of inquiry, is absent from philosophy. Wolff *et al.* (2015) provide two explanations for the surprising lack of philosophical discussion of poverty. First, poverty is often lost within broader debates on issues such as justice or sufficiency. Second, political philosophy tends to focus on 'ideal theories of justice', in which poverty does not exist. Focusing on the injustices of the real world and suggesting remedies for them is a relatively novel approach in philosophy. Philosophers who focus on injustices tend to have 'discussions of a theoretical or methodological nature' which omit the identification of tangible cases in which injustice occurs (Ibid, p.7).

To articulate the distinct ways of thinking about poverty, it can be helpful to align them with the three strands of the 'currency of justice' debates in contemporary philosophy. The first strand argues that when discussing the issue of justice, we

¹¹ While the authors say they review papers that have a clear definition of poverty, it seems that they use measures and definitions interchangeably.

should focus on equality of resources and wellbeing (welfare).¹² When applied to poverty, this thinking is structured around a lack of resources to meet needs. Poverty definitions based on this concept focus on either lack of resource or needs deprivation. The second debate is based on the idea of equality of opportunity and choice. This leads to a definition which situates poverty as a lack of freedom or capabilities, focusing on what a person can do or be, rather than on what they have or their wellbeing. Both of these conceptualisations emphasise the deficits of the poor in terms of what they are lacking. Finally, the third strand argues that the discussion of justice should concern 'the relationship between people rather than the distribution of resources or opportunities' (Wolff, 1998; Scheffler, 2003), referenced above as oppressive social relationships. This conception is rarely used in poverty definitions but frequently features in qualitative research on poverty.

2.1.1 Poverty as Lack of Resources to Meet Needs or Wellbeing

In political philosophy, debates about social justice typically lead to discussions about equality of resources and wellbeing. Resource-based theorists of justice, such as Dworkin (1981) and Rawls (1971), argue that we should put more emphasis on resources because of their instrumental value for welfare. Other theorists (Arneson, 1989) argue that we should focus directly on analysing wellbeing. Moreover, hybrid theories argue that it is possible to focus simultaneously on both resources and welfare, which led to the development of the ideas of 'advantage' and 'disadvantage' (Cohen, 1989; Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007; Dean and Platt, 2016). It is important to note that while most definitions and measures focus

¹² The literature on the currency of justice uses the word welfare rather than then wellbeing. The choice to use the word wellbeing instead was made with the aim of reducing confusion because in the social policy literature, the word welfare often refers to social protection and poverty relief.

on material poverty, there is no consensus on how broad the category of resources should be, as resources can range from income and wealth to skills, talents, networks, and even the legal structure of the society in which one lives. The well-known definition of poverty as lack of resources to meet needs seems to have roots in this philosophical debate as to whether resources or welfare should be the focus of social justice debates.

There are two key types of measures that stem from the definition poverty as lack of resources to meet needs: absolute and relative poverty measures. Some argue that the differences between relative and absolute poverty measures are in how they define needs, and the necessary resources to meet those needs. Absolute poverty measures focus on inability to meet the basic needs necessary for subsistence or physical survival, while relative poverty measures focus on socially defined needs, the fulfilment of which is necessary for participation in a specific society at a particular point in time. Absolute poverty measures are often seen as having inherent justifications, such as scientific calorie counts, which can then be applied to a single household in isolation, regardless of context. The critique of understanding needs in this narrow way is that it fails to capture some meaningful aspects of what we mean by 'poverty' as needs are inherently socially constructed rather than being objectively factual. In most modern societies, merely meeting the threshold of survival does not mean that someone is no longer poor and so relative measures focus on social participation and embrace additional important aspects of life (Townsend, 1993), thereby broadening the meaning of basic needs.

When comparing absolute and relative poverty measures, there are two interpretations as to whether these measures are based on the same definition of poverty. They can be interpreted as constructed from two distinct ideas: the lack of

resources for subsistence and the lack of social participation. Alternatively, they both can be viewed as capturing the same needs-based definition, but varying in terms of the depth of needs deprivations that they are capturing. Walker (2014) and Lotter (2011) argue that relative and absolute poverty are essentially Rowntree's (1901) ideas of primary and secondary poverty, which distinguish between extreme and intermediate poverty. Similarly, Lister (2004a) and Atkinson (2019) support the idea that the dichotomy between the two is illusory, as even basic needs are inherently relative and context dependent and that in practice both types of measures are 'anchored', falling somewhere on the spectrum between pure absolutism and pure relativism.

One of the important and unresolved issues in relation to relative poverty is what reference group should be used to set the parameters of an acceptable living standard. In many cases, people tend to compare their living situation with those in a similar position (Bottero, 2004, p. 998; Zeidan, 2015). At the same time, people may be comparing their situation not only with that of people in their neighbourhood but also those living abroad (UNICEF, 2000). Looking across EU member states, 'poverty thresholds in the more affluent member states are higher than the average incomes in the poorer member states' (Nolan and Whelan, 2011, p. 4). These observations have considerable implications for the exploration of subjective poverty in Ukraine, as some of the subjectively poor participants might be well-off compared to their local standard of living, but may have lower living standards than people who are counted as deprived in the high-income countries.

Whether an individual or a household has sufficient resources to meet their needs is often assessed through income-based measures. This is because income is a prime and vital trigger of transitions into poverty (Layte and Whelan, 2003),

economic hardships have direct impacts on the physical and emotional home environment (Cooper and Stewart, 2013), and money matters tremendously for the reduction of poverty (Tomlinson and Walker, 2009; Schoon *et al.*, 2013; Cooper and Stewart, 2017). Furthermore, from a practical point of view, income data is often more easily accessible, it can be tracked over time on a consistent basis, and is internationally comparable.

However, there are several limitations to using income as an indicator of poverty as it is an indirect and imprecise assessment which can fail to identify those who are unable to participate in society (Ringen, 1988). The cost of the same basic necessities, such as housing, varies widely between areas and by age group, which means that the same income does not equate to the same level of basic needs met. Availability of non-cash resources or the social wage (such as free health care, public education etc.¹³) means that particular basic needs can be met even with low levels of income. Furthermore, given that many income measures, along with other economic measures such as assets, are evaluated at the household level, these measures may fail to identify members within a household who are poor due to the fact that the distribution of income within households is unequal (Bennett, 2013). Similarly, whether a given household income is sufficient depends on household composition. Unfortunately, the topic of the appropriate equivalence scales to adjust income measures to household composition is still being explored, with very few papers on the subject in transition economies (Abanokova, Dang and Lokshin,

¹³ Although the availability of services is not the same as spending. We would not wish to say that an individual with an illness is rich because they get more in healthcare spending (Beduk, 2018).

2020). Lastly, income is also frequently misreported, especially in low- and middle-income countries where there are high levels of informality.¹⁴

Furthermore, income circumstances can be very unstable, as the experiences of low levels of income are often temporary (Valletta, 2006; Biewen, 2014). Across EU countries, of those who experience income poverty, no more than 30 per cent experience chronic poverty, defined as experiencing poverty for more than three years (Layte and Whelan, 2003). In countries with a social-democratic welfare regime, such as Denmark, the levels of chronic poverty are as low as 14 per cent (Fouarge and Layte, 2005).. Meanwhile, in Russia during the 1990s, as many as two-thirds of households who experienced an economic shock ended up in chronic income poverty (Lokshin and Ravallion, 2001). Poverty dynamics are likely to have changed in the last two decades but unfortunately, poverty research in post-Soviet transition economies remains limited (Kazuhiro, 2016)

2.1.2 Poverty as Lack of Freedom and Choice

Drawing on the second currency of justice conceptual approach, it can be argued that what matters most is not what a person possesses (resources) or how satisfied they are with their life (wellbeing), but what people are able to 'do or be', and in other words, whether they are able to live a life that they find worth valuing (Nussbaum, 2000). Sen (1999, 2000) famously put forward the arguments that understanding poverty requires a focus on impoverished lives, not just empty wallets, and that poverty should be reconceptualised in terms of capabilities deprivation, rather than resource or wellbeing deprivation.

¹⁴ In Ukraine, at least 50% of all economic activity takes places in the shadow market.

The primary concepts in this approach are functionings and capabilities, where functionings are the 'beings and doings' that one has reason to value, while a capability set refers to 'alternative combinations of functionings the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection' (Sen, 1999, p. 75). Capabilities may encompass both a person's actual functionings, that can be observed, and functionings that they could have achieved under different choices if they were available. The distinction between a functioning and the necessary means to achieve that functioning is crucial. Due to conversion factors, individuals may require different levels of resources to achieve the same functioning based on their level of need. (Hick *et al.*, 2016). The end goal of the capability approach is for individuals to have the ability to live the lives they find worth valuing. An inability to pursue functionings an individual has reason to value, and the consequent inability to become the person one wants to be, is conceptualised as the lack of substantive freedom. A person's success in the pursuit of their goals is conceptualised as agency: an individual's capacity to assert themselves and act in their own interest in terms of attaining a life worth valuing. The implication of this conception is that policy efforts should focus on the actual opportunities people have to engage in activities and actions they value, rather than on what they have, or their subjective assessment of life satisfaction (Nussbaum, 2000; Alkire, 2005).

There are two key critiques of a definition of poverty in terms of capabilities deprivation. Firstly, the term 'capabilities failure' conflates the concepts of wellbeing and poverty, which are argued to be distinct issues (Lister 2004b). In low-income countries, in which poverty affects such a large proportion of the population, this conflation may appear less problematic because poverty is often equated with ill-being (Narayan-Parker *et al.*, 2000). But even in those cases, defining poverty in

terms of capabilities deprivation makes it difficult to distinguish between the causes and the effects of poverty. Considering this issue, it is argued that the capabilities approach is effectively a theory of human development that is helpful in highlighting how institutional contexts shape what lives people are able to live (Robeyns, 2018).

Secondly, it is difficult to operationalise the concept of capabilities in terms of definitions and measures because the list of capability dimensions, their relative weighting, and their indicators are highly disputed.¹⁵ In many cases, dimensions and their relative weights are assigned arbitrarily. This is problematic because the experience and severity of poverty are significantly shaped by the balance and interaction between different dimensions (Trani, Biggeri and Mauro, 2013). For example, the well-known operationalisation of the capabilities approach at the household rather than country level is the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which uses three dimensions (health, education and living standards) and ten indicators (Alkire and Santos, 2010).¹⁶ Critics point out that the indicators are selected based on the questionable value judgments of analysts and are arbitrarily assigned equal weight (Ravallion, 2010; Walker, 2014). Based on the indicators that are used, it is unclear whether the dimensions of health, education, and living standards are the causes or consequences of poverty, as well as whether they are capturing wellbeing or poverty. When applied to the context of Ukraine, this measure shows that only 2.3 per cent of people are poor, which is difficult to interpret given that as many as 47.2 per cent of the population reported that they

¹⁵ This is why it has been argued that it might be more helpful to draw out the key principles of the capabilities approach rather than focus on identifying a specific list of capabilities (Robeyns, 2018).

¹⁶ The UN Human Poverty Indices I and II used the capabilities approach to poverty measurement but on a country level.

‘do not have enough money to eat’ (Paniotto and Charchenko, 2008), suggesting high rates of poverty.

The application of the capabilities approach to measuring poverty - which, due to data limitations, effectively measures functionings - can be problematised further in contexts with long-term economic volatility and insecurity. In partial disagreement with the capabilities approach, Wolff and De-Shalit (2007) argue that it is crucially important to focus on one’s ‘genuine opportunities’ for ‘secure functionings’ (Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007, p. 135), rather than on the level of functionings at any point in time or one’s hypothetical capability to reach those functionings. This implies that we should look not only at whether individuals can enjoy their current functionings but also at whether they are able to sustain these functionings into the future in order to live a life free of worry. When there is a threat of losing a functioning, the ability to enjoy that functioning is undermined, such as how the threat of being evicted undermines the enjoyment of housing (Ibid., p. 9). Even if the functioning is never lost, living in stress and anxiety takes a great toll on one’s health and forces people to take involuntary risks, such as taking on dangerous or illegal jobs. ‘Involuntary risks’ are those that cannot be avoided because there is no reasonable alternative (Cohen, 1989).

The reason that Wolff and De-Shalit (2007) focus on functionings is not to say that achieved functionings should be the sole measure of capability deprivation, but to illustrate that insecure functionings effectively limit the freedom to make choices, which is the underpinning idea of capabilities. For people with multiple disadvantages, achieving one functioning often comes at the cost of sacrificing another functioning (Ibid., p. 64). The implication of this argument is that policy should focus on fostering ‘fertile functionings’, which lead to the fulfilment of other

functionings, and reducing 'corrosive disadvantages', both of which would have positive cascading effects on capabilities.

Linking these insights back to the topic of subjective poverty in Ukraine, the capabilities approach is informative in two ways. Firstly, the framework emphasises the importance of the context in which people live (Graf and Schweiger, 2013), which is helpful for thinking through the structural limitations that people in Ukraine face. Secondly, the idea of being able to 'live a life one finds worth valuing' highlights that subjectivity and relative standing are important across different conceptualisations of poverty. This message was also highlighted in the discussion on relative poverty measures. The importance of subjectivity is often overlooked in the capabilities literature which simultaneously argues that the focus should be on objective capabilities rather than satisfaction with one's functioning (subjective wellbeing) (Nussbaum, 2000).

2.1.3 Poverty as Oppressive Social Relations

Some philosophers disagree with the approaches which focus on the distribution of resources, welfare and opportunities, arguing that this is too narrow an interpretation of social justice and that the real concerns should be about relationships between people (Wolff, Lamb and Zur-Szpiro, 2015, p. 7). This strand of political philosophy argues that inequalities in status and power are the underlying cause of inequalities in 'the distribution of divisible, privately appropriated goods, such as income and resources, or privately enjoyed goods, such as welfare' (Anderson, 1999). A full theory of social justice requires that equal concern for all citizens be based on equal respect for all citizens, rather than the distribution between superior and inferior persons.

This alternative way of thinking about social justice addresses the issue of social hierarchies which perpetuate inequalities, while the concepts of social justice which focus on resources, wellbeing and opportunities do not. In the ideal theories of justice by Dworkin and Rawls, achieving equality through the redistribution of goods requires those with relatively more power to accept the general idea of equality when choosing how to distribute resources amongst those with relatively less power (Scheffler, 2003). These authors argue that conceptions of justice which do not address the question of power are partially flawed because they do not challenge the underlying social hierarchies. Leaving the social hierarchies intact gives those with superior rank the power and discretion to inflict violence on 'inferiors' through their marginalisation and exploitation.

Furthermore, this literature highlights that most practical implementations of resource-centred concepts of inequality require shameful revelations, from those who receive aid, of being low status. Wolff (1998) argues that the conditional schemes of welfare states, such as means testing or requirement to work, are inherently insulting to aid recipients because they are seen as being of lower standing and thus are objects of suspicion. For example, it is demeaning that someone must go through the process of convincing others that they are unable to secure a job despite their best efforts. The fact that shameful revelations about one's circumstances disproportionately 'falls only on one sector of society that is already most disadvantaged' (Ibid, p. 111) shows that equality is simply an ideal to which more privileged members of society claim adherence without the corresponding practices. In an equal society, people would make claims for aid 'not in light of them proving their inferiority to others, but through virtue of their equality to others' (Anderson, 1999, p. 306). This literature suggests that because the welfare state

treats citizens unequally, it can never fully solve the problems of poverty and inequality, and may even have the tendency to perpetuate them.

The theme of oppressive social structures is frequently evidenced in qualitative studies of poverty, with people in poverty frequently reporting a lack of voice in relation to experiences of disrespectful treatment by social institutions and others in society (Narayan-Parker *et al.*, 2000). These insights are typically conceptualised as falling under the psycho-social dimensions of the experience of poverty (Jo, 2013). As part of the experience of poverty, disrespectful treatment is categorised as the unfortunate consequence of inequalities in resources and opportunities. The discussion about oppressive structures is rarely linked to how poverty is conceptualised because, as previously mentioned, poverty is predominantly thought of as a lack of resources to meet needs.

The arguments about the importance of relational equality suggest that the frequently documented experience of being oppressed can be interpreted as a conceptualisation of poverty based on unequal power relations. This is different from treating poverty as a consequence of lack of resources. Take, for instance, the following voices of people living in extreme poverty, who suggest that poverty is relational subordination imposed on them by others in society:

‘Society acts with arrogance by thinking that it can bring an end to suffering solely by sharing material goods [...] This prevents the world from having to think about the essential issue [of] creating the conditions for liberty and liberation. [...] Humanity is more important than need, than emergency or deprivation.’ Participant in Senegal (Brand and Barón, 2013, p. 54)

‘I remind myself all the time that [the] violence [of poverty] is imposed on us by other people, by society.’ Participant in Germany (Ibid, p.59)

Similar ways of talking about what poverty is are evidenced in a recent study which sought to refine the understanding of poverty through participatory research in six different countries (Bray *et al.*, 2019). The participants in this study discussed poverty as a controlling and exploitative relationship between different socio-economic classes:

‘We are controlled by the greed of a few.’ (United States)

‘Rich people control everything.’ (Bangladesh)

‘Rich people take advantage of poor people. There is economic exploitation. Small farmers are forced to sell their own products at the prices set by rich people coming from the city. [They even] manipulate the measurements in order to take advantage of people living in poverty.’ (Tanzania)

This qualitative evidence resonates with the argument made by Campbell (2007) who highlights that while scholars tend to focus on the suffering of the poor, the injustice derived from the relationships between the poor and the non-poor is of equal importance. Fleurbaey (2003) similarly explains that being poor is not just experienced in terms of ‘having less consumption, less leisure and reduced opportunities’ (Ibid, p. 143). Rather, it is experiencing life on qualitatively different terms, of ‘fears for the future, shame, lack of control and submission to the arbitrary power of boss or civil servant’ (Ibid). Contrary to the idea of freedom of economic exchange, the poor are frequently forced or coerced into accepting work and treatment that others in society are not asked to tolerate. This treatment can be understood as a systematic oppression that is, to a great extent, benefiting the non-poor. Therefore, there is great value and insight in conceptualising poverty as particular types of unequal and exploitative social relationships within which goods are distributed. This evidence suggests that people with the lived experience of poverty are more likely to think of oppressive social relations when thinking about

what poverty is because for them, access to resources has been determined by power relations at every level.

The main weakness of this conception, which is also its main strength, is that thinking about poverty in terms of unequal social relations blurs the line between the poor and the non-poor. This tension is equally present in the conception of poverty as lack of opportunities. The strength of this blurred line is that it portrays poverty as a possibility of human experience, rather than as a condition that is characteristic of a specific group of people (Jones, 1990). In contrast, its weakness is that lack of opportunities and oppressive social relations affect many groups, not just those in poverty. This conception is difficult to operationalise into a poverty definition which can draw a distinction between the poor and the non-poor. It would be misleading to identify all those who are subject to oppressive social relationships as poor. Based on this limitation, it can be argued that disempowerment and lack of voice, which are characteristic of unequal social relations, are a serious consequence of poverty rather than part of the meaning of poverty itself. Despite this weakness, this conceptualisation of poverty is valuable as it challenges the way in which poverty prevention and alleviation is sometimes framed. Rather than 'fixing the deficient poor', this conception puts the emphasis on fixing the system of structural inequalities. In other words, it shifts the focus from 'blaming the oppressed people for their individual and collective deficiencies', which is often based on stereotypes about the poor, to identifying the 'individual or systematic perpetrators of their community's oppression' (Gorski, 2008, p. 138).

This third strand of the 'currency of justice' is rarely applied to the topic of poverty. However, this focus on relational inequalities shares some features with the branch of the social exclusion literature which focuses on how people in poverty

are included in society, but on unequal and typically disadvantageous terms (du Toit, 2008). This interpretation of social exclusion emphasises the patterns which systematically lead to the kinds of social relations that cause people to be in poverty. In this interpretation, social exclusion is a dynamic process which excludes individuals from a 'certain standard of living in economic, political, cultural, and social dimensions' (Hick, 2012, p. 298). This highlights the importance of understanding that the impoverishment of individuals is an ongoing process, rather than just a static end result. In addition, looking at the issue of poverty at the community level, rather than at the individual or household level (Room, 1995), points to the relational dynamics underlying the perpetuation of poverty.

This is distinct from the social exclusion literature which uses a horizontal view of the world whereby those who are in poverty are excluded from the rest of society. In this way of thinking, social exclusion can be defined as a rupture of collective and social bonds caused by poverty which undermines social cohesion, solidarity, and integration (Silver, 2007). This interpretation closely resembles Max Weber's analysis of 'social closure', a process in which groups systematically maintain the privilege of their own members inside the group at the expense of those outside the group (Berting and Villain-Gandossi, 2001). This is the common use of the term in countries of the Global North, which have a history of social rights to which the majority of citizens are entitled, such as France where the concept originated.

The three ways of thinking about poverty outlined so far differ in terms of how they problematise the advantages of the privileged. The concept based on relational inequality is the most pronounced in terms of identifying active actors at fault for the occurrence of poverty. Typically, the identified actors are the 'society' and the

‘government’. The idea of society being at fault implies that everyone who is benefiting from the oppressive structure of classism must be responsible for tackling poverty (Ashford, 2007). Given that the individual responsibility of citizens is transferred to the government, this makes the government also responsible. Anger is typically directed at the government when the inequalities are seen as designed to purposefully ‘keep some of us at the bottom’ (Fine *et al.*, 2004, p. 59). This is especially the case when governments neglect poverty concerns, which results in avoidable poverty.

Drawing on the three discourses of the currency of justice, this section highlights that there are different concepts of poverty with differing implications for how wide or narrow the definition of poverty should be. On the one hand, it is well established that poverty is more than just a lack of income, suggesting that definitions of poverty should be expanded to reflect the complexity of the concept. On the other hand, there is also the need to contain the poverty definition and anchor it in resource and needs deprivation so as to not lose the meaning of the term. When focusing on resource deprivation, a materially centred measurement of poverty is further justifiable given the limitations of available data and the importance of income for the avoidance of poverty in highly monetised societies.

Unfortunately, a materially centred focus limits the discussion of felt poverty as being merely a consequence of resource deprivation, meaning that cases in which subjective feelings of poverty are unsupported by objective measures of deprivation end up being dismissed (Bradshaw and Finch, 2003; Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007). This poses a limitation on the central question of this thesis, which is why people who are not materially deprived, feel and self-identify as poor. Given

the research puzzle, it is helpful to be flexible and open to different concepts of poverty when exploring the high rates of subjective poverty in Ukraine.

2.2 Poverty as a Status-Based Identity

All existing identity theories suggest that how individuals perceive and value themselves is to some degree derived from an individual's knowledge of their membership in a social category, such as gender, age, and race, and 'the value and emotional significance attached to that [group] membership' (Brewer, 2016, p. 117). In many ways, self-concept and self-understanding are inseparable from the relative status and meaning of the social groups to which an individual belongs (Toolis and Hammack, 2015). To construct a self-concept and to make sense of one's position in society, an individual must engage with the discourse about various social categories to which they are seen as belonging, by others and by themselves (Hammack and Toolis 2015). Identifying with a certain social group implies that there is truth to the social descriptors of that category. Even though the discourses and the meaning of any social category are always changing (Hammock, 2018), social categories are 'real' because individuals internalise the narratives about the categories with which they are identified.

In English, the word 'poor' means 'inferior', as in poor quality (Lister, 2004a).¹⁷ The category of poor people is often associated not just with a lack of resources, but also with negative personality traits such as laziness, a low level of intellectual

¹⁷ Concerns regarding translation and potentially different meanings of the word 'poverty' in the Ukrainian and Russian cultures and languages are addressed in Chapter 3.

aptitude, family dysfunction and substance abuse (Gorski, 2012).¹⁸ A social categorisation of an individual into this group often entails a stereotypical evaluative component about their personhood (Versfeld, 2012) and inevitably suggests an inferior position in the social ranking. To say that someone is poor implies that they are living a life that does not meet the standard of how human beings ought to be able to live (Gordon and Townsend, 2000; Lötter, 2011). Some authors say explicitly that the social category of 'poor person' is a deficient or a negative identity in most societies (Felski, 2000; hooks, 2000; van de Mieroop 2011).

In the social sciences, there is an array of terms used to describe a group's or individual's low standing in the social stratification system, including the terminology of being at the bottom of the income distribution, belonging to a low-ranking social class (such as the working class), having low social status, or occupying a low socio-economic position. The terms class, status and socio-economic position are often used interchangeably even though there is a conceptual distinction between them, because there are overlaps between the groups empirically.

In Weber's famous sociological theory, class and status are two distinct concepts. Class refers to one's position in relation to the labour market structure, capturing acquisition and production of goods. Meanwhile a status group refers to the esteem and degree of honour in society, based on the consumption of goods. The distinction between class and status emerged as a critique of Marx's dual theory of class structure which argues that there are only two classes: those who own

¹⁸ Although, there is variation in how society views different categories of the poor, with those who are unemployed being stereotyped less favourably people with disabilities, the elderly or children in poverty.

property (bourgeoisie) and those who do not (proletariat) (Wright, 2005). There are three types of classes in Weberian theory: property classes, commercial classes, and social classes, with social classes being closest in meaning to status groups. The Weberian distinction between classes and status groups has since been expanded on (Runciman, 1997) and challenged. Yet a recent empirical analysis of British society suggest that the distinction between status and class remains valid (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004).

The role of social class in the understanding of self, such as the importance of working-class identity for someone's self-concept, has been under-explored in the psychological literature compared to the role of gender or ethnicity (Thomas and Azmitia, 2014). That said, there is a growing discussion on socio-economic status increasingly becoming a salient factor in how people are perceived and valued by themselves and others (Kraus and Park, 2014). This literature seems to be mirroring the shift in sociology from a discussion of stratification in terms of class to that of socio-economic status. The umbrella term of status-based identity captures the subjective meaning and value that people attach to their own and others' socio-economic positions. It is argued that, in a similar way to other identities, status-based identity plays an important role in shaping a person's preferences, motivations, and behaviours (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000; Benjamin, Choi and Strickland, 2010). Independently of an individual's objective socio-economic status, perceived socio-economic status has been shown to predict physical and mental wellbeing outcomes, such as high blood pressure and even the risk of mortality (Kopp *et al.*, 2004).

There are three components to status-based identity: narrative identity, based on an individual's past socio-economic status; social group identity, based

on current socio-economic status; and imagined future socio-economic status (Destin, Rheinschmidt-Same and Richeson, 2017). Firstly, the concept of narrative identity refers to the stories that people tell about their lives to make sense of themselves and their place in the world (McAdams *et al.*, 2001; McLean, Wood and Breen, 2013). The construction of a cohesive life narrative requires an individual to make a sensible link between their past and present experiences. Thus, past socio-economic position inevitably feeds into an individual's current understanding of themselves. Secondly, social group identity is also crucial for self-understanding as it establishes a sense of belonging. Ambiguity about belonging to a certain socio-economic category, as is often evident with the experience of social mobility, often causes ontological insecurity and distress (Destin and Debrosse, 2017). Lastly, future possible identities refer to how an individual imagines their future based on their past and current context and typically include both positive and negative images. Information directly relevant to socio-economic status, such as unemployment and financial security, is central to the construction of future identities (Oyserman, Destin and Novin, 2015). It is likely that in Ukraine people frequently reconstruct their narrative identities to find meaning in their changing socio-economic circumstances because of the post-Soviet transition and have negative imagined future identities because of the ongoing economic volatility in the country. It is important to note that in a context in which failure is more likely than success, negative possible future identities are not necessarily obstructive for pursuing future endeavours. This is because in unfavourable contexts, negative future identities are 'significantly more motivationally powerful' than positive future identities (Ibid, 183).

Status-based identity seems to be formed in early childhood and plays a crucial role in the narrative understanding of self. To what extent status-based identity is malleable is not clear given that challenges to status-based identity in later life, due to downward or upward mobility, are associated with a myriad of negative psychological and physical health outcomes. Qualitative research on the formation of low-status identity shows that, by the age of 14, schoolchildren in the US have a deep sense of being poor and a well-articulated narrative that the disparities that they are experiencing are representative of a complete disregard of them by society (Fine *et al.*, 2004). Belonging to a category of 'poor' seems to leave a long-term mark on individuals' understanding of themselves, given that those who have experienced a change in their socio-economic status continue to identify with a low socio-economic group (Muzzatti and Samarco, 2006). Even in cases of objective upward socio-economic mobility, parts of low-status identity remain because of psychological and relational attachments to the low-status group (Van Laar *et al.*, 2014). Substantial changes in status-based identity are often detrimental in terms of psychological and mental wellbeing, with those who have experienced identity uncertainty due to mobility having worse health outcomes compared to their peers in the low-status group (Destin, 2019).

The perception of low status, and resulting negative self-evaluations, are typically derived from situation-specific contexts which communicate to individuals their lower relative standing. People tend to be incredibly accurate when assessing the social class of others (Kraus, Tan and Tannenbaum, 2013). The quick and often subconscious identification of social class is thought to define and legitimize the nature of existing social relations and daily interactions (Reicher, 2004). Consequently, everyday contexts are fundamentally shaped by mutual perceptions

of social class (Kraus, Tan and Tannenbaum, 2013). Insights about the mechanisms by which people learn their lower socio-economic standing resemble those from the literature on the stigmatisation of people in poverty, which argues that this occurs through disrespectful ways of communication in which they are talked about and treated as inferior (Chase and Walker, 2012).

Typically, the form of communication through which individuals learn their inferior social position is more subtle than outward name-calling such as 'white trash' or 'welfare queen'. Similarly to racism or sexism, classism (also referred to as 'povertyism' (Killeen, 2008)) tends to take on the form of derogatory verbal, behavioural and cultural microaggressions such as offering a person from a low-income background second-hand clothing without them asking, or labelling foods typically consumed within low-income communities as uneatable or disgusting (Smith and Redington, 2010). Research shows that it is specifically the subtle nature of the demeaning and dismissive messaging toward those with the lived experiences of poverty that are wounding to their self-concept. Compared to the overtly classist remarks, subtle cues of social rejection lead to greater stress because of uncertainty as to whether one was put down intentionally and deservedly or not (London and Rosenthal, 2013). As with the example of an uninvited offer of second-hand clothing, a person might question whether their distress from the gesture is justified because the classist undertones are masked under a helpful gesture. Even subtle ambient cues, such as posters which indirectly perpetuate stereotypes, are enough to provide a message of rejection and make people disengage (Cheryan *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, the negative consequences of ambiguity seem to be greater for individuals belonging to stigmatised groups

specifically, as individuals from privileged groups seem to react more strongly to blunt prejudice (Salvatore and Shelton, 2007).

The main shortfall of psychological studies on poverty is that they focus predominantly on cataloguing all the particular psychological damage endured by individuals living in deprivation (Fell and Hewstone, 2015), therefore often losing sight of the personhood of people in poverty (Smith, 2010). Without a holistic view of people in poverty as persons, there is little space given to people who both internalise and resist the injustice they experience, therefore running the risk of perpetrating the injustice by studying them solely as victims of injustice (Reicher, 2004). While there is a valid reason to highlight the injustice that is done to individuals in marginal social positions, focusing predominantly on how injustice gets under the skin of marginalised individuals can overlook how they resist the injustice (Hammack, 2018). For example, Versfeld (2012) argues that being poor stands in complete contrast to positive personhood underpinned by a social consensus on the individual as a valuable human being. Such framing overlooks cases of positive marginality, however, in which marginal identities do not necessarily have to be a burden, but can rather be psychologically beneficial and even lead to the pursuit of social justice (Hammack, 2010).

The above review shows how self-identifying as poor can be conceptualised as a status-based identity based on perceived low socio-economic status, comprising of narrative identity, social group identity and future imagined identity. The theorisation of these three constituent parts of status-based identity as being interrelated suggests that subjectively poor participants might draw on both their past and future imagined socio-economic positions when constructing their status-based identity. Individuals learn about their inferior status from an early age based

on contextual experiences. Sometimes, subtle classist messaging might be even more psychologically harmful than direct classist remarks. This section highlights that changes in status-based identity due to upward or downward social mobility are associated with a myriad of negative psychological and physical outcomes. This suggests that individuals have a need for long-term consistency in their status-based identity, especially since in some cases, marginal identities can have positive psychological aspects.

Given these insights, it is important to maintain an open-ended approach when exploring why people self-identify as poor, as there can be both negative and positive aspects to marginal identities, all of which can shape an individual's actions, attitudes and wellbeing. While there is little research on the identity of being poor specifically, there is reason to believe that there might be positive psychological benefits to identifying with this marginal category, based on research about other marginal identities such as those based on race, sexual orientation and homelessness status. The next section proposes the use of recognition theory as the framework in relation to which the empirical analysis of this thesis can be structured. The recognition theory is helpful for an inquiry into subjective poverty because it bridges the insights from the literatures on poverty and on the psychological process of identity formation.

2.3 Recognition Theory

The broad understanding of the term 'recognition' is to 'be seen or regarded – whether directly or through social and political institutions' (Markell, 2008, p. 450). In its application, the term recognition can be used in three different ways: a

synonym for identification, a synonym for acknowledgment,¹⁹ and a term for interpersonal communication or mutual recognition (Laitinen, 2002; Ikaheimo and Laitinen, 2011). Recognition is a widely used concept, ranging in application from country-specific cases, such as fuel poverty (Walker and Day, 2012), to international cases, such as misrecognition of country-states in international relations (Geis, 2018) and reparations for historical injustices (Kutz, 2004).²⁰

The roots of the concept go back to Rousseau, who discussed the topic of self-relations (Pilapil, 2011), as well as to Fichte and Hegel who, in their critique of Kant's idea of rational autonomous individuals, highlight that there is a crucial intersubjective dimension to rationality.²¹ The contemporary philosophical discussion of mutual recognition is divided into two thematic categories: first, the role of recognition in multiculturalism, concerning mutual recognition between groups of different worldviews or cultures, and second, the role of recognition in the development of identity or authenticity (Siep, 2010). The discussion on the relationship between recognition and the distribution of resources falls into the second category. The development of these two distinct directions originates from two key publications: Charles Taylor's *Politics of Recognition* (1992) and Axel Honneth's *The Struggle of Recognition* (1992). Taylor's work focuses predominantly on explaining the rise of identity politics and the new social movements driven by

¹⁹ Acknowledgement in this context is broader than identification because it implies a normative evaluation of an object as valid or valuable.

²⁰ For an argument against using any form of recognition theory, on the grounds that it provides a limited understanding of identity and agency in the context of the reproduction of inequalities, see McNay (2008a).

²¹ Hegel thought that the idea of an atomistic self-interested individual is misleading because all humans are fundamentally intersubjective beings, formed in and through their relationships with others.

minority cultural groups, spurring debates over multiculturalism. Meanwhile, Honneth outlines the structure of social relationships which ensure the conditions of human flourishing (Anderson 2017). In the context of subjective poverty in Ukraine, where the key issue is not the exclusion of a culturally different minority group, Honneth's ideas seem more relevant than Taylor's. To build his theory of just social relations, Honneth draws on Hegel's early Jena writings,²² Habermas' theory of communicative action²³, and Mead's work on identity.²⁴

²² Honneth's broad theoretical orientation is informed by Hegel's critique of atomism, which highlights the importance of intersubjectivity (Mark, 2016). Honneth deliberately avoids Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the *Philosophy of Right* in order to talk about the struggle for recognition without defaulting to a 'Marxist narrow interest in social labour' (Deranty, 2015, p. 666). In doing so, he shifts the focus of criticism from that of labour production to communicative recognition (Markell, 2008). One of the key ideas in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the society's dialectical understanding of the self, which is an ongoing historical process of synthesis of various theses and antitheses. The classic example of a synthesis of a thesis and antithesis is the conflict between a master and a slave (from which the ideas of bourgeoisie and proletariat originate). The struggle between the two comes to an end once the master understands that he cannot subsist without his slaves because the two are interdependent. The dialectical combination of a thesis and antithesis leads to the emergence of a new thesis. Hegel argues that society will be evolving through this process until the end of history. Marx and Taylor rely on *Phenomenology of Spirit* in their theorisation. For analysis of Marx's use of Hegel's idea of recognition see Brudney (2010). Honneth disapproves of how the recognition concept is used in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, arguing that it is less nuanced than Hegel's earlier Jena writings, which incorporate the gradual three-stage demanding forms of intersubjectivity. Honneth essentially argues that Hegel's later work unjustifiably reduces recognition to a 'monological self-developing Spirit' (Honneth 1992, 61). It is worth noting that over time Honneth has become less critical of Hegel's later work (Huttunen, 2007).

²³ Also known as a theory of language, Habermas' idea of communicative actions focuses on the mechanism of recognition in interpersonal communication through language. Honneth expands Habermas' theory to move beyond linguistic recognition to include non-linguistic, rational and affective forms of communication (Mark, 2016).

²⁴ Honneth builds on Mead's argument that selfhood is based on one's ability to 'view oneself from the perspective of others' (Neuhouser 2010, 46) and the idea that identities are socially constructed but malleable (Markell, 2008, p. 453). In essence, he uses Mead to flesh out the Hegelian abstract idea of the gradual three-stage form of intersubjectivity into more practical terminology (Deranty, 2015).

The key dispute in recognition theory relevant to the study of poverty is about the relationship between identity recognition and the distribution of resources. On the one hand, redistribution of resources is argued to nest within the broader umbrella concept of recognition. On the other hand, these two concepts are argued as distinct and parallel to each other. According to Honneth, we should not draw a sharp distinction between the two because maldistribution is one form of misrecognition, and therefore falls under the broad umbrella of intersubjective patterns of recognition. Honneth reaches this conclusion based on the idea that the recognition of an individual, as being of inherent value, can be expressed in different ways, incorporating both material and social forms such as the awarding of income, humane treatment at work, and meaningful political participation. In his argument, a positive relationship to one's own identity is inseparable from the issue of distributive justice - individuals are treated in certain ways by others based on their identity and their identity is dependent on the value assigned by others. This is because people are typically treated in ways consistent with their perceived value. Negative evaluations of an individual based on their identity give others the power to treat them in a demeaning manner consistent with that identity-related evaluation (Laitinen, 2002, p. 468).

This view has been famously challenged by Fraser (1995; Fraser and Honneth, 2003), who argues that maldistribution and misrecognition are two distinct concepts and separate vectors of injustice. In her argument, the two concepts are not reducible into each other as they are two different dimensions of justice. To achieve a just parity of participation, which is how Fraser conceptualises a just society, adults need to have access to objective means (in terms of wealth and resources) and institutionalised intersubjective conditions that assign them equal

status relative to their peers (Honneth and Fraser, 2003, p. 36). Basing her analysis on the US, Fraser cites the examples of racism and sexism, meaning that, even after amassing significant wealth and moving up in class, individuals might not achieve equal status because of misrecognition due to their identity. Fraser is essentially trying to maintain the distinction between class and status, which links back to our discussion in Section 2.3. Furthermore, Fraser argues that recognition tends to focus on identity politics, promoting the specificity of groups, such as the demands for acceptance of the culture and religion of minorities, emphasising that they are different but equal. In contrast, the politics of redistribution focuses on undermining specificity, such as demands for the equal inclusion of women in the labour market, emphasising that they are the same and equal. Fraser draws a distinction between the two in order to raise concerns over the displacement of calls for economic justice by identity politics, which can lead to pathological forms of demands for recognition such as the populist right-wing movements across Europe and the US (Lamont, 2018).²⁵ For similar critiques of Honneth, see Borman (2009) and Connolly (2016).

Several scholars reassert Honneth's view that in most examples of injustice there is a causal relationship between recognition and distribution (Butler, 1997; Hobson, 2003, 2018; Yar, 2010), arguing that for example, 'economic goods are

²⁵ It is argued that demands for recognition on behalf of a broad category of 'the people' are inherently harmful, to both individuals and the wider society, because they can lead to populism, which undermines democracy (Hirvonen, 2019). However, even in the case of populist demands for recognition, the underlying issue is economic inequality (Lamont, Park, and Ayala-Hurtado, 2017). Populist movements typically demand redistribution and inclusion, as has been the case with the rise of populism in Eastern Europe, where it has been fuelled by the 'losers' from the transition (Rupnik, 2007), and Western Europe (Reilly *et al.*, 2016; Bonikowski, 2017). This tends to reinforce Honneth's argument about the interconnection between identity recognition and redistribution.

actually the material embodiments of shared human evaluations' (Markell, 2008, p. 459). It is difficult to articulate the injustices of misdistribution without at least some reference to recognition. In drawing a sharp distinction between recognition and distribution, there is the risk of perpetuating an illusory idea that a capitalist labour market system is a neutral, norm-free medium that does not discriminate based on people's identities. These scholars argue that no social practice is ever purely economic, cultural, or political. Ending an 'economic' injustice always entails changing the discourse that justifies the unjust distribution (Swanson, 2005). Therefore, Honneth argues that it is a worthwhile endeavour to pursue, at least partially, the identification of the normative structure underpinning economic stratification (Pilapil, 2011, p. 101).

Given this discussion, a more complete definition of recognition is the extent to which an individual is acknowledged by others to be of inherent value within different contexts of that individual's daily roles and status positions (Honneth, 2007, p. 71). The minimum threshold of recognition is that a person is 'merely noticed or seen' by others (Huttunen, 2007, p. 424). In its most fully realised form, 'recognition represents the maximal conditions for positive self-realisation and personal integrity' (McNay, 2008b, p. 272). Based on this definition, recognition is not a good that can be obtained; rather, it is a 'mechanism by which meaningful social relations are constituted' (Markell, 2008, p. 454).

Since recognition focuses on intersubjective communicative patterns, a person's identity is both an object and a product of recognition. An individual's sense of self, articulated through a broad definition of identity as personhood, is shaped by how they are viewed, valued and treated by others (Castleman, 2013), implying that their identity is a product of recognition. Simultaneously, because an

individual's identity informs how they are treated by others, identity is also an object of recognition. Therefore, while identity is socially constructed, it is also malleable, implying that positive self-relations are not innate, but rather are acquired through the process of socialisation into roles and status positions within the broader socio-economic structure. Individuals need ongoing affirmation from others to see themselves as worthy and to develop and sustain their holistic personhood. The ideal of a positive relationship to the self is associated with the norms of fulfilment and self-realisation (Honneth, 2001, 2004).

Considering that the experience of social recognition represents a condition upon which the development of human identity depends, its denial is accompanied by the experience of a distorted relation to the self. This occurs when individuals cannot see themselves as being described sufficiently within the 'categories that exist in [the] social order in which they live' (Honneth, 2007a, p. 110). Misrecognition means the experience of social, symbolic and redistributive injustices which undermine an individual's self-relation, which comprises self-respect, self-confidence and self-esteem (Honneth, 1992; Huttunen, 2007). Denial of recognition can be expressed as either non-recognition, which entails being invisible to others, or misrecognition, which entails inaccurate subordinating discourses such as the discourses of underclass or welfare dependency (Lister, 2002). When people are denied the recognition they feel they deserve, they generally react with moral feelings of shame, anger, and indignation (Honneth, 2007a). The following quotes from participatory research with people living in poverty capture such feelings: 'We are not inferior, we are not deficient – but we are made to feel that way' (cited in European Commission, 2000, p. 3); 'I feel very angry that people are ignorant to the fact that we are humans and that we also need to be respected' (Russell, 1996, p.

10 cited in Lister, 2002, p. 41). These feelings resemble the feelings of subjective poverty in Ukraine, as will be illustrated in the empirical chapters.

When applied to poverty, the theory of recognition brings to the fore several ideas: first, low-income groups are typically also low-status groups; second, the actions of those with more power over the poor have special significance for their self-image; and third, the contestation for recognition of social value is a crucial part of the daily experience of poverty (Lister, 2004a). For example, Graf and Schweiger (2014, p. 263) argue that the experience of poverty can result in lifelong harmful effects through which disrespect and humiliation become internalised and cause a distorted perception of self that undermines individual agency. Although, as will be shown in this thesis, that does not necessarily have to be the case for everyone who has experienced, or is experiencing, poverty. Furthermore, by suggesting a causal relationship between misrecognition and maldistribution, the theory effectively suggests that poverty is caused by structural patterns of misrecognition. The theory thus puts forward a relational explanation of poverty (Section 2.1.3), which implies that people are poor because systematic injustice is ‘enacted [by] individuals occupying different social classes in such a way, that injustice becomes embodied in everyday processes and interactions’ (Walker and Smith, 2018).

The ‘demands’ for recognition are divided into two types. The first type is about wanting to be included in the existing social order of stratified recognition. This does not question the existing principles of recognition but instead demands a favourable status within them. An example of such a struggle for recognition is the idea of social inclusion, where there is an attempt to re-identify a given community or individual with reference to existing principles of recognition. The second type is about wanting to change the whole normative order of stratification, as the existing

normative order is not seen as justified (Honneth and Rancière, 2016). Fraser makes similar arguments for affirmative and transformative remedies for misrecognition and maldistribution, the former remedy being to equalise 'the distribution of social esteem or economic resources within existing relations', with the latter being to 'break down the hierarchies of value' (McNay, 2008a, p. 291). Given Ukraine's challenging ideological context (Section 1.4), demands for changing the system of recognition altogether are stronger compared to demands for the inclusion of the poor in the existing system.

In Honneth's theory, there are three interconnected spheres of recognition: love, social esteem and rights. They differ from one another in terms of the communicative space in which they are experienced and the effects that misrecognition in that sphere has on the three components of self-relations and, consequently, identity. Misrecognition in the sphere of love undermines self-confidence, and lack of social esteem undermines self-esteem, while lack of rights undermines self-respect. Spheres of recognition are sometimes referred to as patterns of intersubjective recognition. The first sphere of recognition is concerned with the consideration of the needs of the individual, the second discusses the contribution of the individual to society, and the third focuses on individual moral autonomy (Honneth, 2007a, p. 22). In other words, 'love' refers to the importance of being recognized as a particular and vulnerable individual with needs, who is accepted for the kind of person they are, within familial relationships (Huttunen, 2007). 'Social esteem' (also called 'achievement' and 'community of values') refers to the idea that all individuals deserve to be recognised for their contributions to society (Schweiger, 2014). The 'social esteem' form of recognition (the second sphere) is bound up with the need for equal opportunity to pursue an economically

rewarding and, therefore, socially esteemed occupation. This sphere of recognition highlights that an individual's identity formation is dependent on the social esteem they enjoy based on their labour within society, including paid and unpaid roles (Honneth, 2007, p. 76). The sphere of 'rights' refers to the universal respect that humans owe to one another because they are equal moral agents, which suggests an expectation that people should be treated with respect not only with regard to other people but also to the state and state institutions. Just recognition in the three spheres reflects 'adequate social conditions for the good life' (Zurn, 2003, p. 528).

Given that this research is an exploratory research project, the theoretical framework of recognition was chosen after the first round of data analysis, involving content analysis (more detail in Section 3.6). The choice to rely on the theory of recognition, rather than the capabilities approach and the idea of insecure functionings, was made because the explanations that participants gave as to why they feel and see themselves as poor clustered around themes of lacking self-realisation and lacking social and legal rights. These themes, which arose unprompted from the data, map closely on to the spheres of social esteem and rights, which are the focus of Chapters 5 and 6, respectively. Given that the thesis did not set out to test for the three dimensions of recognition, misrecognition in the sphere of love and familiar relationships is not explored, as it did not emerge from the interviews. This limitation is addressed in Chapter 7.

2.3.1 Recognition Through Social Esteem

Social esteem, ascribed to individuals by others in society, is societal approval of the type of self-realisation that a person has been able to attain. The recognition dimension of social esteem (or social achievement) describes a social

condition in which individuals find themselves appreciated for their specific qualities and contributions to societal development. Recognition in this sphere of social esteem is an individual's 'ability to valuably contribute to shared goals with one's own talents and features' (Graf and Schweiger, 2013, p. 285); therefore, they are able to identify themselves with those positive attributes and achievements (Honneth, 2001, p. 50).

Social esteem shapes individuals' self-relation in the sphere of self-esteem, one of the three forms of self-relation, the other two being self-confidence and self-respect. To achieve and maintain self-esteem, an individual's abilities and way of life must be ascribed social value and be socially acceptable (Honneth, 2001, p. 49). Therefore, the social process of recognition in this sphere is inherently intersubjective, because without social value being attributed to an individual's forms of self-realisation, people are unable 'to relate positively to their concrete traits and abilities' (Honneth, 1995b, pp. 121–123). Due to an individual's intersubjective understanding of self, the validity of a person's conduct in life is dependent on the respect of their fellows. Experiences about oneself are conditional on one's personhood, the formation of which is partially based on social recognition by others in the community (Honneth 1992). Without social esteem, 'the person experiences [themselves] as inferior because they have violated a [shared] moral norm' (Ibid, p. 199). Lack of self-esteem is often manifested in the feelings of shame due to a person 'experiencing the repulsion of [their] action[s]' by society, which communicate to them that they are of lower social value (Ibid).

The contributions which are held in high esteem and seen as socially necessary depend on societal norms which are both context and time specific (Honneth, 2001). A norm is a constitutive feature of the social world that is treated

as a social fact, 'not just as an ideal with no social reality' (Smith, 2009, p. 47). What is seen as a socially necessary and valuable activity is culturally dependent and fluctuates over time. For example, in the former Soviet Union, women working in the labour market were held in high esteem and supported by generous provision of child care through the state. However, following the fall of the Soviet Union, and the consequent return of women to traditional work at home due to the rise in unemployment, raising children and housework became seen as the most socially valuable contributions. The extent to which unemployment is stigmatising often depends on economic conditions: during periods of expansion and growth unemployment typically leads to the lack of social and self-esteem because it is treated as an individual's fault, while in a time of contraction and downturn, unemployment might be less stigmatising. The relevant group within which social norms matter for the determination of self-esteem is unclear, as this can range from specific cultural sub-groups or small communities to entire countries or regions. Heidegren (2002) argues that while Honneth is not specific about the relevant group, his intention is to focus on community-level social esteem, rather than at the country level. This is consistent with the fact that analysis at the national level is within the remit of Honneth's sphere of the recognition of rights.

Furthermore, even in a specific context, there is not necessarily only one standard to determine which contributions are held in high esteem, as many societies have a plurality of values (Smith, 2009). The way in which Honneth addresses this issue is by arguing that what is important is that relations of mutual esteem obtain, not that there is a general consensus on what social achievements should look like. In a just society, no one should be denied an opportunity to achieve social esteem merely because of their identity, nor should someone be denied just

recognition for their contributions based on the fact of them belonging to a stigmatised group. All individuals should be able to 'see themselves as having the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to society through the expression of their distinctive traits and abilities' (Smith, 2009). This injustice, from the denial of opportunities for self-realisation, can result in moral injury and a distorted sense of self.

While there are many ways in which someone can contribute to the common societal good, labour is seen as central to this contribution, as the majority of people construct their social identity based on their role in the organised labour process (Honneth, 2012, p. 57). This broader conception expands on the instrumental conception of work that is common in capitalist societies, which focuses on its economic benefits. In this conception, there is an emphasis on paid work for social esteem over other forms of labour, such as caring responsibilities and unpaid work (Honneth, 2007, p. 76). This can help to explain the extent to which unemployment is stigmatised, and often results in low self-esteem. Moreover, achieving recognition within the system of labour market exchange requires someone not only to contribute but also to be able to sustain their livelihood through this contribution. Thus, the lack of market-mediated recognition, as in the case of the working poor, implies that people bring little value to society, potentially undermining their self-esteem. Conflicts over distribution are contestations over the value of activities, attributes and contributions.²⁶ Overall, Honneth argues that the way in which labour is divided and compensated reflects the existing pattern of intersubjective recognition.

²⁶ For example, see "The Roles We Play": https://atd-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ATD_Email_.pdf

2.3.2 Recognition Through Rights

The third sphere of recognition is the sphere of formal rights. The abstract idea of 'rights' refers to a pattern of intersubjective recognition which comprises mutual respect that individuals owe to one another because they are equal by virtue of being a human being and a member of society. This underlying mechanism of intersubjective reciprocity is similar to that in the sphere of 'social achievement and self-esteem'. Individuals can develop a positive self-relation in the sphere of rights only when other members of the community see and treat them as the bearers of rights (Honneth, 1995b, p. 108). It is through this mutual respect in the forms of rights that subjects can translate their needs into claims that are given due weight and feel equal to others (Spicker, 1993). Recognisable capacity to assert claims is sometimes referred to broadly as dignity and autonomy (Bird, 2018). The denial of recognition in the sphere of rights leads to psychological injury and a deep sense of disrespect and injustice. The key difference between social esteem and rights is that while esteem must be earned, rights have an inherent universal aspect to them.

The corresponding self-relation in this sphere of recognition is that of self-respect. Honneth argues that rights are necessary for the ongoing development of self-respect because we learn our value from how we are recognised and treated by others. What exactly self-respect entails is not clearly articulated, as Honneth draws on negative examples such as during the US civil rights movement when rights were denied, to illustrate the relationship between rights and self-respect:

'This conclusion [of rights leading to self-respect] is only a conceptual claim, for which empirical support is, as yet, completely lacking. The reason it is so difficult, in the case of self-respect, to demonstrate the reality

of the phenomenon is because, to a certain extent, it acquires a perceptible mass only in a negative form.’ (Honneth, 1995a, p. 120)

The empirical data presented in Chapter 6 will illustrate how, in the context of subjective poverty, a lack of civil and social rights makes individuals feel disrespected by others and see themselves as lesser. The mechanism by which disrespect from others translates into a lack of self-respect is the internalisation of negative messaging. In some cases, if people are treated poorly for long enough, they eventually start believing that they deserve such treatment.

The category of formal rights encompasses civil rights, political rights and social rights, which guarantee liberty, participation, and wellbeing respectively. Building on Marshall’s (1950) conception of social rights and chronological evolution of rights, Honneth argues that to be effective, civil and political rights must be underpinned by social rights. A certain standard of living is necessary to exercise rights because the status of a citizen is much broader in its content and membership now than it was at the time of the conception of civil and political rights. In having formal rights, one is now respected with regard not only to the abstract capacity to orient oneself in relation to prevailing moral norms but also to the fact of being a human being deserving of a certain standard of living. Given the public funding necessary for the enablement of rights, rights are in themselves distributive (Bird, 2018). Honneth supports Marshall’s logic of gradualism with an argument that, historically, the practical confrontations that arise in reaction to being denied recognition are typically ‘demands for expansion of the substantive content and the scope of the status of a legal person’ (Honneth, 1995b, pp. 117–8). In other words, demands for recognition in this sense historically centre on the expansion of social rights in their substantive form and in their coverage of a population.

There are limitations in relying on Marshall in theorising recognition in the sphere of rights. Feminist critique of his theory highlights that in many Western European countries, women gained social entitlements before political rights (Lister *et al.*, 2007; Lewis, 2008). In Ukraine, we similarly cannot observe Marshall's gradual expansion of social rights based on the power resource theory, in which social rights are built on prior civil and political rights. As in many other low-income country contexts, the initial establishment of social provision in Ukraine has institutional/authoritarian roots (Skocpol and Amenta, 1986; Mares and Carnes, 2009). In fact, the idea of universal social rights was driven out of welfare policy with the introduction of democratisation and the expansion of political and civic rights. Since the 1990s, Ukraine has been going through the process of retrenchment and restructuring of previously universally delivered public social services. A similar rolling back of social rights has been taking place incrementally in the West since the 1980s, but this process happened much more rapidly and had a much more detrimental effect on population wellbeing in the former Soviet Union countries (Cook, 2010). Given the above insights, it is likely that the conceptualisation of social rights within the category of 'formal rights' in Honneth's recognition theory might need to be supplemented by further theorisation of social rights to capture the depth and nuance of participants' discussions of social rights.

Furthermore, it is not clear whether fellow citizens or the state are at fault for denying individual recognition in the sphere of rights. Honneth's idea of recognition by the state was built on a 'property-owner' conception of rights, whereby the terms of mutual respect are agreed upon between the individuals themselves, while social rights are bestowed on individuals by the collective authority of the state. The way that social rights are negotiated is different from the process of negotiating property-

owner rights because in the case of social rights, the terms of recognition are imposed on both the administrators and the users of services by the state. Social rights in this sense represent claims made by or on behalf of groups in society, not individuals. The mechanism by which misrecognition between individuals as equal actors translates into misrecognition by the state is not clear, as Honneth did not reflect on the case of social rights as deeply as he did on the consequences of misrecognition on identity in broad terms.²⁷ What we do know from Honneth's writing, is that by relating to state institutions, individuals relate to themselves and that this relationship to the state takes place through their interactions with other individuals.

Lastly, stepping away from specific dimensions of recognition, using recognition as a heuristic tool for analysing subjective poverty is helpful, as the theory discusses how individual misrecognition can lead to collective misrecognition through the co-construction of an intersubjective framework. Drawing out the link between the individual and the collective is helpful in this research project, as in Ukraine poverty is often discussed as a phenomenon affecting everyone in the community. As illustrated in the research puzzle in Section 1.1, according to the National Statistics estimates, most of Ukraine's population self-identifies as poor. This suggests that in Ukraine, there might be also a collective, not just individual-level, 'poor identity'. Benhabib (2002) and Pilapil (2011) argue that individual experiences of injustice become seen as typical for an entire group once there is a semantic bridge built from articulated stories of experiences of humiliation. 'These

²⁷ The lack of clarity seems to stem from Honneth combining the ideas of Hegel, who distinguishes between the family, society, and the state; and Mead, who discusses legal relations in terms of a generalised other (Honneth, 1995a).

shared semantics serve as the intersubjective framework through which personal experiences of suffering are interpreted as something that affects both the individual and others' (Pilapil, 2011, p. 83). Similar insights are evident in the psychology and feminist literatures (Young, 1994; Alexander *et al.*, 2004), which suggest that an individual experience becomes enlarged to that of a collective group when people become aware of the common plight and perceive the similarity of their situation to those of others.

2.4 Conclusion

Poverty is a complex phenomenon, which makes it difficult to distinguish between poverty concepts, definitions, and measures. The literature referred to above has discussed different ways of thinking about poverty by applying the three strands of the 'currency of justice' (equality) debates in contemporary philosophy to the concept of poverty. Poverty can be discussed in terms of lack of resources to meet needs, with varying degree of focus on either resources or needs; a lack of opportunity and choice to live a life one finds worth valuing; or an oppressive relationship between different parts of society. It was argued above that, while people in poverty tend to think of poverty in terms of lack of opportunities and oppressive social relations, such conceptualisations are problematic for poverty definitions and measures, as not all who are subject to limited capabilities or oppressive social relations are poor. Having reviewed different concepts of poverty, it has been argued that subjective poverty is a status-based identity based on past, current, and future socio-economic status. The review also illustrated how the recognition theory, as conceptualised by Axel Honneth, provides a potential

theoretical lens through which it is possible to bridge the relational conceptualisation of poverty and the idea of a status-based identity.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The previous chapter set out the theoretical framework for this thesis by exploring the concepts of poverty, identity, and recognition. This chapter moves away from the theoretical analysis to focus on the research methodologies used to collect and analyse the empirical data. The structure of this chapter is as follows: it first explains why the qualitative research approach was used, then reports on the decisions underpinning the sample design, reflects on the process and the dynamics of the interviews, and lastly, shares the process of data analysis.

3.1 Qualitative Approach

The main research question and the two sub-questions, outlined in Chapter 1, are:

Why do so many people in Ukraine identify as poor?

- a) What does identifying yourself as poor entail in the context of Ukraine?
- b) Why does the attribution of subjective poverty not correlate with income or material circumstances?

These questions are exploratory in nature, requiring a flexible, in-depth, and context-dependent investigation of the phenomenon, thus making a strong case for using a qualitative approach (Audet and d'Amboise, 2001; Baxter and Jack, 2008). Exploratory research implies 'unpicking and unpacking things that are commonly accepted to encourage new viewpoints, perspectives and ideas to emerge' (Cortes *et al.*, 2019, p. 519). As discussed in the literature review section, the literature on the topic of felt poverty is limited. Therefore, the approach of this study should be flexible enough as to allow for the discovery of new insights into the nature of subjective poverty that might not have been hypothesised based on the existing scholarship. In contrast to other research methods, qualitative approaches allow the

researcher to grasp the complexity of the experiences and perceptions of participants and thus gain a deeper understanding of participants' world views (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative techniques have long proven essential in understanding subjective meanings of poverty, exploring what poverty signifies to participants, and capturing context-dependent dynamics of poverty (Gacitua-Mario and Wodon, 2001).

For data collection, I made use of semi-structured interviews, as is commonly done in research on beliefs about poverty (Strier, 2005; Halik and Webley, 2011; Sachweh, 2011). For participant recruitment, I relied on peer referral sampling. Participants were thanked in kind for their participation in the interview and were not monetarily compensated for the number of peer referrals, in order to avoid the potential ethical issue of peer pressure in the process of chain referrals. The interviews were conducted in Ukrainian and Russian between June and August of 2018, with each interview lasting about an hour on average. The overall aim was to have a gender-balanced sample of 54 interviews across six cross-cut categories based on income (high- and low-income) and age (20-34, 35-54, and 55 or older), with nine participants per category. Data collection was stopped after 50 interviews as I reached empirical saturation with little new information being extracted from additional data (Byrne, 2001; Fossey *et al.*, 2002; Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006). The process of peer referral and interviewing will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

The study was conducted in Rivne, a mid-sized city in Western Ukraine and one of the 24 primary administrative regional centres. Rivne was chosen based on two factors. Firstly, in terms of subjective poverty, it is relatively close to the average subjective poverty rate of the country. At the time of the study design in 2017, the

most recently publicly available data (2016) indicated that Rivne's subjective poverty rate was 65.5 per cent, relatively close to the national average of 74.0 per cent. Secondly, it was easier to establish local connections for participant recruitment compared with other locations, given my personal affiliation with the city as I grew up in the region and have many contacts there.

Prior to conducting fieldwork, this research received ethics approval from the Departmental Research Ethics Committee following the procedures stipulated by the University of Oxford Ethical Approval (Appendix 3). This research conformed to the conventional ethical standards on informed consent and voluntary participation. Written consent and audio-recorded data were prioritised over other forms of consent and research data. Permission to record the interview was sought and granted prior to the commencement of each interview. All interview recordings and transcripts were anonymised to avoid the identification of participants.

3.2. Sample Design

At the time of study design, 74 per cent of the population in Ukraine identified themselves as poor, making the relevant population a large category that cuts across age cohorts and different socio-economic classes. As was illustrated in the research puzzle section, based on the data from the Ukraine Income and Living Conditions Surveys (2009-2016), subjective poverty at aggregate levels does not correlate straightforwardly with age and material circumstances. Given these observations, it was decided that the sample design should be broad enough to capture the differences in how subjective poverty is manifested across income and age groups. Furthermore, for the data to be representative, to the extent that this is possible in qualitative data, the aim was to keep the sample gender balanced,

although it is worth noting that gender was not one of the initial analytical dimensions.

Regarding income, the sample targeted low-income and high-income groups for two reasons. First, focusing on the extreme cases would highlight the discrepancy between well-off people who judge themselves to be poor and low-income participants who see themselves as not poor. Second, the usage of more detailed income levels would not have been beneficial to the study. This is because the differences between low-income and moderate-income groups are often marginal, and distinguishing between them would be difficult, as Ukraine is one of the most equal countries in the world based on various measures of inequality, such as the GINI coefficient.

In other contexts, it is typical to target low-income participants based on their receipt of welfare benefits. However, in Ukraine, targeting in this way is problematic because most benefits are categorical, with little or no means testing, and thus are not very good predictors of actual income levels or material wellbeing (Gora, 2008; Brück and Lehmann, 2012). Furthermore, those who are most deprived might actually have the least access to the benefits due to widespread low-level corruption (Grødeland, Koshechkina and Miller, 1998).

To target by income groups, I developed simple criteria based on the type of occupation and asset ownership, informed by the 2016 National Household Survey. The low-income group was defined as people who work in low-paid occupations, have small or no asset holdings, and live in small and often shared apartments. The high-income group was defined as those who either run a personal business or hold positions in the city government, own cars, and live in houses in the city suburbs.

Due to high importing costs, owning a car in Ukraine is expensive and hence indicative of wealth. A practical concern is that it is hard to anticipate whether someone has low- or moderate-income levels before the interview when relying on the peer-referral recruitment method. This is mostly due to high rates of remittances from overseas, and the relatively large informal sector.

Given these practical difficulties, the group labelled as low-income in the final sample of this study consists of a mix of low and moderate deprivation levels (Appendix 9). However, they are still relatively similar in terms of income as they all earn approximately 100 to 300 USD a month. The high-income group is also partially diverse, with most participants' incomes falling between 600 to 2,000 USD per month. It is worth noting that the average local regional income at the time of data collection was around 4,364 UAH (157 USD). Furthermore, the high-income participants with relatively low reported income all owned valuable assets, such as cars and housing, and had substantive familial income sources to support high spending.

In addition to targeting by material conditions, the second aspect of the sampling strategy was to target by age. The importance of age often features in studies on subjective socio-economic status and is frequently discussed in the post-communist literature. A recent study on changes in subjective socio-economic status in the US and Germany finds that there are age-related patterns with regards to subjective status, although the patterns vary. In Germany, older generations are more likely to have lower subjective status, explained through their limited future prospects when compared to younger generations. The opposite is true in the US whereby younger people have lower subjective status compared to older people (Weisstanner and Nolan, 2020).

The discourse on the importance of generational experience of subjective status is exceptionally widespread across post-communist countries. As explained by Yurchak (2005), it is common in post-communist countries to compare the experiences of different generations, use specific names to identify the generations, and mention events and cultural phenomena that are important for them. While age and generation are not synonymous, the shared experience around coming of age during a particular period contributes to shared understandings, perspectives, and meanings (Rofel, 1999; Yurchak, 2005).

Given these insights, it was decided to target participants by three age categories: the generation raised during the period of late socialism²⁸ (aged 55 or older), the generation who came of age in the 1990s (aged 35-54), and the generation educated in independent Ukraine (aged 20-34). These categories are roughly in line with the age groups used for the household survey by the Ukrainian National Statistics Agency. The older cohort (aged 55 or older) are unlikely to have capitalised on the transition and are often stereotyped as lacking initiative and yearning for state provision; these are the people who were educated in the Soviet Union and often fully believed in, and supported, the socialist system. People roughly between the ages of 35 and 54 are those who were young adults during the turbulent disintegration of the Soviet Union and are often labelled as ‘the people of

²⁸ The period from 1964-1982/85 is also known as the Breznev era of stagnation, although the term ‘stagnation’ can be misleading in describing this period. While there was resistance to change in the communist party, which manifested in frozen and formulaic state ideology as well as ballooning bureaucracy, there were also positive developments during this period, including the rise in standard of living and flourishing in cultural and intellectual spheres. Breznev’s predecessor (Khrushchev) attempted to remove the privileges of the Soviet officials and a strong resistance to change in the communist party was a response to that attempt. Of relevance to this thesis is that the emergence of secondary economy and the idea of officials enjoying the luxurious lifestyles while simple people struggle to obtain basic goods emerged during this period. (Fainberg and Kalinovsky, 2016).

the 90s'. The younger generation (aged 20-34) are those who were educated in independent Ukraine and are seen as capable of successfully adapting to the market economy (Zlobina, 2004) with the potential to become the new middle class (Symonchuk, 2003). Targeting by age was much more straightforward compared to targeting by material conditions.

As is often the case with qualitative work, I had concerns about persuading people to take part in the study before arriving in Ukraine for data collection. This was driven by the accounts of other researchers carrying out qualitative work in the post-Soviet space. While conducting research in Ukraine, Drzewiecka (2007) encountered difficulties in obtaining information at different levels and had frequent no-shows to scheduled interviews. Padvalkava (2011) shares a similar account of qualitative research in Belarus, highlighting that being native to the country does not always help in navigating social institutions.

Given the general concerns about recruitment, and the fact that getting people to talk about very personal topics such as income and poverty can be difficult, participants were approached through a combination of purposive and peer referral sampling. This recruitment method is also known as 'snowball' or 'chain' referral (Noy, 2008; Beauchemin and González-Ferrer, 2011; Cohen and Arieli, 2011) as well as respondent-driven sampling (Abdul-Quader *et al.*, 2006; Mills *et al.*, 2014; Mosher *et al.*, 2015; Rocha *et al.*, 2017). Peer referral is typically implemented in order to access underserved and hard to reach populations (Tucker *et al.*, 2016). The method involves asking the initial small sample of study participants to recruit peers from their social networks that they know belong to the target population. The success of this recruitment strategy is largely dependent on the trust and support of the participants toward the researcher. These newly

recruited participants are then also asked to recruit others, after taking part in the study themselves. Given this recruitment method, establishing a connection with the participants was crucial not only for collecting rich data during the interview, but also for the purpose of having future participants.

The recruitment process began with a small sample of six participants (seeds), one from each of the six cross-cut categories based on their age and material conditions. The initial participants were identified and approached with the help of local acquaintances. I did not interview my acquaintances, who played the role of initial gatekeepers. At the end of each interview, I asked participants to refer me to two people who might be interested to speak to me. During the initial waves of referral, my requests were unspecified, which led to referrals within the same income category. As the interviewing progressed, the requests became more specific with regard to age, material conditions and gender. In order to achieve a cross-cut gender balanced sample, I had to maintain awareness of the overall composition of the participant pool as the recruitment progressed. The final composition of the 50 participants was gender balanced within each category. As planned, each category consisted of between eight to nine participants, of which at least four or five were women. The only exception to this was the oldest high-income group, where I was only able to recruit a gender balanced sample of five participants (see Appendix 9).

One of the common concerns regarding peer-referral sampling is the risk of bias due to the non-random recruitment method and the consequent inability to make conclusions about the wider population. This is typically mitigated by recruiting subgroups defined by demographic or other characteristics that are not the focal point of the study (Tucker *et al.*, 2016), which was the method used in the

study. There was no recruitment based on subjective poverty status, as my recruitment method focused on material conditions, age and gender. Despite the term subjective poverty appearing in all the ethics forms shared with the participants, the process of peer referral often involved recently interviewed participants framing the interview as focusing on life and poverty in Ukraine more broadly. In most cases, I was not able to anticipate who would be subjectively poor and who would not. Additionally, sampling bias can be reduced by increasing the number of recruitment waves (Mosher et al 2015, p. 832). Therefore, my study aimed to build long and narrow referral chains by asking for a maximum of two referrals to keep the chains narrow and to increase the likelihood that they become long. In most cases, I only received one referral and was able to establish referral chains of around three to five people.

Prior to being in the field, I considered debriefing participants about the ethical responsibilities of approaching their friends, as is sometimes recommended in the literature (DeJong *et al.*, 2009). However, I found this to be relatively ineffective for several reasons. This literature often focuses on the risk of aggressive recruitment in response to financial incentives per recruit. As mentioned previously, I did not include a financial incentive and I was only asking for one or two referrals. I also emphasised that the peer referral was optional and reassured them they were under no obligation to do so. Lastly, participants willing to connect me with their peers typically phoned their acquaintances in my presence immediately after the interview, which alleviated my concerns about unethical behaviour.

Recruitment over the phone typically involved participants telling their acquaintances that I was a 'friend in need' who was writing a thesis and who would want to talk to them about 'the realities of life in Ukraine' over a cup of tea, framing

their request as a small personal favour. If the acquaintance expressed interest in talking to me, the participant would arrange a time on my behalf when I should follow-up and give me the acquaintance's first name and mobile number. These common exchanges reinforced the idea that the success of qualitative interviews can be highly dependent on how the interviewer presents themselves and whether that is well received by interviewees (Sheridan and Storch, 2009).

This recruitment method led to a low level of participation refusal because it presupposed a friendly recommendation from one person to another. The most common cause of refusal provided was that people had no time for an interview because their schedules are busy with other obligations and activities. Another cause for non-participation was an inability of several participants to schedule interviews in advance. These participants, who were typically high-income, would agree to participate only on the condition that I could meet with them within the next couple of days, but on very short notice. This would involve being called and asked to meet within the hour, in various locations across the city, making it practically difficult to meet their requests. Usually if I were unable to meet them in their first availability, I would lose contact with them. When I inquired as to why people preferred to meet on short notice, I was told that 'we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, and you expect us to plan something for a week in advance?!' In the context of Ukraine, this phrase of not knowing of what will happen tomorrow is an idiom referring to high levels of uncertainty. Thus a possible explanation for this inability to plan long-term is Ukraine's context of ongoing economic volatility which leads to a tendency to focus on the short-term.

3.3 Interviewing

Data collection started with three pilot interviews to ensure that the interview questions translated well from English into Ukrainian and Russian, and that the questions worked more generally. After the pilot interviews were transcribed, I gained a better understanding of the specific areas to explore and adjusted my interview structure. I also simplified some of the questions which did not make sense to the participants and learned to alter the sequence of the questions depending on the flow and logic of the conversation. The third pilot interview was actually included in the final data set because it was deemed of sufficient quality.

Pilot interviews also provided an opportunity to reflect on the appropriateness of bringing up the word poverty early-on in the interview as part of the four-tier self-ranking question. Many researchers avoid using this word in qualitative research under the premise that asking about people's subjective feelings of poverty directly could be 'intolerably intrusive' (Wolff, 1998) and can potentially further shame and stigmatise the participants (Lister, 2004a). Employing neutral terminologies is seen as more ethical as it avoids corrosive labelling, which might further undermine the agency of an individual (Walker, 2014). This concern is especially salient in European and North American contexts, where the poor are 'othered' even by those in material deprivation, making poverty a stigmatising label associated with individualistic failure (Gough, Eisenschitz and McCulloch, 2004; MacDonald and Marsh, 2005; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013). Furthermore, in many studies on poverty, participants have already been pre-defined as poor based on their receipt of a specific benefit (Underlid, 2007) and therefore having the researcher bring up the term is deemed unnecessary.

In this study, however, avoiding the term poverty would be difficult as the objective was to understand what drives self-perception of being poor. In Ukraine, the topic of poverty is frequently used in the media and daily discourses, structural explanations of poverty dominate (Habibov *et al.*, 2017), and large categories of people are seen as deserving of state provision (Whitefield, 2002). Furthermore, in some research contexts, labels with stigmatising connotations, such as the label of being homeless, have been shown to be meaningful and positive for the participants themselves (Fitzpatrick, 2005). Therefore, this suggests that in my study, the term might be less stigmatising compared to other contexts.

This raises the question of whether the word poverty has a different meaning in Ukrainian language compared to English. Atkinson (2019, 52) argues that the word poverty does not always translate well across languages and cultures, citing Japan and the Solomon Islands as examples. In developing country context, the word poverty is often translated as 'ill-being' (Narayan-Parker *et al.*, 2000). In Zambia, the closest word to poverty is 'umwasauka', which literally means a life of suffering and carries different connotations compared to the word poverty in English (Sambo, 2018, p. 59). In the context of Ukraine, the word 'bidnist' (бідність) is a linguistically direct translation of the word poverty. However, this word has slightly different connotations and associations, usually carrying an empathetic acknowledgement of suffering, as will be illustrated throughout this thesis. In comparison, the word poor in English has more negative connotations given that the word poor is used synonymously with inferior, as in poor quality (Lister, 2004a).

In terms of interview logistics, participants would choose the location themselves. It was decided under the assumption that letting the interviewees pick the location that is most convenient and comfortable for them would decrease the

rate of refusal to participate and facilitate the discussion of personal topics. Given that data collection was taking place in the summer, most participants chose locations in public parks or coffee shops with outdoor seating areas. In most cases, the cafes were half-empty, which made it easy to ensure privacy by sitting far away from other customers. Only three interviews were conducted in non-public areas, all of which were with high-income female interviewees at their home. To ensure my safety, prior to these interviews I informed my flatmate where I was and for how long I would be gone and also had a cell phone quickly available in case of an emergency. In addition to these precautions, there was no one at home at the time of the interview except for the female participant in all three cases. Overall, while I had control over the interview structure, I often had little control over the conditions in which the interviews took place.

The interview schedule began with going over the information sheet detailing the purpose and aims of the study (Appendix 4), followed by signing of the written consent form (Appendix 5). The decision to obtain written, rather than oral, consent was taken in order for the participants to take this process more seriously and provide them with an opportunity to ask more in-depth questions about the project. Unfortunately, the downside was that some participants interpreted the consent procedures as the university trying to protect itself from being sued, rather than informing the participants about their rights in the research process. A similar issue was raised by Lincoln and Tierney (2004) in their research. This type of response can be interpreted as a general lack of trust in social institutions, including universities. In such cases, I apologised about the time it took to go through the forms. Throughout the interviews I actively reminded participants that they could

withdraw their consent at any moment by offering the option to skip difficult topics or stop the interview entirely when they seemed distressed.

With regards to compensation for their time, it was clearly stated that participants would receive no direct benefit from taking part in this research, even though their involvement would hopefully improve the general understanding of the nature of poverty in Ukraine. This was explained while reviewing the information sheet. The lack of remuneration never raised questions as all participants understood that being a PhD student does not entail high earnings. I did offer to treat all participants in kind with tea or coffee as a thank you gesture for volunteering their time. Most male participants regardless of their financial status disapproved of my gesture and insisted on treating me instead.

Once the consent was obtained, the recorder was turned on and I followed the semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 6). Recording the interviews allowed me to better navigate sensitive topics, focus on establishing a rapport, and maintain eye contact. I was unable to take notes during the interview as looking down during the conversation to take notes made participants visibly uncomfortable and disrupted the flow of the conversation. The interviews themselves typically started with an informal discussion about the interviewee's profession, age, education, and family. The conversation then transitioned into the question about how they perceive themselves on the four-tier socio-economic ranking from poor to rich. The choice of a four-point scale ladder was based on papers about subjective poverty in Russia by Ravallion and Lokshin (2001, 2002). In practice, the issue of what scale is appropriate was less important as many participants interpreted this scale in a binary way (poor versus rich). Therefore, this question was an effective way to initiate reflection on their subjective status position.

Furthermore, I was mindful to not coerce participants into identifying themselves on the one to four ranking if they did not feel comfortable. Several participants were undecided as to whether they were poor or not because of comparisons to several reference groups. The subjective poverty status of these participants was categorised as 'ambivalent', and these interviews were nonetheless able to provide key components of the answers to the research questions. Following the self-identification question, I proceeded in an open-ended manner, prompting individuals to explore the factors underlying their answers. The semi-structured nature of the questions allowed me to have the flexibility to approach respondents differently based on the natural flow of the conversation, while still covering the same topics of interest.

I also made a conscious effort to pay attention to how my own identity, language and a slight foreign accent might affect interviewees and their responses. This approach was taken based on an epistemological assumption that knowledge production is contingent on the positionality of a researcher within a given context (for more detail on critical realism epistemology see Denermark (2002)). Positionality refers to a researcher's stance in relation to participants and preconceptions about the research context (Mason-Bish, 2019). The literature on positionality argues that when collecting qualitative data, a researcher's identity, personal experiences, cultural factors, and assumptions shape the dynamics of interviews as well as the analysis and reporting of results by determining which insights are seen as important (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

Researcher subjectivity can be seen as problematic, yet it is impossible to view the research and data 'without viewing [it] from somewhere' (Fisher, 2009, p. 584). Therefore, bracketing out preconceptions during a research process is neither

possible nor desirable because lived experience is part of the interpretative process (Tufford and Newman, 2012). The solution to subjectivity in qualitative research is to practice ongoing critical reflexivity and in some cases, even deliberate self-scrutiny, throughout the process of data collection and analysis (Hallowell, Lawton and Gregory, 2005; Hallowell, 2007). To instil a routine of ongoing reflexivity into my research, I wrote field notes and short memoranda in conjunction with the interviews, while listening to interview recordings, transcribing, and coding the data. I was extra cautious to reflect carefully on my potential biases especially in cases where either the participant's response evoked strong negative feelings in me, or in cases where I took a participant's experience for granted because of its familiarity. This approach was used to ensure that the study highlighted not just one set of responses, but the plurality of views on the research subject from the participants.

Reflecting on my positionality, it is fair to say that this research is written with the voice of someone who feels both connected and estranged from Ukraine's social setting. I was an insider amongst both low- and high-income participants. I could relate to low-income individuals because I grew up experiencing acute material deprivation and social exclusion. I was also a cultural insider amongst the high-income participants as I have lived in the US and UK for the last ten years and studied at elite universities. However, I was also an outsider amongst both groups because I have not lived in material deprivation for many years and was not of high social status while living in Ukraine. I was essentially treading the margins between being both an insider and an outsider throughout the data collection process. When establishing rapport with the participants, different parts of my lived experience and identity featured more strongly based on what was more useful in connecting with each participant. The way I presented myself to others was easily reshaped by the

social context of each interview and I found this unsettling, leading to a complex emotional attachment to the field.

The fluctuations in my positionality were the outcome of the power dynamics between the participants and myself which changed from one interview to the next (similar research experiences have been documented by Dwyer and Buckle (2009, 2018)). This was mostly evident at the beginning of interviews as it was always important for the participants to establish a clear idea of who I was before we started reviewing the consent forms. It was during these initial stages of the interview that I would briefly reveal that I finished secondary school in Rivne and am currently a PhD student at the University of Oxford. Sharing personal information with the participants follows the idea of flattening the traditional hierarchy between the researcher and the participant (Oakley, 1981, 2016; Yost and Chmielewski, 2013).

Low-income participants would typically respond to such an introduction with pointed questions about the occupation of my parents, how I managed to leave Ukraine, and how long have I lived abroad. The questions seem to have been aimed towards determining whether I was from a well-off background, implying that my success was driven by money and support from my parents. When I told them that I left on my own upon finishing secondary school, and that my family still lives in Rivne region, the participants would sigh in acceptance: 'oh so you are local/ours' ('а, то ти місцева/наша'). Such phrases indicated to me that they saw me as an insider given my background. I suspect that my status of being an insider would have been reinforced by my empirical literacy (Roseneil, 1993) throughout the interview based on small idiosyncrasies such as laughter at hardships that are not humorous outside of the context.

Nevertheless, there were some low-income participants who tested whether I was a trustworthy insider by being unfriendly or even hostile towards me. The following example is an exceptional case in which I captured such a dynamic because the exchange happened after the participant had given formal consent and the recorder was turned on. The interview began ordinarily and I asked the participant to tell me about himself. After sharing details about his formal education and work experience in the Soviet Union, the participant discussed his history of insecure employment and material deprivation since the 1990s, revealing his vulnerability. It was after touching on a sensitive subject that the participant became defensively angry:

P: You are simply lucky you got accepted to Oxford! Not everyone is as lucky. So stay there and don't kid yourself and others (не морочте собі і іншим голову)! That would be the best solution for you!

I: You think I am kidding others?

P: I don't understand why you would want to write about poverty.

I: I care about people. I want to write about how people here live. No-one is writing about it.

P: Yeah! And no one will ever write about it!

I: I will write about it!

P: And so what?! Let's look at this. What will this lead to?! Absolutely nothing!

I: Well yeah I could sit and cross my arms and do absolutely nothing! I am just one person but I am going to make a tiny contribution! Talking about it is the first step to doing something!

P: (Loud laughter) [long pause] Well umm. How can I explain this to you. Previously [In the Soviet Union] there was one goal – to catch up, to outrun and to build. Now there is a different goal – rich are getting richer and poor are getting poorer. The thieves are living well [...] (Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

While transcribing this interview after the fieldwork, I reflected how mirroring the participant's anger and raising my voice potentially signalled to him that I understood the root of his anger and genuinely cared about his life experiences. This conversation with the participant is instructive in how establishing rapport might look very different based on the context and the identity of the researcher. The

consent to participate must be ongoing and based on mutual respect and trust, stretching far beyond signing the formalised written consent form (Gabb, 2010). In the end, this interview turned out to be one of the most insightful, rewarding and positive experiences because the emotional connection established in the beginning allowed for a very open conversation and emotional release. At the end of the interview, the participant apologised for being difficult to approach and admitted that he was testing me to see whether I was trustworthy:

Maybe I was a bit rough with you in the beginning. I was asking you this and that ... just to see your reaction. I am also a psychologist in a way. I have come across different people in my life. (Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

Furthermore, this experience showed that the conventional view of the relationship of the dominant researcher and the passive participant might not always be applicable (Smyth and Williamson, 2004). Participants living in material deprivation are not by default powerless and are often able to limit disclosure or steer the discussion away from difficult life stories. However, sensitive topics can stir up difficult emotions, such as anger, despite a participant's preconception that the topic would not be this distressing. In such moments, it is important to distinguish between the potential for causing minor distress, such as in the case of this participant, and the potential for causing harm (Dingwall, 2008; Gabb, 2010). In anticipation of a participant becoming deeply distressed, possibly even beyond the duration of the interview, I included a follow-up document outlining services and resources they could access if they experienced problems after the interview (Appendix 8). This document was included with the participant's copy of the information sheet and the written consent form.

The dynamics of establishing rapport with high-income participants were often quite different, even though I was also able to establish trust with them rather

easily. Given that the location was determined by the participants, the interviews would often take place in more high-end cafés. Upon hearing the same short introduction which I gave to low-income participants, high-income interviewees tended to care more about my experiences living abroad rather than my upbringing in Ukraine. Since the data collection took place over the summer, we would often discuss upcoming vacation plans and share our impressions of places to which we have both travelled. These participants shared their personal, or their children's, experiences of travelling internationally, especially if they had been to either the UK or the US. In many ways, I was a 'cultural insider' (Ganga and Scott, 2006) amongst the high-income participants because my current lifestyle shares many similarities to theirs.

It is important to note that my life story was interpreted differently by participants based on their beliefs about inequality, which do not necessarily coincide with their income level (as will be shown in Chapter 4). For those with an inclination towards more structural explanations of inequality, my story demonstrated that an average Ukrainian could be successful if they were given a meaningful opportunity to progress in life. A few older participants even made comments about how they were proud of my success -- it showed to them that 'our people' can go as far as Oxford if given an opportunity. For participants with more individualistic explanations, my story showed that Ukrainians already have the necessary opportunities to be successful if only they were willing to work harder and to get out of their comfort zone. These participants would remark that people in Ukraine need to change their mindset of learned helplessness and take up available opportunities.

My experience of being an 'intimate insider' (Taylor, 2011) and acknowledging 'common vulnerabilities' between the observer and the observed (Behar, 2014) were key to producing rich data, contrary to some qualitative studies which argue against this (Malyutina, 2013; Pechurina, 2014). Being an insider allowed me to build rapport quickly, ask very personal questions, and be sensitive about participants' experiences without falling into the trap of victimising them. With the majority of participants, interviews flowed well and I could easily manoeuvre between topics and ask several follow-up questions.

Simultaneously being an insider and a stranger seems to have given some participants the platform to express their grievances that they otherwise would not have mentioned in other settings. Take, for instance, the following quote from a participant who, 25 minutes into the interview, became concerned that he talked too much about poverty and inequality. In his experience, talking about these topics at work and other spaces would annoy people:

P: Sorry. I like talking about such topics. My friend probably told you that I get carried away talking about this at work but no one actually wants to listen to me.

I: No no, I want to. I am here to listen to people.

P: Still not sure whether this is what you want to hear, but I am ready to talk.

(Andriy, 35, male, high-income)

Several participants were initially cautious about overburdening by talking about the issue of poverty and inequality too much. These topics are so commonly discussed in Ukraine that friends and family sometimes categorically refuse to engage in the subject. Participants were often relieved that I was willing to listen to their views without judgment or imposing my own views. Because of the element of relief amongst some participants, the interviews had a somewhat therapeutic aspect to them. Several other researchers have also raised this point, showing that in cases

where the interviewee and the participant are equals in the storytelling experience, qualitative interviews can be relatively therapeutic, as participants feel heard (Birch and Miller, 2000; Haynes, 2006; Rossetto, 2014).

However, in addition to the benefits, there were also some difficulties from being an insider. The biggest obstacle was extracting shared or implied knowledge. On a few occasions, participants became confused and even upset as to why I was asking 'obvious' questions to which they assumed I already knew the answer by virtue of being local:

P: In Ukraine, you need a lot of money to defend your thesis.

I: You need to pay [bribe] to defend?

P: Well of course! You are also from Ukraine. You should know this.

(Iryna, 37, female, low-income)

This example shows how a participant's assumption of implicit shared experiences can run the risk of undermining the researcher's understanding of the participant (Mitchell, 2010). While I was aware of corruption in the higher education system, I was genuinely surprised by the specifics of the process, as I have never attended university in Ukraine. My intention with asking such simple follow-up questions was to avoid assuming the meaning of what the participants were saying based on my familiarity with the context. In Iryna's view, however, asking a seemingly obvious question led to confusion, as if I was pretending to be ignorant. In such situations, I typically responded by explaining that while I might personally understand what they mean, and know what life is like in Ukraine, the answers will not be obvious to far-away academics in England who have never been to Ukraine. I often had to reassure the participants that their answers were insightful, even though to them, the answers were self-evident. As the fieldwork progressed, I tried to avoid

questions that might come across as obtuse. Ideally, the questions should be meaningful to both the participant and the interviewer.

However, sometimes researcher positionality is not as simplistic as being either an insider or an outsider, especially when gender and age dynamics set the tone of an interview. There were only a few difficult interviews, all of which were with young male participants under the age of 25. Two of these participants were low-income, and one was high-income. These participants tended to give very brief answers and encouraging them to elaborate felt interrogative:

I: Have you ever encountered corruption at work?

P: No.

I: In your personal life?

P: No.

I: How about your parents, have they?

P: No. [silence, 4 seconds]. In school. A teacher asked [silence, 4 seconds]

I: How did he ask?

P: He walked in and said, why should I give you an A? You all should pitch in at least 50 hryvnias each. [silence, 3 seconds]

I: Did you pitch in?

P: Well yeah. What's wrong with that? (Fedir, 20, male, high-income)

Initially, in response to the short monosyllabic answers, I would ask the participants if they wanted to stop the interview, to which they insisted that they wanted to continue. Prior to going into the field, I anticipated encountering silence in interviews, but mostly with low-income participants when touching upon sensitive topics; the silence would speak to the 'marginal voices' of interviewees in difficult life circumstances (Charmaz, 2008). However, the silence and short responses I encountered in these difficult interviews were different. I, like other qualitative researchers in similar situations (Jacobsson and Åkerström, 2012), at first thought that such interviews were largely unsuccessful. Based on the similar profiles of

these three participants in terms of age, gender and self-perception as poor, it seems that their silence was an expression of a difficult power dynamic in the interview. More specifically, I, as a young, assertive, and relatively affluent female interviewer, was looking for 'sincere revelations' (MacLure *et al.*, 2010) from subjectively poor men of a similar age. Bengtsson and Fynbo (2018) argue that in some cases, participants use silence to challenge the interviewer-interviewee power dynamic in the dialogue. In the example above, Fedir probably had his own unspoken and unmet expectations about the interview, and his repeated 'no' to questions about very common experiences in Ukraine showed a degree of resistance to the topics that I anticipated we would discuss. The intersection between gender roles and perceived socio-economic positions is likely to have contributed to this dynamic. Given that a masculine identity can shape a qualitative interview (Pini, 2005), and that work and financial security can be central to such an identity (Broom, Hand and Tovey, 2009), there were understandable power dynamics.

At the end of the interview, most participants were asked to fill out a short end-of-interview questionnaire. The questionnaire was initially designed to help estimate the objective level of the material wellbeing of the participants. The questionnaire included eleven items indicating deprivation, aimed towards capturing the depth of deprivation, and two additional items to indicate asset ownership typical of high-income participants. The questionnaire was modelled after the overlapping sections of the EU SILC 2005 Material Deprivation Indicators (Guio *et al.*, 2017), especially the sections on economic strain and household amenities.

The results of the questionnaire do not feature in the final data analysis but are still mentioned in the report of data content analysis, listed as a one to eleven

deprivation score next to participants' subjective status assessment (deprivation column in Appendix 9). Throughout the interviews, it became evident that the low-income participants tended to severely under-report their level of material deprivation. Several participants would write in the forms that they have no deprivations even though when talking to me, they would disclose experiencing multiple deprivations that are unlikely to have been made up, undermining the premise of the survey. One could argue that their verbal responses were performative and thus exaggerated their deprivation to create a certain image that they wanted to portray. However, having watched the participants fill out the survey, social desirability bias is more likely to have occurred during the survey stage. Writing down all one's deprivations on one official sheet of paper with the University of Oxford logo may be significantly more shameful than was anticipated before the fieldwork. This observation confirms previous findings that misreporting is a major source of error in surveys with sensitive personal questions (Tourangeau and Yan, 2007; Latkin *et al.*, 2017).

In several cases, participants chose to rush through the exercise by quickly circling the answers showing 'that they have everything' and verbally saying that 'they are doing just fine'. Considering these types of responses, I did not place much weight on the surveys but decided to still report that some participants filled out the survey and list their deprivation scores.

After having completed end-of-interview questionnaires and parting ways, there were a few unexpected communications from participants after the fieldwork. Three former participants reached out to me with expectations of catching up and updating me on their life events, two of which told me that meeting me inspired them to leave Rivne for better paid jobs in other cities. Other qualitative researchers have

reported similar experiences in which the interview itself prompted changes for the participants (Rodger and Ludhra, 2011). For two other participants in their early thirties, there was also an unrealistic expectation that I could help them get accepted into a foreign university. I managed these situations by being transparent about my straightforward application process when applying to Oxford, which left them partially disappointed but content with my answers. I personally found these experiences uncomfortable and difficult to navigate, sharing a similar concern with other researchers about the issue of crossing the boundary between research and friendship in qualitative work (Evans, 2003; Rogers, 2003).

3.4 Data Analysis

Preliminary analysis of the data was done during the fieldwork by listening to the audio recordings between the interviews to reflect on the themes that were emerging, which also improved my interviewing technique. Further reflection took place during interview transcription. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Ukrainian, but a few were also in Russian. All interviews were transcribed verbatim in the language of the interviewee, capturing both verbal and non-verbal communication to minimise the risk of misinterpreting responses. All information which might lead to the identification of participants was anonymised during transcription. Coding was done in English but was based on the non-translated transcripts and only quotes included in the thesis were translated into English. Having taught Ukrainian to graduate students at the University of Oxford, which required marking translation of Ukrainian texts to English, I felt comfortable with conducting the translations. On rare occasions, I reached out to other bilingual Ukrainian academics to assist with the translation of specific phrases. The process

of transcribing and translating the interviews myself provided me with a deeper understanding of the data.

Data analysis involved both content analysis (description and quantification) and thematic analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The objective was both to analyse broad trends within the entire sample and to understand the nuances within individual experiences. While there is often no clear boundary between content analysis and thematic analysis in qualitative work (Braun and Clarke, 2006), it can sometimes be argued that the distinction between the two captures the degrees of transformation of the data during the process of data analysis (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013). Therefore, in this case I draw a distinction between the two.

Moreover, the data analysis process consisted of three stages. The first stage of data analysis entailed open coding (Cope, 2016) and thematic analysis using NVivo 11. Open coding is a method which involves assigning a label to a specific section of a transcript, conveying its general idea (Roulston, 2014). Coding relied on both a deductive technique, where the codes are grounded directly in the data, as well as an inductive technique, where the codes build on key concepts drawn from relevant literature. This resulted in over a hundred codes, which were then reassessed and grouped together into several interlinked themes. The important themes that emerged were self-realisation, a lack of rights, comparisons with Western Europe, and animosity towards the government and the rich.

The second stage of analysis focused on content analysis and the creation of a comprehensive written summary of each interview participant. These summaries were based on findings from the initial coding, a re-reading of their

interview transcript, post-interview notes, and short reflections written during interview transcription. This form of analysis confirmed high rates of subjective poverty, the prevalence of structural explanations of poverty, and showed that there was no clear association between subjective poverty, age and income within the sample. These insights were organised into a cross-cut table and several flowcharts to visualise the broad trends within the sample (see Appendices 9 and 10).

The third and final stage of data analysis focused in more detail on the themes of self-realisation and social rights, informed by the first stage. This third stage of analysis focused specifically amongst the subjectively poor and ambiguous participants determined in the second stage. This involved deductive thematic analysis using the theory of recognition as conceptualised by Axel Honneth (Section 2.3), because the two themes that emerged from the first stage resonated well with his two spheres of recognition. Furthermore, the theory of recognition allowed for a holistic description of subjective poverty which includes both material and social causes. It also helped to capture the nuances of the ongoing contestation for social value and how this affects individual self-relation. This last stage of analysis prioritised some topics over others, as well as highlighting and linking previously overlooked issues. The final combined coding framework is available in Appendix 11.

Chapter 4: Manifestations of Subjective Poverty

4.1 Introduction

The research question driving this thesis asks why do so many people in Ukraine regard themselves as poor? To answer this question, it must first be determined what self-identification as poor entails in the context of Ukraine. In other words, if people do readily identify as 'poor', in what ways do they express such feelings? In order to explore this first research sub-question (Section 1.2), in the interviews I asked participants how they perceive themselves on a four-tier self-ranking scale from poor to rich.²⁹ I then sought to understand what it means for participants to self-identify as poor, and what experiences reinforce their self-perception. This chapter contextualises these feelings and experiences within the wider-socio-economic and political context of Ukraine, and forms the first of three empirical chapters.

The 50 participants of this study were initially categorised into high- and low-income groups.³⁰ Then, based on qualitative content analysis (Appendix 9), participants were organised into three main groups based on their subjective relationship to poverty (Appendix 10a-c). The first group consists of 24 subjectively poor participants, comprising of 11 of the 23 high-income and 13 of the 27 low-income individuals interviewed. All of the high-income and seven of the low-income participants directly communicated that they feel poor, while the remaining six low-

²⁹ Given that asking people about their subjective feelings directly would have been 'intolerably intrusive' (Wolff, 1998), I followed the examples of subjective poverty papers by Ravallion (Ravallion and Lokshin, 2001, 2002) and started the discussion with the 1 to 4 question. It was anticipated that subjectively poor participants might think in a binary way (poor versus rich) which makes the issue of how many tiers to include less important.

³⁰ Based on a survey of basic material needs and self-reported income relative to average income levels in Rivne in addition to ownership of property, business and vehicles.

income participants did so indirectly. Those who indirectly expressed their feelings of being poor often identified as an average person within a poor majority country. As such, they directly identified as poor on the collective level, and indirectly on the individual level. The second group consists of 15 subjectively non-poor participants who are mostly from the high-income group, except for three low-income participants who fully rejected the term 'poor' as a personal experience and 'othered' themselves from those in objective and subjective poverty. The final group consists of 11 participants whose subjective self-identification is ambiguous and who are all from the low-income group. Across income and age groups, there are no clear patterns of subjective poverty identification. However, income and age determine the relative importance of different factors which contribute to subjective poverty.

Through the illustration of the complex relationship between material wellbeing, feeling poor and identifying as poor, this chapter shows that stratification ideology, and consequent poverty attributions, contribute to high rates of subjective poverty. Subjectively poor participants tended to perceive inequality in the country as extremely high, with a binary system of opposing and conflicting groups consisting of 'the poor' (majority of the population) and 'the rich' (corrupt oligarchs). These participants upheld a challenging ideology, in which high rates of poverty are seen as being caused by structural factors. Subjectively non-poor participants in both low- and high-income groups tended to support a dominant ideology, in which material deprivation rates are seen as very low and subjective and objective poverty are explained in individualistic terms.

Furthermore, the analysis confirms that subjective poverty is influenced by relative standing in relation to specific reference groups. When reflecting on whether they see themselves as poor, participants made comparisons to the idea of rich in

Ukraine, the idea of 'normal' middle-class living standards in Western Europe, and the average local income levels. Interestingly, they took into consideration their expected lifetime earnings and achievements and not just their current level of material wellbeing. Participants also frequently distinguished between the material and non-material dimensions of poverty.

Finally, the data suggests that self-identifying as poor has both empowering and disempowering elements that reinforce each other. On the one hand, identifying as poor constitutes a claim of deservingness driven by a sense of injustice. On the other, it reflects internalisation of negative stereotypes associated with the label of being poor. Subsequent empirical chapters disentangle how such dynamics undermine an individual's positive self-relation using recognition theory (Honneth, 1992, 2007b, 2007a). Overall, Ukraine's context of prevalent structural explanations of poverty, high rates of moderate material deprivation, deeply held communitarian values, and low levels of income inequality offers a unique opportunity to explore the phenomenon of subjective poverty.

The rest of the chapter is as follows: Section 4.2 discusses subjectively poor participants, Section 4.3 subjectively non-poor participants, and Section 4.4 focuses on participants that were difficult to categorise. The last section is a conclusion.

4.2 Subjectively Poor Participants

Participants who identified as feeling poor are described here as subjectively poor. This group of participants is further divided into three subgroups. The first subgroup consists of low-income participants who directly identified as poor. These participants clearly indicated that they feel poor during the interview. The second subgroup consists of low-income participants who indirectly identified as poor.

These participants did not directly identify as poor, but provided enough evidence of their feelings of being poor to conclude that they identify as such. Finally, the third subgroup consists of high-income participants who directly identified as poor. The way in which these three subgroups discussed subjective poverty is rather distinct, and it is worth understanding the main factors driving their feelings.

4.2.1 Low-Income Direct Identification as Poor

Several participants openly stated that they feel poor, with seven low-income participants having shared that they consider themselves to be poor without being prompted. Direct identification was often associated with more emotive responses, such as raised voices, swearing, crying, and laughing at difficult points of the conversation. Given the emotional nature of such responses, identifying as poor for these participants seems to have been a way to offload pain and frustrations about their circumstances. Their statements usually also included strong feelings of deservingness. Victoria,³¹ who worked multiple jobs at the time of the interview, openly talked about her feelings of poverty and quickly identified as a deserving poor person within the first few minutes of the interview:³²

Well, generally I think that I live in poverty. Why in poverty? Because I do not have some sort of savings put away for the future. Looking at it right now, I am a hero. I am a hero because my husband is ill [...]. Three years ago, we buried my sister. I felt I

³¹ None of the names listed are real. All quotes are assigned to people given aligned pseudonyms.

³² Coding signs in the participant quotes are as follows: letter 'P:' refers to participant speech; letter 'I:' refers to interviewer speech; [...] square brackets denote a point of omitted speech; [text] text in square brackets denotes clarification in meaning by the author; () round brackets denote that the words spoken were too unclear to transcribe; (laughter) denotes participant or interviewer laughter.

was at a zero. Why? Because we had to take her to the hospital multiple times a month. The amounts [we had to pay] were enormous.

(Victoria, 42, female, low-income)

While Victoria reported being exhausted from the experience of material deprivation, she also came across as very proud of her perseverance and ability to manage difficult situations. The simultaneous labelling of herself as both a poor person and a hero can be interpreted as an implicit claim for recognition stemming from her repeated resilience in the face of hardships. Pride in 'making do' amongst those living in deprivation is quite common and has been observed in various other contexts such as Russia (Caldwell, 2004), France (Reed-Danahay, 1996) and Kenya (Mckenzie, 2015).

It was common for these participants to perceive themselves as living on the verge of absolute poverty because while they can generally meet most of their basic needs, they do not have a safety net. By positioning themselves very close to the absolute poverty line, they highlighted their inability to cope with shocks:

I am probably in the category of moderate poor because I still have some sort of pension. So not completely poor. Mmm how can I say, just a little bit above those completely poor, but no more than that (laughter). I am not yet begging. That is the only thing. (Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

As other research has shown, living in contexts in which poverty is a reoccurring phenomenon, with little certainty that poverty will not occur again, can cause significant psychological damage (Lister, 2004a, p. 54). Mixed methods studies on the dynamics of poverty support the idea that moving in and out of poverty is more common than a single-step or continuous upward or downward sloping trajectories (Krishna and Lecy, 2008; Baulch, 2011; Davis and Baulch, 2011). A study on high rates of subjective poverty in Russia similarly showed that past incomes and expected future income are significant for the current self-perceptions of wellbeing

(Ravallion and Lokshin, 2000). As suggested by insecure functioning theory (Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007), it is not only the current level of functioning that is important, but also the level of security in that functioning.

Several participants who felt poor anticipated negative future outcomes and were concerned that they will end up living in poverty when they get older:

I really dislike this thing – future prognoses (laughter). Because unfortunately the prognosis for the future right now does not quite coincide with what I would like the future to be. Realistically, if nothing changes, I will spend my entire life working two to three jobs [...]. Looking at pensioners, I understand that the same future awaits me. (Volodya, 33, male, low-income)

The likelihood of falling back into poverty in the future seemed almost imminent for these participants. While Volodya manages to stay afloat because both he and his wife work multiple jobs, he does not have savings as his income is spent immediately on necessities. Given that state pensions are sub-optimal and his lack of savings, Volodya voiced his anticipation of living in poverty once he is unable to continue working.

The depth of despair related to potential old-age poverty was most intense for people in their forties and fifties, who discussed worrying about their imminent health decline and inability to work:

In Europe pensioners have a life, here it is very difficult. If God gives me health, I will at least be able to grow something in the garden. To be honest, I am only 42, but I frequently ask God in my prayers for a death where I just drop dead (laughter). It is scary, but I have already thought like that. God forbid getting ill - no one will look at you, no one needs you. (Victoria, 42, female, low-income)

It appears that individuals do not make a snapshot judgment when evaluating whether they are poor; instead, they take into account their past experiences and expected future outcomes to make a summative, lifetime assessment of their socio-

economic status. The hypothetical chain of future events often feared by participants in this study, involving health-related expenses and inability to work due to poor health, are common causes of descent into poverty across country contexts. In Peru, the share of households that descend into poverty due to health-related cases is 67 per cent; in different regions of India, the percentage varies between 60 and 70 per cent (Krishna, 2010). Being one illness away from poverty is a leading culprit almost everywhere (Whitehead, Dahlgren and Evans, 2001; Labonté and Schrecker, 2007). When ill-health is combined with a loss of earning power, it is the biggest influence on becoming poor and potentially remaining in poverty, especially in countries where healthcare costs are high relative to average income, such as in Ukraine. Concerns about future poverty also resonate with the population's general inability to cope with economic shocks. According to the Life in Transition survey in 2016, only 25 per cent of respondents in Ukraine said that they can easily meet unexpected expenses of an amount equal to the domestic poverty line with their own resources (Fredrickson, 2017, p. 19).

Further evidence of subjective poverty capturing a more life-time average socio-economic position, rather than merely the current income level, emerges in the way in which interviewees talked about the transition years of the 1990s. Several participants argued that felt poverty was lower during the transition because people had high hopes for the future. However, the post-Soviet era came to be characterised by political uncertainty and economic crises, which in turn worsened expected future outcomes. People therefore had to revise their lifetime socio-economic position downward. This can be seen in Volodya's comments, who grew up in poverty during the 1990s:

My grandmother, may she rest in peace, used to tell me that you, my grandson, will be the generation that lives well. I have caught myself thinking that I will be able to tell the same thing to my grandchildren – they will be the ones to live well. Unfortunately. (Volodya, 33, male, low-income)

It is noteworthy that participants in this group rarely downplayed the difficulty of their current situation, even when their standard of living has improved over time. Several participants who experienced severe deprivation in the past still reported feeling poor even though their current situation is relatively better. Overall, while there have been marginal improvements in material wellbeing, these improvements have not been significant enough to make people not feel poor.

Additionally, in contrast to participants who discussed subjective poverty in very emotive terms, there was a small subset of subjectively poor participants who directly identified as poor but discussed their condition of material deprivation in a very calm, light-hearted way. These participants often acknowledged the realities of their material hardships, and directly identified as poor, but stressed the importance of not letting material deprivation undermine their subjective wellbeing. This shows that adaptation of preferences is often much more conscious than is suggested by the literature:

It is important to find a way to manage your circumstances and not to wind yourself up. Okay, you have less than others, but that is not catastrophic. I don't know, it is important to adopt a philosophical outlook on all this. [...] If you cannot change your situation, then there is no need to scream about it. I don't know, maybe they feel better if they scream about [being poor]. But I don't want to listen to it. It is not pleasant. If you cannot change your situation, there is no need to scream about it.

(Sofia, 70, female, low-income)

These participants communicated that they live in material deprivation and complained about injustice in Ukraine, but found ways to cope with their subjective poverty to preserve their subjective wellbeing. The coping mechanism they adopted

was very conscious and they openly reflected on it. They did not downplay the fact that they lack necessities and are poor in material terms, but they were also able to discuss their circumstances in a calm manner. While participants in this subset experience some shame and stigma in their daily lives, it did not prevent them from discussing the topic in detail and identifying as poor in the interviews.

4.2.2 Low-Income Indirect Identification as Poor

Several low-income participants identified as poor indirectly, by saying that they are an average person in a predominantly poor country:

P: If talking poor in monetary units than of course...well approximately our average Ukrainian family.

I: What is an average Ukrainian family like?

P: The money [pension] I get is very little, I think. Because when I go to a store, I cannot afford to buy something of high quality. I would very much like to try that red fish [salmon]. To buy a nice little piece [...], but I look only at what is the cheapest. That's bad. That is why I am somewhere just tiny bit above complete poverty (laughter) [...] So I am somewhere in the middle (laughter). How could I add - the best amongst the worst (laughter). (Daria, 67, female, low-income)

The use of a reference group to normalise feelings of being poor was a common thread running through responses in this group. Participants such as Daria made multiple comments suggestive of hardship or deprivation in some form, and yet, when it came to self-ranking, they preferred to identify as an 'average Ukrainian' rather than to directly identify as poor. Participants with this type of self-identification seemed to experience a tension of wanting to share their struggles, yet being careful to not exaggerate the depth of their deprivation or undermine the struggles of people who are worse off.

There are a few factors in the context of Ukraine that might be driving this tendency to identify as poor on a collective rather than an individual level. Given the

history of socialism and collectivism in post-Soviet countries, people might be less individualistic compared to those in other contexts (Kemmelmeyer and Malanchuk, 2016; although see Shafiro, Himelein and Best, 2003). It has been shown that societies differ in the extent to which individual self-interest is valued over interdependence and collective wellbeing (Schimmack, Oishi and Diener, 2005; Brewer and Chen, 2007). Given that collectivism ‘implies a tendency to view one’s self as a reflection of interdependent self’ (Spector *et al.*, 2001, p. 817), people might be more sensitive to the wellbeing of others in their community.

A tendency to talk about poverty in collectivist terms seems to be further reinforced by strong social networks and close personal ties with those in poverty, as most participants showed high level of awareness about the realities of living in poverty. This familiarity with the realities of living in poverty is known to mitigate the key driving factor of the fundamental attribution error associated with individualistic explanation of poverty (Jones and Nisbett, 1971). Studies show that exposure to those living in poverty in ways that reflect equal status, such as friendship or intimacy, fosters sympathy (Lee, Jones and Lewis, 1990; Wilson, 1996), thus reducing the shame and stigma around the topic. Furthermore, these personal and familial experiences of poverty are than generalised to the majority of population in Ukraine.

The above minimises to some extent the argument that interviewees identified indirectly to deflect the potential shame and stigma associated with the label. This is supported by the lack of ‘othering’ within this group that is common when people are trying to avoid a negative label, as observed in the subjectively non-poor low-income group (see Section 4.3). In general, these participants tended

to be modest about their personal struggles and focused on the wellbeing of the community.

Furthermore, the way in which these participants expressed concerns about poverty in Ukraine more broadly resonates with the idea of a social collective, described by Young (1994). When applying Young's theorisation to this context, it can be argued that common experiences can create a shared sense of a social collective's place in the world, which is distinctly different from social class consciousness. What sets the idea of a 'social collective' apart from social class is that social agents can be aware that they share a common condition, without necessarily taking on the same identity. Someone might be isolated, with issues specific to their life, but also be aware that they are part of a larger group of people who share the same sense of their place in the world. Therefore, people think that the profiles of individuals who can end up in poverty are interchangeable because everyone has faced and is currently facing similar structural constraints.

The combination of past shared experiences and the idea of interchangeability make poverty a condition to which everyone is vulnerable. For these participants, being average implies being poor:

P: Well I see myself as quite an average person [...].

I: What do you mean by average?

P: Mmm. You know, what I want to say is, I have always had to be frugal. I have never had the opportunity to like; to buy what I want. To buy something tasty. For instance delicious fish or something [...] Here 10 per cent of the population are rich and the rest are average and poor. Well half of the people are poor. The bigger half.

(Elena, 57, female, low-income)

In a context where 90 per cent of the population is viewed as poor, it is easy to identify as poor by virtue of belonging to the majority. Identifying as poor in such a context does not have the same meaning and connotations as in the countries

where people in poverty are a socially excluded population. The perception that most of the population poor typically complements the perception of a great disparity between the small ultra-rich elite and the rest of the average citizens, who all have similar, suboptimal, living standards:

In Ukraine, the non-poor are very few. All the rest [of the people] are poor! [...] If the rich here make up 10 per cent, and 90 per cent of our people are average and poor. Well then, in terms of percentages, more than half of the people are poor. There is no middle class. Average people are those who scramble (карабкаются), and who want to change their life. (Sergiy, 51, male, low-income)

In such binary thinking, the middle class is seen as a marginal, almost absent, group. In fact, nine participants specifically argued that the middle class is completely absent in Ukraine because there are only two categories of people – the very rich (corrupt oligarchs) and the very poor (those who ‘live on a salary’).

Participants who perceived Ukraine as a highly unequal country argued that poverty is all around them and is very visible. To them, questions about the rates and extent of poverty in the country seemed obvious and self-explanatory. In fact, when approached to participate in the study, many interviewees initially laughed in disbelief that I was interested in discussing a topic that, in their mind, had already been exhausted in public discourse. When asked what seeing poverty everywhere means, Vasyl from the low-income group said:

You see it [poverty] when you look at people at the market. There are people who only look at pastries. If they could, they would have bought them ten times over already (laughter). But they can’t allow themselves (afford/дозволить) to do that. It is obvious! (Vasyl, 49, male, low-income).

High rates and levels of deprivation amongst pensioners was one of the most frequently given supporting examples of the idea that a large proportion of the population is in poverty. Pensioners were portrayed as a large group of ‘deserving

poor' on the premise that they have worked their entire life and contributed to state pension schemes, but are now 'surviving rather than living' due to the low pension provided by the state:

Probably 70 per cent of people [in Rivne] are poor. If we think about socially unprotected sections of the population, that is pensioners and low-income families. Most pensioners receive 1300 hryvnias (45 USD) a month. I can't even imagine how, how they survive (виживають). If a granny goes to a pharmacy to buy medicine half of her pension is already gone. 1300 hryvnia-pension is laughable! Plus if you count in utilities and food I have no clue how they are surviving on that kind of money.

(Gregory, 23, male, low- income)

A description of older women selling flowers or vegetables at the roadside or struggling to pay for medications in a pharmacy was a common visualisation of elderly in Ukraine. Even participants in their twenties were concerned about how pensioners are able to make ends meet. The importance of the welfare system in high rates of subjective poverty, including the pensions system, will be explored in more depth in Chapter 6. Deep levels of empathy towards pensioners were often driven by the fact that the grandparents of participants are living in material deprivation. Based on the experiences of their grandparents, participants generalised about pensioners in Ukraine more broadly:

P: [...] People here work their entire lives for nothing (працюють по факту ні за що). And then they receive a pension of 1373 hryvnias [50 USD per month] and are supposed to be happy about life.

I: How come you care so deeply about pensioners?

P: Well because my grandmother is amongst such people. Grandpa is 83 years old. My Grandma grandma is 78. They have worked their entire life and nothing came out of it if you think about it (в історію особливо якби і нічо) (Gregory, 23, male, low- income)

'Surviving' was a common term used to explain the average experience. It encompasses living from paycheque to paycheque, not having substantial savings, being frugal with purchasing food and clothing, not being able to go on an annual

holiday, and being fearful of going to a hospital or having unexpected expenses. Qualitative work repeatedly shows that deprivation is experienced as constant restrictions, doing without, limited choice, chronically running out of money, and lacking room for spontaneity or travel (Kempson et al., 1994; Kempson, 1996; Cohen, 1997). Framing this experience as ‘surviving’, or ‘existing, not living’, is common amongst people in poverty across different contexts (Lister, 2004a, p. 54).

Another common example given to illustrate that Ukraine is a predominantly poor country was in reference to families with children, who were also seen as a large deserving group. As 29-year-old Kateryna put it:

Let's take an elderly person. What is she expected to live on? 1300 hryvnias? That is a mockery! Another example – a young family. He receives an average, not minimum, the salary of 5000 hryvnias (180 USD). His wife is on maternity leave with a baby. What are they supposed to live on?! Diapers alone cost such money that it is unreal! How is it that people must always be frugal? My friends are working full time and they [him and his wife] have two children. I have no idea what his salary is, but I know for sure that her budget per day is 50 hryvnias (1.80 USD). Enough to buy bread and milk maybe. How are you supposed to live like that?

(Kateryna, 29, female, low-income)

Kateryna used the examples of elderly people and young couples to support her claim that there are only two categories of people in Ukraine – those who are living in poverty and those who are living in indulgence. The above examples suggest that participants support a ‘social minimum’ living standard, a quality of life below which the ‘deserving’ citizens should not fall. The examples also reinforce previous findings that Ukrainians define large social groups and categories as deserving of public provision (Whitefield, 2002); and that in Ukraine, the normative principles of deservingness are important only after the minimum living standard requirement has been met (Gatskova, 2013). Despite there being an unusually large deserving group, the deservingness criteria are not particularly different from other contexts

as the category includes the elderly, sick and disabled, employed workers and families with children (Van Oorschot, 2000; van Oorschot, 2006).

Given the broad range of the 'deserving poor' category, distinguishing oneself from those in absolute poverty did not typically involve 'othering', but was instead aimed as showing empathy to those who are worse off. It appears that participants wanted to highlight that even when complaining about being poor, they are still aware of people who are in worse situations than them. Rather than enhancing their self-image by stigmatising the less fortunate, participants tried to show that they are not exaggerating their hardship and that they know it could be worse.

Another unique feature in the context of Ukraine is that referencing is done not in relation to an abstract group such as 'homeless people' or 'the unemployed', but to specific individuals, including grandparents, neighbours, and former classmates:

I told you I receive three thousand hryvnias a month. And there are people that receive only two and a half! If last year we received a subsidy for utilities, then this year, because of the critical situation in the country, only 30 per cent of those who received subsidies last year will continue to do so. I am in despair about the present-day standard of living. I have nothing else to say. (Ostap, 79, male, low-income)

Ostap's emotional outburst, full of sorrow and desperation, was far from exceptional. Similar grievances arose in most interviews, usually when talking about the quotidian experiences and everyday struggles of low salaries and pensions, high taxes and rising prices, and the inadequacy and continuous undermining of social benefits. Importantly, participants often stressed that they were not advocating for an utopian society in which poverty is completely eradicated, because in any society there will be a small fraction of people who will be in poverty, but for curbing of the current unacceptably high rates of poverty.

4.2.3 High-Income Direct Identification as Poor

As anticipated in the initial research puzzle, subjective poverty was also characteristic of some people with high incomes. All the high-income subjectively poor participants were relatively vocal and direct in their identification. The quote below is from Yuriy, a 58-year-old high-income participant. The interviewee is a member of elite circles in the city and owns numerous rental properties. He identified as poor and came across as angry when his self-assessment was challenged:

I: What percentage of people in Ukraine are poor?

P: 95 per cent.

I: Do you think of yourself as one of them?

P: Yes.

I: So you are poor not because you are... you are not hungry or something...

P: Poverty! Do you understand that...Poverty is when you cannot realise your potential. That is poverty! And thinking about poverty in terms of food is wrong [...]

I: What does it mean that you cannot realise your potential?

P: Very simple. Only in a stable economy can a person realise themselves. Why? Because a person needs to make money and be able to save about 20 per cent. Now the system is such that you live off only what you made before [...]

I: When did you start having this feeling?

P: After the [2015 Ukraine-Russia] war. Before the first revolution [in 2004], I had five businesses. I had one left after the first revolution [...] The second revolution [in 2014] again put everyone at the rock bottom. (Yuriy, 58, male, high-income)

There are several factors that seem to cause high-income individuals like Yuriy to feel poor. Firstly, like the low-income participants, they have a binary view of inequality, in which the middle class does not exist. In a scenario where only the extremely wealthy oligarchic elites in the top percentage groups are rich, and the rest of the population are poor, those who are relatively well-off can also think of themselves as poor. To some extent, these participants identified as poor to 'other' themselves from the stereotype of the corrupt and immoral rich:

The rich are people who don't count money. They are the corrupt.

(Andriy, 35, male, high-income)

In these interviews 'rich' was almost exclusively used to refer to highly influential figures with low moral standards, who enrich themselves through connections and force at any cost. The rich were associated with the collusion of government and business, which undermines the interest of the 'small people' who are being taken advantage of. It is important to highlight that here, the undeserving were not the poor, but in fact the corrupt rich. These binary views about inequality and poverty were communicated using the same set of key phrases as those used by the low-income subjectively poor participants.

The conceptual divide of society into two distinct and conflicting groups of 'poor' and 'rich' is sometimes described in the literature as 'a gap instinct' (Rosling, Rönnlund and Rosling, 2018). Even in the most unequal countries, such as Brazil, this 'gap' view of the world is usually factually incorrect, as most citizens live in the middle-upper or -lower income range rather than at the extreme ends of the spectrum. Despite existing evidence against the accuracy of the 'gap' view,³³ the same framing is frequently used by academics in the literature on Ukraine. For example, Gatskova (2013, p. 229) describes Ukraine as 'practically divided into a small group of rich and a large group of poor citizens, for whom the problem of poverty became very acute'.

The second factor that leads some high-income participants to identify as poor is the recent decrease in absolute income. Several participants experienced drops in income after the economic shocks of the two revolutions and the start of

³³ As of 2016, in Ukraine the middle class constitutes 12.4 per cent of population (Klymenko, Akimova and Korzh, 2016).

the armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia. It is typical for a person on a falling income trajectory to feel poorer than their current income might suggest (Ravallion and Lokshin, 2000, p. 1463). Similarly to low-income participants, high-income participants revised downwards their expected lifetime earnings as they aged because they never reached their anticipated earning leaves. For example, Yuriy, who was 58-years old at the time of the study, when asked about his outlook on the future, said that the Ukrainian economy will take decades to recover and thus nothing can possibly improve in his lifetime.

Positioning these responses in the context of global inequality, former Communist countries are the biggest 'losers', in the sense that they were 'non-winners', of global economic growth in the last few decades³⁴ (Milanovic, 2013). While we observe great improvements in the standards of living in other parts of the world, for this group of countries gains over the last two decades have essentially been negligible as their real incomes have stagnated (Milanovic, 2013). The experience of stagnation is especially painful given the high expectations of the economic benefits of transitioning from a planned to a market economy. Those with high levels of education expected that their quality of life would improve in the first few decades of independence to resemble European middle-class living standards.

Building on the last insight, the third driving factor of subjective poverty amongst this group of participants was the deprivation relative to Western European living standards. High-income subjectively poor individuals frequently compared

³⁴ The biggest winners are the very rich, those at the top of countries' income distributions; the middle classes of emerging economies (China, Indonesia, Brazil, India); and the bottom third of the global income distribution, whose real incomes have increased between 40 to 70 per cent according to Milanovic (2013).

their earnings and living standards to that of people in similar occupations in Western Europe and North America. There was a strong sense of relative poverty in terms of absolute income levels, security, and capabilities for personal development:

If I were abroad and worked hard trying make it up somewhere (щоб пробитися), I would have a much better quality of life [...] People in my occupation in Europe are much stronger.³⁵ My occupation would be of high rank in any civilised country. And yet I feel less secure than people working at a factory or as a nurse in Europe.

(Anton, 50, male, high-income)

I: May I ask you how much you are making a month?

P: Across all my businesses? Hmm. About four thousand dollars a month after all expenses. Do you think that is a lot or not?

I: I am not sure.

P. Me neither. For the US that is very little, but for Ukraine that is a lot.

(Yaroslav, 47, male, high-income)

Research on the effects of income inequality on wellbeing supports the above observation -- higher earnings of others are associated with a lower level of wellbeing controlling for the individual's own level of income (Frey and Stutzer, 2002; Luttmer, 2005). This implies that individuals who are well-off in Ukraine's context may feel poor because they are indeed poorer than their reference group.

When discussing Western Europe, participants in this category emphasised that they have never reached their full potential because of the structural limitations of living in Ukraine. For example, medical doctors often stated that the quality of care they are providing in Ukraine is very low compared to the quality of care they could be providing if they had the high-tech equipment commonly available in the US or Western Europe. They also emphasised that they are paid unfairly low wages

³⁵ As in more financially and ontologically secure.

compared to doctors abroad. In essence, they reported feeling deprived of the fully-fledged life and career they thought they are entitled to due to their educational level, occupation, and work ethics. Many of these participants shared a feeling of regret for not leaving Ukraine when there was an opportunity to do so. Interestingly, even those high-income participants who did not regret staying because of being successful in the local context, all hoped for their children to emigrate 'abroad', where education and talent are rewarded fairly.

In addition, there was a sense of deteriorating community and familial social relations amongst middle-aged and older high-income subjectively poor participants. If there was a nostalgia for Socialism, it is for the quality of social relationships that people previously enjoyed. Participants complained that they feel more alone now than they did before because in this new economy everyone is fighting for themselves:

P: People talk to each other a lot less. Substantially less. Before people would take turns to host each other, now we don't.

I: You don't?

P: Nope. Absolutely [...] We used to be simpler. Now we are more self-centred. Poverty forces people to be egotistical. (Yuriy, 58, male, high-income)

The fact that high-income participants felt poor because of deteriorating social relationships resembles the insights from the literature conceptualising poverty in terms of social exclusion. This yet again suggest that the common understanding of poverty in Ukraine is associated with a life experience that is not exclusively defined by income.

4.2.4 Common Features Amongst the Subjectively Poor

Throughout the previous subsections on the different groups of the subjectively poor participants, many of the same topics were discussed but to

varying degrees. It is therefore worth highlighting several of these common features amongst the subjectively poor. One of the similarities amongst the subjectively poor participants is that they shared a deep feeling of abandonment, sadness and even despair about the wellbeing of people in the country which was expressed in the notion that 'no one needs or cares for the people' or that 'no one needs them':

You know, lately there has been a joke going around that we shouldn't be scared that no one needs us abroad because no one needs us here [in Ukraine] either.

(Anton, 50, male, high-income)

I: Did you...what is that you mentioned? That no one needs you?

P: It is insulting. Not even - I am so sick of it! That no one needs you or your children. Is there such heartlessness in any other country? Lack of care responsibility for the people? I haven't seen it in any other country. Not in a single country [...] You have seen what it is like in the US Even unemployed people can live normally. There he [unemployed] has some kind of support, some kind of protection. Here protection is for the dogs, not for the people. If you hit a dog you will go to prison, if you hit a person you can bribe the court. Nothing is working here. (Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

The feelings of not being needed were usually directed at the state, which is supposed to care for its citizens and invest in their health, education and development. Rather than working to improve the wellbeing of its citizens, the state was seen as indifferent, corrupt, vicious, and lacking respect for citizens. The state was described as not only failing to help people improve their livelihoods, but also as consciously mocking people's suffering and making their lives more unbearable; as if individuals' own personhood was under assault by the state (Patino, 2008).

Low-income participants often stated that the sense of being neglected was the most painful part of 'living in a poor country'. People commonly felt dehumanised, especially in the context of social institutions such as hospitals, benefits offices and courts, where 'no one will even look at you' unless you pay a bribe or 'have a connection'. The desire to be perceived as a human being implied

being appreciated for who one is and for what one has done in one's lifetime, rather than being valued based on the amount of money one can present as a bribe. In the context of social institutions, participants highlighted that they want to be treated with dignity simply because of being a person. With regard to the state, they demanded acknowledgment of their contribution to society through work. Not being able to live with dignity despite working and doing their best was perceived as insulting, and led to built-up feelings of anger towards the state:

The most corrupt country is our Ukraine. If I could, I would go in the open fields and shoot all of them. I would kill all of them [politicians/oligarchs] because I am just so sick of all of this. So sick of being constantly frugal. Of the fact that you cannot afford what you want. Simply sick of it. I don't know how people continue to tolerate it and to what point they will continue to tolerate it. (Elena, 57, female, low-income)

The importance of experiences of disrespect within the context of social institutions will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

The discussions about the common occurrence of people in Ukraine 'surviving rather than living' expressed a strong underlying desire to live a 'normal life'. Normal life was depicted as dignified life, with greater certainty and predictability, social protection, and opportunities to realise one's potential. Subjectively poor participants perceived the system in which they live in as far from how a country should normally function. They often referred to the average standard of living in Ukraine and the government as 'not normal'. Typically participants discussed normality in relation to the average living standards in countries which have become a destination for Rivne's short-term migrant workers and long-term migration:

In my opinion, if a person genuinely has brains, then to realise themselves in Ukraine is practically impossible. Unfortunately. I am telling you, it is necessary to emigrate. Most people are leaving. Why? [Because] people want to realise themselves. To live a normal life. Most do not have an aspiration to earn millions. No, just a normal life,

normal salaries - such that you don't have to worry about groceries or clothing or shoes. Basic things. (Nazar, 43, male, low-income)

The notion of 'normal countries' seems to mean countries that allow for social mobility, reward highly educated and skilled people with higher pay, and invest in human capital development, especially amongst the young.

In addition, and in contrast, to the feelings of being dehumanised, subjectively poor participants also reported a strong sense of deservingness. Despite being well-educated and having a long track record of employment, they reported experiencing limited options for career progression and felt underpaid for their labour. Moreover, when mistreated by social institutions, they reported having no recourse to stand up for themselves. The state was commonly seen as the abuser that is responsible for these people being in such precarious positions. Overall, this feeling of deservingness appears to be a double-edged sword because while it bolsters people's self-worth, it also reinforces the feeling of being poorly-off relative to Europe. The next two empirical chapters will dive deeper into the theme of self-realisation and the experiences of disrespect in the spheres of social institutions.

4.3 Subjectively Non-Poor Participants

In contrast to the subjectively poor are the participants who identified themselves as not being poor. The group of subjectively non-poor group participants can be further divided into three subgroups. The first subgroup consists of low-income subjectively non-poor participants. A key feature amongst this subgroup is the extent of 'othering' by these participants. The second and third subgroups consist of high-income participants who were non-empathetic and empathetic

respectively. These final two subgroups are distinctively different in their attitudes towards subjective poverty, despite both feeling not poor.

4.3.1 Low-Income 'Othering'

A small segment of three young male low-income participants did not identify as poor. While acknowledging that most people in Ukraine do in fact feel poor, they argued that such feelings are rooted in unrealistic expectations, constant comparison to Western lifestyles, a lack of effort by individuals to change their situation, and a lack of gratitude for the goods that are already available. The excerpt below is from an interview with Mykola, a 23-year-old unemployed participant who acknowledged that there are very high rates of subjective poverty in Ukraine and suggested that it is due to people having a faulty attitude to life:

How do most people think? We have a smaller salary than others or we can't afford what we want, therefore we are poor. In my opinion, it is necessary to change our attitude to everything [...] If we don't show people the news or anything – will they think about poverty? [...] Those people [who feel poor] look at sausages that cost 200 hryvnias (7 USD) while others look at sausages costing 60 hryvnias (2 USD). They [subjectively poor] always assume that the more expensive things are better, while, in fact, maybe they don't even want sausages to begin with. It is a global issue – imposed consumerism that gets people into imposed depression.

(Mykola, 23, male, low-income)

Mykola was very familiar with the poverty discourse but did not share the same sentiment and was very critical of those who complain about feeling poor. Similar to others in this group, Mykola challenged people to appreciate what they have and to adjust their desires to match their budget. It was common amongst this group to describe those in subjective poverty as 'whining' or 'crying' about their condition. These participants praised themselves for finding a way to intellectually rationalize their way out of feeling poor and subsequently directly shamed those who are

subjectively poor. These cases provide support for the idea of 'othering', whereby people on low incomes contribute to stigmatisation of others in similar circumstances to their own though individualistic explanations of poverty.

4.3.2 High-Income Non-Empathetic

It is important to point out that a small proportion (four) of high-income participants said that objective and subjective poverty rates in Ukraine are actually very low. They argued that the official numbers of those living in poverty in Ukraine are hugely skewed by informal employment and under-reported incomes³⁶ and that the accounts of subjective poverty are misreported, rather than genuine, feelings of being deprived. These interviewees argued that in Ukraine, it is common and fashionable to misreport earnings and to pretend to be poorer than you are:

People here like to make themselves appear poor (прибіднятися), and say 'Ohh we are so miserable'... But then everyone lifts their mattress and they have savings for a rainy day. (Anna, 49, female, high-income).

In these interviews, the idea of high rates of poverty in Ukraine was dismissed with examples of well-off neighbours who unjustifiably complain about being poor:

Poverty! Everyone is talking about it. We have such a tradition – to complain about life; to tell others how awful everything is. Even people who make over 10 thousand dollars a month complain. People who have 3-store houses apply for utility subsidies (laughter). [...] There is simply no poverty of the kind that is listed in statistics and that everyone is talking about. If there were that many poor people, you would see a starved dead person lying to the left, a hungry person to the right. Have you ever

³⁶ As was mentioned previously, at least 50 per cent of all economic activity takes places in the shadow market (compared to about 18 per cent in OECD countries). That figure is often misused to argue that the country is much wealthier than is suggested by official statistics. Such view is inaccurate because even though half of Ukraine's GDP is created using illegal schemes, such as unofficial employment, the value added of the shadow economy is largely included in the official statistics (Schneider and Klinglmair, 2004; Schneider, 2012).

seen a person who died from hunger here? If you listen to people, you might get the impression that they lack food, lacking sleep, walking around naked and barefoot (roni бoci). But that is simply not real. I think it is trendy (модно). That is why everyone is talking about poverty. I don't see anyone in poverty.

(Yevhen, 42, male, high-income)

When asked about indisputable cases of people living in poverty, these participants argued that material deprivation is caused predominantly by individual shortcomings such as lack of effort and laziness. All the participants in this category said that they are content with the current situation in the country as they are earning high incomes and live a comfortable life. Yet, these participants also refused to self-identify as either rich or middle class, showing some common traits with the high-income subjectively poor, who also wanted to distinguish themselves from the rich, and denied the existence of middle class.

4.3.3 High-Income Empathetic

In contrast to the above group, several well-off participants were very empathetic towards people in poverty and did not dismiss high rates of subjective poverty, even though they themselves did not identify as poor. These participants had a strong leaning towards structural explanations of poverty even though they themselves are earning high incomes. The quote below comes from Valeria, an older wealthy female participant:

I feel so bad that they [people in poverty] are not valued. It hurts me (мені обідно) that these people tried hard and studied. I generally feel bad for the poor (всіх бідних я шкодую). I often cry about it [...]. One time I was in the supermarket. An elderly woman was walking in the shop. There is a kitchen section. The hot food smells so nice. She looked at all the food; walked back and forth; looked in her wallet; stood next to it [hot food display] a bit more. And then she left. I came up to her and asked whether I could buy her something or give her money. She got so offended – ‘Do I look like a beggar or something!’ [...] She could have been a teacher because she was dressed so intelligently. I only wanted to help. I often give

money when I am in the shop and other people do take it. Sometimes I ask cashiers to weigh sausages. I mean, she is an elderly person!

(Valeria, 59, female, high-income)

Valeria was easily one of the most well-off participants in the study (the interview took place in her private mansion outside the city); yet she showed very nuanced understanding of the realities of living in material deprivation and expressed deep sorrow for people living in those conditions. While not feeling poor or deprived in any way herself, Valeria was in a lot of distress when discussing the difficulties other people face.

Towards the end of the interview, it became apparent that several people in Valeria's social circle (extended family members, former university friends and neighbours) live on low incomes. Rather than blaming them for their poverty because she herself had become financially successful, as suggested by the theory on fundamental attribution error (Jones and Nisbett, 1971), Valeria highlighted that these people are as equally gifted as she is and are surviving rather than living because of a lack of a well-paid jobs and insufficient government support. It appears that the exposure to those in poverty in ways that reflect equal status, such as friendship or familial ties, has fostered Valeria's empathy and sense of injustice.

4.4 Ambiguous Subjective Self-Identification

For the remaining interviews, it was difficult to determine whether the participants felt poor. Given the limitations of the interview data, it was unclear whether these individuals did not feel poor given their broad conceptualisation of poverty or whether they felt poor but avoided identifying as such by shifting attention to their subjective wellbeing. In other words, in some cases, where the participants did not directly respond to the socio-economic position question, it was difficult to

distinguish between subjectively poor participants with high subjective wellbeing and subjectively non-poor participants.

Eleven participants, all from the low-income group, when asked about their position in the ladder between one (being poor) and four (being rich), responded by asking clarifying questions about the word or concept 'poverty'. They often made the distinction between material poverty and a broader conceptualisation of poverty, arguing that there is a clear distinction between the two conceptualisations:

I: If one is people in poverty, and four is rich people, where are you at?

P: In material terms? Looking simply at money? Because I evaluate wealth very differently.

I: How do you evaluate wealth?

P: Wealth for me is foremost that my wife and I sing. We have been a part of a church choir for over 25 years. I have taken part in festivals all over Europe [...] I have three children and a beautiful family. We don't need much in material terms.

(Taras, 60, male, low-income)

This example is a good illustration of a response that was difficult to categorise. On the one hand, it can be argued that the participant hinted at being subjectively poor before he moved on to discuss subjective wellbeing. Participants such as Taras could therefore be viewed as having indirectly identified as poor. These participants often discussed wealth in terms of 'spiritual wealth' centred on the idea of finding fulfilment. Common examples of spiritual wealth were volunteering, painting, playing musical instruments, attending community plays and concerts, belonging to a religious community and previous academic achievements. All of these are closely related to subjective wellbeing and seem to be important because they generate feelings of social validation, of being needed, and contributing or participating in society. However, this type of classification could be misleading, as these participants are rather distinct from the indirect self-identification group, whom insist

that they are a part of Ukraine's poor majority although they may not say specifically 'I am poor' when talking about subjective poverty.

On the other hand, it can also be argued that participants such as Taras are subjectively non-poor precisely because of how they define wealth, which can be viewed as a broader definition of poverty. However, these participants are also very different from the other subjectively non-poor participants, in that they did not directly reject the idea that they feel poor. It is also worth highlighting that subjective wellbeing and subjective poverty are distinct concepts (see also Section 1.3.1) even though disentangling the two can be difficult when looking specifically at this subgroup of participants. More specifically, subjective poverty is not simply low subjective wellbeing because the two concepts are not mutually exclusive. In this study there were several interviewees who identified as poor whilst simultaneously reporting positive wellbeing (happiness) in their daily life. Therefore, given the issues with classifying this group as either subjectively poor or non-poor, it is most appropriate to describe them as subjectively ambiguous.

Despite ambiguity in subjective poverty status, the responses of these participants remain relevant because key messages from this group still connect to findings in the subjectively poor group. The subjectively poor group reported feeling poor because they are unable to find self-fulfilment and do not feel needed by society. This ambiguous group did not explicitly identify as poor because they have found some degree of self-fulfilment and feel like part of a community. Furthermore, these participants also shared the frustrations and anger regarding the government and poverty in Ukraine more broadly and often downplayed the importance of material conditions for their subjective wellbeing.

4.5 Conclusion

The data in this chapter confirms that a large proportion of people in Ukraine self-identify as poor and that the attribution of felt poverty does not strongly correlate with income, age or gender. To arrive at this conclusion, the chapter drew the distinction within the sample between those who identified themselves as poor, those who did not, and the ambiguous cases. Only 15 out of 50 participants clearly did not see themselves as poor even though half of the sample was well-off compared to the average living standard in Rivne. Out of the 24 participants that readily self-identified as poor, 11 were high-income and 13 were low-income. The remaining 11 people were all from low income backgrounds and were conflicted as to whether they see themselves as poor. Age and gender do not seem to strongly predict the likelihood of subjective poverty, as it seems to be driven by structural causes that affect all the subgroups. However, age and gender do mitigate the extent that these external factors affect one's sense of being poor, which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

Focusing on the subjectively poor, this chapter further illustrated the differences and similarities between their responses. People varied in the extent to which they were outspoken in terms of their feelings on the topic and how much it was part of their identity. These differences were categorised as either direct identification, or indirect identification by virtue of belonging to the poor majority. When looking at the low-income participants, with relatively homogenous deprivation levels, subjective poverty manifested itself differently. This reinforces the idea that while poverty is placed firmly within the context of socio-economic inequality, individuals who experience poverty do so as active heterogeneous agents who react in different ways (Lister, 2004a, p. 51).

Across high- and low-income subjectively poor participants there were striking commonalities including a perception of high levels of inequality, support for stratification ideology, structural explanations of poverty, and problematisation of the idea that poverty as a concept is material at its core. This last point is inconsistent with the literature which suggests that the 'ordinary understanding' of the term poverty is centred on income and resource-related deprivation (Wolff, Lamb and Zur-Szpiro, 2015, p. 26).

The social construct of a 'poor majority' means that more than half of Ukrainians are considered as poor. Support for this idea was relatively widespread, with 38 out of 50 participants agreeing. Nine participants even took it as far as to argue that at least 90 per cent of the population is poor. This is a different way of thinking about poverty compared with other contexts, in which people in poverty are usually thought of as a socially excluded minority. In many ways, how these people conceptualised poverty resembles the idea that poverty is a phenomenon that affects everyone in the community, rather than just a specific group of people (Jones, 1990, pp. 15–16). In the case of Ukraine, the public rhetoric emphasises the exclusion of the public by a small elite (oligarchs/government officials), who have special privileges and hold a disproportionate amount of wealth and power. At its core, the construct of a poor majority is based on the idea of social rupture along the lines of differential access to resources and power in national decision-making. Overall, the inequality is perceived to be so severe as to create a 'gap view' of the two opposing and conflicting groups of the poor and the rich (Rosling, Rönnlund and Rosling, 2018). Participants regarded the inequality between the wealthy oligarchs and government officials on the one hand and the poor majority on the other as abnormally high compared to the perceived levels of inequality in neighbouring

European countries. This is consistent with other research on what ‘normal life’ means in the Eastern European countries (Pesmen, 1999; Fehérváry, 2002; Dzenovska, 2014).

Additionally, the way in which participants discussed their experiences and the idea of a poor majority highlights the link between subjective poverty and poverty beliefs, which contributes to prior research on stratification ideologies (Hunt and Bullock, 2016; Bullock and Reppond, 2018). Evidence supports the idea that someone’s perceived socio-economic position is interlinked with how they interpret the system of inequalities in which they live (Sullivan and Transue, 1999). Most participants in the sample, including all subjectively poor participants, upheld a ‘challenging ideology’ (discussed in Section 1.3), which involves the perception of high levels of inequality and the belief that material poverty is caused by ‘structural failing’ (Rank, 2010). These observations support the findings by Habibov *et al.* (2017), who show that Ukraine has the highest support for structural explanations of poverty amongst post-Soviet countries, at 65.5 per cent of general public as of 2010.

Only a small minority of participants, mostly younger female high-income individuals, supported a ‘dominant ideology’, in which material deprivation rates are very low and subjective and objective poverty are explained in individualistic terms. However, even in the cases in which individualistic explanations persist, the understanding of poverty by participants was rather complex, as they often held nuanced, compromise attributions whereby they would occasionally ‘combine [some] individual blame with structural reasons and see the poor as active agents who operate in a web of social constraints’ (Lepianka, Van Oorschot and Gelissen, 2009, pp. 433–4; see also Kluegel, Mason and Wegener, 2011). These findings are

significant given that the sample over-represents high-income participants, who in other contexts, are more likely to support a dominant ideology. Furthermore, structural explanations of poverty were equally frequent across different age categories. This challenges the literature on the so-called 'Soviet mentality' (Sztompka, 1993; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017), which would imply that structural explanations should be more frequent amongst older populations who, having lived under the communist regime, lack agency and are overly reliant on government provision.

Finally, the interviews indicate that recognition theory is an appropriate analytical framework for exploring what self-identifying as poor means in the context of Ukraine at the individual level. Subjectively poor participants were quick to highlight the areas in which they are lacking and often shared feelings of being insignificant and powerless. This was despite the strong undertones of deservingness, which signalled agency, that came with outward self-identification as poor. People seemed to both proudly own and yet deeply resent self-identifying as poor.

This internal tension resonates with the idea of distorted identity from the theory of recognition. In recognition theory, the distortion of identity comes from the mismatch between the recognition one is given compared to the recognition that one needs to have a positive self-relation, which describes the participants in this research relatively well. However, Honneth's (2012) descriptions about the implications of distorted identity are quite static, arguing that it can either erode agency or lead to increased demands for recognition. Consequently, when applied to the context of poverty, it is used almost exclusively to highlight a lack of agency (McNay, 2008a). In contrast, the interview data in this research indicates that

distorted identity involves dynamic fluctuations between a lack of agency and a demand for recognition, reflecting the internal tension. In many ways, felt poverty has both empowering and disempowering elements which reinforce each other. For example, there is a feeling of deservingness driven by a sense of injustice when the participants feel poor compared to government officials and oligarchs, who are viewed as morally corrupt. Simultaneously, there is a feeling of shame and a diminished sense of self when they feel poor compared to citizens of neighbouring Western European countries. Subjective poverty as an identity shows restlessness and unease with regards to the social category to which they belong.

Overall, this chapter acts as a building block for the next two empirical chapters, which discuss common themes of subjective poverty through two spheres of recognition: lack of opportunities for self-realisation (Chapter 5) and lack of social rights (Chapter 6). In-depth analyses of these two spheres of recognition provide more detail about the interaction between structural constraints, personal experiences and individual self-perception and answer the second research sub-question of this thesis.

Chapter 5: Subjective Poverty as Lack of Self-Realisation

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has explored different ways in which subjective poverty manifests itself in Ukraine. The second of three empirical chapters, this chapter discusses in more depth factors causing participants to feel poor. To answer the second research sub-question, the chapter analyses why subjective poverty is associated with the idea of (a lack of) self-realisation, which corresponds to the idea of recognition in the sphere of the social achievement (Section 2.3). Throughout the interviews, both high- and low-income subjectively poor participants were much more likely to report that they do not have the opportunity to realise their potential, while the subjectively non-poor were quite proud of their life progression or accomplishments. The concept of ‘self-realisation’ is associated with a rich life and a sense of self-development or a ‘maturing of the self’ (Harrison, 2018), which resembles the idea of eudaimonic³⁷ wellbeing.

The chapter is structured into four sections. The first part of the chapter describes what participants across incomes meant by self-realisation, or lack of it, and conceptually links the lack of self-realisation with eudaimonic wellbeing. The second section describes the experiences underpinning self-realisation. Lack of self-realisation was associated with stagnation, inability to progress in the sphere of work, not being able to afford to start a family, and living a routine life without meaningful memorable experiences. Self-realisation was associated with being proud of one’s life’s accomplishments and narration of growth and development over the life-course. It is suggested that self-realisation can be conceptualised as

³⁷ Sometimes also spelt as eudaemonic or eudemonic.

capabilities to pursue functionings which in turn lead to a sense of social achievement and a sense of self-worth. Overall, lack of self-realisation is a combination of lack of capabilities for self-realisation and the consequent feelings of misrecognition in the sphere of social achievement. The next section discusses how given the shared sense that Ukraine has no opportunities for self-realisation, seeking opportunities abroad was seen as the only viable option for self-realisation by most participants. The concluding section argues that the recognition theory and the concepts of relative poverty and aspirations gap are useful for understanding the phenomenon of subjective poverty in Ukraine.

5.2 Self-Realisation as Eudaimonic Wellbeing

People who self-realised³⁸ are those who can say that they have achieved a lot of positive things. And not only they personally, but also their children. I am now 60 years old and I can still afford the things I want. (Valeria, female, high-income)

I: Do you have a feeling that you have fulfilled yourself in life?

P: A person never completely realises themselves, but I got that feeling from work [...] You know, I have quite a bit of pride inside. At work, I used to get small gifts from co-workers. I never asked for them, but they wanted to recognize me. It gave me such a feeling in my heart ... I felt uplifted. Maybe even happy.

(Daria, 67, female, low-income)

I: Do you feel that you have realised yourself in life?

P: Oh yes. I live to my enjoyment. Back in my time, I was a researcher in experimental physics at the university. Everything is great with my children; my elderly parents are alive and well. I think my children will be a lot more successful than me. (Pavel, 57, male, high-income)

³⁸ Participants used phrases 'realizyvatu sebe' (реалізувати себе) or 'realizovana lyduna' (реалізована людина) which literally translate to 'realise the self' and a 'self-realised person'. Given that in English self-realisation is a noun, and is not used as a verb or an adjective as it is in Ukrainian, the phrases are translated as 'to realise/fulfil one's own potential' or to 'actualise yourself'.

The empirical section of this chapter begins with the responses of participants who reported that they have in fact experienced self-realisation or fulfilment. Valeria has never experienced material deprivation, even during the tumultuous years of the 1990s following the Soviet collapse. She and her husband have been part of the distinct local elite since before the 1990s and the tumultuous years had barely put a dent in her wellbeing. Daria, on the other hand, is living in material deprivation and indirectly identifies as poor. According to the end-of-interview survey, she does not have the means to meet seven out of eleven basic needs. Pavel is somewhere in the middle of the spectrum – having experienced material deprivation in the 1990s, he and his children now live comfortably by the local standards.

The key similarity amongst these (seemingly very different) participants is that they have lived, and continue to live, a life they find worth valuing. Similarly to other participants who have reported self-realisation, they have reached a certain level of social achievement which gives them a feeling of worth and social recognition. As can be seen from the quotes of Daria and Pavel, participants associated self-realisation with feeling proud of having done intellectually challenging work that was recognized as of value by others.

Participants who discussed self-realisation also insisted that there must be a balance between earning an adequate and competitive income and doing what makes you develop personally. It was also argued that in Ukraine, it is nearly impossible to find such a balance as even those who earn higher incomes rarely achieve self-realisation:

I: What do you mean by saying that he ‘self-realised’ [actualised himself]?

P: His job is in high demand and he can find a nice place to work. He can find a job, he likes his job, plus he gets paid for it. As people say, he earns thick money.

I: Is there also such a thing as thin money?

P: That is amongst people who have not actualized themselves. That is when you have worked your entire life as an accountant, hating it, and got paid pennies for it. People who aren't fulfilled are angry, depressed and so on because they do jobs they don't like just to make ends meet. (Anna, 49, female, high-income)

The above experiences related to doing unfulfilling jobs to make the ends meet are not surprising and are not specific to the Ukrainian situation. What is interesting is the social meaning attached to money (Zelizer, 1997; Carruthers and Ariovich, 2010) and how this meaning is linked to self-realisation. People's sense of who they are, as well as who others are, is often based not necessarily on the amount earned, but on the meaning associated with the way money is obtained (Daly, 2017). Participants in this study often distinguished between 'thick' and 'thin' money. 'Thick' money is earned in a profession that is in high demand and is fulfilling. Interviewees explained that this type of money means ('weighs') more than money earned through the job that one hates. As such, subjectively poor participants with a material standard of living that was indeed comfortable sometimes did not attach much meaning to their relatively high earnings because the way that they earned their money was not associated with an experience of self-realisation.

Furthermore, while lack of money often symbolises lack of self-worth and value, presence of money should not be equated with the feeling of self-worth as the social meaning of money is not binary and complex. Dennis – a 34-year-old high-income male participant – conveys the complexity involved:

I: Do you feel as though you have actualised yourself in life?

P: Not yet. The thing that I want, well...I am like a cockroach that needs to climb up to the 10th floor. So far, I have once been able to climb up to the 1st floor but then went back down to the bottom floor.

I: Didn't you mention that you are earning I don't fully understand.

P: I am not talking about my earnings. My dream is to work as an engineer until I die. Simply working is not self-realisation. (Dennis, 34, male, high-income)

Participants such as Dennis aspired to doing more intellectually challenging, fulfilling and socially respected jobs, not just earning high income. Due to the general instability in Ukraine, people felt forced to choose opportunities that paid most rather than those that contributed to their personal development. Reflecting on their careers and lives overall, these participants said that they had no achievements to feel proud about and that they could have been and done more if they had lived elsewhere:

I have what I need to eat and to wear, more or less. We can afford a bit more now. We have an apartment and we have a cottage (дача). I can't tell you that I'm completely poor, but these accomplishments are not something I can brag about or at the very least be proud of. (Victoria, 42, female, high-income)

A common thread running through such answers was that despite comfortable lifestyles, there was a sense of regret about wasted talent and potential. The way these relatively successful individuals talked about their accomplishments left an impression of powerlessness and a 'wasted life' that is insignificant or not worthy of being proud of.

Looking at the responses of low-income participants, while the inability to cover necessities certainly influenced how people perceived their socio-economic position more broadly, the instances where they felt poor most acutely were those in which they felt they could not pursue opportunities and activities that would enable them to develop as a person:

P: Do you have any specific examples of when the feeling surfaces? The 'feeling of being poor even though you are trying hard'?

I: When it happens? When I need to give up a small amount of money for personal goals. Buying necessary things or attending a seminar. Yeah, especially when

attending a seminar. For some reason, it is incredibly important to me. When it is important to me personally, and I cannot afford it. I cannot tell you why [...] Discovering the self (знаходити себе) is very important to me. I want new experiences. I want to realise myself somewhere, but I haven't found where yet.

(Anastasiya, 56, female, low-income)

Responses such as this illustrate on the one hand a strong desire to continue growing and learning throughout life, and on the other frustration at the inability to do so because of limited opportunities and resources. Anastasiya, for example, struggled to understand why she cannot seem to find a way to fulfil her potential. Rather than progressing in her career over her life-course, she went from working as an engineer, to working as a schoolteacher, to working irregularly as a cleaner, and is now living on benefits. Similarly to other participants, there was an underlying fear that she will never be able actualise herself fully in her lifetime.

Several participants highlighted that a key feature of the concept of self-realisation is that it is not a static end goal. Instead, it is an ongoing process or a life journey that over time slowly contributes to their personal growth:

To actualise yourself is to do what you like, to be in a process that you enjoy. You continuously discover and open yourself up from different angles. As a person, you are continuously growing and learning, learning new things.

(Olga, 24, female, high-income)

Overall, the idea of self-realisation as it is explained by participants above, can be understood as an aspiration to live a flourishing life resembling Aristotelian concept of eudaimonic wellbeing. Contrary to hedonism, which often relies on studies of subjective wellbeing or life satisfaction, eudaimonism argues that wellbeing is more than happiness and lies instead in actualisation of human potential. While hedonic and eudaimonic experiences are strongly correlated, it is

helpful to tease out that the experiences participants were describing are not reducible, although related to, happiness.

On the eudaimonic side of timeless debate on what constitutes a 'good life', wellbeing is thought to consist of fulfilling or realising one's true nature or true self (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Waterman (1993) explains eudaimonic wellbeing as personal expressiveness, which occurs when people's activities make them feel alive and authentic, existing as who they really are. This type of experience is related to activities that lead to personal growth and development and is associated with being challenged and putting in effort, while hedonic wellbeing focuses on the subjective experience of pleasure, irrespective of the source from which pleasure derives (Waterman *et al.*, 2010). This literature argues that the pleasure deriving from a sense of self-actualisation and purposeful living is distinct from simply attaining desires (Kokkoris, 2016). The concept of eudaimonic wellbeing is fruitful in the context of self-realisation and subjective poverty as it captures the importance of meaning in life and development of one's full potential.

5.3 Experiences of Self-Realisation

For the many participants who reported feeling unable to self-realise, four common and interrelated themes were upsetting to discuss: the future, the experience of work, the topic of starting a family, and travel, a lack of which resulted in frustration about the quality of life. 'What have I seen in life? What have my parents seen? Nothing!' was sometimes shouted during the interviews - not directly at me, but more generally in frustration with the lack of meaningful or memorable experiences. Given the context of economic volatility, many participants have spent years focusing on their material security and now it seems that there is nothing to

remember except the blurry mundane experience of hassling, worrying, and working.

Discontent with the lived experience was usually coupled with an inability to envision the future, or a sense of 'nothingness' ahead:

I have such great fear, I am so scared about the future. I simply cannot picture my future. I cannot see it! (Anna, 49, female, high-income)

As was briefly discussed in Chapter 4, concerns about the lack of future prospects was frequently discussed in the interviews, especially amongst those who self-identified as poor. Participants found it deeply troubling to engage with the topic of their futures. The only viable future that participants could imagine for themselves was one resembling the lives of older people living around them. Given that most of the elderly in Ukraine are seen as living in poverty, it is easy to conclude that future prospects are rather bleak. These interviewees often shared having a sense of 'nothingness' awaiting them and struggled to imagine more positive scenarios for their futures.

Insecure futures were underpinned by disappointing personal experiences and the idea that Ukraine, as a socially constructed place, has limited opportunities for self-realisation, especially for educated people and the younger population. Ukraine was often described as a 'backward' place where intellectual aptitude, work ethic and formal education are not associated with a decent standard of living and upward mobility. Participants explained that there are no opportunities for self-realisation for 'smart people' because of the wide-spread gap between formal education and the types of jobs available, corruption in obtaining higher education and securing jobs, and a lack of labour rights. Given the precarious labour market, interviewees had limited opportunities for self-realisation through the experience of

work. Building on the lack of decent work, without a stable income, participants reported being forced to live in intergenerational households, which further undermined their ability to self-realise by starting a family. Material deprivation also led to forgoing of leisure activities such as going on a holiday, which was especially upsetting for younger participants who placed a lot of value on travelling.

A common feature discussed by participants about the experience of work is the mismatch between formal education and employment status. At least 40 per cent of those aged 15–70 are currently over-educated for their jobs (Kupets, 2016) and according to ILO estimates, at least 60 per cent of higher education graduates are unable to jobs in the field of knowledge they have been taught' (2016, p. 6). This mismatch was particularly emphasised by the low-moderate income participants:

I was a straight 'A's as a student in school. I finished college – one of the two people in a class of 28 to get a first (червоний диплом) [...] Just between us, I earn only 4200 a month. No more than that. Given my education and how much effort I put in my job, I should be paid at least 8 thousand as a bare minimum.

(Eva, 32, female, low-income)

I am looking for a job. A full-time job with bad hours at a supermarket pays only 4000 a month (150 USD) [...] I studied psychology. Only one girl from my year got a psychology-related job in the city. But her starting monthly salary was 2800 (100 USD) and she was covering a maternity leave position.

(Myroslava, 24, female, low-income).

Given the high levels of formal education, people aspired to more fulfilling and better-paid jobs than being a cashier at a supermarket or cleaning. They felt that at the very least, having a graduate degree should have enabled them to not live in poverty. The widespread prevalence of highly educated workers in low-skilled jobs seems to have create a shared sense that the potential, talent and contributions of people in Ukraine are being wasted.

Given this mismatch, middle-aged and older participants often shared concerns that they struggle to motivate their children and grandchildren to pursue formal education, as it is seen as useless:

I am begging my children, but they say they don't want to go to school. They don't want to study. They say 'You and grandma finished university, so what? What do you have now? What came out of you studying?' And what can I tell them? That I am a silly idiot because I finished university? What I have now is not even a pension, more like an allowance. (Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

A key explanation for Ukraine's high and persistent mismatch between education and jobs is the combination of an increase in the demand for low-skilled work coupled with the excess supply of highly educated people. Over-education is a product of the objectively high quality of education under Communism and of an increase in the quantity, but not the quality, of educational attainment after the fall of the Soviet Union. However, the fact that education is a poor determinant of job placement is also significantly driven by corruption, practiced by both higher education institutions and employers. The decentralisation and privatisation of education have led to an increase in the scale and scope of corruption in higher education (Osipian, 2009; 2017).

As was explained by participants who were lecturers or students at a local university, those who want to study are free to do so and can pass the exams through their own efforts. Nevertheless, those with financial means can easily purchase exam results and diplomas, extending all the way up to the PhD level and even for medical degrees. Participants who have earned their degrees without bribing felt that their efforts were constantly undermined. The fact that one can easily purchase diplomas, in turn, reduces the perceived value of diplomas in the labour market. Consequently, formal education has become a basic requirement that does

not carry much worth in terms of earning prospects as it has limited signalling power of one's intellectual potential.

Furthermore, there is also wide-spread corruption in the hiring process. Across the income scale, participants reported that they have to pay a bribe to be hired for a job, including low-paid jobs. These bribes for job placements are relatively costly and often exceed the job's monthly salary:

It is very difficult for young people to fulfil their potential even when you have connections. Remember I mentioned a young fellow, the son of my friend who died? He finished Kharkiv Law School and is ready to work even in the Eastern war-torn regions. Okay, let's say I am willing to pay 10 thousand dollars. When will he earn that money back? The same story with getting a job at a hospital. A position of a nurse costs 3 thousand dollars. How many years will it take to earn it back with a salary of 100 dollars a month? (Sasha, 50, male, high-income)

P: My best friend earns a minimal salary, something around 3000 hryvnyas. She got the job through her mother-in-law. She works at a clinic as a cleaner. To get a job as a cleaner in a [freaking] stupid clinic, she paid 300 dollars.

I: Why did she go to work there?

P: Where else is she supposed to work!? (Kalyna, 26, female, low-income)

Several participants, including high-income participants such as Sasha, who had the resources and the local influence to help young people secure a job placement, did not see the jobs available as worthy of a bribe. Given the discrepancy between the cost of finding a placement and the pay, working in certain fields yield very low returns. Not surprisingly, Sasha sent both of his sons to live and work in the US rather than trying to arrange a job for them locally. Despite such high costs, participants with low to moderate incomes admitted to paying a bribe to secure a job placement because they were desperate to find at least some type of work and felt that they had to 'thank' the future employer for giving them a post.

In addition to these factors, labour rights are also very weak in Ukraine with high levels of informality reflected in many aspects of the labour market, not just corruption during the hiring process. Many participants, especially those in low-income occupations, reported working in hazardous conditions, unable to voice their grievances without fear of losing their job. They also reported not getting paid for their labour, especially during 'training' periods, and having no say in their working schedule. Women, especially over the age of forty, shared that they frequently experience age discrimination when trying to find a job. While workers in their twenties and thirties can leverage their relative youth to manage growing economic precariousness, people over the age of forty often feel redundant, as an unusable remnant of a bygone era (Bauman, 2005). Discrimination against women after the age of 40 was almost expected amongst the low-income participants³⁹ and in rare cases, women as young as in their mid-twenties have reported age discrimination when searching for work:

I: You mentioned feeling that no one needs you, when does it surface? Do you have any examples that come to mind?

P: When does it surface? When you can't find a job whilst having three university diplomas. You come for an interview and they ask you how old are you? 40!? Oh no no! We don't even take cashiers that old. No-one needs an older person here. Even to be a cashier you need to be under 30 because they think you are slower.

(Victoria, 42, female, low-income).

I have been looking for a job the last three weeks. Some places told me I am not a good fit because I am almost 25, which is too old for a job of a barista.

(Myroslava, 24, female, low-income).

All of these factors based on the experience of work contribute significantly to a lack of self-realisation, especially amongst highly educated workers.

³⁹ There is a formal legislation against age and sex discrimination (Law on Employment), but their enforcement and meaningful remedies are often lacking

Nevertheless, there are externalities to consider as well, namely the experiences of family and leisure. Building on the experience of precarious employment, several participants voiced that they did not self-realise because they could not afford to start a family and support their aging parents. The fact that 'everyone' in Ukraine or around them is struggling to provide for their families softened the shame and stigma associated with not living up to social roles amongst interviewees. However, it did not calm their anxiety about a lack of personal life progression and thus an inability for self-realisation. For example, Diana, who is a high-income earner, felt that she is unable to progress towards self-realisation given her age because she still lives with her parents. When defining self-realisation, she said:

[To self-realise] is to be financially independent of your parents. To know that if you start a family, you will be able to provide. And if you have children, you will be able to afford the necessities. Also, to find your purpose in life socially and spiritually (духовно). To build up your life slowly. In all, to become a self-sufficient adult and individual. Because I am still living with my parents, I am still kind of a child even though I am 24 years old. In the future, I want to be able to support my parents, rather than ask them to pay for my winter boots. I want them to be proud of me.

(Diana, 24, female, high-income).

For participants such as Diana, living with parents was associated with not becoming an independent person. Starting your own family and providing for parents was a sign of accomplishment and maturing, and that one is 'standing firmly' on both feet. Failure to provide material support for aging parents in a context in which pensions and social assistance are inadequate made people feel helpless as they were failing to fulfil their social roles as sons and daughters. Evidence from other contexts supports the idea that turning to family for material support can lead to negative self-evaluations and a lesser sense of self (Chase and Walker, 2012).

The pressure to provide was felt especially acutely by the male participants,

who often told me that ‘any normal woman will want to have a normal man (мужик) by her side’ (Dennis, aged 34). Interviewees associated not earning enough income to provide for your future wife and children with a failure in manhood. The cultural expectation that men should be the material providers and protectors of the family explains why not starting a family was typically associated with the inability to become a mature person. Similar observations about the link between poverty and emasculation have been made in other contexts (Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2016). The absence of generous welfare state provisions is likely to exacerbate the feelings of gendered inadequacy and entrench the demarcated gender roles.

Older participants similarly expressed how much they wished for their children to have the financial freedom to live separately. While parents typically enjoyed sharing experiences and daily activities with their children, and especially grandchildren, there were intrinsic difficulties of living in an overcrowded space. In many cases an intergenerational household consists of four to five people in a one-bedroom apartment: ‘My daughter, son in law and granddaughter all live with us. I only have a one-bedroom apartment. It is a bit much to have that many people there’ (Elena, 57, female, low-income). Older participants shared the common view that young people, especially those recently married, are undermining their ability to become the master or mistress of a household by living with their parents.

High numbers of intergenerational households is typical in the context of economic insecurity as families tend to form a risk pool against adverse shocks (Landmann *et al.*, 2017). In Ukraine, the family became a fundamental institution for survival based on mutual support and solidarity during the transition and the following economic crises (Zhurzhenko, 2004). In this context, intergenerational co-residence is driven as much by the relationships of affection, as it is driven by need

and the local ideas about intergenerational obligations (Saraceno and Keck, 2008).

There is a growing body of literature on the implications of intergenerational co-residence on the wellbeing of younger and older generations (Silverstein, Cong and Li, 2006). The findings suggest that the implications vary considerably depending on the reasons for co-residence as well as cultural and institutional contexts. Resembling the observations in this study, some evidence suggests that intergenerational co-residence can undermine wellbeing because living separately is seen as a sign of successful launching into adulthood (Shanahan, 2000; South and Lei, 2015). However, such conclusions might not apply to the Eastern European countries. It has been argued that in this region, family interdependence and traditional roles are genuinely valued more than self-achievement and autonomy (Tosi and Grundy, 2018), even though interdependence was forged to a large extent by the Soviet collapse (Mair, 2013). With the lack of generous state support, parents might expect to provide support for their adult children and thus co-residence might not have the same extent of negative implications.

While the overall literature on the family patterns and its implications for wellbeing in Eastern Europe is inconclusive because the family patterns are in flux (Daly, 2005), the data here suggests that in the context of Ukraine, intergeneration co-residence is undermining eudaimonic wellbeing both in children and their parents. The negative consequences from this inability for self-realisation by becoming independent and starting a new family appear to outweigh the benefits of intergenerational households.

Beyond the experience of family, participants also cited the importance of leisure, particularly through travel, as a key factor for self-realisation. Consider the

following from Eva, a 32-year old low-income participant, who associated travelling and 'seeing things' outside your immediate environment with self-realisation:

While you are still young you want to go somewhere and see something in life. But then you realise that your finances are truly limited. (Eva, 32, female, low-income)

An ability to go on a holiday away from home once a year, excluding travelling to see family, is frequently used as one of the criterion for determining those who are poor (Abe and Pantazis, 2014). Going on this kind of holiday also features prominently on the socially-perceived list of necessities,⁴⁰ although the extent of public support for it being a 'basic need' varies by country (Mack and Lansley, 1985; Fusco, Dickes and Marlier, 2008).

There are several factors why in countries such as Ukraine, there is strong support for a holiday being a necessity. Firstly, during the Soviet years, all working adults were entitled to nearly a month of leave per year, in addition to sick leave and national holidays. There were also vacation packages (путёвки) awarded to people from their place of work. Secondly, one of the biggest restrictions of the Communist regime was a denial of the right to travel outside of the Soviet bloc, and the promise of mobility outside the Union was a key organising metaphor of the transition. The post-Soviet era brought about a significant growth in new forms of consumption (Sassen, 2010), with travel being an essential part of the evolution from a Soviet person (Yurchak, 2003) to a modern consumer of western lifestyles. In Ukraine, a lack of travel is therefore associated with the experience of exclusion

⁴⁰ Mack and Lansley (1985) developed a 'democratic' (consensual) approach to defining poverty in which the public, rather than academics or professional experts, define and rank the necessities of life one has to be able to enjoy to not be poor.

from practices of consumption that were a huge part of the promise of transition (Berdahl, 2008).

Alternatively, travel is perhaps so highly ranked because a large proportion of the population genuinely lack opportunities to travel with their families, especially to the nearby Western Europe. Particularly for those living on the poverty line, travel outside Ukraine is expensive and they are often not entitled to take leave from work. For them, travel is associated with an opportunity to stimulate senses dulled by the experience of precariousness and routine (O'Neill, 2014). In support of research which challenges the validity of Maslow's hierarchy of need (Gambrel and Cianci, 2003; Bouzenita and Boulanouar, 2016), participants often discussed how it is worth forgoing food and new clothing to save up for a short trip somewhere once a year. Short trips to the Carpathian Mountains for camping or to Poland were described as 'explosions of emotions' that render the mundane experience of frugality, which they endure for the rest of the year, more bearable. Travel was associated with experiences they were able to remember and proudly describe to their friends and family. As such, trips and experiences gave them not only personal meaning and memories that the mundane experience of 'surviving' could not provide but also the social esteem that they desired for self-realisation. Overall, the participants highlighted the importance of experiences in work, family and travel as key for their self-realisation and cited numerous reasons why these experiences are limited in the context of Ukraine.

5.4 Efforts for Self-Realisation

Given the limiting factors for self-realisation in Ukraine, discussions about the lack of opportunities were naturally followed by conversations about going abroad,

particularly for young people who still have a long future ahead of them. This topic was brought up mainly by older participants (over the age of 35):

I: How come so many people leave to go abroad?

P: Because it is impossible to actualise yourself here! There are no jobs. There is no self-realisation. Well, those who are lucky, who have connections and friends, they have opportunities. It is so difficult to find a job with a decent salary for a young person. Very few can support a family. Those who are lucky – they are a bit better off. The unlucky ones go abroad and achieve something there.

(Ostap, 79, male, low-income).

Even those older participants who had enough disposable income to be comfortable felt that there was something irreparably wrong in Ukraine from which young people needed to escape. Well-off parents wanted their children to avoid wasting their time by leaving Ukraine if possible. There was a feeling that the current broken system will continue reproducing itself and that the brief moment when Ukraine had an opportunity to become a 'normal' country had already been lost. While they were not insecure in material terms, these participants expressed existential insecurity similar to that of older low-income participants because they have experienced ontological precariousness during the post-Soviet transformation (Neilson and Rossiter, 2008). The idea of a widespread lack of self-realisation in Ukraine evoked hurtful feelings amongst older well-off participants and reinforced their view that Ukraine is a poor country with wasted potential:

I feel bad for the people! (Ну шкода людей!). That they cannot realise themselves. Everything comes down to some financial issues I think, moments related to the government. The country is poor, that is all. (Anna, 49, female, high-income).

These views were strongly shared by young participants in the low-income subjectively poor group. These participants discussed the difficulties of self-realisation in Ukraine despite their attempts to overcome the limitations which often resulted in short-term thinking. While they were aware of the long-term costs of their

short-term thinking, they felt too insecure or simply too tired to change the pattern of living from paycheck to paycheck. Despite the predominance of structural explanations of poverty, subjectively poor low-income young men commonly blamed themselves for not finding an opportunity to do remote work for foreign IT companies as many of the well-off young people do. While they had a genuine desire to develop personal skills such as coding or English, working in a soul-draining manual job and managing a household on low income often left no mind-space and time to reflect and plan for professional growth:

P: [...] there are so many things I want to try and do. But so far nothing happened. I am still kicking (брикаюсь), but I am mostly going with the flow (пливу за течією).

I: People frequently talk about 'going with the flow', what does it mean?

P: It's when someone simply lives in a routine, addresses issues as they arise, and then goes back to the routine. It sucks you in. You don't make a choice yourself. You come to work, someone gives you a task to do. The same happens at home. And then there is no more time left for you to make choices, so you go with the flow doing tasks and don't make an active choice. It's when you are boxed in into certain limits and you must adjust and act only within that frame. (Igor, 29, male, low-income)

Igor has made several attempts to learn graphic design so that he could take online orders from foreign companies. Unfortunately, given his working hours and commute to work, and the cost of access to Adobe software, he found it very difficult to push himself into a new occupation.

Moreover, given how difficult it is to find a permanent job placement, once in a job, these participants tended to hold on to it despite the low wages, which barely kept them above the poverty line, in favour of stability. Several participants have said that they are reluctant to drastically change their situation even though they know they could potentially benefit from taking such risks:

P: I am lazy, scared, and not an adventurer. Probably that's why I didn't manage to fulfil my potential.

I: What do you mean?

P: Whew, well how can I put it, I'm not keen on radical steps, to make drastic changes in my life. It's our Ukrainian thing... A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush (синичка в руках краще ніж журавель в небі). I earn little, but it is something, and it is consistent. (Volodymyr, 33, male, low-income)

The prospect of going to work as a short-term migrant abroad felt inevitable for these participants. It was simply a matter of time until they would have to surrender and join the stream of migrant workers ('заробітчани') going back and forth between Ukraine and, most likely, Poland. The inevitability of having to go to work abroad left people feeling trapped, disempowered and sometimes even embarrassed. Similarly to other studies (Vicol, 2019), data here shows that the harmful effects of short-term migrant work precede the work abroad itself. The way in which working abroad undermines people's sense of self-worth is a long-term process, which starts at home with the feeling of having no choice because there are no local opportunities for self-realisation.

While moving abroad was associated with moving up the income scale, going back and forth for short-term or seasonal work was often described by participants as a 'narcotic addiction'. Interviewees repeatedly said that once you start going abroad for work, it becomes very difficult to stop. Therefore it is better to avoid going abroad or at least limit it to a few purposeful trips for purchasing something specific:

So many people are going to Poland, especially now with the new visa regime. But I am deferring the moment of going till we reach the last drop, when we completely go down to zero, then we might go. Or if we decide to earn for something specific like a car. (Myroslava, 24, female, low-income).

In cities such as Rivne people struggle to stay away from migrant work because they can get paid up to five times more for the same low-skilled work that they are currently doing. Unfortunately, the desired increase in income when working abroad

comes at great personal costs. Taking into account the costs of getting to the work site and living in the foreign country, to make the trip worthwhile in earnings, people have to stay abroad for at least six months at a time. During these six or more months abroad, people report being overworked and lonely, living in suboptimal conditions, and doing physically demanding work that undermines their health. In the time that they are away, relationships at home weaken and the bills pile up. Upon their return, people report trying to 'catch up' on the lack of social interaction, entertainment, paying bills and buying necessities for their families, which all result in the foreign money being spent rather quickly. And when the money has run out, they have a choice of either staying to work in Rivne for 200 USD per month or making their way back to Poland and working for 800 to 1000 USD per month. Not surprisingly, most choose to make another trip, even though they know that such a lifestyle is unsustainable and is wearing down their physical and mental health. Given the realities of short-term migrant life, going abroad often only further diminished people's feeling of dignity and perpetuated their feelings of subjective poverty. There was an emphasis on people not being treated in dignifying ways, either in Ukraine or abroad, accentuating the feeling of being stuck between two undesirable alternatives:

You are of course paid more abroad, but you are still not treated as a human being even if you are working hard'. (Daria, 57, female, low-income)

Abroad you are not treated as an individual, just as a working unit. Here the treatment is no better, but you are paid less' being even if you are working hard'.

(Kateryna, 29, female, low-income)

In successful cases, going abroad enables people to save up money and redecorate their current accommodation or even purchase a new apartment or a car. This way individuals are able to create a visual display of achieving 'something

tangible' in their lifetime. The extent to which participants valued home ownership was surprising but understandable given that investment in property is low-risk. Several participants told me that no matter what happened in the government, or to the exchange rate, if you own your own apartment, it is yours to keep and pass on to your children.

There is a vast body of literature capturing how consumerism and property ownership played a particularly important role in the process of transition from the centrally planned economy (Dunn, 2004; Berdahl, 2008; Ghodsee, 2011; O'Neill, 2014). For many participants, owning property was associated with the idea of being an independent citizen in a democratic country. In this context, owning property could make people feel that they are finally achieving European 'normality' (Mandel and Humphrey, 2002; Dzenovska, 2014).

Lastly, having had a chance to experience what life was like abroad, many thought they could evaluate more clearly Ukraine's global ranking. The comparison of living standards was often based on the mundane small comforts of living that are taken for granted in western Europe:

When we were in Poland, even looking at the public toilets and sinks. They have hand dryers there. Everything is clean. Even looking at the tools cleaners have there for work. Here cleaners look miserable. Comparing the two, you start thinking 'we are not that stupid, but then how come we are so poor?' (Eva, 32, female, low-income)

The views of young participants from low-income background stand in stark contrast to the views of young well-off participants. It almost appears as if they live in different versions of Ukraine altogether. For the young well-off participants, Ukraine is full of untapped opportunities. After studying and travelling abroad, these individuals see Ukraine as having unlimited options for self-realisation. Several specifically said that they cannot fully understand why others think that Ukraine does

not have opportunities for self-realisation. In essence, these young people also pushed against going abroad, but for very different reasons:

One can become successful in Rivne in any sphere. Even in movie production. You can write a cool book. For example, there is this local writer in Rivne. He writes books and travels the world but lives in Rivne. His wife is also very active and cool. These people, they are not restricted in spending as they have diversified sources of income.

(Olga, 24, female, high-income)

Convinced about the abundance of opportunities for upward mobility in Ukraine, they were confident that they were en route to becoming wealthy themselves. Similarly to how people perceive opportunities in countries such as the US, they tended to bring up anecdotal examples of Ukrainians who made it 'from rags to riches' as a justification of their conviction that there are equal opportunities for upward mobility. As a 23-year old Victor said, people just need to try harder:

For example, there was this dude from Ukraine who came up with the idea of WhatsApp. And then he sold it successfully. Now he is quite comfortable. Well yeah, of course there are many people who grew in the 90s due to banditry. But there are also people, like scientists, who made a breakthrough with their hard work and achievements. Now they are millionaires or billionaires and so on.

(Victor, 23, male, high-income)

Young well-off participants tended to actively argue against the negative stereotypes about the rich, focusing on the fact that not all rich people in Ukraine have acquired their wealth through corruption and crime. They were also very critical of low-income people demanding higher wages, asserting that if one is paid a minimum wage it is probably because they are not skilled and do not deserve higher pay:

Our people have a habit of complaining. They do not want to work on personal development or aspire for better things, and yet they want to receive unreal money. People say 'why should I work for 5-7 thousand a month? I am not born for that type of work'. Well you don't know anything! So sick of such people! [...] People are lazy

and think that they deserve more than they are really worth!

(Victor, 23, male, high-income).

The above quote illustrates deep frustration about the dominance of structural explanations of poverty. Several well-off young participants insisted that by continuing to blame everything on a lack of opportunities and corruption, low-income people set themselves up for failure before they even try. They were frustrated at the wide-spread disbelief in the future surrounding them and insisted that people with such a deficient mindset are holding back the development of Ukraine.

These young participants from the subjectively non-poor high-income group were very critical of people who do not want to work for a minimum wage. They argued that they too had started their careers working for only 5,000 hryvnias (185 USD) a month but managed to 'pull themselves up by their own bootstraps'. That said, when it came to the details of their low-paying job experiences, interviewees often revealed that they were supported by their parents while pursuing unpaid internships or additional training. They also had a great sense of confidence that these types of jobs are merely a steppingstone to a lucrative career and temporary. For example, one young male participant was content working in a low-paying clerkship job because he knew that this experience would lead him to a high-paying job at the court. These participants often criticised people who failed to fulfil their potential for being 'all over the place' and not planning long term. They argued that the strategies people adopt usually only perpetuate their poverty, so they therefore should not complain about the lack of opportunities:

For example, short-term migrant workers. They are all over the place. Pointlessly running in circles. They go abroad, work nine to five. Work in some odd job like construction. No one gets a kick out of a construction job (laughter). Then they get the money and start compensating for not having a life while working abroad. You cannot work that way your entire life. Another example of those who failed to self-

realised are people working in a supermarket, who praise God they're at least making 3000 hryvnias (110 USD) (laughter). (Olga, 24, female, high-income)

Stereotyping and blaming people on low incomes for their misfortunes is a classic example of a fundamental attribution error, whereby people attribute their own circumstances to structural reasons but the outcomes of others to individual success or failure. It is interesting to note the importance that many participants place on going abroad to overcome the domestic limitations of self-realisation. Unfortunately, it appears that these attempts come at high personal costs and often have very limited effects on self-realisation.

5.5 Conclusion

Building on the previous chapter, which outlined how subjective poverty manifests itself in the context of predominantly structural explanations of poverty in Ukraine, this chapter gave a more in-depth insight into how subjective poverty is experienced on the individual level and why it does not correspond to material circumstances. When explaining what poverty is, or why they see themselves as poor, participants commonly talked about the 'unrealised self' and the lack of opportunities to pursue self-realisation. Self-realisation was associated with living a life that one finds worth valuing and an ability to narrate a life story in which effort results in positive outcomes and individual growth. Participants who reported self-realisation all seem to have reached a certain level of social achievement which gives them a feeling of worth and social recognition. Lack of self-realisation was explained as an inability to fulfil one's potential in the sphere of work, inability to start a family, lack of memorable experiences such as travel, and ever-present worries about future wellbeing.

The theme of self-realisation that emerged from the interviews was conceptualised as eudaimonic wellbeing (Waterman, 1993; Ryan and Deci, 2000; Waterman *et al.*, 2010; Kokkoris, 2016) and the need for recognition in the sphere of 'achievement and self-esteem' for the development of positive self-relation (Schweiger, 2014a). The lack of recognition in the sphere of social achievement was shown to affect people's feelings of self-worth and to contribute to high rates of felt poverty. This observation goes back to the argument that the key underpinning idea of recognition theory is that positive self-relations are not innate; intersubjective recognition is a necessary social condition for developing and sustaining one's holistic personhood. Opportunities for self-realisation were conceptualised as the capabilities to pursue functionings one finds worth valuing (Ransome, 2010).

Within the sphere of achievement, the experience of paid work was of key importance. The dominant experience amongst the participants was one where employment does not provide adequate income, contribute to their personal growth, nor build on their formal education. From a practical perspective, social obligations such as those of parenthood, obligations to the elderly, and various forms of leisure such as travel, all depend predominantly on 'the level of income or equivalent resources in kind and property' (Gordon and Townsend, 2000, p. 17). In line with Wolff and De-Shalit (2007), this provides evidence that there are fruitful functionings, such as paid employment, which if not met can undermine other functionings. As was shown earlier, lack of self-realisation in the sphere of work undermined participants' prospects of self-realisation in other spheres of their life. In the view of recognition theory, the world of work is central in the dimension of self-realisation because the majority of people 'continue to attach their own social identity primarily to their role in the organized labour process' (Honneth, 2012, p.

57). The current experiences of participation in the labour market are in conflict with the deeply engrained socialist values in post-Soviet countries that all human beings deserve a secure livelihood as long as they contribute to society according to their ability.

Another finding regarding self-esteem in the sphere of work is the role of the EU labour market. While long-term migration was seen as a guaranteed path towards self-realisation, short-term migrant work prevalent amongst the low-income participants led to mixed feelings, as it was both a short-term opportunity to self-realise but also a factor perpetuating their low status. Low-income subjectively poor people described these feelings as being stuck between a rock and a hard place, whereby they had to choose between either low-esteem and low-salaried employment, or even less esteemed employment but with higher salaries across the border. The discussion of work highlights the differences between average living standards in Ukraine and the 'normal' living standards of neighbouring countries where these migrant workers often spend at least half of their time. This finding suggests that in some locations, such as Western Ukraine, cross-country comparisons are becoming equally, if not more, important for subjective welfare compared to the local-level relative standing (for a similar discussion see Rainwater, Smeeding and Coder, 2003).

Furthermore, when looking at the high-income participants, there seems to be an underlying gender dimension. High-income men were far more likely to be subjectively poor compared to high-income women, with a particularly sharp contrast between middle-aged high-income men and women (aged 35-54). Men in this category were overwhelmingly subjectively poor and strongly upheld structural explanations of poverty. Meanwhile, high-income women overwhelmingly believed

in individualistic explanations of poverty. While the sample of high-income people in this age group is too small to draw concrete conclusions, the difference might be driven by rigid gender roles which put men under a lot of pressure to be the sole provider in the family. The stereotypical ideal is that a husband should be the protector of the family, and success is defined by being able to give his wife a choice to not work in paid employment. Not surprisingly, upholding this standard in the context of recurring economic crises is challenging and can impede the achievement of a successful masculine identity. Subjectively poor high-income men frequently reported how stressful their work experience is and how they had to give up their ambitions in order to earn their current income. Many were convinced that if they lived in Europe, they would be doing more fulfilling and more highly esteemed jobs. By contrast, all the women in this group reported that they have already realised their potential.

The gender differences in subjective social position in this small sub-group of participants resonate with the notion of the 'missing men' in Eastern Europe, where the ratio of men to women is unusually low (Marmot and Bobak, 2000; Marmot, 2004). More specifically, the death rates amongst middle aged men, especially those who are single, unmarried or divorced, are disproportionately high. In Ukraine, there are only about 82 men per 100 women aged 45-64, while the ratio is about one-to-one in Western Europe. Part of this difference in life expectancy between men in Eastern and Western Europe can be attributed to men lacking social support; experiencing ontological insecurity because of inability to fulfil their social roles; lacking confidence in maintaining the same position in the social order; and an inability to hold a belief that self-realisation can be achieved (Marmot, 2014, pp. 196-221). Marmot identifies these factors as important because they shape the

social environment that people live in, which in turn determines the prevalence of cardiovascular disease, a key factor that explains half of the difference in the relatively lower male life expectancy. There is significant overlap between these factors and those discussed in this Chapter relating to subjective poverty.

The last relevant observation from this chapter is that age matters to the extent that it relates to the evaluation of one's opportunities for social mobility. Participants reported that they became acutely aware of their position in the socio-economic hierarchy after finishing high school, whether this was in the context of attending university or entering the labour market. In line with research on identity formation, these years are important as individuals learn more clearly how their opportunities compare to those of others. The extent to which people feel confident in their assessment that they are poor solidifies with age as their socio-economic position becomes less malleable. Because subjective poverty refers to cumulative negative experiences and the evaluation of one's life-long achievements, subjective poverty is much more pronounced and deeply felt in older participants.

Chapter 6: Subjective Poverty Through the Lens of Social Rights

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored how misrecognition in the sphere of social achievement and self-esteem contributes to the subjective feeling of being poor. As the last of the three empirical chapters, this chapter investigates subjective poverty through the lens of Honneth's third sphere of recognition: formal rights and self-respect.

Within the broad category of rights, this chapter focuses mostly on social rights in their dimensions of procedural and substantive justice. Social rights are defined as 'articulations of human need' through social practices in which 'the means of achieving human welfare or wellbeing' are negotiated (Dean, 2015, p. xiii). As was discussed in Section 2.3, Honneth's conceptualisation of social rights within the category of 'formal rights' is too simplistic to capture the nuance of participants' discussions of social rights. For that reason, this chapter incorporates additional concepts of procedural and substantive justice. Procedural fairness refers to how individuals are treated by government departments and other official bodies in the process of accessing their rights while substantive justice refers to what those rights actually deliver (i.e. what people end up with) (Ibid, p. 11). In the context of social institutions, procedural justice is important not only because it contributes to fair outcomes but also, because perceptions of procedural justice have independent effects on perceptions of distributive justice (Lind and Tyler, 1988).

Subjectively poor participants frequently explained why they see themselves as poor by providing examples of their experiences within three groups of social rights: healthcare, education, and minimal subsistence. In these discussions,

participants focused on the affordability of healthcare, procedural injustice in higher education, and the lack of meaningful social protection and social insurance for vulnerable older adults (which could be themselves and/or their family members).

Repeated negative experiences within these contexts left participants feeling disempowered, undervalued, and frustrated. Given that the quality of social institutions affects the wellbeing of large proportions of the population, not just those at the lowest spectrum of the income distribution, the idea of poor majority implies that most Ukrainians are rightless and lacking voice in political decision-making pertaining to the welfare system. Most subjectively poor participants understood the failures of social institutions as purposeful and systematic oppression of the people by the state. Such explanations evoked feelings of both deep-rooted anger towards the government and worthlessness; the latter being expressed as remarks about Ukrainian people being ‘uncivilised’, ‘backward’ and ‘stupid’.

This chapter contributes to the literature showing that welfare systems and their social institutions play important roles in framing how citizens understand their relationship with the state (Lipsky, 1990; Dubois, 2010; Haney, 2002) and in shaping subjective socio-economic security (Mau, Mewes and Schöneck, 2012). Applying the idea of recognition in the sphere of rights to this context highlights how such interactions can also distort how people view themselves, contributing to felt poverty across the income spectrum.

The following section (Section 6.2) is divided into four sub-sections. The first three sub-sections focus on the right to health, the right to education and the pension system, respectively. Instances of procedural and substantive injustices are highlighted as contributing to felt poverty. The fourth sub-section illustrates how

diminished social rights at the individual level contribute to the idea of poor majority as the average citizens are portrayed as 'rightless' and 'voiceless'. The next section (Section 6.3) focuses on the complex dynamics of misrecognition in which individuals hold both severely demeaning and also deserving views of themselves and others belonging to the socially constructed group of poor majority. Section 6.4 summarises the findings and draws chapter conclusions.

6.2 Experiencing Social Rights

When exploring what made them see themselves as poor, participants frequently discussed their perceptions of local state institutions, drawing on a range of personal experiences which caused them to feel dismissed, disrespected and taken advantage of. The data below shows that social institutions shape participants' livelihoods, although they do not have much influence over how these institutions treat them. Despite continuous reforms towards greater independence of citizens from the state, most participants still want significant involvement of the state in promoting the wellbeing of its citizens.

6.2.1 Healthcare

The right to healthcare is considered to be a fundamental human right as health is one of the basic human needs (Dean, 2015, p. 107). Due to the importance of health to the wellbeing of a population, an effective health system is a core social institution and the state tends to accept much of the responsibility for the health of its citizens, as reflected in the high levels of expenditure on healthcare in most industrialised societies (Baggott, 2016). In many ways, analysing a country's healthcare system is central to understanding a country's welfare state (Moran, 2000).

The prevalence of procedural injustices through low-level corruption has major implications on the daily lives of Ukrainians. In practical terms, to access the medical care that is supposed to be free, individuals have to pay the full price of medicines and medical services out of pocket. Typically, medical care will be not provided until informal payments have been made. Several participants reported that even the smallest interactions with medical staff required some form of payment:

If I go to a clinic, a supposedly free clinic, and don't give 100 UAH (4 USD) upfront, they won't even look at me. They will treat me poorly (халатно поставляться), say that I don't have any issues and that it will all pass. Medicine is supposed to be provided by the state [...] (Katherina, 29, female, low-income)

Stories about medical personnel extorting an illicit payment by refusing to provide medical services without it were common amongst all participants. The staff might have not asked for payment directly, but the demand was clearly communicated by poor treatment. In instances in which illicit payments are expected, medical staff convey their demands by hints, or by complaints about their unbearable workload, or simply ignoring the person, as in the example above. Similarly to findings from other studies of corruption in the region, unofficial payments are expected for services ranging from basic consultations with specialists to complex surgery and hospitalisation (Miller, Grødeland and Koshechkina, 2001).

The fact that medical staff can blatantly dismiss someone's physical presence and 'not even look at them' unless they pay a bribe, which was a recurring theme in the interviews, caused deep psychological distress amongst low-income participants. As was discussed in Chapter 4, the minimum level of recognition that people need for developing an undistorted self-relation is that an individual is at

least noticed or seen (Huttunen, 2007). Therefore, beyond the financial strain of such costs, this treatment implicitly communicated to the participants that their health is not seen as of inherent value because eliciting the payment takes priority. The extent of this relatively mundane act of disrespect can be so profound that it can affect the very core of participant's perception of self and lead to severe distress. The following quote illustrates what this experience felt like for two participants:

I: How does it make you feel?

P: When they don't even want to look at me?

I: Yes if they [doctors] won't look at you because you don't have the money

P: You know... It gets to right here (pointing at her heart). Right here it sinks like a rock. Just bam. You want to tell them off... to tell them everything. [...] And sometimes I do speak up, or sort of 'bark' at them in such situations. I can get upset. It's just such unfairness. But then, afterwards, you think I shouldn't have said anything. It doesn't make a difference, I just stress myself out.

(Sofia, 70, female, low-income)

I am terribly upset about it [poor treatment in medical institutions]. It really gets down to my soul (аж до душі). Why is it necessary to rip off a person who is in a critical health condition? They have the medication and yet they say they won't treat you until you pay the money. If you don't have the money – you can leave (забирайтеся). These institutions... why? What have we done to be treated this way?! (Maria, 37, female, low-income)

In addition to reiterating how deeply hurtful such interactions can be, the quote by Sofia also illustrates the subtle process in which people learn not to complain about their circumstances. The difference between the vocal subjectively poor and indirect or ambiguous participants is that the latter groups choose to not react to being disrespected. This is in order to protect their mental health, because they have learned that speaking up will not change their situation. However, it seems that such a strategy does not necessarily mend the hurt from misrecognition and, without

speaking up, the individual finds that the injury of misrecognition is internalised:

I: What happens next?

P: Nothing. You go home upset, then pull yourself together. If I know that I was mistreated for no reason it takes me three days to get over it (три дня відхожу). Then I forget and...you know, I try to not hold grudges, because it doesn't lead to anything good. (Elena, 57, female, low-income)

This quote highlights the psychological toll that results from these interactions as the feelings of disrespect can linger for several days, further exacerbated by the complete lack of recourse for such treatment. This toll can be particularly straining for the subjectively poor compared with other groups and there appears to be a shared knowledge that a large group of the population struggles to not take this kind of treatment personally and perceive it as disrespect rather than a financial transaction. Even high-income subjectively non-poor participants frequently reflected that such treatment can get internalised by people with less resilience and were conscious of the long-term psychological damage these interactions have on other people:

Yesterday we were at the clinic to pick up an X-ray. We were told to go for a consultation with a doctor. He didn't even let me say a word! He said I don't have the time for you, go to a different clinic. I responded: you didn't even let me say a word, I was just going to ask you a question [...] It's good that some people can let it go. But others hold on to it inside and feel wronged.

(Svetlana, 40, female, high-income)

The payment of bribes has costs far greater than the financial ones because of the inherently uneven power dynamics of these transactions. Resembling findings from anthropological research in other post-communist countries (Karklins, 2005a, p. 68), participants in this study reported feeling uncomfortable when giving informal payments as it is difficult to know how to behave according to the unofficial rules, that are neither obvious nor transparent. The power dynamic that

accompanies being forced into paying a bribe makes people feel inferior, especially when they do not know how to bribe or how much they are expected to pay. In this type of exchange, the patient is not treated as an equal as they must please the staff member. Below is an insight from a low-income female participant who used to feel very uncomfortable in such exchanges but with age, learned how to hold her ground:

I used to not know how to do it. I would get all sweaty. My back, my hands especially. I didn't know where to put those bills. Should I take them out now or should I do it later? How do I say it? How do I approach the doctor? But then I realised I can treat it as a business conversation. Why not? [...] Last time I paid a doctor conducting a surgery. I paid for the medication, for the post-surgery set...whatever they wrote on the piece of paper. But I asked them directly, how much will this cost me? They said 'you are so strange'. Well, why should I go about asking others how much they charge? The doctor said: for the surgery and post-surgery it is 15 thousand. I said okay. Then I asked the next question: how much do your services cost? The doctor got so uncomfortable. I responded: why am I supposed to ask other people around about that!? I want to pay you for your services. How much do you charge for your services, so that I don't short-change or offend you?

(Agneshka, 50, female, low-income).

It seems that the reason the doctor was so uncomfortable with Agneshka asking the price directly is because informal payments for medical services are an 'open secret'. The medical staff typically will not treat patients kindly (or at all) without a bribe, and yet will not acknowledge openly that they charge, or even how much they charge, because they are, after all, state employees in a state hospital. To navigate these dynamics, participants reported having to go around asking other patients and low-ranking staff what amount would be respectful to give to the doctor, as giving an inappropriately low amount could significantly undermine the quality of treatment. This unequal power dynamic is especially disempowering for those on low incomes because for them, these are relatively large amounts of money (often their

emergency savings) and they also have reduced bargaining power because of their socio-economic status. Similar findings have been documented in other post-communist countries where in about two-thirds of low-level corruption cases, the payments are non-voluntary either because officials had requested them, or because respondents knew that 'this is the way it goes' (Karklins, 2005a, p. 41).

For the high-income participants, such interactions were frustrating, but not as damaging to their self-perception. With more substantial savings, well-off participants had more agency and bargaining power to navigate the system compared to low-income participants. Consequently, the degree of ontological injury that high- and low-income participants experience in the context of healthcare institutions differs. High-income participants were also more likely to demand better treatment on the premise of being active, productive workers paying taxes to the state and contributing to society. The well-off participants felt offended that they had to pay twice for the medical care, once through taxes and then again in cash at the point of using the service. The discontent was not about the amount as much as the fact that they had to pay twice:

Even if I wanted to get a simple paperwork done at the clinic. If you come in and ask for a simple certificate, she will ask 25 hryvnias (1 USD). Why am I supposed to pay her 25 hryvnias? I am paying all my taxes. This clinic is completely...it's one complete corruption. (Dennis, 34, male, high-income)

Moreover, participants often had conflicting feelings about bribing. A common belief amongst participants was that corruption is due less to individual malfeasance than to institutional failings because the official salaries of medical personnel are quite low. Thus, as much as these participants disliked being forced into that situation, they also had an understanding and empathy towards healthcare staff because they were also experiencing their own hardships:

To some extent they do take bribes. And I can't say anything to that because they are also surviving. Medical personal they get very small official salaries. Doctors and medical personnel. (Elena, 57, female, low-income)

For this corrupt system to function, there needs to be both an 'understanding of economic self-interest and impoverishment' (Patino, 2008; Morris and Polese, 2016, p. 485). Putting these interactions into context, paying bribes is not just strategic in order to receive better treatment, but also sincere. There is an important element of reciprocity and gratitude in making these payments, which complicates their meaning as they go beyond the simple blanket statement of 'corruption'. Making an informal payment because the other person is 'surviving' is a recognition of their personhood. The sincerity often comes through adding a gift element to these payments. Due to these complex dynamics, participants will try to avoid state healthcare facilities:

We now try to go only to a private clinic. You go to the payment desk (?) to pay and that's it. Otherwise you go and then you look at that nurse. If she is attending me, I will give her at least something. Some chocolates or 100 hryvnyas (4 USD). It's just you must give something. Without that they will have a very different attitude. Yeah. It's poverty. Poverty is the source of all evils. If they [staff] were better off, if they had salaries. But if you come and they see you are better off. Everyone wants to be acknowledged at least a tiny bit. (Oksana, 59, female, high-income)

In addition to the widespread prevalence of relatively manageable payments for routine health care and administrative services, an even more problematic issue undermining procedural justice is the prohibitively high cost of treating complicated health issues. One striking similarity amongst low- and high-income subjectively poor participants was that they were terrified of potentially having a serious diagnosis such as a stroke or cancer and having to pay expenses out of pocket. Even high-income groups will not have enough savings to purchase certain expensive courses of treatment:

No-one here has enough money for medical treatment. I am not talking about the wealthy; I am talking about those living on a salary. A heart bypass, which is probably accessible around the world, costs 100 thousand [hryvnias] (4,000 USD). What normal person in Ukraine can afford that when [monthly] salaries are five to six thousand? All you can do is die (laughing). (Anton, 50, male, high-income)

It is interesting to note that by laughing, the participant indicates that the healthcare provision in Ukraine is so problematic and dysfunctional that it is comical. For several subjectively poor participants, there is an absurdity to the reality of living in Europe but without affordable access to modern health care procedures. Due to these high costs, many participants will choose instead to not engage at all with the healthcare system, ignoring health concerns and avoiding doctors and clinics unless it is an absolute emergency which undermines their long-term health:

Even when I am sick...I wouldn't go to see a doctor unless it was a last resort, if I were dying or something. (Valeriy, 25, male, low-income)

I don't worry about anything. Except sometimes I worry about health. But then I understand that there is also a solution. I can talk to my cells. There are prayers that help with health. That I don't need to get scared about losing my vision with age. That you simply need to endure it (перетерпіти). When you understand it, you feel better. (Anastasiya, 56, female, low-income)

In the case of a medical emergency, people often resort to crowdfunding from their social network to pay for treatment. The quote below from a high-income participant who is a medical doctor highlights how common crowdfunding is; the doctor argues that it is a testament to how supportive and good-hearted the Ukrainian people are compared to the government:

We operated on a woman last week. She is an employee of the hospital. From a very troubled, poor family. Poor meaning that her financial capability is quite low. As soon as we posted on facebook, the bank account got filled up. People are actually quite responsive to this sort of stuff [...] To give you a better idea, she needs 700 UAH (25 USD) per day. And she is supposed to stay at the hospital for about 28 days. We raised the money to cover all of it. Not with the help of the government,

but with the power of the people. We raised the money in two hours.

(Anna, 49, female, high-income)

In many ways, the 'survival culture' whereby one's safety net comprises their connections, resourcefulness and the notion of reciprocity, inherited from the Soviet Union, persists (Kyrychenko, 2005; Ryabchuk, 2012, p. 216-217). As was illustrated in the quotes, relying on connections continues to be hugely important for accessing certain goods and services. It is important to note that crowdfunding is often more difficult for low-income individuals compared to high-income individuals, as members of high-income social circles are more likely to have spare resources to contribute. The issue of accessing healthcare might be felt more acutely by low-income individuals as they are more likely to have poorer health. For example, people working in precarious labour-intensive jobs are more likely to require expensive treatments and not be able to afford the payments. As was put forward by Sen, relative income inequality can result in absolute deprivation in terms of the capability to access healthcare services.

Another recurring theme in the criticism of the healthcare system was the low quality of the services provided. Participants across different income groups were concerned about the quality of care because corruption also infiltrates the medical education system, the hiring process and government quality reviews. In such a context, it is difficult for patients to trust the official qualifications of the doctors and their judgment:

Well, actually good healthcare here is expensive [...] But the saddest part is that you still need to check the quality of the doctors on the internet! Once I come home I have to check online whether what they prescribed is appropriate. And often it is not. That is scary. (Andriy, 35, male, high-income)

The fact that there is a risk of receiving incorrect treatment was in conversation often associated with not being treated as a human being:

Honestly, most people would rather go to a private clinic and pay 200 UAH (8 USD) but be treated as a human being. To be given proper treatment for your condition.

(Katherina, 29, female, low-income)

The two quotes above from subjectively poor participants are telling in that the right to healthcare is diminished not only in its procedural but also in its substantive form.

It is insightful to contrast these quotes with a quote from a high-income non subjectively poor participant on his perception of corruption in the healthcare system:

P: I take care to find good doctors. For a certain amount of money of course. To have security you need to work on it yourself. Because to expect something from the government is (laughter).

I: Money solves everything?

P: Thankfully to the corruption in our country it does. I am actually one of those people who support corruption [...] I frequently receive goods that I should never receive by law (laughter). To skip a queue somewhere, to solve something you cannot solve otherwise. I don't have a legal right to it, but luckily due to corruption, I can solve these problems. [...] I think people who complain they have a feeling of insecurity. Let's take health. Like finding a good doctor. It is easier for the young. But if the person is older or you don't have the health, than finding a good doctor in Ukraine is very difficult. (Yevhen 42, male, high-income)

This makes it evident that being able to afford medical services is not enough to ensure good quality care as the responsibility for checking the quality falls on the consumer rather than on the administration of the hospital system. Participants often indicated that they only go to see doctors whom they personally know, or who have been referred to them as being well qualified by their acquaintances. As Yevhen had put it, while this system might serve high-earning young people like

him, vulnerable populations might have a difficult time ensuring that they receive high quality care.

Having explored their experiences within the current health system, participants would typically continue by comparing the health care available in Ukraine with the healthcare in other countries:

If you get sick and need something you need to pay for everything yourself (laughing). In other countries, you pay for an insurance policy and then the rest is free. But here if you can't afford to pay upfront the government won't help you.

(Maria, 37, female, low-income)

One of the biggest points of comparison was that in other countries, people are not forced to face the same financial pressures when trying to access healthcare, especially when it comes to more complex health issues. Participants discussed a range of examples, from the tax-funded UK system to the private insurance system of the US. Participants seemed indifferent in terms of what the system should look like as long as there is some form of state-regulated safeguarding. Even low-income participants, whom one might expect would argue for redistribution, said that they would prefer an insurance scheme to the current system. Since they must pay for care in full anyway, they would prefer to contribute to a system with clear rules and respectful treatment rather than continue with the current dysfunctional universal provision. A similar interest in private care provision has been recently observed in Russia (Kaneva *et al.*, 2019).

Lastly, what distinguishes the rich from the poor majority in the context of healthcare is that the rich do not have to deal with the highly dysfunctional healthcare system. They can exclude themselves and get treatment in nearby European countries, or go to local private providers:

Rich people I think they have their own institutions. Or, as an option, they go abroad.

Where there is a normal medical system. [...] They have the money so they get treated there. (Katherina, 29, female, low-income).

Summing up the intrinsic importance of healthcare for high rates of subjective poverty in Ukraine, one interviewee explained that:

There is a part of the middle class that probably consider themselves poor too. Because in our country to have even the most basic things you must work very hard. And then you have health issues. Even basic things such as getting medical help or going on a vacation are difficult to achieve. Everyone wants to have that, I think.

(Iryna, 37, female, low-income)

Overall, diminished rights to healthcare contribute to high rates of subjective poverty amongst both high- and low-income participants, although the degree of distress is higher for low-income participants. Those on low incomes have less bargaining power when navigating a corrupt healthcare system which exposes them to a higher probability of disrespectful treatment and consequent psychological injury. It also puts a greater pressure on their already limited financial resources compared to the high-income participants.

6.2.2 Education

The right to education is different from other social rights because it is both a social right and a social requirement (Dean, 2015, p. 103). With the basic right to education, individuals have a corresponding duty or expectation to exercise this right (Nowak, 2001, p. 253). As a right, education corresponds to the basic human need for personal autonomy and the capability to be educated. Yet education also has an instrumental function, of investment and development of human capital – it is a precondition for accessing the labour market and for exercising civil and political rights. Because education encompasses several needs, it is typically discussed as both an end in and of itself and as a means to an end. Typically the state has to either provide or regulate the provision of education for the right to be effective.

Chapter 5 had a brief discussion on the instrumental function of education in accessing the labour market. Data presented there showed how the widespread mismatch between formal education and employment status in Ukraine, where individuals with high levels of formal education often end up in low-skilled jobs,⁴¹ undermined the subjective achievement of self-realisation. This section discusses education from a different angle, focusing on inequality of access and the quality of higher education in Rivne.⁴²

It is worth noting that it is unusual to include higher education in the discussions of social rights as university education is rarely considered to be a requirement for satisfying the threshold of living a minimally decent life. The right to higher education is not mentioned in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the scholarship on social rights tends to focus on children's rights to be educated. From the point of view of development, primary education should have the priority. Yet it is important to also discuss the right to higher education, especially in the context of middle-income and high-income countries, because of its importance for equal citizenship and social mobility (King, 2019, p. 34).

A few participants did briefly mention issues pertaining to early education, especially those who have young children, but it did not feature nearly as strongly as the topic of higher education, which frequently came up without prompting. The reason seems to be that the university years are the time of life when the practical

⁴¹ In Ukraine at least 40 per cent of those aged 15–70 are currently over-educated for their jobs (Kupets, 2016) and, according to ILO estimates, at least 60 per cent of higher education graduates are unable to find jobs in the field of knowledge they have been taught' (2016, p. 6).

⁴² Participants discussed their experiences of higher education making generalisations that this was what higher education institutions are like in Ukraine more broadly. I am careful to distinguish that they are talking about Rivne specifically, as corruption might be less or different in other cities such as Kyiv which might have been subject to more reforms.

implications of socio-economic inequality become painfully obvious. It is during these years when individuals from lower-income families are confronted with their limited prospects of social mobility:

I: When did you understand this [that your financial situation will never improve drastically?]

P: I understood this very early on. Practically in my second year of university.

(Volodymyr, 33, male, low-income)

In school they might still study and put in effort, but later on they see that they do not have prospects. When it's time to apply to university everything becomes dependent on money [...] Those kids simply burn out. They finish school and get accepted to a state program [which is meant to be free]. In reality, state programs are pay as you go programs [because of bribes]. [They can't afford the bribes if] their parents can't [even] help them with the living costs to begin with.

(Vasyl, 49, male, low-income)

The above participants argued that it is during the university years (age 16 to 20) that youth realise their position on the socio-economic gradient. While the discussion on social mobility often focuses on prospects of graduates after university, in the context of Ukraine, students from different socio-economic classes have practically different experiences of university. In addition to having to work in low-wage occupations to cover their living expenses, these students are further disadvantaged by their inability to pay bribes that well-off students can do without putting in much effort. It seems especially painful that the corruption is so blunt and that there are limited ways around it.

A more detailed description of how the higher education system works in Rivne was given by a senior lecturer at a local university:

We had examinations for the 4th year bachelors students and then graduation in the spring. Out of those who graduated, there were probably seven students who didn't sit the exams. I actually haven't seen them for the last two years. That means someone got paid good money for those seven students. And that someone doesn't

care what it's like for the rest of those graduating. This year 60 students graduated. They all knew that 10 of them didn't attend but got a diploma. 60 students. Now multiply that by two parents, cousins, neighbours. Now all of them know that people who didn't even attend received diplomas. Would you want your child to go to a university like that? [...] Those without money they can attend. No-one will demand money from those students. But those who have money and are a bit better off can just buy it. (Nadiya, 54, female, low-income)

As evident above, in Rivne it is possible and common to purchase university admissions, grades and diplomas. All the possible payments that occur within universities could constitute a research project of its own and the list of main ones can be found in previous research (Morris and Polese, 2016). The fact that this is how the university system works is public knowledge and, as was explained by Nadiya, is an issue that unnerves the entire community. Lack of procedural justice in the university system undermines the respect and trust in local universities and as of recent years deters people from attending.

Despite the widespread knowledge about the deep-rooted nature of the corruption in universities, participants aspired to progress in their educational achievements and felt bitter about the lack of fair recognition of hard work and student ability:

The whole system is such that you must give [bribes]. At university even if you are a good student...you are the best one in your cohort. If you don't give – you won't get the stipend [scholarship]. (Dmytro, 27, male, high-income)

On a few occasions, participants explained why they see themselves as poor by bringing up their personal experiences of being disempowered and discouraged when navigating the university system. Iryna is a 37-year old teacher who perceives herself as moderately poor. In her explanation of why she sees herself as poor, she focused more on highlighting what it means to not to be poor and how she does not fit that description:

P: Speaking of poverty... I am not well off enough to defend my thesis without some... well ... with just my own abilities. Like, I got accepted to the university with my own abilities [i.e. without paying a bribe]. Similarly, I finished it by myself. But then if you look at my thesis, it has been stagnant for years. Yeah. It's a bit of a shame that I am losing so much time. As far as I know, in Ukraine you need a lot of money to defend your thesis [...] The bare minimum is around three thousand dollars I would say. That includes some simple supervisions, to come with some written material and to get feedback what to redo, what to include. I was told that a supervision is about 100 dollars.

I: One supervision?

P: Yeah, one supervision. Well it actually depends on which professor you ask. On how they price their feedback. That's why...well. Plus the expenses for the defence itself. All the restaurants and the dinners, the accommodation. You need to pay for all those people on your thesis panel. (Iryna, 37, female, low-income)

For Iryna, the experience within the university cemented the idea that she is positioned in the lower echelon of society (within the poor majority) because her academic contribution is valued less than the work of those who can afford to pay for supervisions and viva arrangements. The way Iryna talked about her academic career was surprisingly calm and unemotional, communicating both sadness and cynicism about her life prospects.

This form of misrecognition in education undermines social rights, in both procedural and substantive forms, and undermines an individual's sense of social achievement and self-respect. As was mentioned in the theoretical discussion (Section 2.3), Honneth does not fully articulate self-respect and therefore it is beneficial to draw on King (2019). When discussing social rights, King argues that self-respect is typically contingent on one's experience within their community and that a real possibility to achieve self-respect means 'being able to attain self-respect by effort alone, even though extraordinary effort may be required' (King, 2019, p. 32). In Iryna's case, obtaining that sum of money necessary to defend her thesis

would require an extraordinary effort on her part, beyond what many subjectively poor individuals would argue is reasonable.

Having explored how the lack of procedural fairness contributes to the subjective feeling of being poor, there is a noticeable contrast between the experiences of low- and high-income individuals. While high-income participants similarly felt pressured to pay the bribes, such pressure mostly made them feel taken advantage of, rather than misrecognised or disempowered:

My daughter says that in the first year of university she took out of it what she needed. The next three years they [university staff] took out of her whatever they needed. The lecturers knew that we have a successful business and acted accordingly ... She did try [to pass exams]. But they don't pass you the first time. They don't pass you the second time. It is such a system that it is easier to make a deal. They [her daughter's cohort] pooled the money together and paid all the examiners. (Oksana, 59, female, high-income)

This quotation resonates with the idea that informal and illegal payments are sometimes used as a 'street-level bureaucrat's means-testing', through which those who are better off are asked to pay more (Morris and Polese, 2016, pp. 488–9). In this context, this means that lecturers will find out the wealth of their students' families and price exams accordingly. In situations such as that of Oksana's daughter, the receiver of the bribe has the power to assess what the student can afford to pay so as to arrive at the 'just' price for the grade or the type of exam that is in negotiation. From the point of view of university staff, such means testing is the only way to mitigate the failings of the state to pay university employees appropriate salaries. From a lecturer's perspective, this self-administered price discrimination might be a compromise between getting their financial needs met and not taking advantage of the low-income students. However, as we saw in the beginning of this section, this practice still negatively effects low-income students.

High-income participants were further dissatisfied because the university curriculum is generally inadequate and outdated. In essence, having paid for their education, these participants were dissatisfied with the quality of the teaching provided, which is associated with social rights in their substantive form:

I: Could you please tell me a little bit about yourself? What do you do?

P: Well I am a web designer. I am 23 years old. I finished Vodnyi [University of Water and Environmental Engineering]. A useless university to be honest. But that's whatever (laughter). [...] the university curriculum is a bit outdated and that's why no one looks at these diplomas. You have it – good for you. Everyone understands that they couldn't have taught you much there. Self-education is 30-50 per cent [of the reason for being employable]. (Victor, 23, male, high-income)

Several participants, especially those in younger age cohorts, shared Victor's sentiment and reflected negatively on the quality of higher education, arguing that the curriculum taught at universities is completely irrelevant to the jobs available on the market. While low-income participants would probably agree that the education is not of the best quality, within the interviews they were vocal primarily about their struggle to pay their way through university. This is because in Ukraine it is unthinkable to get a job without higher education. Even for non-specialized precarious employment, such as being a cashier at a supermarket, one is still required to have an undergraduate degree. The context of Ukraine is such that higher education is not seen as valuable and yet is mandatory for entering the labour market. Consequently, the fact that young people from lower socio-economic groups still expect labour market returns on their education, and perceive their bachelor's degree as an achievement, is seen as a delusional entitlement by those from higher income groups:

A buddy of mine really has no practical skills. He finished university with a history degree. I told him why don't you go work as a teacher. He said 'they don't pay well; what will I be able to buy for that kind of money?' Can you imagine that! If you were

to ask him what he can do better than others, [meaning] why he should get paid more than others, the answer is nothing. (Victor, 23, male, high-income)

Conversations with high-income subjectively non-poor people were filled with remarks about the responsibility of young people to educate themselves independently, given the poor quality of teaching at universities:

Right now there are actually plenty of options for those who want to do something and are not lazy. Although there is lack of education. Not that people don't want to – there is no one to teach them [...]. The diplomas that are given out ... they are not supported [не підкріплені] by knowledge. But that is also laziness. It is a free country – you can study if you want to. (Yevhen, 42, male, high-income)

As was briefly mentioned in the earlier discussions (Section 5.4), those from low-income backgrounds often had limited bandwidth and time to pursue independent study on top of attending university and working. The poor quality of state education and the 'laziness' of people who do not educate themselves independently were used by the subjectively non-poor participants as the explanation for the 'poor majority' in the country:

You can see that the people are degrading because there is lack of education. The curriculum taught in Ukraine is not fit for the modern world. Maybe it was appropriate in the 90s but not now. (Dmytro, 27, male, high-income)

Some participants upheld a mix of both individualistic and structural explanations of the poor majority: it is the fault of the state for not educating its population and it is also the individual's fault for giving up in the face of country-level circumstances and not persevering to pull themselves up by their bootstraps:

I must say that those who wanted to, they learned how to think, how to work and how to earn. To learn all of that [...] a person has to control their emotions, desires and to orient themselves. But people here they have given up. You can't do that. But the reasons people give up is because they are surviving.

(Svetlana, 40, female, high-income)

Participants such as Svetlana typically had very strong individualistic explanations of poverty, using very judgmental and punitive descriptions. However, over the course of the interview they would subtly concede that structural conditions are severely limiting, but they would stop short of being empathetic to others. This might be in part because they did well for themselves despite the circumstances and attributed their success purely to their individual efforts.

That said, in the context of education specifically, it was difficult to downplay the responsibility of the state in failing to provide quality education:

Even in the 1930s there was agricultural education. They would gather people and have lectures on new technological advances. We don't have that right now. Who is supposed to do this? It looks like our government is not interested.

(Yevhen, 42, male, high-income)

The state was frequently seen as doing nothing to curb the corruption and therefore ensure a just procedure in accessing higher education:

If you want to attend a public university, the admissions decision is rigged for certain people. People who paid are guaranteed to get accepted. That is again lack of social protection because one cannot get accepted there.

(Katherina, 29, female, low-income)

Overall, high levels of corruption in the higher education system seem to be an important driver of subjective poverty especially amongst low-income individuals. The fact that someone can purchase the degree that low-income individuals must work hard for devalues their academic efforts, makes them feel powerless, and leads them to perceive themselves as second-tier citizens. Given that the role of higher education is not only to prepare individuals for future work, but also to promote the ideals of scholarly and scientific excellence, corruption 'undermines the norms that give universities reason for being' (Sandel, 2008, p. 90). For subjectively non-poor high-income people, the low quality of education is seen as contributing

to high rates of poverty in the country, and they blame the government for not investing in and regulating higher education, even though it does not affect them personally as they can afford the time to pursue self-education.

6.2.3 Pension System

Another theme pertaining to diminished social rights was the Compulsory State Pension Provision, which was mentioned by two thirds of the participants. As was briefly mentioned in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2.2), high rates and levels of deprivation amongst pensioners (who constitute about 23 per cent of the population) was one of the most frequently given examples supporting the idea that a large proportion of the population is poor. The discussions of the topic were quite emotionally charged. Participants across age and income in unison said that the pension system is inadequate and does not meet the needs of the current and future retirees. Of relevance to subjective poverty is the observation that pensions have a strong symbolic component of being recognised and valued by the state, which to an extent, affects how people see themselves. Similarly to other post-Soviet contexts (Padvalkava, 2011), participants in this study maintained a socialist understanding of pensions, whereby pensions are a deserved reward for years of service to society through work.

There are several reasons why pensioners are a large deserving poor group fostering the idea of a poor majority. Present-day pensioners have a record of full-time employment and are unlikely to have personal savings as they were wiped out during the fall of the Soviet Union. There was a consensus amongst interviewees that those who have worked and contributed to society their entire adult life should not be living in poverty at the end of their life. Furthermore, pensions are very low, and do not cover even basic needs, which means that a large proportion of

pensioners is living on the brink of absolute poverty and thus has to continue working or rely on their family for support. Lastly, the national pay-as-you-go system has not been reformed since the fall of the Soviet Union. This lack of an alternative pension arrangement reinforces the expectation that provision of an adequate pension is the responsibility of the state.

Below is the voice of Gregory, who is a civil servant working in the social administration office and is concerned that the pensions people receive are so low that many people are unable to meet their basic needs:

Many pensioners receive 1300 hryvnias (45 USD) a month. I can't even imagine how, how they survive (виживають). If a granny goes to a pharmacy to buy medicine half of her pension is already gone. 1300 hryvnia-pension is laughable! Plus if you count in utilities and food I have no clue how they are surviving on that kind of money. (Gregory, 23, male, low-income)

The fact that many pensions are below the poverty line is offensive to people because to qualify for the minimal pension, one must have been officially employed for at least 20 years (25 for men):

Our people are poor. My mom worked in the police force for around 20 years. But her pension was about 80 dollars a month. That amount is a joke.

(Andriy, 35, male, high-income)

My father worked as an electrical engineer. The last years before retiring he wasn't paid his salary, so he had no money. And then after retiring he worked in different places because the pension was stupid (пенсія була дурнувата).

(Nadya, 54, female, low-income)

To make ends meet, many older adults continue working well into retirement. Nadya's father, who was highly educated and highly skilled, worked into his 80s because the pension he was receiving was too small to live on. The fact that even those with high levels of education and several decades of official employment,

which implies decades of pension contributions through taxes, end up living in poverty is incomprehensible to Nadya.

Several older adults also reported being financially dependent on their families:

Pensions are very small now. I do not even have two thousand hryvnias (58 USD). That's after 40 years of work [...] I receive 1790 (52 USD). My husband 2500 (73 USD). If not for my daughter I don't know where we would have been right now.

(Tanya, 74, female, low-income)

That said, it is important to keep in mind that intergenerational support in Ukraine is rarely unidirectional as older generations often reciprocate the monetary help by providing childcare and sharing their housing with younger generations (Zhurzhenko, 2004; Saraceno and Keck, 2008). All age groups tended to discuss the consequent tensions and sometimes even conflicts that arise from the need for mutual survival strategies. In contexts where the rates of child and elderly poverty are high, the probability of intergenerational conflict, in terms of sharing resources between generations, is also high (Botev, 2012), especially given the cultural expectations about intergenerational obligations (Saraceno and Keck, 2008).

In addition to lacking substantive justice, the current pension system was critiqued for being procedurally burdensome. Given that present-day pensioners accumulated a great proportion of their working years in the Soviet Union, any mistakes in the work record made during the Soviet Union are administratively time consuming to fix today. In many cases former workplaces have been renamed or completely ceased to exist. Fixing the mistakes can also be expensive:

The pensioners fund office had told me that they won't be counting the years I worked before moving here [Rivne]. The woman said this is because the form says I worked at a Lenin's Collective Farm [which has been renamed to Tseren, making the document invalid]. Well is it my fault that it was Lenin's!? They sent me to renew

the records [the farm is a few hours outside Rivne]. But I didn't go at first because the travel is expensive. [Eventually they] sent me the exact same document except now it says Tseren farm (laughter). (Tanya, 74, female, low-income)

In the months that it took to sort out the paperwork, Tanya was receiving a smaller pension than which she was qualified. From Tanya's perspective, such treatment was unfair as she got short-changed due to a minor mistake that was outside of her control. Gregory, who works at the social administration office said he witnesses such procedural mishaps frequently. In many cases people are less lucky than Tanya and can be left without a pension for six or more months:

So, for example, someone made a mistake back in the Soviet time. Like misspelled your name. You won't be able to get a pension. Because your document is illegitimate. Then they must go to court to get a ruling that this document [showing the years of work] is not fraudulent. Imagine, a pensioner must go to court to fix a mistake that was made back in the Soviet Union. And they won't get a pension for at least six months, that's the minimum length of time that the court process takes.

(Gregory, 23, male, low-income)

The current situation with the pension provision was a source of distress for many participants. For older adults, in addition to evoking the feelings of injustice, the topic brought up a sense of disrespect by the state and simultaneously a sense of personal failure and worthlessness. For Tanya, the fact that she had to go through so much trouble to get a pension that does not even cover her basic needs left her feeling humiliated and hurt:

I: Do you have a feeling of insecurity in any sphere of your life?

P: Mmm. Insecurity...I think I feel humiliation more than anything. Because people are not valued here. I have always worked 1.5 full time equivalent. Many hours. And now retiring I am given the minimal pension. [...] It is so unfair, but to whom can I say anything? To whom can I turn to complain? It is very hurtful.

(Tanya, 74, female, low-income)

Similar feelings can be seen in the following quote by a 64-year-old Matviy. During the Soviet times, he obtained a technical degree and worked at a large factory. In the 1990s he worked as a small business owner in the informal sector that unfortunately was not profitable, and so in the early 2000s, he resorted to working as a seasonal migrant worker. Currently he has no choice but to work as a night guard because he is too old to qualify for seasonal migrant work and receives only the minimal pension:

Why do you think I came here [to work as a night guard]? Because I have such a huge pension (laughter)! The official minimum subsistence level is 1840 hryvnyas (54 USD) per month. My pension is 1400 (41 USD) per month. What else do I need to say? [...] Is there such heartlessness in any other country? Lack of care and responsibility for the people? (Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

The use of the words 'heartlessness' and 'lack of care' to describe how the state treats its citizens is significant as it reveals how personally hurtful the lack of adequate welfare provision is for many people. Similarly to Andriy and Nadya, Matviy was quite cynical about the pension and laughed at the absurdity that it is below the absolute poverty threshold.

These insights show that in addition to objectively low levels of income, powerlessness due to the lack of options and the seemingly complete disregard by the state for the welfare of its citizens are important factors driving the self-perception of being poor. The idea of being poor in the context of social rights has strong undertones of being left behind and excluded by the state and the minority elite. As illustrated in a quote from Sasha, the poor are those who have been taken advantage of through strenuous work and tax collection, only to be 'abandoned' to their fate at the end of life:

The poor are the people left behind by everyone to be at the whim of fate (на призволяще). I think those are poor people. Like receiving a pension of 1200

UAH/month after having worked full time your entire life. Meanwhile utilities for a studio apartment are 1500 UAH/month. What are they supposed to live on after paying for utilities? This is an impoverished nation. There is no middle class.

(Sasha, 50, male, high-income)

When thinking about the dichotomy between the rich minority and the poor majority in the context of pensions, people typically believed that those in power are abusing the system and draining the solidarity pension fund dry, leaving the majority of the population, who finance the fund, to struggle:

Yeah, well there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. Take for instance pensions (loud sigh). In 2015 or 2016 I read an article where all of this was shown in numbers. 10 per cent of pensioners receive 90 per cent of the total pension funds. Respectively the rest of the pensioners receive 10 per cent. The 10 per cent are those judges, military people. (Anton, 50, male, high-income)

Anton suggested that because of corruption, the amount those in power can get out of the pension system is disproportionately high compared to their contributions and needs. Because individuals can quantify the disparity between the maximal and minimal pensions, the topic of pensions was the most frequent example of the poor majority. The issue of pensions provision seems to be slightly different from other social rights, such as healthcare or education, in that it leads to much stronger feelings of being taken advantage of and thus misrecognised and disrespected by the state.

Due to a general cynicism about substantive and procedural justice within the system of pensions provision, participants openly stated that they avoid paying taxes to the Pension Fund. With the ongoing reforms, high levels of corruption, and long-term uncertainty, individuals find it difficult to trust the system. Business owners reported not registering their employees and paying them in cash because there is no guarantee that investment into a Pension Fund will ever yield a return:

Why do you think we give salaries in an envelope? If a salary is 3700 – you pay 740 into the Pension Fund. That is 20 per cent. If the person knew that that money will return – that would be one thing. But no one knows that. The only thing that counts is the years of work. And the laws are changing all the time. They say it will be one way and there will be a pension reform again. We are not sure what the things will be like tomorrow. What will happen in 20 years is completely impossible to know. (Yaroslav, 47, male, high-income)

Lack of registered (official) years of employment means that one will never qualify for the minimal pension. Yet many are willing to take such risk and work unofficially, which makes the future failure of the pension fund a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The literature on post-communist countries argues that to curb problems such as corruption, people need to change their mentality and become democratic citizens who refuse to participate in low-level corruption and start paying taxes. As we can see from Yaroslav, people have the opposite view and argue that the state ought to somehow make the first step. The issue of pensions provision illustrates how Ukraine has become stuck in a ‘social trap’ situation, where policies that could remedy the hardships are likely to fail because of the lack of trust, yet trust cannot be established until the inequalities are resolved (Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005).

6.2.4 Rightless Majority

Lack of social rights in substantive and procedural forms was exacerbated by the lack of civil rights due to widespread corruption in the legal system. In reference to encountered mistreatment within medical institutions or bribery within higher education, participants did not see any value in reporting the mistreatment because they did not believe that any reparatory actions would be taken on their behalf, even if they were obviously wronged. Here is an account of a 29-year old Kateryna who felt powerless in defending her own interests in the cases where she has been mistreated at work and at a hospital:

What can I possibly do? File a claim to the court? (laughing) What can I do?! I am a small person. That is the lack of protection. It seems to me it is everywhere, in all aspects of life. (Kateryna, 29, female, low-income)

When reflecting on her inability to defend herself, Kateryna makes a judgment not only about the feasibility of the existing system of social institutions, but also about herself. While the discussion was around medical care and work conditions, the sense of powerlessness and insecurity seems to infiltrate all aspects of her life. The self-perception of being a 'small person' was common amongst subjectively poor individuals and speaks to the psychological effects from the experiences of long-term insecurity, lack of opportunities to realise one's potential, and reoccurring experiences of disrespect. Chase and Walker (2012) similarly found that the experience of poverty includes a negative assessment of the self, manifested in a sense of feeling small, powerless and inferior to others.

In the context of recognition in the sphere of rights, the common feature amongst low- and high-income subjectively poor participants was that they had a strong sense of lacking a voice. In addition to feeling insecure about their long-term wellbeing due to the dysfunctional social safety net, both materially deprived and monetarily affluent subjectively poor participants believed that their voices do not matter in the political and economic decision-making in the country. The following is a conversation with Sasha, who directly identified as poor and expressed a deep-rooted sense of powerlessness and frustration that his voice does not matter:

I: In what sense are you poor? It seems you are financially successful, you have the money and you have influence in the city.

P: Well no...

I: I am not criticising you, I am just trying to understand.

P: Okay, well yes I have money. Not huge money, but not as poor as it might appear. But can I say that I can influence anything? Then absolutely no. [...] Well may be in the limits of my city, but we are talking about Ukraine as a whole.

I: So poor people are those who can't influence things?

P: Poor are those whose voice doesn't mean anything. Do you understand?

(Sasha, 50, male, high-income)

In cases of subjectively poor participants such as Sasha, having income above the Rivne city average can partially mitigate the extent to which lack of social rights undermines their self-respect, but not enough to not feel poor. Despite earning a high income and being able to bring about marginal improvements in the lives of his employees, relatives or neighbours, Sasha knew he could never challenge the corrupt system in any major way. Furthermore, he knew he could easily be 'put in his place' by 'the truly rich' from the capital city Kyiv who could 'squeeze' (i.e. take) his business away without any consequences. As such, the idea of being a small, powerless person lacking voice and having little control over their wellbeing in the long-term is at the core of the experience of felt poverty.

Personal experiences of disempowerment were often compared to similar experiences of close friends or family, and then generalised to be the experience of the average person in Ukraine. Subjectively poor participants shared a perception that average Ukrainians lack social, civil, and political rights. In this thinking, personal experiences are merely examples of the 'fact' that most Ukrainians have no rights:

P: The world already knows what we are like anyway.

I: What are we like?

P: Poor and miserable. Rightless. Most importantly, we are rightless. We have no rights! Absolutely none! You can't prove anything. If the doctor mistreats you, you won't prove anything. The court won't even try to take on the case.

(Sofia, 70, female, low-income)

For participants such as Sofia, generalising is protective of their individual self-perception as it enables them to feel less responsible for their unfavourable

circumstances. Yet, at the same time, such generalisations reinforce the feelings of disempowerment as they solidify the self-perception of being rightless. Furthermore, imagining that 'the rest of the world already knows what we are like' worsens the sense of shame and embarrassment as it is now expanded from being linked to individual financial circumstances to the national identity of Ukrainians.

The division between the poor majority and the rich minority in the dimension of rights suggests that the government has two separate social contracts – one for the poor (or average) and one for the 'rich' – and that these two sets of social contracts differ in their balance of rights and responsibilities. Those in the rich category were seen as having abundant entitlements, making little contribution to the flourishing of society, and not being held accountable for breaching the rules that should apply to all citizens. Meanwhile the poor, referred to as the 'normal' or 'simple' people, were seen as having no rights and being punished disproportionately by the state for any small mishap:

Most importantly, our legal system works very selectively. Those who should be in court are not held responsible, yet they can destroy a regular person because of a small mishap. There isn't a strong footing in constitutional rights such that everyone has equal rights. We don't have that, and that's our biggest trouble. It leads to a lot of anger in society. (Taras, 60, male, low-income)

Ultimately, interviewees felt that laws and regulations were unevenly applied, with the fines for the people at the bottom of the social ladder being disproportionate to the crimes committed. Meanwhile, at the top, the consequences for committing crimes were nearly non-existent:

For example, when a rich person hits and kills a person on the road, the rich person will not be held accountable for that. If you have high-up connections, nothing will happen to you. You can do whatever you want. Simple people (прості люди) cannot do that. They will never be able to do that. Even for the smallest mishap the courts will demand such things ... like you can easily go to prison or pay high fines etc.

This is not normal. (Kateryna, 29, female, low-income)

The above quote illustrates how the knowledge that a minority of citizens is not held accountable for major wrongdoings due to corruption in the judicial system, shows individuals each time anew, when they hear about such cases, that people like them are not being equally valued by the state. The inability to voice wrongdoings not only causes practical obstacles, as in the case of accessing medical care or being admitted to university on fair admissions criteria, it also contributes to the individual feeling of not being recognised as having equal rights and value compared to the privileged minority.

As with all other aspects of life discussed so far, the experiences in the sphere of rights and respect were frequently compared to the somewhat idealised view of equality in Western European countries:

Abroad it's different. There, if a person is working in any field, they will get social protection on equal terms. Regardless of who you are. Even traffic violations – everyone gets fined the same there. Why don't we have that? Again, this is inequality. Those who have connections they can call someone [...] A simple person gets caught and gets fined the maximum level imaginable. And there is nothing you can do if you don't have connections. (Sasha, 50, male, high-income)

In a similar manner, participants contrasted the current system of social protection to that of the Soviet Union:

What was good in the old system? Social protection. Meaning for those who wanted to earn an apartment the path to follow was clear – please go and work in construction. Back then one could earn an apartment in about seven years.

(Yuriy, 58, male, high-income)

The peculiar similarity of comparisons with the idealised West and the Soviet Union is the perception that social rights should be earned through work contributions rather than granted based on social citizenship or need. There seems to be an alignment is the social contract ideal of a former communist regime and the liberal

welfare state type which Ukraine has been moving toward. The frustration many participants expressed is that working does not guarantee security as it did in the Soviet Union or as they assume it does in the West, especially as a large proportion of the population in Ukraine are working poor or anticipate being poor at the end of life. In participants' perspective, Western European governments guarantee social, civil and political rights and while the Soviet Union denied political and civil rights, at least social rights were guaranteed. Meanwhile the current oligarchic government does not grant any of the above-mentioned groups of rights, leaving the majority of citizens to fend for themselves.

6.3 Misrecognition and Self-Respect

Participants were not asked specifically what they thought of the Ukrainian government or social institutions; they were asked open-ended questions about what made them feel poor. As expected with exploratory research, participants sometimes brought up themes that were not anticipated and were difficult to interpret at the time of data collection. One such theme was the idea that the government is treating people poorly on purpose, with the intent of getting rid of a large proportion of the population. Here is a view from Anton, a high-income subjectively poor participant, who thinks that the government is creating unfavourable living conditions to reduce the population:

Given the current technologies, only about 5 million people are needed to farm the lands of Ukraine. I think everything is done to reduce the population to that. What will be left are the owners of the country, the oligarchs. They will be well-off. Everyone else has left. We are not worse than Europe, we have wonderful people. But rather than investing in our people, the government is forcing everyone smart to leave. (Anton, 50, male, high-income)

In instances where such feelings were expressed, there was a strong underlying sense of oppression and, in some cases, imprisonment of the people by the government:

We as Ukrainian people have become prisoners of our government. [...] It's a pity of course. The people are quite hardworking. (Nazar, 43, male, low-income).

Participants such as Victoria thought that the unfavourable conditions were created to break the spirit of regular people and make Ukraine a colony:

We are slowly degrading as a county. I think the reason this is done to such a degree is so that we become some sort of a colony. (Victoria, 42, female, high-income)

The depiction of oppression by the government typically included metaphors about violence, such as the government strangling people. The common perception was that the government is purposefully targeting those who are trying to improve their livelihoods, such as small business owners:

The idea that our government takes care of small business is empty talk. The government continues to strangle small businesses (як душила так і душить).

(Taras, 60, male, low-income)

The key subtext of these spontaneous remarks is that the high rates of poverty are preventable because people would take up opportunities to change their circumstances if they were given the capability or support to do so:

I am telling you; our government has such an attitude... They don't understand and do not want to see the people in such a way that the people could actually find their place in life and make a contribution to the country. The government couldn't care less about that. (Elena, 57, female, low-income)

The quote above is also illuminating in that it shows the relationship between different dimensions of recognition. The above suggestion that people are unable to find a place in life because the government does not see them as worthy of investment shows how the dimensions of recognition are interlinked and that lack of recognition across dimensions has a compounding effect.

The perception by subjectively poor individuals that others want them gone seems to be reflective of how the better-off talk about the problem of poverty in Ukraine. Several subjectively non-poor high-income participants openly stated that the economic development of Ukraine is halted by the poor and their backwardness, especially those who are older and have experienced communism. This comes across very clearly in the following example, where a participant said that he cannot wait for the poorer populations to die out:

These people are dragging us back down into the abyss, back to the Soviet Union. And they are dragging all of us down. Cannot wait for it to happen faster. For all of them to die out (laughter). (Dennis, 34, male, high-income)

The comments about the need for poor people to die out were common and surprisingly casual amongst a minority of subjectively non-poor participants, suggesting that this way of thinking about the poor is a normalised part of the discourse.

On some occasions, low-income participants themselves supported this social Darwinian type of solution to Ukraine's poverty problem:

P: There is a very simple solution that would make Ukraine flourish. Of course, it is a bit radical and resembles totalitarianism. But if we take it, the population of Ukraine is about 35 million. We need to take 25 million and poof! Such that only 10 million are left.

I: Do you mean older people?

P: Inadequate people. Practice shows that building something new is easier with younger people. Although, our young people are also often inadequate. They were taught by the older generation and grew up in unfavourable circumstances.

(Volodymyr, 33, male, low-income)

Volodymyr's idea of 'inadequate people' essentially refers to the losers of the transition who are not well adjusted to the current socio-economic structural condition. Their inadequacy is rooted not just in the inability to earn an adequate

income, but in the culture of state dependency, laziness, and unwillingness to change, which in the context of Ukraine is associated with communism. Having a deviant mindset and culture, the elderly are portrayed as not belonging to modern society and are blamed for passing on their outdated world views to younger generations. Surprisingly, there was no discussion about activation policies to reskill and include these people, which are popular in developed countries; the only solution the participants saw was to wait for these people to pass away. This could be due to the scale of the problem or because the inadequacy is linked to who people are at their core, rather than to their income.

In some ways, this 'Soviet mindset' rhetoric closely resembles that of the underclass rhetoric, in which people in poverty are portrayed as having a distinctive subculture that is separate from supposedly coherent mainstream society. Murray (2005), writing about the causes of crime, argues that there are people living in poverty who are 'distinguished from the civilised men [...] who live in a different world [...] contaminating the life of entire neighbourhoods' (p.138). A large number of participants in this study held a strong conviction that people are poor because they are uncivilised and backward:

I: What makes us poor?

P: We are rotting from the inside. Chaos in people's heads. Backwardness. People will eventually understand that being civilised is more comfortable. But that will come only with the change of generations. You won't learn anything from older generations. We used to think that if we get rid of communism everything will be well. Not even close. We need to get rid of that generation. Why did Moses in the Bible walk around the desert for 40 years? To kill off the generation of Jews that were slaves. (Pavel, 56, male, high-income)

It is Ukrainian nature – we want change, but we are too lazy to do something specific. That's just my opinion. We are just not quite there in terms of being civilised, in terms of the standard of living. (Katherina, 29, female, low-income)

People are simply more developed abroad. How to put it correctly, they are more civilised. (Sergiy, 51, male, low-income).

The ever-present comparison to Western Europe seems to be a strong driver of the self-perception of backwardness and cultural underdevelopment. On the one hand, such a finding was surprising because there is no literature discussing internalisation of Western European imperial narratives of inferiority (Nyström, 2018) by people in post-communist countries such as Ukraine. Imperialism is discussed mostly in reference to Soviet times and repression of Ukrainians by Russians (Doyle, 1986; Kuzio, 2002; Barrington, 2009; Szeptycki, 2011; Applebaum, 2017). Lack of scholarly exploration of internalised inferiority to Western Europe could be due to resistance amongst intellectuals of lumping post-communist countries with the rest of the developing world (Budryte, 2016). At most, the comparison to Western Europe is discussed as the idealisation of the West before the fall of the Soviet Union (Yurchak, 2005) and disappointment with the outcomes of the transition (Loveless, 2013; Aleksievich and Shayevich, 2016). The literature overlooks the harm that such demeaning comparisons might have on individual self-perception and consequently wellbeing.

On the other hand, such a finding is unsurprising in that the idea of Eastern Europe being uncivilised is hardly new. Going back to the age of Enlightenment, Western Europeans referred to it as the 'European Orient', implying that it was backward and stuck between civilisation and barbarianism (i.e. Europe and Asia). In the less distant past, in 1985, distinguished international scholars held an international academic conference on *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe* (Wolff, 1994), which focused on finding solutions to this 'backwardness'. A

book published after the conference (Chirot, 1989) argues that Eastern European cultures have a deep rooted backwardness that led to slow economic development.

For example, a third of the participants jokingly brought up the idea that people in Ukraine are poor because they are innately stupid:

We are quite hardworking people. But we are also a bit dumb because we are poor (laughing). Because we can't properly stand up for ourselves. We are probably that way on a genetic level. (Iryna, 37, female, low-income)

There is a common idiom capturing this stigmatising discourse which was frequently brought up by the participants: 'we are poor because we are stupid, and stupid because we are poor.' As with other themes contributing to subjective poverty, this phrase has both elements of self-blame and demands for recognition by highlighting the causal and cyclical relationship between deprivation and actions that perpetuate deprivation. For example, people resort to low-level corruption to surpass the dysfunctional social systems; yet widespread corruption is precisely what keeps these institutions dysfunctional. In other words, poverty pushes people to make sub-optimal choices and then the outcomes of those choices are what keeps them poor.

The 2004 and 2014 revolutions were seen in a similarly conflicting light. They were supposed to improve the life of Ukraine's citizens by overthrowing the oligarchic government; however the revolutions have so far only worsened the economic conditions for the average citizen:

P: What do you mean by 'poor because stupid, stupid because poor'?

I: Because our people will put up with anything. This government is just.... It was supposed to get better. We gathered the Maidan [2014 Revolution] together. But it all turned for the worst as always. Now there is war. Lots of people died. We wanted the best, but it turned out as always. (Maria, 42, female, high-income)

The general tendency was to go back and forth between blaming themselves and blaming the structural limitations for the conditions they live in:

We are so used to blaming everything on the government. We live poorly because the government is bad. But it is partially true. Because a simple person will never be able to get elected. (Volodymyr, 33, male, low-income)

Bringing these conflicting feelings together, it is not surprising that subjectively poor participants also share a feeling of anger. Anger about inequality is typically based on three elements: a sense of inferiority, a sense of injustice, and envy of possessions one feels they rightfully deserve (Smith and Leach, 2010). All of these three elements were presented in the data above.

The observation that there was a high level of anger in society was common amongst both the subjectively poor and non-poor participants. The shared anger was associated with the feeling of being stuck in unfavourable conditions and having no options for self-realisation which was discussed in the previous chapter:

You see, people are forced into a corner. They are cornered and because of it they are angry. They are angry at the world, at themselves, at everything. And because of it they are miserable. They were unable to realise their potential in this country and have quite an aggressive attitude. (Dmytro, 27, male, high-income)

Poor people are angry. [...] They don't have that feeling of things working out, of being good at something. This anger it accumulates. Because people get fooled once, twice [...] People here are angry here and rightfully so.

(Andriy, 35, male, high-income)

I think [the youth] are angry from that poverty. Most likely from poverty. Lack of employment. It used to be that all the sports were free, you used to be able to get a stipend if you played sports. And now you can't do anything unless you can pay.

(Matviy, 64, male, low-income)

In some cases, rather than discussing anger in society in an abstract manner of the poor majority, participants admitted that they personally frequently feel angry. The following is the voice of Vasyl, who struggled with a sense of failure, anger and alcohol abuse after losing a prestigious academic position:

Before I started drinking and before I was so angry I actually used to be quite calm.

Things did not get to me as much. But then I somehow was just angry for a while [...] You see... I failed my parents. I used to be a researcher, but (laughter).

(Vasyl, 49, male, low-income).

Anger is often listed as one of the many common psychological effects of poverty (Ridge, 2009), but unfortunately, its causes and consequences in the context of poverty are not yet explored in as much depth as the inward-directed emotions of hopelessness, stigma, and shame. Based on the studies of lived experiences of poverty in the US, the onset of anger and its continuation is fuelled by a sense of powerlessness (Thomas and Gonzalez-Prendes, 2009; Ali *et al.*, 2018). Such anger has positive effects in that it is a defensive emotion and it has been shown to be associated with pride in one's marginalised identity (Thomas and Azmitia, 2014; Yang *et al.*, 2020). Historic examples of political mobilization and collective action of people in poverty are typically associated with the collective feelings of anger and indignity (Piven and Minnite, 2016). At the same time, persistent and long-term feelings of anger is problematic as it becomes a chronic internal stressor that undermines physical health (Thomas and Gonzalez-Prendes, 2009).

Furthermore, the anger is directed specifically at the government and their social policies, which speaks to the lack of trust and maybe complete disconnect between the government and the citizens:

You know, if the salaries were normal, people would not be so angry. If we had normal prices for groceries, maybe people would have a different attitude. If the government wasn't constantly tripling the utilities, people wouldn't be so angry because they would have enough and wouldn't face such difficulties.

(Katherina, 29, female, low-income)

If I could, I would go in the open fields and shoot all of them. I would kill all of them [politicians and oligarchs] because I am just so sick of all of this. So sick of being constantly frugal. Of the fact that you cannot afford what you want. Simply sick of it.

(Elena, 57, female, low-income)

A shared chronic sense of anger directed at the government for 'not doing what they are meant to do' is common amongst people living in poverty across country contexts (European Commission, 2000a, p. 3; Fourth World, 2007; Bray *et al.*, 2019). Personal accounts of experiencing poverty in the UK (McGavery, 2017) closely resemble the above quotes of subjectively poor participants from Ukraine:

'Everyone I have grown up with was very pissed off and I was too. In fact, it was almost rude – taboo even – to not be angry at something [...] The feeling of justifiable anger at the state of things [...] always led to some sort of blame being ascribed to another group in society (p. 29). It is the belief that [...] other people are deliberately trying to conceal things from you (p.37).'

These feelings of anger and perceptions of being purposefully oppressed go beyond the issues of redistribution of material resources as they are also about the issues of structural injustice, domination, and exclusion because people know that there is a 'close linkage between personal and societal problems' (Rylko-Bauer and Farmer, 2016, p. 47). In conceptual terms of recognition theory, it is difficult to disentangle the issue of misrecognition and redistribution as the two are connected and reinforce each other. For individuals such as Ostap, whose quote is listed below, maldistribution communicates what value the government ascribes to people like him:

All those leaders on EuroMaidan [leaders of the 2014 Revolution of Dignity] and in parliament screaming that they are advocating and caring for the people. How are they for the people? The people are living worse and worse every day. We are expecting increases in gas prices. This means the prices will go up on everything - electricity, water, rubbish and rent. (Ostap, 79, male, low-income)

Ostap shares feelings of betrayal as the authorities are making empty promises, which seems to suggest that the state does not care or value people like Ostap. The lack of recognition by the state appears to be especially hurtful given the hopes that

came with Euromaidan (Revolution of Dignity) to then only be shattered with the onset of the armed conflict with Russia.

6.4. Conclusion

The last of the three empirical chapters, this chapter explored subjective poverty through the third lens of recognition: rights and self-respect. In the interviews, participants who self-identified as poor were asked to elaborate on why they saw themselves in this way. In addition to thinking that they are not living up to their full potential, subjectively poor individuals described themselves as vulnerable to shocks and mistreatment by others in the context of the social institutions with which they come into contact in their daily lives. When discussing the existing welfare system, participants expressed complex and often contradictory feelings of anger, deservingness, powerlessness, shame and self-blame. The feeling of anger was interpreted as communicating a demand by individuals for the recognition by the state of their value. To feel valued, subjectively poor participant wanted the Ukrainian government to create opportunities and a safety net similar to that in high-income countries in Western Europe.

High-income subjectively poor people worried about their livelihoods being destroyed by a health emergency and were uncertain about how they will be able to maintain their income into old age. They also reported being deeply frustrated by the quality of education, healthcare, and pensions as they had to seek out alternative opportunities to gain marketable skills, had to personally evaluate the qualifications of the doctors from whom they are seeking care, and were financially responsible for supporting their elderly parents. In their opinion, it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that education and healthcare are up to

standard, to establish a contributory healthcare insurance scheme, and to have a functioning pension savings scheme. In addition to feeling insecure in their current functionings, high-income subjectively poor people felt disempowered because they were lacking voice to influence the social policies in their country.

Deficiencies in the current welfare system were felt even more acutely by the low-income participants. In hospital settings, low-income participants, who are less likely to be able to afford medical care, are more vulnerable to being dismissed and treated with disrespect. Especially in the context of health care, lacking voice and protection communicates to people that their lives are dispensable. With regard to higher education, low-income participants felt as though their efforts were undervalued and fruitless because the better-off can simply purchase the degree that they themselves must work for instead. To make matters worse, obtaining an official degree does not necessarily guarantee job security. Growing old in Ukraine for this group of people is nearly synonymous with becoming poor. Even those who are currently able to make ends meet often anticipate that their living conditions will be close to that of their parents or grandparents once they age. These observations show how fair procedures in accessing social rights are important not only because they contribute to fair outcomes, but also because they are important for their own sake. Regardless of the outcome, recurrent disrespectful treatment disempowers people and undermines their sense of self-respect.

Contrary to the above findings, academic discussions of reforms in Ukraine tend to imply that Ukrainian people are dissatisfied with the reforms simply because they do not understand the costs involved with receiving benefits and goods in a capitalist welfare system (Weber *et al.*, 2003), or that they unreasonably expect the healthcare to be completely free, as it was in the Soviet Union (Okulicz-Kozaryn,

2014). Data presented here shows that the desire for greater involvement of the state that people express does not necessarily imply greater redistribution or the return of free services. In many cases, participants wanted to see a greater degree of regulation in order to promote the quality of the services and ensure transparent and respectful transactions. With reference to health and pensions, demands were equally based on the arguments of human rights (that they are entitled to better treatment based on their being human) and earned rights (rights are earned through contribution to society through work). Overall, participants showed a complex understanding of social rights, incorporating both conservative and liberal ideas. The fact that the need justice principle persists is driven by the low-income population, rather than socialisation and the Soviet legacy (Gatskova, 2013).

Lastly, this chapter provided insight into how Ukrainian citizens perceive the relationship that they have with the state. Data suggest that the strong 'us versus them' divide amongst subjectively poor individuals is driven by structural inequalities and that power imbalances can lead to psychosocial suffering (Frost and Hoggett, 2008, p. 440) and policy alienation (Heath, 2016). Participants in this study seem to have lost trust in the government based on the premise that the minority at the top of the political system holds an inordinate share of political power and wealth. Subjectively poor participants also exhibited a lot of frustration and anger directed toward the elite and the government.

Similar discontent about inequality has been observed in other countries (Wolff, 2010; Graeber, 2013) and is often framed as populism (Rupnik, 2007). Evidence presented in this chapter emphasises the importance of not conflating tribal populism, which is also based on us versus them thinking, with moral outrage over wrongdoings inflicted by corrupt and inept governments on their people (Blyth

and Lonergan, 2020). There is a lot of concern over populism as it has exclusionary tendencies of group think, which can undermine democracy. This is why non-minority demands for recognition, which are seen as populist, are portrayed as being inherently toxic and damaging to society (Hirvonen, 2019). However, it is important to not dismiss and overlook the underlying causes of anger and policy alienation that sometimes lead to populist thinking. Focusing disproportionately on the negative consequences, rather than the causes of us versus them thinking, overlooks the fact that widespread anger can be based on a desire for greater democratic participation, and for the voices of ordinary people to be included in political decision-making.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Since gaining independence, Ukraine has experienced a significant reduction in poverty levels despite frequent political and economic instability. According to the World Bank's country-specific 'moderate poverty' rate for Ukraine, poverty fell from 79 per cent in 2002 to 28 per cent in 2015.⁴³ Similar positive trends have been observed in more recent years using the non-official national poverty measure calculated by the National Statistical Services, which indicated that poverty declined from 51.1 per cent in 2016 to 34.9 per cent in 2017, and further to 27.6 per cent in 2018.⁴⁴ However, despite recent economic improvements and reductions in poverty, subjective poverty rates are high. In 2017, 70 per cent of the Ukrainian population self-identified as poor. This is based on the annual household survey, in which participants are directly asked whether they consider themselves 'poor', 'not poor but not middle class', 'middle class' or 'wealthy'. Even in the top income decile, as many as 36.7 per cent self-identified as poor. Similar trends have been observed in other post-communist countries in Eastern Europe. The aim of this thesis was to understand why so many people in Ukraine regard themselves as poor. To accomplish this, the thesis was organised around two sub-questions: 1) what does self-identification as poor entail in the context of Ukraine? and 2) why does the

⁴³ Due to concerns over the political nature of official poverty rates (they are reviewed and approved annually by the Cabinet of Ministers), the World Bank developed its own moderate poverty measure using a new consumption aggregate and the cost of basic needs methodology.

⁴⁴ According to the official estimates by the Ukrainian National Statistics Services, the proportion of the total population below the national poverty line fell almost continuously from 87.4 per cent in 2000 to 1.3 per cent in 2018. The official national poverty line underestimates the level of income and material deprivation in the country, however, the reason being that the official Subsistence Minimum level is tied to the provision of social assistance.

attribution of subjective poverty not correlate with income and material circumstances?

This study employed qualitative research methodology to explore what self-identification as poor entails in the context of Ukraine and to understand the driving factors of such self-identification. Data was collected in Rivne, Western Ukraine, in the summer of 2018, using in-depth semi-structured interviews, which allowed for nuanced understanding of the daily experiences that shape an individual's perception of being poor. This choice was driven by arguments from the poverty literature suggesting that the best chance of understanding poverty is through engaging with people with direct experience of poverty (Bessell, 2015; Narayan, Chambers, Shah, and Petesch, 2000; Wisor *et al.*, 2016). Participants were recruited using snowball sampling, targeting two income groups and three age groups (aged 20-34, 35-54, and 55 or older). A total of 50 individuals took part in the study, amongst whom 39 were subjectively poor. The interviews were conducted in Ukrainian and Russian and were transcribed and translated into English by the author. Data analysis entailed iterative inductive and deductive coding (Cope, 2016) using a thematic analysis approach.

This study's topic of inquiry raised questions about the level of sensitivity that is ethically necessary to employ when approaching populations which have suffered difficult experiences such as poverty. For example, in the process of data collection, it was found that whether it is appropriate to bring up the term 'poverty' in the interview before it is raised by an interviewee varies based on country context. In countries such as the UK, participants are sometimes not informed that the project in which they are taking part is about poverty and the word 'poverty' often does not appear on written material seen by respondents. This is because of the 'potential

for offence or embarrassment’ and the concerns that ‘the emotive word of poverty would discourage participation’ (Taylor, 2009, p. 79). To give due weight to ethical considerations, the study was set up in the form of asking participants to rank themselves on a four-tier scale so as to not pressure them to self-identify as poor if they did not feel comfortable doing so. Once in the field, however, it was quickly realised that people wanted to self-identify as poor as it was a meaningful category to them. Many felt passionate talking about it, indeed, saying that no-one in their immediate circle wanted to listen to them talk about it. This finding reinforces the importance of taking context into consideration when designing interviews and thinking through potential risks to the wellbeing of the participants. More specifically, it can be appropriate to talk to people directly about felt poverty contingent on the context in which the research is conducted and the researcher’s identity. See Chapter 3 for more details on the methods employed.

This thesis first explored how subjective poverty is manifested in answer to the first sub-question. One key finding is that people who see themselves as poor also see themselves as belonging to a poor majority. The idea of a poor majority captures the common perception that more than half of all Ukrainians are poor and that an ‘average Ukrainian’ is ‘surviving’ rather than living. The common evidence put forward to justify this construct was that a wide range of people, including pensioners as well as young adults with children, are struggling to make ends meet. Participants used phrases such as ‘I am poor’ and ‘we are poor’ interchangeably, blurring the line between individual and collective experiences. Those participants who viewed the Ukrainian population as poor⁴⁵ also readily identified as poor

⁴⁵ As discussed in Chapter 5 and as shown in Appendix 9, many participants shared a perception that about 80 per cent of the population in Ukraine is poor.

themselves. Because poverty was seen as a widespread phenomenon, subjective poverty was concurrent with structural explanations of poverty.

The construct of a poor majority strongly influences how people think about inequality. Rather than thinking of inequality as a continuous gradation of all individuals and households, the subjectively poor think of inequality as discontinuous and binary, between two socially constructed groups of the poor majority on the one hand and the rich elite on the other. The perception of belonging to the poor majority and identifying with it emphasises the differences between the elite and the rest of society, glossing over the diversity of income and material assets within the poor majority.

The tendency of participants to view themselves as part of a poor majority, which implies 'view[ing] one's self as a reflection of an interdependent self' (Spector *et al.*, 2001, p. 817), seems to be only partially driven by a history of collectivism. Especially when looking at the high-income subjectively poor participants, the data suggests that the sense of solidarity with the poor stems from personal experiences of poverty, fear of going back to poverty in the future, strong reliance on social networks due to failure of the welfare system, and close personal ties to those currently living in poverty. Several materially well-off participants reported supporting family members who live in poverty and made generalisations about average Ukrainians, based not only on personal but also on familial experiences of poverty.

At the individual level, naming oneself as poor entailed dissatisfaction with anticipated life accomplishments, conceptualised in this thesis as eudaimonic wellbeing or recognition in the sphere of social achievement and self-esteem.

Subjectively poor individuals typically felt that they never will (or never have) reach(ed) their full potential, or live(d) a 'normal life' that people in high-income countries enjoy, because of the structural limitations of living in Ukraine. Several expressed distress over having very limited employment opportunities and being underpaid for their labour, lack of resources to support a family, lack of leisure, and anticipated downward mobility with increasing age. The combination of these factors led participants to conclude that their entire life might be spent 'hassling to secure a livelihood' without ever achieving the security or fulfilment that they wish for. Because of this long-term evaluation of the value and meaning of life, subjective poverty captures a perceived permanent inferior socio-economic position.

The inability to live a life that subjectively poor individuals envisioned as dignifying or normal led them to have a conflicted view of themselves. This contradictory view was driven by an internal struggle to give a coherent explanation of their current life circumstances. On the one hand, subjectively poor individuals described Ukrainian people as hardworking, honest, highly educated and cultured, and therefore deserving of a better life. On the other hand, the same participants also explained the existence of the poor majority as being caused by people being backward, uncivilised, lazy and stupid, with the suggestion that people are responsible for being poor or, in other words, that they are worthless. Participants would acknowledge that they did the best they could given their circumstances, but they would also criticise themselves for not doing more, for example not learning English or coding, or not migrating abroad when they could do so. The internal struggle to causally explain the reasons for one's circumstances was present across subjectively poor participants as well as those whose subjective poverty status was ambiguous.

The constant fluctuations between the ideas of deservingness and worthlessness show that identifying as poor is closer to the idea of distorted identity, rather than the idea of deficient identity (see Sections 2.3 and 2.2 respectively). The latter implies that being poor stands in contrast to positive personhood underpinned by a social consensus of an individual being valuable (Versfeld, 2012). This idea of deficient identity follows naturally from the psychology literature, which focuses on cataloguing the psychological damage endured by individuals living in deprivation (Fell and Hewstone, 2015). However, the idea of distorted identity is more open-ended and complex, making it more suitable for capturing the dynamics underpinning aspects of identity derived from low subjective socio-economic status, which can go beyond focusing on just the negative. When analysing the consequences of the injustice that is done to individuals in marginal social positions, this theory highlights that individuals' self-relations become distorted, which is more encompassing than just the lack of positive self-relations implied by deficient identity. Distortion occurs when individuals cannot see themselves as being described sufficiently within the 'categories that exist in [the] social order in which they live' (Honneth, 2007a, p. 110).

Viewing subjective poverty through the lens of misrecognition and distorted self-relations allows for a more holistic representation of participants' experiences. While there is a valid reason to highlight the injustice that is done to individuals in marginal social positions, focusing predominantly on how it gets 'under their skin' can overlook the experiences of resisting the injustice (Hammack, 2018). Without this holistic view of people in poverty, we run the risk of perpetuating the injustice by studying people with the lived experience of poverty as merely victims of injustice (Reichner, 2004).

The findings of this thesis strengthen the idea that marginal identities do not necessarily have to be a burden and can sometimes be psychologically beneficial, even leading to the pursuit of social justice. This is complemented by research on the motivations of the 2014 Revolution of Dignity, which shows that protestors predominantly wanted a better economic and democratic future in Ukraine (Onuch, 2014). The largest age group of protestors, aged 30 to 55, demanded 'economic security and opportunities for their children, and [expressed a] desire to live in a normal European democracy' (Onuch, 2014, p. 243). While this is the case in Ukraine, this may not be true in other contexts, however, in which it may be more difficult to take on poverty as a badge of positive personhood to rally around, especially compared to other identities such as race, gender or disability.

Despite the contextual differences between Ukraine and Western European countries described above, the way in which the subjectively poor participants in this study describe their circumstances is strikingly similar to how objectively poor people in other contexts talk about their experiences. This holds true even for the materially well-off subjectively poor participants in this study. For example, the subjectively poor high-income individuals framed the experiences of the poor majority, including themselves, as 'surviving' and 'existing not living', which are common expressions used by people in objective poverty to describe their experience regardless of their subjective poverty status (Lister, 2004a, p. 54). When discussing their economic success, they highlighted perseverance through the difficult times as central to their experience, which resembles the pride in 'making do' amongst those living in deprivation which has been observed in various other contexts such as Russia (Caldwell, 2004), France (Reed-Danahay, 1996), England (Mckenzie, 2015), and Hungary (Fodor and Vicsek, 2006). Similarly, they

highlighted limited choices, lacking room for spontaneity or travel, experiencing stress, and deteriorating community and social relations, which all frequently feature in studies on the experience of poverty (Kempson et al., 1994; Kempson, 1996; Cohen, 1997). Overall, the feelings of these subjectively poor individuals resemble to a great extent the psycho-social and symbolic dimensions of poverty captured in other qualitative studies (see Chase and Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, 2013).

A key finding from this thesis indicates that the experiences of those who identify as part of the poor majority in Ukraine are similar to those of the minority at the bottom of the social gradient in Western European countries. This observation from the data resembles the results from *Status Syndrome* (Marmot, 2004), which examines amongst other issues the gap in life expectancy between Western and Eastern Europe. Marmot shows that health outcomes for those at the bottom of the social gradient in Western European countries are comparable to average outcomes in Eastern European countries. His study shows that health outcomes are largely dependent on the extent to which individuals have control over their life and have opportunities to participate in society. Building on this, he illustrates how the same reasons that underpin the health gradient in developed countries can also explain poor health outcomes of whole countries, citing the post-Soviet bloc (2004, p. 197). During the post-communist transition, whole societies experienced low status from a lack of control that is more often associated with people at the bottom of the stratification curve in developed countries. This idea of low status corroborates the findings of this thesis about the poor majority and similarities between subjectively poor individuals in Ukraine and objectively poor individuals in Western Europe.

This finding leads naturally to the second sub-question of this thesis: why does the self-attribution of subjective poverty not correlate with income and material circumstances? The reasons for this mismatch can be broadly grouped into three categories: deprivation in Ukraine relative to the standard of living in Western European countries, rising inequality between Ukraine's elite and the rest of society, and a dysfunctional welfare system - all of which affect the entirety of the population, not just those at the bottom of the income distribution.

Reflecting on the first reason, although people in general compare their living situation with those in a similar position to their own (i.e. those who are equally deprived) (Bottero, 2004), participants in this study often compared themselves to those enjoying the 'normal' western lifestyle that is not common in Ukraine's national context. The ever-present and detailed comparison to living standards in Western European countries such as Poland or Germany was an important factor contributing to the feelings of subjective poverty and lack of self-realisation. This stands in contrast to countries such as the UK, where people usually feel relatively well off when comparisons are made internationally, even when they feel relatively worse off in their domestic situation (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013). Meanwhile, in Ukraine, international comparisons only contribute to subjective poverty, as the average Ukrainian is likely to be worse off than the average middle-class resident of Western European countries.

While both high- and low-income participants are affected by this cross-country comparison, there is variation in the extent to which the shared condition of relative deprivation undermines their sense of self-esteem. In this study, the high-income participants were confident that if they had lived in Europe they would have had a more fulfilling and meaningful life. They also strongly believed that their

children would be more successful if they were to emigrate. In contrast, the low-income participants were less optimistic about the benefits of going abroad. This was often because most available job opportunities abroad are low-skilled and seasonal; and can be degrading, isolating and physically strenuous. For them, going abroad was a short-run solution that in the long run would cause a deterioration in their health and familial relationships without dramatically changing their socio-economic position. Despite these differences, the comparison with Western Europe was frequently discussed by both high- and low-income groups and was an important contributing factor to high rates of subjective poverty.

The findings in this study show that while the subjectively poor might not be 'excluded from [...] the [national] customary life-style' (Townsend, 1979, p. 31), they are excluded from the living standards of neighbouring, more economically developed, countries. Nikolova (2015) makes a similar observation in Bulgaria, where the commonly held perception that everyone in their country is struggling was to a great extent driven by a feeling of being less prosperous than people in other EU countries. Sági (2011) argues that absolute standards of living have very little effect on satisfaction with living conditions in Ukraine, Poland, Hungary and Georgia because citizens of the former Soviet bloc tend to compare their living standard to that of people in more developed western European countries. This cross-border relative deprivation is likely to be associated with a lower level of subjective wellbeing – just as within-country relative deprivation has been shown to be associated with lower subjective wellbeing (Frey and Stutzer, 2002; Luttmer, 2005; Johansson-Stenman and Martinsson, 2006; Carlsson *et al.*, 2007). In some cases, relative standing can be even more important for wellbeing than objective position (Clark *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, perceptions of socio-economic inequality can also

have negative effects on individual wellbeing, independent of objective socio-economic status (Stewart, 2000; 2014).

The discussion of Ukraine's position relative to that of Western Europe contributes to the literature which argues that inquiries about inequality and poverty should incorporate international comparisons because people increasingly take circumstances in other countries into account when evaluating their own position (Delhey and Kohler, 2006; Whelan and Maître, 2013). As discussed in the literature review (Section 1.3), the idea that an individual's self-assessment of their own standing is rooted in their comparison to a specific reference group or groups is not disputed (Runciman, 1989; Luttmer, 2005; Kingdon and Knight, 2006; Knight, Lina and Gunatilaka, 2009; Bookwalter and Dalenberg, 2010; Zeidan, 2015). The question is whether Runciman's idea that people have local/restricted reference groups for social comparison when evaluating their position is still relevant, given the increased cross-national comparison because of rising levels of globalisation, mass culture and interconnectedness (UNICEF, 2000; Rose, 2006). This is especially relevant in Europe, where people may increasingly make comparisons across EU member states (Fahey and Smyth, 2004). This matters to the topic of subjective poverty and is consistent with research indicating that low levels of subjective wellbeing in poorer EU member states can be accounted for in part by the fact that their average incomes are lower than the poverty thresholds in wealthier EU countries (Fahey, 2007).

The second reason why subjective poverty does not correlate with income and material circumstances is that people who see themselves as belonging to the poor majority compare their position to those of the small political and economic elite. The rich elite were described as those who have embezzled government funds

and state enterprise assets during the post-communist transition and who collude with corrupt government officials. Furthermore, they were seen as taking advantage of the 'small people', who live from pay-cheque to pay-cheque, by reducing their social, civil and political rights. Due to this comparison, the rich were characterised as morally corrupt and underserving, while those in poverty were portrayed as honest and hardworking by participants. This is different from the comparison made by participants between Western Europeans and Ukrainians, which is when the ideas of backwardness and laziness were brought up. The rich-poor comparison highlights how the rich exclude the majority from their special privileges. This observation challenges the conception of social exclusion in which it is a minority that is excluded from society. Therefore, this thesis finds that the subjective feeling of being poor captures not only differences in income levels but also the differential power and opportunity at each end of the inequality hierarchy. This is consistent with some of the literature on the broader topic of subjective wellbeing, which argues that growth in national wealth must be fairly distributed for it to lead to an increase in a country's life satisfaction (Oishi and Kesebir, 2015).

The third reason why subjective poverty does not correlate with income is that even those who are materially well off were vulnerable to shocks due to lack of social protection. One of the most common insecurities was related to health, as many participants were fearful of falling ill and experiencing downward economic mobility in later life as a result. As suggested by subsection of capabilities theory on insecure functionings, it is not only the current level of functionings that is important, but also the level of security in those functionings (Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007). Subjectively poor participants were resigned and fatalistic about securing their personal wellbeing, especially since there is no legal accountability for mistreatment

within social institutions such as hospitals. The lack of investment in the welfare state and common dehumanising treatment experienced by individuals were interpreted as evidence of the government's goal of deliberately humiliating poor people, or even completely getting rid of them. The participants felt that the state does not recognise their humanity, since it does not care enough to meet their needs adequately. Given the economic crises that followed the 2004 and 2014 revolutions, the subjectively poor felt completely powerless in relation to changing those social institutions on which their livelihoods depend. Therefore, this thesis provides evidence that both a lack of social rights, in their substantive and procedural forms, and 'policy alienation' (Heath, 2016), play a more significant role than income in determining subjective poverty.

Given the above findings, it is necessary to re-evaluate how we frame the general feeling of being let down by the new system and being worse off compared to Western Europe. As was briefly outlined in the introductory chapter, the literature often suggests that people in Ukraine are disappointed with the transition because their expectations of it were unrealistic (Wanner, 1998), they were unprepared for the transition (Ryabchuk, 2012), and/or because they continue to compare themselves with an 'Imaginary West' (Fehérváry, 2002; Yurchak, 2006, pp. 158–160) that idealises the quality of life in Western Europe.

While there is an element of idealisation of social citizenship rights in Western European societies amongst the population in Ukraine, the perception of being worse off is not imaginary. As of 2018, Ukraine's GDP per capita was only 3,095 USD, which is considerably lower than countries often referenced by participants in their comparisons, such as Romania (12,306 USD), Poland (15,420 USD) and Germany (47,603 USD), to name but a few. Ukraine is in fact objectively poorer

compared to Western European countries. The framing of this discontent, that is in many ways justifiable, in terms of unrealistic expectations portrays people as passively waiting to receive the benefits of the transition, underplaying the key structural barriers that undermine a successful transition to a market economy (Kideckel, 2002; Riabchuk, 2009).

As we saw in the data, hurtful feelings of disappointment come from the lack of capabilities experienced and repeated failures to achieve self-realisation in local and foreign labour markets. Despite numerous experiences of failure and disappointment, people have continued to find opportunities to make a living, although they ‘grumble’ loudly in the process. Indeed, the evidence clearly demonstrates that people in Ukraine were not passive in the process of transition, instead developing a broad spectrum of both formal and informal strategies in response to the widespread economic marginalisation caused by the transition (Round, Williams and Rodgers, 2008, 2010; Round and Williams, 2010).

An alternative way to frame these feelings would be to use the concept of an ‘aspiration gap’ or cross-national subjective view of relative poverty. Ray (2006, p. 412) defines an aspiration gap as the ‘difference between the standard of living that’s aspired to and the standard of living that one already has’ which can be extended to include multidimensional aspirations (Genicot and Ray, 2020). Based on the findings from this thesis, this broader view could include aspirations for social and economic rights, protection from risk, dignified treatment and political inclusion. The key difference between unrealistic expectations versus aspirations is that ‘aspirations’ acknowledges the presence of agency, whereby the person concerned actively seeks to move themselves closer to the valued condition (Callard, 2018). In some ways, it is encouraging that in Ukraine a large proportion of materially

deprived people hold on to their aspirations and continue to demand recognition of their value. As we know from other contexts, the experience of poverty tends to diminish people's aspirations (Frost and Hoggett, 2008; Canvin *et al.*, 2009) and undermine their agency. Understanding the reasons for the persistence of aspirations amongst the subjectively poor in Ukraine could be an avenue for future research.

In addition, this thesis contributes to the literature on the application of recognition theory to the study of poverty. To date, there is only a handful of studies examining poverty through the lens of recognition, most of which have been applied in the Global North context (Lister, 2002, 2004b, 2015; Walker and Day, 2012; Castleman, 2013; Graf and Schweiger, 2013; Schweiger, 2013, 2014b; Lamont, 2018; Sambo, 2018). In the context of Eastern Europe, recognition theory has only been applied to study the marginalisation of the Roma population (Szalai, 2005; Hobson, 2018) and has not been used in relation to examining (subjective) poverty amongst non-minority groups. This thesis is the first such application of recognition theory in the context of Ukraine.

The evidence from the participants in this research study shows that recognition in the spheres of social achievement and formal rights is important for their positive self-relations. Misrecognition in a range of different spheres undermines one's positive self-perception; however, it does so in different ways, which have both material and symbolic elements that communicate a person's worth to themselves. For example, lack of recognition in the sphere of work, such as having low-paid insecure employment, manifests itself materially (as inability to cover the cost of basic needs) and also symbolically (whereby someone's intellectual capacities are neither valued nor deemed important). Similarly, in the

sphere of rights, lack of access to health care was found to have a practical element (in terms of someone being unable to access care) and also a symbolic element (of feeling as though your life is unworthy, such as when you are ignored by a doctor, and therefore treated as if you do not exist).

This brings to the fore the idea that material and symbolic recognition interact and reinforce each other, challenging alternative conceptualisations of recognition, such as in Fraser (1995), in which material distribution and symbolic recognition are treated as two separate vectors of analysis. For subjectively poor participants in this study, the relationship to one's own identity was inseparable from the issue of the distribution of resources. This was especially true for low-income subjectively poor individuals, who were treated in certain ways by others based on their socio-economic status, which in turn shaped their status-based identity and perpetuated the value assigned to them by others in the economic sphere. The perception that they are not being valued by society was communicated to them through low compensation for their work, inhumane treatment in the workplace and social institutions, and lack of meaningful political representation. This also holds true to an extent for high-income subjectively poor individuals, who felt undervalued given that their pay and living standards are significantly lower compared to people in similar occupations in Western Europe. Therefore, these insights suggest that in some contexts, such as in the case of subjectively poor individuals in Ukraine, social recognition of an individual cannot be easily decoupled from the redistribution of resources, as the two are intimately interrelated.

This thesis makes another theoretical contribution to the theory of recognition by expanding the conceptualisation of the sphere of formal rights and self-respect. Honneth theorises social rights using Marshall's conception of the chronological

evolution of rights, in which social rights emerge only once there are civil and political rights. This does not reflect the trajectory of social rights in post-communist countries, such as Ukraine, in which social rights preceded the development of civil and political rights. To capture the dynamics of recognition in the sphere of respect and formal rights, the thesis expanded the theory of recognition by using the additional concepts of substantive and procedural justice (see Section 2.3.2). The importance of further theorisation of the sphere of formal rights is reinforced by the finding that in Ukraine social rights are central for positive self-relations, relative to other forms of rights (Chapter 6).

One form of recognition that received less attention in this thesis was the sphere of love and self-confidence that exists within primary relationships, such as friendships and family. Subjectively poor participants rarely brought up familial recognition when explaining why they felt poor, focusing predominantly on the lack of recognition in the spheres of social achievement and rights. Despite this theme not featuring much in the interviews, there is reason to believe that primary relations do play an important role, because familial networks are often a safety net that mitigates the lack of a well-functioning welfare system. In other words, it could be relevant because this sphere might be mitigating felt poverty, as was evidenced by participants who were ambiguous about their subjective poverty status in part because they felt strongly valued by their family and community. Future exploration of this third sphere of recognition would not only potentially provide additional insights into the topic of subjective poverty but also contribute to furthering the theory of recognition.

Another key lesson from this thesis is about the importance of distinguishing between poverty concepts and definitions. Both high- and low-income subjectively

poor participants frequently problematised the idea that poverty is primarily about lack of income and material resources. Instead, they argued that poverty is structural oppression manifested through the lack of opportunities, lack of political voice and diluted rights, which taken together are experienced as the inability to fulfil their potential. Drawing on the discussion of poverty concepts in Section 2.1, subjectively poor participants leaned towards conceptualising poverty as an oppressive social relation and as lack of freedom and choice. Such a view resembles the idea that poverty does not concern only lack of income, because ‘as important as money is if you don’t have enough, it is not just the matter of money’ (Marmot, 2004, p. 11). The finding that participants have quite a broad conceptualisation of poverty that is not anchored in the idea of income relative to local living standards is another partial explanation as to why there are individuals who feel poor even though they are not materially or income poor.

This finding challenges the assumption that the ‘ordinary understanding’ of the term poverty is centred on income and resource-related deprivation (Wolff, Lamb and Zur-Szpiro, 2015, p. 26). In this case study, the concept of poverty is more politicised and broader, compared to poverty definitions employed in policy and academia. This might be because the participants’ understanding of poverty is not driven by the need to distinguish between people who are living in poverty and those who are not, which is the primary goal of poverty definitions. This insight is a reminder that the limitations of poverty measurements, which often lead to income-centric definitions, should not constrict our conceptual understanding of poverty (Lister, 2004a). In other words, what people think poverty is (the concept of poverty) and the key factor which separates people living in poverty from those who are not (the definition of poverty) do not have to be the same. Therefore, while the above

finding does not challenge any specific definition of poverty, it does highlight that themes which are central to the experiences of subjectively poor individuals, and their conceptualisation of poverty, are often not included in definitions and measures of poverty.

This thesis therefore makes a further theoretical contribution by articulating the difference between poverty concepts and definitions. This builds on the concerns voiced by Nolan and Whelan (2011) and Lister (2015) about how the current definitions of poverty are being overly influenced by measures and the fact that the transition from concept to measure is rarely justified or made clear. Despite their insistence on the importance of such a distinction between the two, the authors only briefly touch on the subject, without providing tangible examples or clear categories of poverty concepts. This thesis disentangles poverty concepts from definitions by incorporating the philosophical debates on the currency of justice in discussion of the topic of poverty. While this thesis makes some progress in the direction of articulating concepts of poverty, there is room for further philosophical theorisation here.

In addition, this thesis shows that in Ukraine there are high levels of transient and recurrent poverty, with people frequently describing how they have moved in and out of poverty over their lifetime. In particular, the mismatch between subjective and objective poverty is driven in part by people having experienced poverty in the past and anxiously anticipating being poor in the future due to high levels of vulnerability to shocks and a lack of security in the contexts of Ukraine's healthcare and pension systems. This empirical evidence confirms the view that people in poverty are not a static group (Krishna and Lecy, 2008; Baulch, 2011; Davis and Baulch, 2011). The evidence of this thesis also reinforces the idea that

distinguishing between the poor and the non-poor is bound to be arbitrary to some extent, as there is a deprivation continuum, across which it is hard to draw a definitive poverty line.

In doing so, this thesis highlights how the idea of there being a clear category of 'poor people' is misguided. Such a static concept of poverty might apply to those living in persistent poverty; but they constitute only a minority of all people experiencing poverty at any given point in time. Evidence across countries shows that dynamic movements in both directions are more common than a single step or continuous trajectory, either upward or downward (see also Layte and Whelan, 2003; Fouarge and Layte, 2005; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013; Ward, 2016; Hills, 2017). Therefore, the use of ideas such as a 'poverty threshold', below which one's likelihood of participation in society drops significantly (Townsend, 1979; Ferragina, Walker and Tomlinson, 2013), or class-based clustering of disadvantages (Grusky and Ku, 2008), should be interpreted carefully to prevent the adoption of any misguided idea that all those in poverty are members of a static, socially excluded group.

Further elaborating the theme of transient poverty, inability to envision the future positively was identified as one of the key factors driving high rates of subjective poverty in this case study. This inability was grounded in not having savings and seeing older family members struggling to make their ends meet in old age, communicating to the participants that there is a high probability of poverty in the future. The centrality of having few if any prospects for a flourishing future amongst the subjectively poor individuals in this research resonates with the work of Atkinson and Hills (1998) on social exclusion. The authors suggest that the analysis of social exclusion must go beyond current employment or income status

and incorporate the future prospects of individuals, and potentially also of their children.

In addition, the qualitative evidence from this thesis expands our understanding of what is meant by lack of future prospects in the context of subjective poverty. Previous quantitative research (Ravallion and Lokshin, 2002; Koczan, 2016a; Duvoux and Papychon, 2019) highlights the importance of uncertainty about future income levels and vulnerability to shocks for subjective poverty. This thesis finds that these factors further lead to painful ontological insecurity and difficulty envisioning a future social role and identity. Many participants shared a feeling of ‘nothingness’ when thinking about their future, emphasising that they did not necessarily have a negative view of their future, but rather that they struggle to envision it at all, leading to ‘profound fear’. This insight uncovers that confidence in being able to maintain income in the future is important because, without it, people lose their sense of safety and question their value in society.

As an exploratory study conducted in one city in Western Ukraine, this thesis demonstrates that there are still many avenues for future research to consolidate the findings presented here. This thesis chose to explore subjective poverty in a relatively average city (in terms of subjective poverty rates) as to ensure the inclusion of both subjectively poor and non-poor individuals in the sample. However, further insights might be gained from future research in outlier cities, such as Kyiv in which only about 50 per cent of people self-identify as poor, and border regions in the West of Ukraine, in which 99 per cent of people identify as poor. It is possible that in these cities, the same factors are present but to different intensities, or that there are entirely or partially new factors. Similarly, it is possible that the issue of

standing relative to Europe might not feature as strongly in Eastern Ukraine, even though subjective poverty rates are equally high in those regions. Finally, the data collection took place in an urban area and it is possible that in a rural setting certain themes would have featured more strongly, such as the availability of work (due to higher rates of rural unemployment) and a greater proportion of people resorting to short-term migrant work.

As was noted during the analysis in the preceding chapters, gender might have a bearing on subjective poverty amongst the well-off middle-aged participants (aged 35-54) in particular. As briefly discussed in the conclusion to Chapter 5, men in this category were overwhelmingly subjectively poor and upheld structural explanations of poverty strongly. Meanwhile, high-income women overwhelmingly believed in individualistic explanations of poverty. Unfortunately, in-depth investigation of the important aspect of gender dynamics was outside the scope of this study. Future research into the dynamics between gender roles and perceived social status, especially in the sphere of social achievement, would deepen our understanding of subjective poverty and the influences upon it.

The methodological limitations of this thesis also open opportunities for further research. More specifically, this thesis took a qualitative approach, as the study was exploratory and it was difficult to set out clear hypotheses in advance. Now that we have some insights into the factors contributing to subjective poverty in Ukraine, it could be fruitful to examine whether we can observe similar patterns using household survey data and quantitative analysis. A quantitative inquiry could also test for the relative importance of different factors that have been identified as contributing to subjective poverty, control for mitigating variables, and uncover new

factors. Furthermore, future survey questionnaires could incorporate the important factors identified throughout this thesis.

Lastly, another area for future research arising from this thesis is the application of national subjective poverty lines in contexts such as Ukraine. As was mentioned in the introductory chapter, the official poverty counts, based on minimum subsistence levels, are very low (at 1.8 per cent in 2018, for example), because they are tied to the provision of social assistance. Similarly, the unofficial national poverty estimates, also calculated by the National Statistical Services, are at around 28 per cent as of 2018. Both are much lower compared to the subjective poverty line. Specifically, in 2016, 89.6 per cent of respondents from the nationally representative household survey indicated that an average individual would require a monetary income exceeding 3,000 UAH per month to not feel poor, with 64.4 per cent of the population living on less that year. As discussed in Section 1.3.1, the common argument in favour of subjective poverty lines is that ordinary people are best at estimating what is necessary for a decent standard of living. That said, in contexts such as Ukraine, setting the poverty threshold at a level that includes the majority of the population runs the risk of undermining the meaning of a poverty threshold. A potentially beneficial idea that could be explored in this regard, which has been suggested in other low-income country contexts (Atkinson, 2019), is to set an ethical poverty line in addition to an administrative poverty line. The former would describe the standard that is aspired to, which in the context of Ukraine could be based on a subjective poverty line, and the latter would correspond to the official poverty estimates used for the distribution of social benefits. This could, at the very least, be a symbolic gesture of recognition from the government to acknowledge the conditions that are faced by the majority of the Ukrainian people.

Appendix 1: Subjective Poverty Rates by Decile of Household per Capita Income

Year	Category	Total	Deciles									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2009	Poor	58.7	78.9	73.6	74.0	69.6	66.0	61.5	55.0	47.2	38.9	22.9
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	39.2	20.7	26.2	25.8	29.5	33.9	37.7	43.4	50.5	57.3	66.8
	Below Middle Class	97.9	99.6	99.8	99.8	99.1	99.9	99.2	98.4	97.7	96.2	89.7
2010	Poor	60.2	79.5	70.8	75.5	72.8	68.2	61.7	58.4	49.5	42.3	23.3
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	38.2	19.2	28.2	24.2	26.9	31.0	37.6	41.0	50.0	55.7	68.6
	Below Middle Class	98.4	98.7	99.0	99.7	99.7	99.2	99.3	99.4	99.5	98.0	91.9
2011	Poor	62.4	79.5	74.1	77.9	74.5	68.3	68.8	58.5	51.6	43.8	26.5
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	36.8	20.5	25.1	21.7	25.4	31.2	30.9	40.8	47.7	55.3	69.2
	Below Middle Class	99.2	100	99.2	99.6	99.9	99.5	99.7	99.3	99.3	99.1	95.7
2012	Poor	68.0	87.2	86.0	82.9	77.0	74.5	74.4	62.7	57.6	49.8	28.0
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	31.5	12.7	14.0	17.1	23.0	25.2	25.4	37.1	42.1	49.9	68.3
	Below Middle Class	99.5	99.9	100	100	100	99.7	99.8	99.8	99.7	99.7	96.3
2013	Poor	67.6	86.3	86.2	82.6	78.4	76.5	71.5	65.4	55.0	43.7	29.7
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	31.6	13.3	13.6	17.3	21.2	23.2	28.2	34.2	43.9	55.8	65.9
	Below Middle Class	99.2	99.6	99.8	99.9	99.6	99.7	99.7	99.6	98.9	99.5	95.6
2014	Poor	70.7	81.1	84.1	81.1	80.5	80.9	75.2	71.4	63.9	54.5	34.6
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	28.5	18.8	15.8	18.7	19.2	19.1	24.4	28.3	35.8	44.4	60.6
	Below Middle Class	99.2	99.9	99.9	99.8	99.7	100	99.6	99.7	99.7	98.9	95.2
2015	Poor	72.3	85.2	86.2	83.3	79.5	76.2	74.4	70.2	64.5	61.7	42.0
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	27.0	14.7	13.7	16.4	20.1	23.6	25.0	29.8	34.7	37.4	54.1
	Below Middle Class	99.3	99.9	99.9	99.7	99.6	99.8	99.4	100	99.2	99.1	96.1
2016	Poor	74.0	87.0	85.5	83.7	78.4	80.8	80.5	72.6	65.8	61.4	44.5
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	25.5	12.8	14.3	15.7	21.5	18.9	19.4	27.1	33.5	37.6	53.6
	Below Middle Class	99.5	99.8	99.8	99.4	99.9	99.7	99.9	99.7	99.3	99.0	98.1
2017	Poor	70.7	86.8	84.9	84.6	83.3	74.7	74.4	70.8	59.4	51.5	36.7
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	28.7	12.9	15.0	15.4	16.7	24.8	25.4	28.7	40.6	47.8	59.6
	Below Middle Class	99.4	99.7	99.9	100	100	99.5	99.8	99.5	100	99.3	96.3
2009-2017	Poor	67.2	83.5	81.3	80.6	77.1	74.0	71.4	65.0	57.2	49.7	32.0
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	31.9	16.2	18.4	19.1	22.6	25.7	28.2	34.5	42.1	49.0	63.0
	Below Middle Class	99.1	99.7	99.7	99.8	99.7	99.7	99.6	99.5	99.3	98.8	95.0

Appendix 2: Subjective Poverty Rates by Age and Sex Cohorts

			Women			Men			Age			Sex	
Year	Category	Total	18-29	30-58	59+	18-29	30-58	59+	18-29	30-58	59+	Women	Men
2009	Poor	58.7	58.7	58.4	68.7	52	51.4	58.2	55.6	54.3	65.1	58.6	53.4
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	39.2	38.8	39.8	30.4	45.3	45.3	40.2	41.8	43.0	33.7	39.3	43.8
2010	Poor	60.2	61.8	57.9	70.7	55.5	52.8	59.6	58.8	55.0	67.0	59.9	55.0
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	38.2	37.7	40.4	28.4	42.4	45	38.7	39.9	43.1	31.8	38.6	42.9
2011	Poor	62.4	54	61	73.2	54.8	54.9	63.7	54.3	57.5	70.0	61.8	57.5
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	36.8	44.7	38.1	26.5	44.3	43.6	35.9	44.5	41.3	29.7	37.3	41.4
2012	Poor	68	69.2	63.7	77.1	66.1	62.4	68.4	67.7	62.9	74.3	67.3	64.5
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	31.5	30.6	35.3	22.7	33.7	36.8	31.4	32.1	36.2	25.5	32.1	35.0
2013	Poor	67.6	69.9	66	76	66.5	60.6	67.1	68.3	63.0	73.1	67.4	63.0
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	31.6	29.5	33.2	23.7	33	38	32.1	31.1	35.8	26.4	31.8	35.8
2014	Poor	70.7	68.5	69.8	80.4	67.9	64.1	70.6	68.2	66.7	77.1	70.5	66.3
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	28.5	30.1	29.3	19.4	31.2	34.8	29	30.7	32.3	22.6	28.7	32.8
2015	Poor	72.3	69.5	73.2	81.8	68.4	66.1	70.3	68.9	69.3	77.6	72.4	67.5
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	27	30.1	26.2	17.9	31.5	32.5	29.2	30.8	29.7	22.0	27.0	31.5
2016	Poor	74.0	74	70.9	83.6	69.7	68.8	77.1	71.7	69.7	81.3	73.4	71.3
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	25.5	25.5	28.7	16.3	29.5	30.1	22.8	27.7	29.5	18.6	26.1	27.9
2017	Poor	70.7	71.4	68.4	83.8	67.7	62.7	71.1	69.7	65.3	79.0	70.3	65.6
	B/t Poor and Middle Class	28.7	26.9	30.9	16	32.3	36.3	28.7	29.4	33.8	20.8	29.1	33.7
2009-2017	B/t Poor and Middle Class	32.3	33.4	33.9	23.2	36.4	38.3	32.4	34.8	36.4	26.3	32.6	36.4
	Poor	66.7	65.7	65.1	76.4	62.6	60.1	66.9	64.2	62.3	73.2	66.4	62.3

Appendix 3: Ethics Approval

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY AND INTERVENTION
Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square,
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom
www.spi.ox.ac.uk



Olha Homonchuck
Department of Social Policy and Intervention
University of Oxford

SPI_DREC_17_002

20th June 2018

Dear Olha,

Subjective Poverty in Ukraine: Exploring Influential Factors

Your application for research ethics approval in connection with your thesis has been considered by the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for Ethical Approval.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards and DREC approval has been granted.

If any revisions to your research methodology are made subsequent to this approval, these must be detailed in writing and submitted to DREC immediately.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lucie Cluver'.

Professor Lucie Cluver
Chair of DREC

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet

Department of Social Policy
Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom

Olha Homonchuk
DPhil Candidate in Social Policy
St Antony's College, University of Oxford
Mobile number: +447933714346
Email: olha.homonchuk@sant.ox.ac.uk



Participant Information Sheet

Subjective Poverty in Ukraine: Exploring Influential Factors

If you have questions about any part of this form, the researcher will be pleased to answer

Thank you for showing interest to participate in this research “Subjective Poverty in Ukraine: Exploring Influential Factors.” This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee (Ethics Approval Reference: SPI_DREC_17_002) This form details the aim of the study, why you have been invited to take part and your rights.

1. *What is the purpose of this research?*

The study seeks to understand how people in Ukraine perceive their economic situation and what factors they take into the account when making the assessment.

2. *Why have I been invited to take part?*

You have been invited because you are (age) years old (gender) adult living in (geographic area) in Rivne.

3. *Do I have to take part?*

No. You can ask questions about the study before deciding whether or not to participate. If you do agree to participate, you may withdraw yourself and your data from the study at any time before the data is fully anonymised (about two months after the interview), without giving a reason and without penalty, by advising the researcher of this decision.

4. *What will happen to me if I take part in the research?*

If you are happy to take part in the study, you will be asked to take part in an interview. This will be done at a place of your choosing. If you express no preference, you will be invited to interview at a conference room provided by the researcher, Olha Homonchuk. The interview can also be conducted at your home. This should take approximately one to one and a half hours. Upon arrival, the researcher will talk you through the study procedures and give you the chance to ask any questions. If you are still happy to take part, you will then be asked to sign a consent form.

There is a low chance that you might be asked for a follow-up visits beyond the agreed interview schedule. You and the researcher will then schedule these interviews directly.

The interviews will be **recorded** and transcribed in Ukrainian/Russian. Selected quotes might be translated into English. Only fully anonymised transcriptions will be used in the research and all your personal information will be anonymised. To take part in this study, you must agree to voice recording during the interviews.

5. *Are there any potential risks in taking part?*

Please be aware that the study may ask questions about your poverty-related experiences. The discussion will focus on the incidence and extent of poverty in Ukraine, your current material situation, your background and past experiences, as well as your outlook for the future. If you feel that there are subject areas you would rather not discuss in the interviews, or would like to flag up any potential issues, please contact the study's researcher, Olha Homonchuk, prior to your interview.

During the interview, you have a right to decline to answer any question or stop the interview altogether at any point for any reason.

There are no specific preparations you need to make. We will just be having a conversation about the subjects that my research covers.

In order to mitigate any potential risks, the researchers will ensure that you understand your rights before, during, and after the study. As a research participant, you are entitled to know the key objectives of the project, the potential risks and benefits to yourself and others, to know how the data will stored and used after the interview, and to access personal data about yourself (such an interview transcripts). You also have the right to withdraw your data from the data set within one calendar moth from the date of your interview. To access the transcript of your interview or to withdraw your data please call the primary researcher Olha Homonchuk 0671219350 (UA) 0447933714346 (UK) or their supervisor Fran Bennett +44 1865 270325 (UK).

6. *Are there any benefits in taking part?*

There will be no direct benefit to you from taking part in this research, although your involvement will hopefully improve the general understanding of the nature of poverty in Ukraine.

7. *What happens to the data provided?*

The **research data** and **your personal data** will be stored confidentially using a private encrypted and password protected computer. Your responses and personal data will be fully anonymised to ensure your privacy. Only the principal researcher, Olha Homonchuk, and her supervisor, Fran Bennett, will have access to the research data.

The only exception to anonymity will be regarding the place and time of the interview (your identity will remain anonymous). Due to the university rules about researcher's safety, the researcher will need to inform at least one person (a local confidant) of where she is going and by what time she is expected to be back.

All research data and records will be stored for a minimum retention period of 3 years after publication or public release of the research study. Data will be destroyed after 3 years following the university guidelines.

8. *Will the research be published?*

The research will be written up as a thesis. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be deposited both in print and online in the University archives, to facilitate its use in future research. The thesis will be openly accessible. All quotes will be anonymised before publication.

The University of Oxford is committed to the dissemination of its research for the benefit of society and the economy and, in support of this commitment, has established an online archive of research materials. This archive includes digital copies of student theses successfully submitted as part of a University of Oxford postgraduate degree programme. Holding the archive online gives easy access for researchers to the full text of freely available theses, thereby increasing the likely impact and use of that research.

9. *Who is organising and funding the research?*

This study is funded as part of Olha Homonchuk's PhD (doctorate) studies by the Clarendon Foundation at the University of Oxford, UK and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation in the US. Olha Homonchuk is a PhD (doctorate) student at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention at the University of Oxford.

10. *Who has reviewed this study?*

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee (Reference number: SPI_DREC_17_002)).

11. *Who do I contact if I have a concern about the study or I wish to complain?*

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please speak to the relevant researcher, Olha Homonchuk 0671219350 or their supervisor, Fran Bennett +44 1865 270325 (UK) who will do their best to answer your query. The researcher should acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how they intend to deal with it. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the relevant chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford who will seek to resolve the matter in a reasonably expeditious manner:

Chair, **Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee**; Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

12. *Further Information and Contact Details*

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

Olha Homonchuk
DPhil Candidate, University of Oxford
Telephone number: +447933714346
Email: olha.homonchuk@sant.ox.ac.uk

Appendix 5 Participant Written Consent Form

Department of Social Policy
Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom

Olha Homonchuk
DPhil Candidate in Social Policy
St Antony's College, University of Oxford
Mobile number: +447933714346
Email: olha.homonchuk@sant.ox.ac.uk



If you have questions about any part of this form, the researcher will be pleased to answer

Ethics Approval Reference: SPI_DREC_17_002

Study Title: Subjective Poverty in Ukraine: Exploring Influential Factors

Purpose of Study: The study seeks to understand how people in Ukraine perceive their economic situation and what factors they take into the account when making the assessment.

Please initial each box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without any adverse consequences or academic penalty.

I understand that research data collected during the study may be looked at by designated individuals from the University of Oxford where it is relevant to my taking part in this study. I give permission for these individuals to access my data.

I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.

I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.

I understand how this research will be written up and published.

I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.

I consent to being audio recorded

I understand how audio recordings will be used in research outputs

I agree to take part in the study

Name of Participant Date Signature

Person Taking Consent Date Signature

Appendix 6: Interview Topic Guide

Initial questions were amended based on tree pilot interviews.

Questions were asked in different order based on the flow of the interview.

(Q Background)

Name; age; occupation; education; length of stay in the area

(Q Perception of their socio-economic position)

If one means 'poor' and four means 'rich', where in your opinion are you positioned?

(Q Factors determining their self-assessment)

"Hmmm, that's interesting, how did you decide (reach a conclusion) that you are _____?"

Ukrainian: Як ви вирішили (дійшли до висновку) що ви ____"

What does it mean to be poor/below middle class?

Could you please describe a specific example where you felt _____?

(Q Past experiences)

Could you please tell me a bit about your upbringing?

Has your position changed over your lifetime?

How would you evaluate your situation during that time/events)?

(Q Attribution theory and stratification ideology)

One often hears people say: 'We are a poor country'/'rich country with poor people'/'

What do you think they mean?

I often hear people say that they 'feel poor.' Why do you think people feel this way?

(Q3 Insecurity and deprivation)

What needs are you unable to meet with your current income?

Do you have a feeling of insecurity (незахищеності) in any sphere of your life?

(Q Future perspectives)

What do you think your (your children's) situation/position will be in the future?

Are there things that give you hope for the future?

(Q Relative Deprivation to Europe)

Sometimes people say, 'We are no worse than Europe', what do you think about that?

Follow up: What makes you feel so sad/angry/hopeless?

Have you (are you) considered (ing) going (i.e. moving) abroad? (Ви думали їхати закордон)

Note to self: don't forget to fill out a short survey on socially defined necessities.

Appendix 7: Questionnaire

Department of Social Policy
Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom

Olha Homonchuk
DPhil Candidate in Social Policy
St Antony's College, University of Oxford
olha.homonchuk@sant.ox.ac.uk
0974260031 (UA)
Participant No: _____



I have the resources for:

Heating in the winter	YES	NO
Warm water throughout the year	YES	NO
Unexpected expenses on necessities	YES	NO
Week-long family holiday away from home once a year	YES	NO
Necessary healthcare goods and services	YES	NO
Consuming every other day dishes with meat, chicken and fish (or their vegetarian equivalent)	YES	NO
Timely utility bill payment	YES	NO
Upgrading when necessary clothing and shoes for the winter	YES	NO

I own the following:

Mobile phone	Yes	No, I do not need this	I would like to, but can't afford it
Colour TV	Yes	No, I do not need this	I would like to, but can't afford it
Computer	Yes	No, I do not need this	I would like to, but can't afford it
Car	Yes	No, I do not need this	I would like to, but can't afford it
House/apartment	Yes	No, I do not need this	I would like to, but can't afford it

Appendix 8: Support Resources & Services Handout

Department of Social Policy
Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom

Olha Homonchuk
DPhil Candidate in Social Policy
St Antony's College, University of Oxford
olha.homonchuk@sant.ox.ac.uk
0974260031 (UA)
Participant No: _____



Subjective Poverty in Ukraine: Exploring Influential Factors

Thank you for taking part in this research study. This document is intended for anyone who may be feeling worried, in a low mood, or require additional help and support. If this applies to you, I would like to point out that there are several sources of advice, information and help that are free and readily available to you. If you would like additional information, or a confidential discussion with a senior member of the research team, please contact Fran Bennett at fran.bennett@spi.ox.ac.uk or +44 1865 270325 (United Kingdom).

Support Resources & Services

Regional Organisation of Red Cross

Providing medical, social and household services to disabled, low income, elderly and lonely people.

Address: Stepana Banderu St, 54
Contact number: +38 (0362)63-54-87

Social help line service “Number of Trust” (Телефон довіри)

Provides immediate psychological help to youth, children and families in Rivne city. The help line is receiving calls Monday-Friday 15:00 to 23:00 except national holidays. General queries accepted. The help line also provides socio-economic, legal, and medical advice.

Contact number: 62-06-06

Rivne Centre for Social and Psychological Help

The centre provides social services to citizens and families which ended up in difficult life circumstances with the aim of promoting their early return to normal livelihoods. The centre manages a free help line (63-24-89), provides free psychological and legal help, and welcomes families to stay at the centre for up to three months in the time of a crisis.

Address: **Dybenska St, 71a.**

Contact number: **63-24-89**

Free psychological help “Step Forward” (“Крок назустріч”).

National network of centres of psychological help “Step Forward” provides free psychological help across Ukraine. In Rivne region help is provided over the phone and skype. Priority is given to those suffering from the war-related stress and traumas, such as family members of soldiers, and soldiers and medical care providers who got wounded or traumatised in the armed conflict.

Emergency hotline: 044 222 90 94

“Women’s Advisory” project

Providing support to women who are experiencing trauma, such as sexual violence, harassment, domestic abuse, or whose family members are suffering from alcohol or drug dependency. The centre provides individuals with free access and support through consultations, legal aid, self-help groups, and email consultations for both psychological and legal issues.

Landline: 23-62-00

Mobile number: +38(067)793-46-11.

Psychological services “For You” (“Для тебе”).

The work of the centre focuses on social protection, especially children and youth.

Landline: 43-82-38

Mobile number: +38(067)1626809.

The service of socio-preventative work (“Служба соціально-профілактичної роботи”)

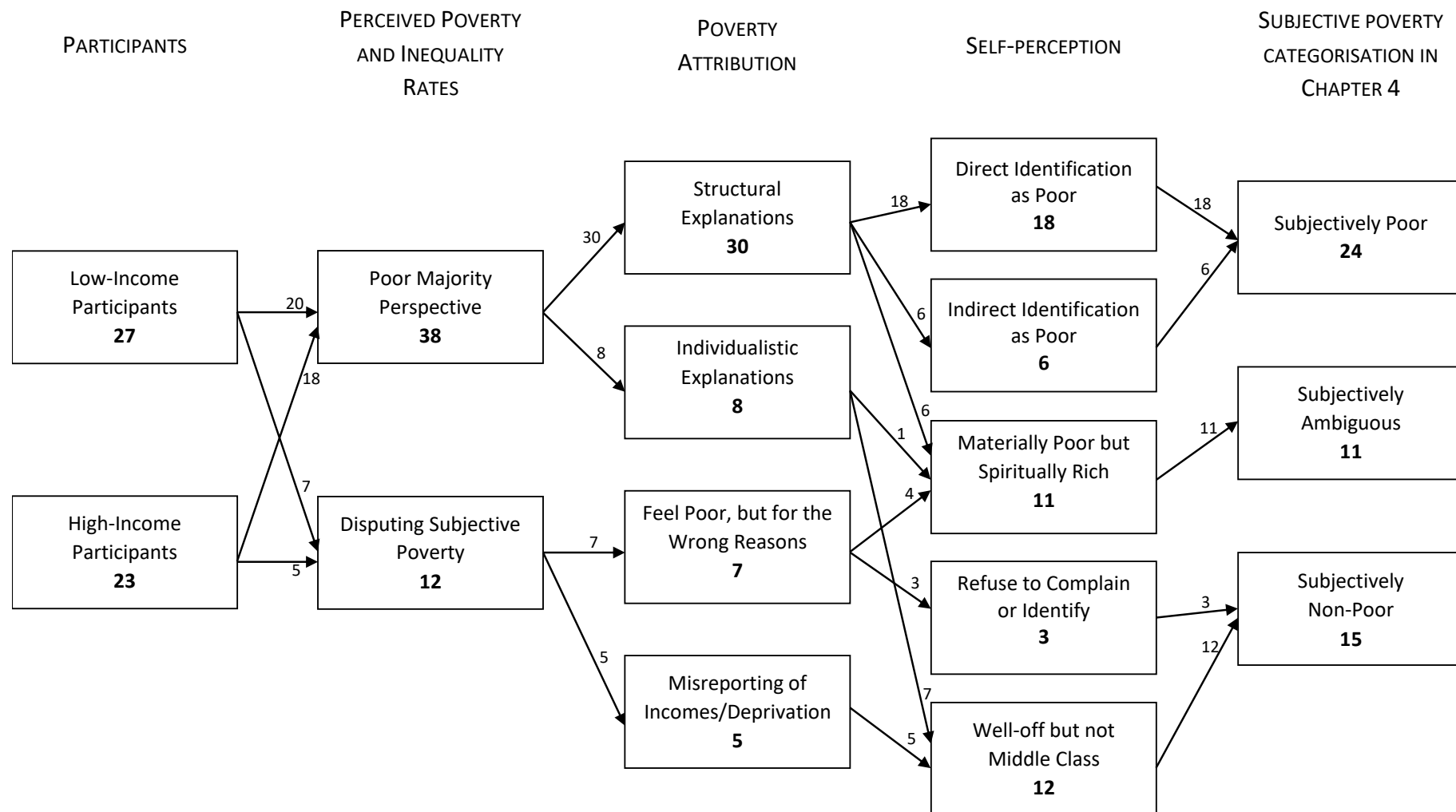
Gives advice and consultations to people suffering from drug dependency. The services provide legal advice (either over the phone or in person) and in-person counselling sessions.

Contact number: 22-14-82.

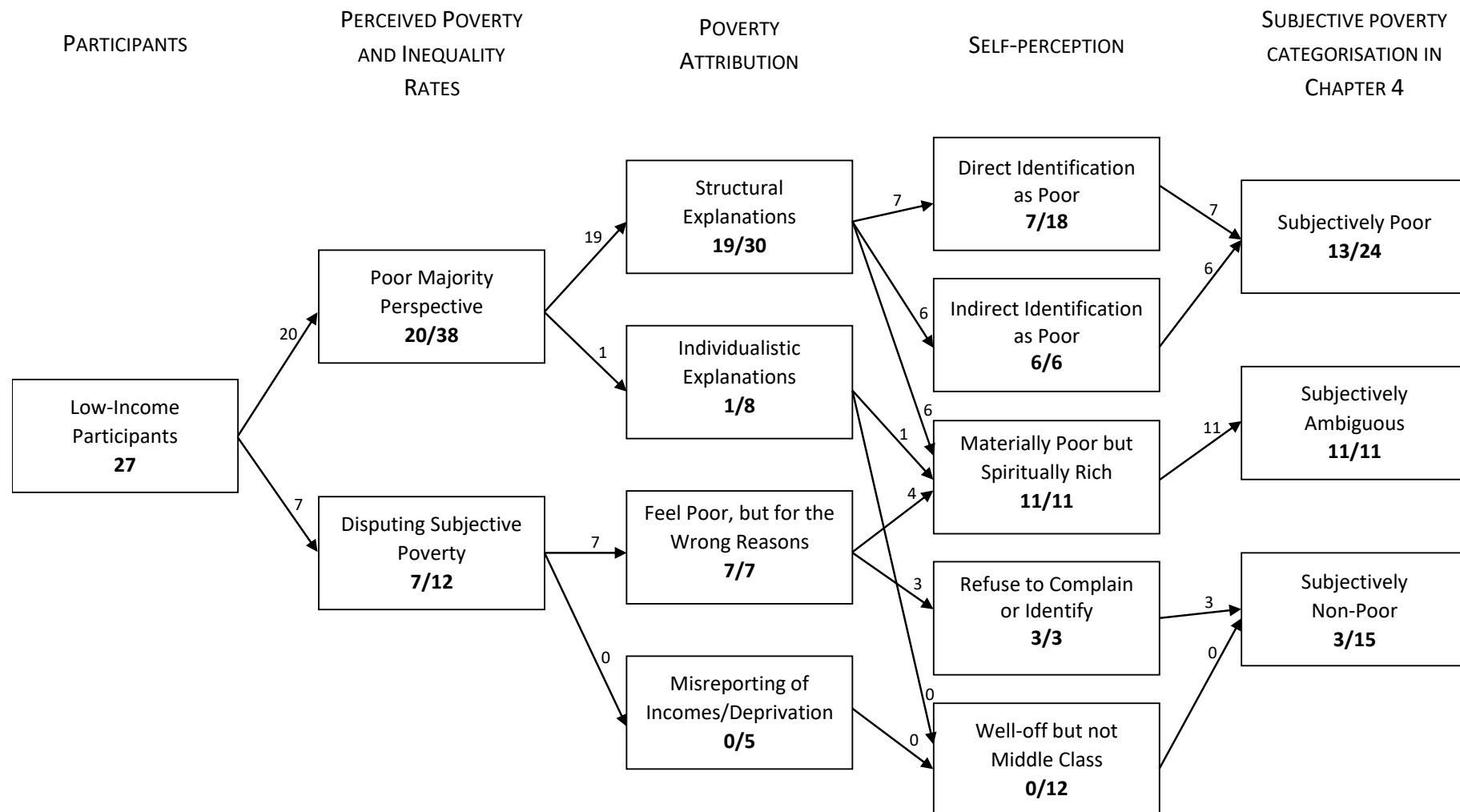
Appendix 9: Participants Self-Categorisation Table

		Age 20-34					Age 35-54					Age 55-79				
		ID	Age	Perception	Depriv.	Income	ID	Age	Perception	Depriv.	Income	ID	Age	Perception	Depriv.	Income
Low-income participants	Men	49BSCH	23	Spiritually rich, materially poor	5/11	n/a	43BSCH	37	Spiritually rich, materially poor	8/11	\$180	31BSCH	56	Not poor, struggling ("Below average because always have to be frugal; with age the need in money decreases".)	5/11	\$150
		13BSCH	23	Poor ("I am closer to one, because we have either poor or rich people". Small salary, lives with parents.)	3/11	\$187	37BSCH	51	Spiritually rich, materially poor	n/a	\$140	32BSCH	60	Spiritually rich, materially poor ("Wealth is that my wife and I sing. A rich person is the one who has enough".)	0/11	\$260
		11BSCH	25	Not poor not middle class ("People don't value what they have. I don't like to complain".)	n/a	\$200	27BSCH	49	Spiritually rich, materially poor	10/11	\$100	24BSCH	64	Moderately poor ("Just above those in poverty; not a pension but an allowance".)	n/a	\$140
		20BSCH	29	Average poor ("I have enough, but not for all I want, like to buy furniture for the house; going with the stream".)	0/11	\$300	44BSCH	43	Moderately poor (Teacher. "Still have a job and health, but no optimism".)	1/11	\$250	30BSCH	79	Poor ("What does it mean to be poor? When I receive a 3K pension and my wife 2.5K". Downward mobility)	n/a	\$110
		18BSCH	33	Poor ("Two, just above one, but when I get old I will be at one".)	5/11	\$330										
		12BSZH	24	Moderately poor ("A bit better than complete poverty because Mom sends money from Spain. Otherwise just survival".)	5/11	\$150	28BSZH	37	Moderately poor ("I do not have a dignifying salary", which is her definition of being poor.)	1/11	\$280	01BSZH	56	Spiritually rich, materially poor ("I earn little, but that is an imposed type of poverty, I need to enrich myself spiritually".)	5/11	n/a
	Women	29BSZH	26	Not poor. ("I don't like to complain like everyone else".)	5/11	n/a	34BSZH	37	Average (upward mobility)	3/11	\$250	06BSZH	57	Average poor ("Average, I always have to be frugal".)	7/11	~\$180
		26BSZH	29	Average poor ("Like everyone else these days, make due but you are always frugal and no savings in need to go to the hospital".)	3/11	\$100	50BSZH	40	Spiritually rich, materially poor	n/a	\$290	05BSZH	67	Average poor ("Average Ukrainian family, it is enough, but we can't buy tasty food. Barely above one, as all pensioners".)	7/11	~\$180
		25BSZH	32	Poor ("The living standard is very low, if my parents weren't helping me I would not pull through. Such is poverty".)	3/11	\$160	16ZMZH	42	Poor ("I am a hero", spiritually rich materially poor).	2/11	\$450	45BSZH	70	Spirit-> ("It is necessary to look at it philosophically and to not wind yourself up".)	2/11	\$110
							38BSZH	54	Spiritually rich, materially poor	n/a	\$160	48BSZH	74	Not poor, struggling (upward mobility "I can't complain given how bad it used to be" and adaptation "I don't want anything anymore".)	5/11	\$65
High income participants	Men	36ZMCH	20	Poor (Small salary, but confident will make lots of money in the future.)	0/11	\$200 (fam)	02ZHCH	35	Minimal subsistence level ("I don't feel poor, but I have no savings, everything I earn is spent right away".)	1/11	\$550	04ZMCH	56	2-3 (upward mobility)	0/11	\$600
		41ZMCH	23	Rich locally, poor relative ("In Kyiv I wouldn't be poor, but in Europe I would".)	1/11	\$1000	22ZMCH	42	3 Well-off ("I can buy anything I want, I have savings for a rainy day, for a very rainy day, and my children's rainy day".)	0/11	\$600+	39ZMCH	58	Below middle class , part of poor majority ("Poverty is when you cannot realise yourself. That is poverty. Poverty in terms of food basket is just wrong!")	0/11	\$2000
		10ZMCH	26	Well-off locally, poor relative ("Poor are those who live on the average/minimal salary".)	0/11	n/a	40ZMCH*	47	Average ("Not rich", very empathetic to the poor and has himself experienced material deprivation.)	0/11	\$3000	23ZMCH	60+	Below middle class	n/a	n/a
		17ZMCH	27	Well-off	0/11	\$2,000	03ZMCH	50	Moderately poor ("Given that some live even worse than me, not very poor, but my family lives of my salary".)	1/11	\$650					
		14ZMCH	34	Well to do for local standards (Making 10K UAH while many live for 6K with families; strong feeling of unrealised potential)	0/11	\$500	47ZMCH	50	2-3, part of poor majority ("I am poor not in the sense that I can't buy food or clothing. Rich can forcefully take someone's business".)		Politician					
	Women	08ZMZH	24	Spiritually 5/4, materially 3/4	0/11	\$550	33ZMZH	35**	Not rich ("because I have not been abroad".)	0/11	\$2,000+	42ZMZH	59	well-off	0/11	Business
		21ZMZH	24**	3 Average ("I live comfortably for my age and am happy about that")	1/11	\$450	35ZMZH	40	2, well-off	n/a	\$15K	09ZMZH	60	2.5, comfortable	0/11	\$1300
		19ZMZH	31	Not poor not rich	0/11	\$450	46ZMZH	49	2.5, well-off	0/11	Politician					
		15ZMZH	34	Not middle class ("I have enough to live comfortably, but it would take me a while to save up to buy a house".)	1/11	\$500+	07ZMZH	49	2.5, well-off	0/11	Doctor					
				> 50% of people in Ukraine are poor				Poor-Rich Binary								
				> 70% of people in Ukraine are poor				Strong Individualistic Explanations								
				> 90% of people in Ukraine are poor												

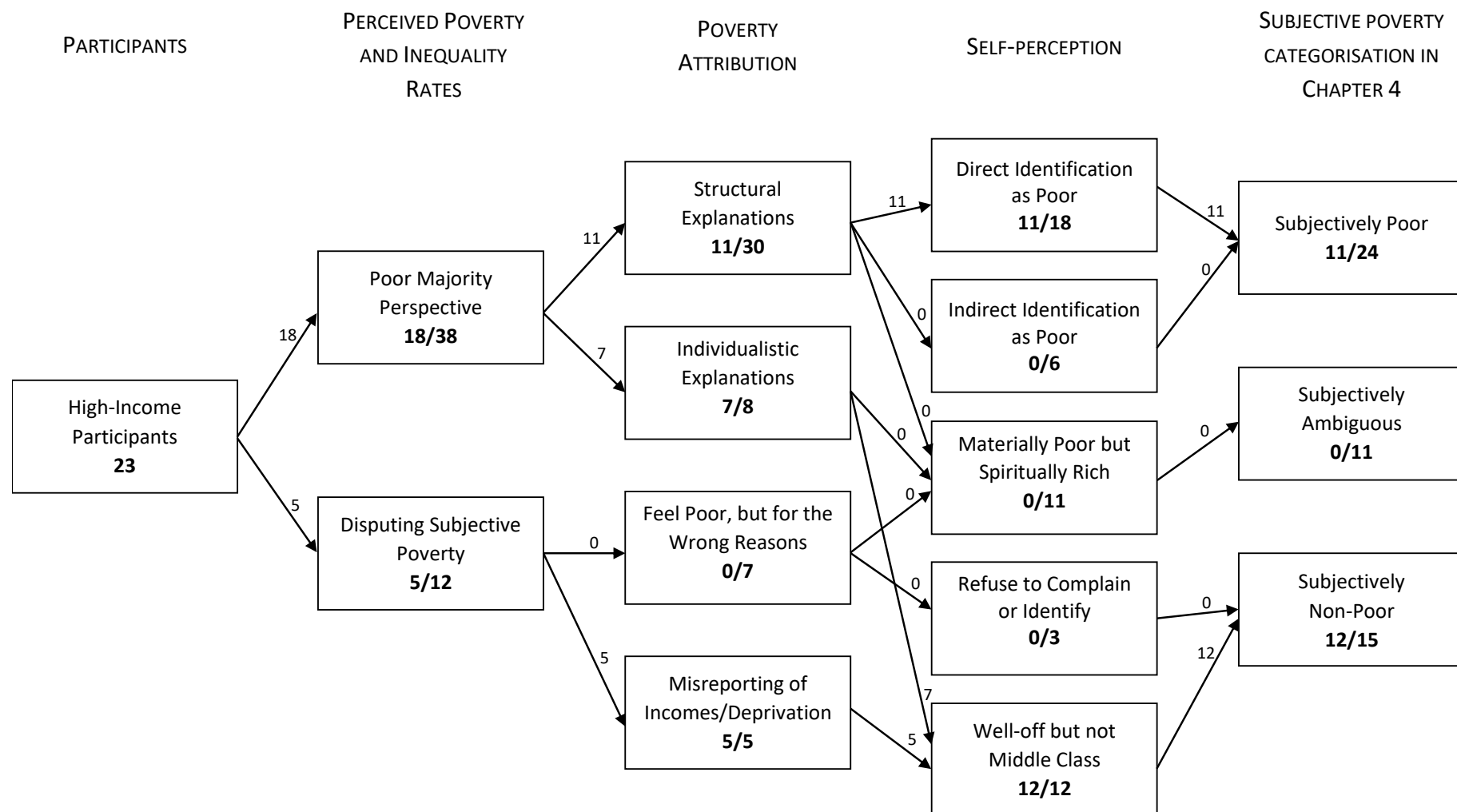
Appendix 10a: Poverty Beliefs and Self-Conception (All Participants)



Appendix 10b: Poverty Beliefs and Self-Conception (Low-Income Participants)



Appendix 10c: Poverty Beliefs and Self-Conception (High-Income Participants)



Appendix 11: Coding Framework

Coding Theme	Underlying Codes
Perceived socio-economic position	Average (middle class but not rich); Average moderately poor (surviving); Like everyone else (Me=We experience); Poor (part of poor majority); Poor (drop in material wellbeing); Not poor (adaptation); Not poor (improvement/mobility)
Experiences of material deprivation	Basic needs (utilities food clothing); Competing needs/frugality; end of patience with frugality; Household repairs; Intergenerational Households; Social exclusion/not fitting in; Surviving; Unmet wants and desires
Adaptation	Change attitudes to the situation; No point of complaining; Forgoing needs (consciously); I don't need much anymore; Simple pleasures
The sting of misrecognition	Feeling of anger; Feeling of injustice; Feelings pained, insulted; no one needs us
Claims of deservingness	Intellectual capacity and potential; Hardworking and creative people; Doing meaningful work; Our people are successful abroad; We are no worse (better) than EU; Structural explanations of poverty
Desire for recognition	
Dissatisfaction with current principles of recognition	
Self-realisation and meaningful experiences	
Future	Can't plan for the future (insecurity); Short-term thinking; Fears about the future; Will get poor when old; No hope (nothing will ever change); Hope (next generation)
Solidarity (empathy?)	Mutual support (daily life); Pensioners; Rural poverty; Young and working age people
Pathologies of solidarity	Anger in society; Can't trust anyone; Strain on relationships; Theft; Violence
Negative self-relation	Self-blame, contradicting view of self; Judging those trying to fit it; Judging those who give up (go w/ a flow); Deficient Soviet mentality; Poor b/c stupid, stupid because poor; We deserve what we have; We blame others, should blame yourself
The 'Other'	Abroad (Anglo-Saxon) (Thoughts on moving; Relatives abroad; Comparison here vs there); Normal Countries Ideal; Russia/Belarus; Soviet Union
Government/the state	Lack of support and safety nets; Mismanaged resources; No leadership; Taking advantage of people; Unequal legal rights/punishment; Unfair taxation; War; Need to change the system
UA rich-poor distinctions	Spiritual vs material wealth; The meaning of money; Descriptions of rich vs poor; Unequal rights
Corruption	Morality and corruption; Education; Getting a job; Healthcare; Amber mining; Running a business; Tax; Getting any official documents
Inequality	Abyss between the rich and the poor; No middle class (poor majority); Rich country poor people; UA not as poor as people say
The instance of misrecognition	Being underpaid for work; Inferior treatment abroad; No legal rights; Not seen/treated as a person
Feeling constrained	Forced into corruption; Feeling stuck/no mobility; Forced to go abroad
Insecurity	Dollar/price fluctuations; Health (related to state); Lack of assets and savings; Legal rights (related to state); Retirement (related to future)
Work	Discrimination (age and gender); European work standards but UA treatment; Time off (lack of time off, being tired, quitting job to have time off); Living of a salary/no savings/low pay; Multiple jobs; Instability (in jobs and in income); Working abroad
Additional	"90s are back"; Alcoholism; Religion; Gender Roles; Past experiences of poverty

Bibliography

- Abanokova, K., Dang, H.-A. and Lokshin, M. (2020) 'The Important Role of Equivalence Scales: Household Size, Composition, and Poverty Dynamics in Russia', *IZA Institute of Labour Economics Discussion Paper Series*, (No 13043).
- Abdul-Quader, A. S. *et al.* (2006) 'Implementation and analysis of respondent driven sampling: Lessons learned from the field', *Journal of Urban Health*, 83(7 SUPPL.), pp. 1–6. doi: 10.1007/s11524-006-9108-8.
- Abe, A. and Pantazis, C. (2014) 'Comparing Public Perceptions of the Necessities of Life across Two Societies: Japan and the United Kingdom', *Social Policy & Society*, 13(1), pp. 69–88. doi: 10.1017/S1474746413000420.
- Akerlof, G. A. and Kranton, R. E. (2000) 'Economics and Identity', *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(3), pp. 715–753.
- Alcock, P. (2006) *Understanding poverty*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Aleksievich, S. and Shayevich, B. (2016) *Second-Hand Time*. Fitzcarraldo Editions.
- Alem, Y., Köhlin, G. and Stage, J. (2014) 'The persistence of subjective poverty in urban ethiopia', *World Development*, 56, pp. 51–61. doi: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.10.017.
- Alexander, J. C. *et al.* (2004) *Cultural trauma and collective identity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Ali, S. *et al.* (2018) "Feeling Less Than a Second Class Citizen": Examining the Emotional Consequences of Poverty in New York City', *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(10), pp. 2781–2805. doi: 10.1177/0192513X18760348.
- Alkire, S. (2005) *Valuing Freedoms: Sen's Capability Approach and Poverty Reduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alkire, S. and Santos, M. (2010) *Acute Multidimensional Poverty: A new index for developing countries*. 38. Oxford.
- Anders, Å. (2014) 'Oligarchs , Corruption , and European Integration', *Journal of Democracy*, 25(3), pp. 64–73.
- Anderson, E. S. (1999) 'What is the Point of Equality?', *Ethics*, 109(2), pp. 287–337.
- Anderson, S. C. (2017) 'Liberalism and recognition', in Dean, M. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Hegel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 767–786. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199355228.013.36.
- Applebaum, A. (2017) *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*. New York: Doubleday.
- Arneson, R. (1989) 'Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare', *Philosophical Studies*, 56, pp. 77–93.
- Ashford, E. (2007) 'The Duties Imposed by the Human Right to Basic Necessities', in Pogge, T. (ed.) *Freedom From Poverty as a Human Right*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Atkinson, A. (2019) *Measuring Poverty Around the World*. Woodstock, UK: Princeton University Press.
- Atkinson, A. and Hills, J. (1998) *Exclusion, Employment and Opportunity*. London. Available at: <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cp/Paper4.PDF>.
- Audet, J. and d'Amboise, G. (2001) 'The multi-site study: An innovative research

- methodology', *The Qualitative Report*, 6(2), pp. 1–18.
- Baggott, R. (2016) 'Healthcare', in Alcock, P. et al. (eds) *The Student's Companion to Social Policy*. 5th edn. Chichester, England: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Baldini, M., Peragine, V. and Silvestri, L. (2018) 'Quality of government and subjective poverty in Europe', *CESifo Economic Studies*, 64(3), pp. 371–395. doi: 10.1093/cesifo/ix023.
- Bantebya Kyomuhendo, G. (2016) 'Indignity in Cash Transfers: The Senior Citizen's Grant in Uganda', *The International Journal of Social Quality*, 6(2), pp. 71–88. doi: 10.3167/IJSQ.2016.060206.
- Barrington, L. W. (2009) *After Independence: Making and Protecting the Nation in Postcolonial and Postcommunist States*. University of Michigan Press.
- Baulch, B. (ed.) (2011) *Why Poverty Persists: Poverty Dynamics in Asia and Africa*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Baxter, P. and Jack, S. (2008) 'Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers', *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), pp. 544–559.
- Bazylevych, M. (2009) 'Who is Responsible for Our Health? Changing Concepts of State and the Individual in Post-Soviet Ukraine', *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 27(1), pp. 65–75. Available at: <http://www.scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/aeer/article/download/267/343%5Cnhttp://www.scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/aeer/article/viewArticle/267>.
- Beauchemin, C. and González-Ferrer, A. (2011) 'Sampling international migrants with origin-based snowballing method: New evidence on biases and limitations', *Demographic Research*, 25, pp. 103–134. doi: 10.4054/DemRes.2011.25.3.
- Beduk, S. (2018) 'Missing the Unhealthy? Examining Empirical Validity of Material Deprivation Indices (MDIs) Using a Partial', *Social Indicators Research*. Springer Netherlands, 135(1), pp. 91–115. doi: 10.1007/s11205-016-1483-2.
- Behar, R. (2014) *The vulnerable observer: Anthropology that breaks your heart*. Beacon Press.
- Bengtsson, T. and Fynbo, L. (2018) 'Analysing the significance of silence in qualitative interviewing: questioning and shifting power relations', *Qualitative Research*, 18(1), pp. 19–35. doi: 10.1177/1468794117694220.
- Benhabib (2002) 'The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era', *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 30(1), pp. 84–86. doi: 10.1177/0196859905280956.
- Benjamin, D. J., Choi, J. J. and Strickland, J. A. (2010) 'Social identity and preferences', *American Economic Review*, 100(4), pp. 1913–1928.
- Bennett, F. (2013) 'Researching Within-Household Distribution: Overview, Developments, Debates, and Methodological Challenges', *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 75(3), pp. 582–597. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23440902>.
- Berdahl, D. (2008) 'The Spirit of Capitalism and the Boundaries of Citizenship in Post-Wall Germany', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 47(02), pp. 235–251. doi: 10.1017/s0010417505000125.
- Beresford, P. et al. (1999) *Poverty first hand: Poor people speak for themselves*. London: Child Poverty Action Group.

- Berting, J. and Villain-Gandossi, C. (2001) 'The significance of collective identities in intergroup relations', *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 11(1), pp. 11–42.
- Biewen, M. (2014) 'Poverty persistence and poverty dynamics', *IZA World of Labor*, (November), pp. 1–10. doi: 10.15185/izawol.103.
- Birch, M. and Miller, T. (2000) 'Inviting intimacy: The interview as therapeutic opportunity', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(3), pp. 189–202. doi: 10.1080/13645570050083689.
- Bird, C. (2018) 'The Theory and Politics of Recognition', in Olsaretti, S. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Redistributive Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–22. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199645121.013.11.
- Blanchflower, D. and Oswald, A. (2002) 'Well-being over time in Britain and the USA', *Journal of Public Economics*, 88(7–8), pp. 1359–1386.
- Blanchflower, D. and Oswald, A. J. (2008) 'Is well-being U-shaped over the life cycle?', *Social Science & Medicine*, 66(8), pp. 1733–1749.
- Blyth, M. and Lonergan, E. (2020) *Angrynomics*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Agenda Publishing.
- Bonikowski, B. (2017) 'Ethno-nationalist populism and the mobilization of collective resentment', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68(S1). doi: 10.1111/1468-4446.12325.
- Bonoli, G. (2005) 'The Politics of the New Social Policies: Providing Coverage Against New Social Risks in Mature Welfare States', *Policy & Politics*, 33, pp. 431–449.
- Bookwalter, J. T. and Dalenberg, D. R. (2010) 'Relative to what or whom? The importance of norms and relative standing to well-being in South Africa', *World Development*, 38(3), pp. 345–355.
- Borman, D. A. (2009) 'Labour, exchange and recognition: Marx contra Honneth', *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 35(8), pp. 935–959. doi: 10.1177/0191453709340637.
- Botev, N. (2012) 'Population ageing in Central and Eastern Europe and its demographic and social context', *Critical Positions in Ageing Research*, 9, pp. 69–79. doi: 10.1007/s10433-012-0217-9.
- Bottero, W. (2004) 'Class identities and the identity of class', *Sociology*, 38(5), pp. 985–1003.
- Bouzenita, A. and Boulanouar, A. (2016) 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs: An Islamic critique', *Intellectual Discourse*, 24(1), pp. 59–81.
- Bradshaw, J. and Finch, N. (2003) 'Overlaps in dimensions of poverty', *Journal of Social Policy*. Cambridge University Press, 32(4), pp. 513–525.
- Brand, A.-C. and Barón, B. M. (2013) *Extreme poverty is violence Breaking the silence searching for peace*. Vauréal, France.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77–101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.
- Bray, R. et al. (2019) *The hidden dimensions of poverty*.
- Brewer, M. B. (2016) 'The Many Faces of Social Identity: Implications for Political Psychology', *International Society of Political Psychology*, 22(1), pp. 115–125.
- Brewer, M. B. and Chen, Y. R. (2007) 'Where (Who) are collectives in collectivism? Toward conceptual clarification of individualism and collectivism', *Psychological Review*,

- 114(1), pp. 133–151. doi: 10.1037/0033-295X.114.1.133.
- Broom, A., Hand, K. and Tovey, P. (2009) 'The role of gender, environment and individual biography in shaping qualitative interview data', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12(1), pp. 51–65. doi: 10.1080/13645570701606028.
- Brück, T. and Lehmann, H. (2012) 'Introduction', in *In the Grip of Transition: Economic and Social Consequences of Restructuring in Russia and Ukraine*. Springer, pp. 1–6.
- Brudney, D. (2010) 'Producing of Others', in Schmidt am Busch, H.-C. and Zurn, C. F. (eds) *The Philosophy of Recognition*. Lexington Books.
- Budryte, D. (2016) 'Decolonization of Trauma and Memory Politics: Insights from Eastern Europe', *Humanities*, 5(1), p. 7. doi: 10.3390/h5010007.
- Bulakh, T. (2014) *A spell of glamour: consumer practices in post-soviet Ukraine*. Indiana University.
- Bullock, H. E. and Reppond, H. A. (2018) 'Of "takers" and "makers": A Social Psychological Analysis of Class and Classism', in Hammack, P. L. (ed.) *Oxford Handbook of Social Psychology and Social Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 223–244. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199938735.013.26.
- Butler, J. (1997) 'Merely Cultural', *Social Text*, 15(3–4), pp. 265–277.
- Buttler, F. (2013) *What determines subjective poverty? An evaluation of the link between relative income poverty measures and subjective economic stress within the EU, Pre-prints of the DFG Research Unit 'Horizontal Europeanization'*.
- Byrne, M. M. (2001) 'Evaluating the findings of qualitative research', *AORN journal*, 73(3), pp. 703–706.
- Caldwell, M. L. (2004) *Not by bread alone: social support in the new Russia*. University of California Press.
- Callard, A. (2018) *Aspiration: the agency of becoming*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, T. (2007) 'Poverty as a Violation of Human Rights: Inhumanity or Injustice', in Pogge, T. (ed.) *Freedom From Poverty as A Human Right*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Canvin, K. et al. (2009) 'Tales of the unexpected? Hidden resilience in poor households in Britain', *Socail Science and Medicine*, 69, pp. 238–245. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2009.05.009.
- Carletto, G. and Zezza, A. (2006) 'Being poor, feeling poorer: Combining objective and subjective measures of welfare in Albania', *The Journal of Development Studies*, 42(5), pp. 739–760. doi: 10.1080/00220380600741896.
- Carruthers, B. G. and Ariovich, L. (2010) *Money and credit: a sociological approach*. (Vol. 6.). Polity.
- Castleman, T. (2013) *Human Recognition and Economic Development: An Introduction and Theoretical Model*. Available at: <http://www.ophi.org.uk> (Accessed: 10 February 2019).
- Center of Social Expertise (2011) *Assessing the Social Impacts of the Economic Crisis in Ukraine*.
- Cerami, Alfio; Vanhuyse, P. (2009) *Post-communist welfare pathways: Theorizing Social Policy Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave

Macmillan.

- Chan, T. W. and Goldthorpe, J. H. (2004) 'Is there a status order in contemporary british society? Evidence from the occupational structure of friendship', *European Sociological Review*, 20(5), pp. 383–401. doi: 10.1093/esr/jch033.
- Charmaz, K. (2008) 'Views from the Margins: Voices, Silences, and Suffering', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 5(1), pp. 7–18. doi: 10.1080/14780880701863518.
- Chase, E. and Bantebya-Kyomuhendo, G. (2013) *Poverty and shame : global experiences*.
- Chase, E. and Walker, R. (2012) 'The Co-construction of Shame in the Context of Poverty: Beyond a Threat to the Social Bond', *Sociology*, 47(4), pp. 739–754. doi: 10.1177/0038038512453796.
- Cheryan, S. et al. (2009) 'Ambient Belonging: How Stereotypical Cues Impact Gender Participation in Computer Science', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 97(6), pp. 1045–1060. doi: 10.1037/a0016239.
- Chiot, D. (1989) *The Origins of backwardness in Eastern Europe: economics and politics from the Middle Ages until the early twentieth century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Cohen, G. A. (1989) 'On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice', *Ethics*, 99(4), pp. 93–131. doi: 10.4324/9781315236322-8.
- Cohen, J. R. (1997) 'Poverty: Talk, Identity, and Action', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(1), pp. 71–92. Available at: <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:7218/doi/pdf/10.1177/107780049700300104> (Accessed: 1 March 2019).
- Cohen, N. and Arieli, T. (2011) 'Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling', *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(4), pp. 423–435. doi: 10.1177/0022343311405698.
- Connolly, J. (2016) 'Honneth on work and recognition: A rejoinder from feminist political economy', *Thesis Eleven*, 134(1), pp. 89–106. doi: 10.1177/0725513616646013.
- Cook, L. (2010) 'Eastern Europe and Russia', in Castles, F. et al. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 69–83. doi: 10.2307/j.ctt32b13r.10.
- Cooper, K. and Stewart, K. (2013) *Does Money Affect Children's Outcomes? A Systematic Review*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Cooper, K. and Stewart, K. (2017) *Does money affect children's outcomes? An update*.
- Cope, M. (2016) "'Interpreting and Communicating" Qualitative Research', in *Coding Qualitative Data*, pp. 279–294.
- Cornes, M. et al. (2019) 'Working Together to Address Multiple Exclusion Homelessness', *Social Policy & Society*. Cambridge University Press, 10(4), pp. 513–522. doi: 10.1017/S1474746411000261.
- Daly, M. (2005) 'Changing family life in Europe: Significance for state and society', *European Societies*, 7(3), pp. 379–398. doi: 10.1080/14616690500194001.
- Daly, M. (2017) 'Money-Related Meanings and Practices in Low-Income and Poor Families', *Sociology*, 51(2), pp. 450–465. doi: 10.1177/0038038515616355.
- Davis, P. and Baulch, B. (2011) 'Parallel Realities: Exploring Poverty Dynamics Using Mixed

- Methods in Rural Bangladesh', *The Journal of Development Studies*, 47(1), pp. 118–142. doi: 10.1080/00220388.2010.492860.
- Dean, H. (2015) *Social Rights and Human Welfare*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. doi: 10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004.
- Dean, H. and Platt, L. (2016) *Social advantage and disadvantage*. Oxford University Press.
- DeJong, J. *et al.* (2009) 'Ethical considerations in HIV/AIDS biobehavioral surveys that use respondent-driven sampling: Illustrations from Lebanon', *American Journal of Public Health*, 99(9), pp. 1562–1567. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2008.144832.
- Delhey, J. and Kohler, U. (2006) 'From nationally bounded to Pan-European inequalities? On the importance of foreign countries as reference groups', *European Sociological Review*, 22(2), pp. 125–140. doi: 10.1093/esr/jci047.
- Denermark, B. (2002) *Explaining Society: critical realism in the social sciences*. London: Routledge.
- Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (2011) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Fourth. London: Sage Publications.
- Deranty, J.-P. (2015) 'Beyond Communciation. A Critical Study of Axel Honneth's Social Philosophy.', *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, 12, pp. 651–671. doi: 10.1163/17455243-01205005.
- Destin, M. (2019) 'Socioeconomic Mobility, Identity, and Health: Experiences That Influence', *American Psychologist*, 74(2), pp. 207–217.
- Destin, M. and Debrosse, R. (2017) 'Upward social mobility and identity', *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 18, pp. 99–104. doi: 10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.08.006.
- Destin, M., Rheinschmidt-Same, M. and Richeson, J. A. (2017) 'Status-Based Identity: A Conceptual Approach Integrating the Social Psychological Study of Socioeconomic Status and Identity', *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 12(2), pp. 270–289. doi: 10.1177/1745691616664424.
- Diener, E. *et al.* (2010) 'Wealth and happiness across the world: material prosperity predicts life evaluation, whereas psychosocial prosperity predicts positive feeling', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99, pp. 52–61. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018066>.
- Diener, E., Lucas, R. E. and Oishi, S. (2018) 'Advances and open questions in the science of subjective well-being', *Collabra: Psychology*, 4(1), pp. 1–49. doi: 10.1525/collabra.115.
- Dingwall, R. (2008) 'The ethical case against ethical regulation in humanities and social science research', *Twenty-First Century Society*, 3(1), pp. 1–12. doi: 10.1080/17450140701749189.
- Djankov, S., Nikolova, E. and Zilinsky, J. (2015) 'The happiness gap in Eastern Europe', *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 44, pp. 108–124. doi: 10.1016/j.jce.2015.10.006.
- Doyle, M. W. (1986) *Empires*. Cornell University Press.
- Drzewiecka, A. (2007) 'the Joys and Perils of Conducting Field Research in Eastern Europe', *European Political Science*, 6(3), pp. 295–301. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.eps.2210135.
- Dunn, E. C. (2004) *Privatizing Poland: baby food, big business, and the remaking of labor*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

- Duvoux, N. and Papychon, A. (2019) *Subjective Poverty as perceived lasting social insecurity: Lessons from a French survey on poverty, inequality and the welfare state (2015-2018)* .
- Dworkin, R. (1981) 'What Is Equality? Part 2: Equality of Resources', *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 10(4), pp. 283–345.
- Dwyer, S. C. and Buckle, J. L. (2009) 'The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), pp. 54–63. doi: 10.1177/160940690900800105.
- Dwyer, S. C. and Buckle, J. L. (2018) 'Reflection/Commentary on a Past Article: "The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research"', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), pp. 1–2. doi: 10.1177/1609406918788176.
- Dzenovska, D. (2014) 'Bordering encounters, sociality and distribution of the ability to live a "normal life"', *Social Anthropology*, 22(3), pp. 271–287. doi: 10.1111/1469-8676.12075.
- Emigh, R. J. and Szelényi, I. (2001) *Poverty, ethnicity, and gender in Eastern Europe during the market transition*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- European Commission (2000a) *Listen hear: the right to be heard. Report of the*.
- European Commission (2000b) 'Listen hear The right to be heard Report of the Commission on Poverty , Participation and Power'.
- Fahey, T. (2007) 'The case for an EU-wide measure of poverty', *European Sociological Review*, 23(1), pp. 35–47. doi: 10.1093/esr/jcl018.
- Fahey, T. and Smyth, E. (2004) 'Do subjective indicators measure welfare? Evidence from 33 European societies', *European Societies*, 6(1), pp. 5–27. doi: 10.1080/1461669032000176297.
- Fainberg, D. and Kalinovsky, A. (2016) *Reconsidering Stagnation in the Brezhnev Era*. Lanham; Boulder; New York; London: Lexington Books.
- Fehérváry, K. (2002) 'American kitchens, luxury bathrooms, and the search for a "normal" life in postsocialist Hungary', *Ethnos*, 67(3), pp. 369–400.
- Fell, B. and Hewstone, M. (2015) *Psychological Perspectives on Poverty*.
- Fereday, J. and Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006) 'Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), pp. 80–92. doi: 10.1177/160940690600500107.
- Ferragina, E., Walker, R. and Tomlinson, M. (2013) *Poverty, participation and choice: the legacy of Peter Townsend*.
- Ferraz, O. (2009) 'The Right to Health in the Courts of Brazil: Worsening Health Inequalities?', *Health and Human Rights*, 11(2), pp. 33–45.
- Fine, M. et al. (2004) 'Civics Lessons: The Color and Class of Betrayal', in Weis, L. and Fine, M. (eds) *Working Method: Research and Social Justice*. New York: Routledge.
- Fisher, C. (2009) 'Bracketing in qualitative research: Conceptual and practical matters', *Psychotherapy Research*, 19(4–5), pp. 583–590. doi: 10.1080/10503300902798375.
- Fitzpatrick, S. (2005) 'Explaining Homelessness : a Critical Realist Perspective', 22(1), pp. 1–17. doi: 10.1080/14036090510034563.

- Fleurbaey, M. (2003) 'Poverty as a Form of Oppression', in *Freedom From Poverty as A Human Right*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Foa, R. S. and Ekiert, G. (2017) 'The weakness of postcommunist civil society reassessed', pp. 419–439. doi: 10.1111/1475-6765.12182.
- Fodor, É. and Vicsek, L. (2006) 'A different type of gender gap: How women and men experience poverty', *East European Politics and Societies*, 20(1), pp. 14–39. doi: 10.1177/0888325405284248.
- Fossey, E. et al. (2002) 'Understanding and evaluating qualitative research', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 36(6), pp. 717–732.
- Fouarge, D. and Layte, R. (2005) 'Welfare Regimes and Poverty Dynamics: The Duration and Recurrence of Poverty Spells in Europe', *Journal of Social Policy*, 34(3), pp. 407–426.
- Fourth World (2007) *The Merging of Knowledge: People in Poverty and Academics Thinking Together*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America.
- Fraser, N. (1995) 'From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a " Post-Socialist " Age', *New Left Review*, (212), pp. 68–93.
- Fraser, N. and Honneth, A. (2003) *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*. London, New York: Verso.
- Fredrickson, W. E. (2017) *Life in Transition, European Bank for Reconstrucion and Development*. doi: 10.1177/10570837040140010102.
- Frey, B. S. and Stutzer, A. (2002) 'What can economists learn from happiness research?', *Journal of Economic literature*, 40(2), pp. 402–435.
- Frost, L. and Hoggett, P. (2008) 'Human agency and social suffering', *Critical Social Policy*, 28(4), pp. 438 – 460. doi: 10.1177/0261018308095279.
- Fusco, A., Dickes, P. and Marlier, E. (2008) 'Socially perceived necessities of life across EU countries: Structures and consensus', in *30th General Conference of The International Association for Research in Income and Wealth*. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228384922> (Accessed: 15 March 2019).
- Gabb, J. (2010) 'Home truths: ethical issues in family research', *Qualitative Research*, 10(4), pp. 461–478. doi: 10.1177/1468794110366807.
- Gacitua-Mario, E. and Wodon, Q. (2001) *Measurement and Meaning: Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Methods for the Analysis of Poverty and Social Exclusion in Latin America*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Gambrel, P. and Cianci, R. (2003) 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Does It Apply In A Collectivist Culture', *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, 8(2), pp. 143–161.
- Ganga, D. and Scott, S. (2006) 'Cultural "Insiders " and the Issue of Positionality in Qualitative Migration Research: Moving "Across " and Moving "Along " Researcher-Participant Divides', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 7(3).
- Gatskova, K. (2013) 'Distributive justice attitudes in Ukraine: Need, desert or social minimum?', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 46(2), pp. 227–241. doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2013.03.007.
- Geis, A. (2018) 'The ethics of recognition in international political theory', in Brown, C. and Eckersley, R. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of International Political Theory*. Oxford:

- Oxford University Press, pp. 612–625. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198746928.013.44.
- Genicot, G. and Ray, D. (2020) 'Aspirations and Economic Behavior', *Annual Review of Economics*, 12(30), pp. 1–32.
- Ghodsee, K. R. (2011) *Lost in transition : ethnographies of everyday life after communism*. Duke University Press.
- Goedemé, T. and Rottiers, S. (2011) 'Poverty in the Enlarged European Union. A Discussion about Definitions and Reference Groups', *Sociology Compass*, 5(1), pp. 77–91. doi: 10.1111/j.1751-9020.2010.00350.x.
- Gora, M. (2008) 'Pension Reform: Challenge for Ukraine', *UNDP Blue Ribbon Analytical and Advisory Centre*, Kyiv.
- Gordon, D. and Townsend, P. (2000) *Breadline Europe: the measurement of poverty*. Policy Press.
- Gorski, P. C. (2008) 'Peddling Poverty for Profit: Elements of Oppression in Ruby Payne's Framework', *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 41(1), pp. 130–148. doi: 10.1080/10665680701761854.
- Gorski, P. C. (2012) 'Perceiving the Problem of Poverty and Schooling: Deconstructing the Class Stereotypes that Misshape Education Practice and Policy', *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(2), pp. 302–319. doi: 10.1080/10665684.2012.666934.
- Gough, J., Eisenschitz, A. and McCulloch, A. (2006) *Spaces of social exclusion*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Graf, G. and Schweiger, G. (2013) 'Capabilities, Recognition and the Philosophical Evaluation of Poverty: A Discussion of Issues of Justification and the Role of Subjective Experiences', *International Critical Thought*, 3(3), pp. 282–296. doi: 10.1080/21598282.2013.818088.
- Graf, G. and Schweiger, G. (2014) 'Poverty and freedom', *Human affairs*, 24(2), pp. 258–268.
- Griggs, J. and Bennett, F. (2009) *Rights and responsibilities in the social security system, Social Security Advisory Committee Occasional Paper*.
- Grødeland, Å. B., Koshechkina, T. Y. and Miller, W. L. (1998) "Foolish to give and yet more foolish not to take" In-depth interviews with post-communist citizens on their everyday use of bribes and contacts', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 50(4), pp. 651–677.
- Grusky, D. B. and Ku, M. C. (2008) 'Gloom, Doom, and Inequality', in Grusky, D. B., Ku, M. C., and Szelényi, S. (eds) *Social stratification: Class, race, and gender in sociological perspective*. 3rd edn. Boulder, Colorado: Westview, pp. 2–28.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A. and Johnson, L. (2006) 'How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability', *Field methods*, 18(1), pp. 59–82.
- Guio, A.-C. et al. (2017) *Revising the EU material deprivation variables*. Luxembourg. doi: 10.2785/33408.
- Habibov, N. et al. (2017) 'Explaining Support for Structural Attribution of Poverty in Post-Communist Countries: Multilevel Analysis of Repeated Cross-Sectional Data', *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 44(3), pp. 173–197. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/f9c4/1152c93d10dfe285515a3df092d4f95efa54.pdf> (Accessed: 5 July 2019).

- Haggard, S. and Kaufman, R. R. (2009) 'The eastern European welfare state in comparative perspective', in *Post-Communist Welfare Pathways*, pp. 217–236.
- Halik, M. and Webley, P. (2011) 'Adolescents' understanding of poverty and the poor in rural Malaysia', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 32(2), pp. 231–239.
- Hallerod, B. (1995) 'The truly poor: direct and indirect consensual measurement of poverty in Sweden', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 5(2), pp. 11–129.
- Hallowell, N., Lawton, J. and Gregory, S. (2005) *Reflections on research: the realities of doing research in the social sciences*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Hammack, P. L. (2010) 'Identity as burden or benefit? Youth, Historical Narrative, and the Legacy of Political Conflict', *Human Development*, 53(4), pp. 173–201. doi: 10.1159/000320045.
- Hammack, P. L. (2018) 'Social Psychology and Social Justice: Critical Principles and Perspectives for the Twenty-First Century', in *The Oxford handbook of Social Psychology and Social Justice*. Oxford University Press, pp. 3–39.
- Hammack, P. L. and Toolis, E. (2015) 'Identity, Politics, and the Cultural Psychology of Adolescence', in Jensen, L. A. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Human Development and Culture: an Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 396–409.
- Hammock, P. (2018) 'Social Psychology and Social Justice: Critical Principles and Perspectives for the Twenty-First Century', in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 3–41.
- Harrison, O. (2018) 'From "Dignity" to "Self-Realisation": Rethinking Holloway's Emancipatory Theory', *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, pp. 1–18. doi: 10.1080/10455752.2018.1481120.
- Hartman, T. (2007) 'Moral vectors, transitional time and a "utopian object of impossible fullness"', *Social Anthropology*, 15(2), pp. 187–203. doi: 10.1111/j.0964-0282.2007.00012.x.
- Haynes, K. (2006) 'A therapeutic journey?: Reflections on the effects of research on researcher and participants', *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 1(3), pp. 204–221. doi: 10.1108/17465640610718798.
- Heath, O. (2016) 'Policy Alienation, Social Alienation and Working-Class Abstention in Britain, 1964–2010', *British Journal of Political Science*, 48, pp. 1053–1073. doi: 10.1017/S0007123416000272.
- Hegedûs, I. (1999) *European Ideas Hungarian Realities*. Available at: https://fedtrust.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Essay_1.pdf (Accessed: 12 March 2019).
- Heidegren, C.-G. (2002) 'Anthropology, Social Theory, and Politics: Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition', *Inquiry*, 45(4), pp. 433–446. doi: 10.1080/002017402320947531.
- Hellawell, D. (2007) 'Inside-out: analysis of the insider-outsider concept as a heuristic device to develop reflexivity in students doing qualitative research', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 11(4), pp. 483–494. doi: 10.1080/13562510600874292.
- Hick, R. (2012) 'The capability approach: Insights for a new poverty focus', *Journal of Social Policy*, 41(2), pp. 291–308. doi: 10.1017/S0047279411000845.
- Hick, R. et al. (2016) 'Capability Deprivation', in Brady, D. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the*

- Social Science of Poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hills, J. (2017) *Good times, bad times: the welfare myth of them and us*. Revised. Bristol ; Chicago, IL: Policy Press.
- Hirvonen, O. (2019) 'Populism as a pathological form of politics of recognition', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 22(1), pp. 27–44. doi: 10.1177/1368431018766271.
- Hobson, B. (2003) *Recognition Struggles and Social Movements: Contested Identities, Agency and Power*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hobson, B. (2018) 'Revisiting Recognition and Redistribution and Extending the Borders: Júlia Szalai's Contribution', *Intersections*, 4(1), pp. 9–23. doi: 10.17356/ieejsp.v4i1.405.
- Honneth, A. (1992) 'Integrity and Disrespect: Principles of a Conception of Morality Based on the Theory of Recognition', *Political Theory*, 20(2), pp. 187–201. Available at: <https://about.jstor.org/terms> (Accessed: 17 February 2019).
- Honneth, A. (1995a) 'Patterns of Intersubjective Recognition: Love , Rights , and Solidarity', in *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. Policy Press.
- Honneth, A. (1995b) *The Struggle for Recognition*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Policy Press.
- Honneth, A. (2001) 'Recognition or Redistribution? Changing Perspectives on the Moral Order of Society', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 18(2–3), pp. 43–45.
- Honneth, A. (2004) 'Recognition and justice: Outline of a plural theory of justice', *Acta Sociologica*, 47(4), pp. 351–364. doi: 10.1177/0001699304048668.
- Honneth, A. (2007a) *Disrespect: the normative foundations of critical theory*. Polity Press.
- Honneth, A. (2007b) 'The Work of Negativity A Psychoanalytical Revision of the Theory of Recognition', in Deranty, J.-P., Petherbridge, D., and Rundell, J. (eds) *Recognition, Work, Politics: New Directions in French Critical Theory*. Vol. 5. Brill.
- Honneth, A. (2012) *The I in We: Studies in the Theory of Recognition*. Polity Press.
- Honneth, A. and Rancière, J. (2016) *Recognition or disagreement : a critical encounter on the politics of freedom, equality, and identity*. Columbia University Press.
- Huber, J. and Form, W. (1973) *Income and ideology : An analysis of the American political formula*. London: Collier Macmillan.
- Hunt, M. and Bullock, H. (2016) 'Ideologies and Beliefs about Poverty', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:10233/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199914050.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199914050-e-6?print=pdf> (Accessed: 4 July 2019).
- Huttunen, R. (2007) 'Critical Adult Education and the Political - Philosophical Debate Between Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth', *Educational Theory*, 57(4), pp. 423–433.
- Ikaheimo, H. and Laitinen, A. (2011) 'Recognition and Social Ontology: An Introduction', in Ikaheimo, H. and Laitinen, A. (eds) *Recognition and Social Ontology*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- ILO (2016) *Ukraine Decent Work Country Programme, 2016-2019*. Available at: <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/5/2015> (Accessed: 14 March 2019).

- ILO (2017) *Short-Term Migrant Workers: The Case of Ukraine*. Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/migration> (Accessed: 14 March 2019).
- Ivaschenko, O. (2003) *Essays on Poverty, Income Inequality and Health in Transition Economies*. University of Gothenburg.
- Jacobsson, K. and Åkerström, M. (2012) 'Interviewees with an agenda: learning from a "failed" interview', *Qualitative Research*, 13(6), pp. 717–734. doi: 10.1177/1468794112465631.
- Jo, Y. N. (2013) 'Psycho-social dimensions of poverty: When poverty becomes shameful', *Critical Social Policy*, 33(3), pp. 514–531.
- Jones, E. E. and Nisbett, R. E. (1971) 'The actor and the observer: Divergent perceptions of the causes of behavior', in *Attribution: Perceiving the causes of behavior*. New York: General Learning Press.
- Jones, J. D. (1990) *Poverty and the human condition: a philosophical inquiry*. Lewiston, N.Y: Lampeter : Mellen.
- Jung, C., Hirschl, R. and Rosevear, E. (2014) 'Economic and Social Rights in National Constitutions', *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, 62(4), pp. 1043–1093. doi: 10.5131/AJCL.2014.0030.
- Kaneva, M. et al. (2019) 'Attitudes to reform: Could a cooperative health insurance scheme work in Russia?', *International Journal of Health Economics and Management*, 19(3), pp. 371–394. doi: 10.1007/s10754-019-09260-3.
- Karklins, R. (2005a) *The system made me do it: corruption in post-communist societies*. London: M.E. Sharpe.
- Karklins, R. (2005b) 'The Typology of Post-Communist Corruption', in *The System Made Me Do It: Corruption in Post-Communist Societies*. London, England, pp. 19–38.
- Kazuhiro, K. (2016) 'Research on Poverty in Transition Economies: A Meta-analysis on Changes in the Determinants of Poverty', *Journal Transition Studies Review*, 23(1), pp. 37–59.
- Kemmelmeier, M. and Malanchuk, O. (2016) 'Greater self-enhancement in Western than Eastern Ukraine, but failure to replicate the Muhammad Ali effect', *International Journal of Psychology*, 51(1), pp. 78–82. doi: 10.1002/ijop.12151.
- Kempson, E. (1996) *Life on a low income*. York Publishing Services for Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Kempson, E., Bryson, A. and Rowlingson, K. (1994) *Hard times?: how poor families make ends meet*. Policy Studies Institute.
- Kideckel, D. A. (2002) 'The Unmaking of an East-Central European Working Class', in *Postsocialism: Ideals, ideologies, and practices in Eurasia*. London: Routledge.
- Killeen, D. (2008) *Is poverty in the UK a denial of people's human rights?*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- King, J. (2019) 'The case for social rights', in *Judging Social Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press . doi: 10.1017/CBO9781139051750.003.
- Kingdon, G. G. and Knight, J. J. (2006) 'Subjective well-being poverty vs. income poverty and capabilities poverty?', *Journal of Development Studies*, 42(7), pp. 1199–1224. doi: 10.1080/00220380600884167.

- Cluegel, J. R., Mason, D. S. and Wegener, B. (2011) *Social justice and political change: Public opinion in capitalist and post-communist states*. New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Cluegel, J. R. and Smith, E. R. (2017) *Beliefs about inequality: Americans' views of what is and what ought to be*. London: Routledge.
- Klymenko, V. V., Akimova, L. M. and Korzh, M. V. (2016) 'Regional aspects of middle class development in Ukraine', *Aktual'ni Problemy Ekonomiky [Relevant Problems of Economics]*, 178(4), pp. 178–188.
- Knight, J., Lina, S. and Gunatilaka, R. (2009) 'Subjective well-being and its determinants in rural China', *China economic review*. Elsevier, 20(4), pp. 635–649.
- Koczan, Z. (2016a) *Being Poor, Feeling Poorer*. International Monetary Fund.
- Koczan, Z. (2016b) *Being Poor, Feeling Poorer: Inequality, Poverty and Poverty Perceptions in the Western Balkans*. 16/31.
- Kokkoris, M. D. (2016) 'Revisiting the relationship between maximizing and well-being: An investigation of eudaimonic well-being', *Personality and Individual Differences*, 99, pp. 174–178. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2016.04.099.
- Kopp, M. et al. (2004) 'Self-rated health, subjective social status, and middle-aged mortality in a changing society', *Behavioral Medicine*, 30(2), pp. 65–72. doi: 10.3200/BMED.30.2.65-72.
- Kornai, J. and Eggleston, K. (2001) *Welfare, Choice, and Solidarity in Transition: Reforming the Health Sector in Eastern Europe*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/cbo9780511492464.
- Korpi, W. and Palme, J. (1998) 'The Paradox of Redistribution and Strategies of Equality: Welfare State Institutions, Inequality, and Poverty in the Western Countries', *American Sociological Review*, 63(5), pp. 661–687. doi: 10.2307/2657333.
- Kovács, B., Polese, A. and Morris, J. (2017) 'Adjusting social welfare and social policy in Central and Eastern Europe: Growth, crisis and recession', in Kennett, P. and Noémi, L. (eds) *Handbook of European Social Policy*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, pp. 194–217. doi: 10.4337/9781783476466.00021.
- Krastev, I. and Dimitrova, B. (2004) 'Optimistic theory about the pessimism of the transition', *Association Global Bulgaria Initiative*.
- Kraus, M. W. and Park, J. W. (2014) 'The undervalued self: social class and self-evaluation', *Personality and Social Psychology*, 5(December), pp. 1–9. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01404.
- Kraus, M. W., Tan, J. J. X. and Tannenbaum, M. B. (2013) 'The Social Ladder: A Rank-Based Perspective on Social Class', *Psychological Inquiry*, 24(2), pp. 81–96. doi: 10.1080/1047840X.2013.778803.
- Kreidl, M. (2000) *Perceptions of Poverty and Wealth in Western and Post-Communist Countries*, *Social Justice Research*. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1023%2FA%3A1007597807110.pdf> (Accessed: 2 July 2019).
- Krishna, A. (2010) *One illness away: why people become poor and how they escape poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krishna, A. and Lecy, J. D. (2008) 'The balance of all things: Explaining household poverty dynamics in 50 villages of Gujarat, India', *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 2(2), pp. 160–175. doi: 10.5172/mra.455.2.2.160.

- Kupets, O. (2016) 'Education-job mismatch in Ukraine: Too many people with tertiary education or too many jobs for low-skilled?', *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 44, pp. 125–147. doi: 10.1016/j.jce.2015.10.005.
- Kuruchenko, O. (2005) 'Vidnosna bidnist' - vidnosne zuttya? [Relative poverty -- relative life?]', *Dzerkalo tuznya [Mirror of the week]*, (31), p. 559.
- Kutz, C. (2004) 'Justice in Reparations: The Cost of Memory and the Value of Talk Author', *Philosophy & Public affairs*, 32(3), pp. 277–312.
- Kuzio, T. (2002) 'History, memory and nation building in the post-Soviet colonial space', *Nationalities Papers*, 30(2), pp. 241–264.
- Van Laar, C. et al. (2014) 'Ingroup and outgroup support for upward mobility: Divergent responses to ingroup identification in low status groups', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 44(6), pp. 563–577. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.2046.
- Labonté, R. and Schrecker, T. (2007) 'Globalization and social determinants of health: Introduction and methodological background (part 1 of 3)', *Globalization and Health*, 3(5). doi: 10.1186/1744-8603-3-5.
- Laitinen, A. (2002) 'Interpersonal recognition: A response to value or a precondition of personhood?', *Inquiry*, pp. 463–478. doi: 10.1080/002017402320947559.
- Lamont, M. (2018) 'Addressing Recognition Gaps : Destigmatization and the Reduction of Inequality', *American Sociological Review*, 83(4), pp. 419–444. doi: 10.1177/0003122418773775.
- Landmann, A. et al. (2017) 'Intergenerational Co-Residence and Female Labour Supply', in *Gender and Employment in Central Asia - Evidence from Panel Data*. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10419/168282> (Accessed: 25 March 2019).
- Latkin, C. A. et al. (2017) 'The relationship between social desirability bias and self-reports of health, substance use, and social network factors among urban substance users in Baltimore, Maryland', *Addictive Behaviors*, 73, pp. 133–136. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2017.05.005.
- Layte, R. and Whelan, C. (2003) 'Moving in and out of poverty', *European Societies*, 5(2), pp. 167–191. doi: 10.1080/1461669032000072274.
- Layte, R. and Whelan, C. T. (2014) 'Who Feels Inferior ? A Test of the Status Anxiety Hypothesis of Social Inequalities in Health', *European Sociological Review*, 30(4), pp. 525–535. doi: 10.1093/esr/jcu057.
- Lee, B. A., Jones, S. H. and Lewis, D. W. (1990) 'Public beliefs about the causes of homelessness', *Social Forces*, 69(1), pp. 253–265.
- Lewis, J. (2008) 'Feminist Perspectives', in Alcock, P., Erskine, A., and May, M. (eds) *The Student's Companion to Social Policy*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Lindemann, K. and Saar, E. (2014) 'Contextual effects on subjective social position: Evidence from European countries', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 55(1), pp. 3–23. doi: 10.1177/0020715214527101.
- Lister, R. (2002) 'A Politics of Recognition and Respect: Involving People with Experience of Poverty in Decision making that Affects their Lives', *Social Policy and Society*, 1(01), pp. 37–46. doi: 10.1017/S1474746402001069.
- Lister, R. (2004a) 'Poverty: key concepts', *Cambridge: Polity*.
- Lister, R. (2004b) *Poverty and Social Justice : recognition and respect, Third Bevan*

Foundation Annual Lecture.

- Lister, R. *et al.* (2007) *Gendering citizenship in Western Europe: New challenges for citizenship research in a cross-national context*. Bristol: The Policy Press. doi: 10.1332/policypress/9781861346940.001.0001.
- Lister, R. (2015) “‘To count for nothing’: poverty beyond the statistics”, *Journal of the British Academy*, 3(September), pp. 139–165. doi: 10.5871/jba/003.139.
- Lokshin, M. and Ravallion, M. (2001) ‘Household Income Dynamics in Two Transition Economies’, *Studies in Nonlinear Dynamics & Econometrics*, 8(3), pp. 1–40.
- London, B. and Rosenthal, L. (2013) ‘The Social Stigma of Identity-and Status-Based Rejection Sensitivity’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Exclusion*. Oxford University Press, pp. 197–210.
- Lötter, H. (2011) *Poverty, ethics and justice*. University of Wales Press.
- Loveless, M. (2013) ‘The Deterioration of Democratic Political Culture: Consequences of the Perception of Inequality’, *Social Justice Research*, 26, pp. 471–491. doi: 10.1007/s11211-013-0198-7.
- Luttmer, E. F. P. (2005) ‘Neighbors as negatives: Relative earnings and well-being’, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 120(3), pp. 963–1002.
- MacDonald, R. and Marsh, J. (2005) *Disconnected Youth?: Growing up in Britain’s Poor in Neighbourhoods*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mack, J. and Lansley, S. (1985) *Poor Britain*. London: G. Allen & Unwin.
- MacLure, M. *et al.* (2010) ‘Silence as resistance to analysis: Or, on not opening one’s mouth properly’, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(6), pp. 492–500. doi: 10.1177/1077800410364349.
- Mahmood, T. *et al.* (2018) ‘Do the Poor Really Feel Poor? Comparing Objective Poverty with Subjective Poverty in Pakistan’, *Social Indicators Research*, 142(2), pp. 543–580. doi: 10.1007/s11205-018-1921-4.
- Mair, C. A. (2013) ‘Family Ties and Health Cross-Nationally: The Contextualizing Role of Familistic Culture and Public Pension Spending in Europe’, *Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 68(6), pp. 984–996. doi: 10.1093/geronb/gbt085.
- Malyutina, D. (2013) ‘The beginning and end of a beautiful friendship: Ethical issues in the ethnographic study of sociality amongst Russian-speaking migrants in London’, in Ziemer, U. and Roberts, S. (eds) *East European Diasporas, Migration and Cosmopolitanism*. New York: Routledge, pp. 107–122. doi: 10.4324/9780203081129.
- Mandel, R. E. and Humphrey, C. (2002) *Markets and moralities: ethnographies of postsocialism*. Oxford: Berg.
- Mangahas, M. (2001) ‘Subjective Poverty and Affluence in the Philippines’, *Philippine Review of Economics*, XXXVIII(2), pp. 122–134.
- Manning, N. (2004) ‘Diversity and change in pre-accession Central and Eastern Europe since 1989’, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 14(3), pp. 211–232. doi: 10.1177/0958928704044620.
- Mantsios, G. (2010) ‘Class in America-2006’, in *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*. New York, NY: Worth, pp. 182–197.
- Mark, D. C. (2016) ‘Axel Honneth, The Struggle for Recognition’, in *The Oxford Handbook of*

- Classics in Contemporary Political Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–15. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198717133.013.2.
- Markell, P. (2008) 'Recognition and Redistribution', in Dryzek, J., Honig, B., and Phillips, A. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 451–469.
- Marmot, M. (2004) *Status Syndrome: how your social standing directly affects your health*. London; New York: Bloomsbury Paperbacks.
- Mason-Bish, H. (2019) 'The elite delusion: reflexivity, identity and positionality in qualitative research', *Qualitative Research*, 19(3), pp. 263–276. doi: 10.1177/1468794118770078.
- Maton, K. (2012) 'Habitus', in Grenfell, M. J. (ed.) *Pierre Bourdieu: key concepts*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 49–66.
- Matsiyevsky, Y. (2018) 'Revolution without regime change: The evidence from the post-Euromaidan Ukraine', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 51(4), pp. 349–359. doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2018.11.001.
- Mau, S., Mewes, J. and Schöneck, N. M. (2012) 'What determines subjective socio-economic insecurity? Context and class in comparative perspective', *Socio-Economic Review*, 10(4), pp. 655–682. doi: 10.1093/ser/mws001.
- Mayhew, A. (2010) 'The economic and financial crisis: impacts on an emerging economy-Ukraine', *SEI Working Papers*. Sussex European Institute, University Of Sussex, (115).
- McAdams, D. P. et al. (2001) 'When bad things turn good and good things turn bad: Sequences of redemption and contamination in life narrative and their relation to psychosocial adaptation in midlife adults and in students', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, pp. 474–485. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0146167201274008>.
- McGaverty, D. (2017) *Poverty Safari: Understanding the Anger of Britain's Underclass*. Edinburgh: Luath Press Limited.
- Mckenzie, L. (2015) *Getting By: Estates, class and culture in austerity Britain*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- McLean, K. C., Wood, B. and Breen, A. V. (2013) 'Reflecting on a difficult life narrative construction in vulnerable adolescents', *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 28, pp. 431–452. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0743558413484355>.
- McNay, L. (2008a) *Against Recognition*. Cambridge: Policy Press.
- McNay, L. (2008b) 'The Trouble with Recognition: Subjectivity, Suffering, and Agency*', *Sociological Theory*, 26(3), pp. 271–296. Available at: <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:7218/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2008.00329.x> (Accessed: 6 April 2019).
- Merriam, S. B. and Tisdell, E. J. (2016) *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. Fourth. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- van de Mierop, D. (2011) 'Identity negotiations in narrative accounts about poverty', *Discourse and Society*, 22(5), pp. 565–591. doi: 10.1177/0957926511405423.
- Milanovic, B. (1998) *Income, Inequality and Poverty During the Transition from Planned to Market Economy, Regional and Sectoral Studies*.

- Milanovic, B. (2013) 'Global Income Inequality in Numbers: In History and Now', *Global Policy*, 4(2), pp. 198–208. doi: 10.1111/1758-5899.12032.
- Milanovic, B. and Ersado, L. (2012) 'Reform and inequality during the transition: an analysis using panel household survey data, 1990--2005', in *Economies in Transition*, pp. 84–108.
- Miller, W., Grødeland, Å. and Koshechkina, T. (2001) *A Culture of Corruption? Coping with government in post-communist Europe*. Budapest; New York: CEU Press.
- Mills, H. L. et al. (2014) 'Errors in reported degrees and respondent driven sampling: Implications for bias', *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 142, pp. 120–126. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2014.06.015.
- Misturelli, F. and Heffernan, C. (2010) 'The concept of poverty: A synchronic perspective', *Progress in Development Studies*, 10(1), pp. 35–58. doi: 10.1177/146499340901000103.
- Mitchell, N. (2010) *The Participant-Researcher Relationship in Educational Research*. University of Nottingham. Available at: http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/11357/1/Nick_Mitchell_2010.pdf.
- Moore, R. (2012) 'A Crime Against Humanity Arguably Without Parallel in European History': Genocide and the Politics of Victimhood in Western Narratives of the Ukrainian Holodomor', *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 58(3), pp. 367–379.
- Moran, M. (2000) 'Understanding the welfare state: the case of health care', *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 2(2), pp. 135–160. doi: 10.1111/1467-856x.00031.
- Morris, J. and Polese, A. (2016) 'Informal health and education sector payments in Russian and Ukrainian cities: Structuring welfare from below', *European Urban and Regional Studies*. Palmier, 23(3), pp. 481–496. doi: 10.1177/0969776414522081.
- Mosher, H. I. et al. (2015) 'A qualitative analysis of peer recruitment pressures in respondent driven sampling: Are risks above the ethical limit?', *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 26(9), pp. 832–842. doi: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2015.05.027.
- Murray, C. (2005) 'The Underclass', in McLaughlin, E. and Muncie, J. (eds) *Criminological Perspectives: Essential Readings*. Third. Sage Publications.
- Muzzatti, S. and Samarco, V. (2006) *Reflections from the Wrong Side of the Tracks: Class, Identity, and the Working Class Experience in Academe*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Nándori, E. S. (2011) 'Subjective Poverty and Its Relation to Objective Poverty Concepts in Hungary', *Social Indicators Research*, 102(3), pp. 537–556. doi: 10.1007/s11205-010-9743-z.
- Narayan-Parker, D. et al. (2000) *Voices of the poor: crying out for change*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Neilson, B. and Rossiter, N. (2008) 'Precarity as a Political Concept, or, Fordism as Exception', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 25(7–8), pp. 51–72. doi: 10.1177/0263276408097796.
- Neuman-Schmidt, I., Braun, S. and Hofacker, D. (2018) 'Explaining the Differences Between Objective and Subjective Poverty: A Pan-European Perspective', in *Inequalities and social (dis)integration: in search of togetherness*, pp. 255–263.
- Nikolova, B. (2015) *Poor, poorer, Bulgarian: making sense of poverty and inequality after the*

- end of communism*. University of Chicago.
- Nolan, B. and Whelan, C. T. (1996) 'Measuring poverty using income and deprivation indicators: alternative approaches', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 6(3), pp. 225–240.
- Nolan, B. and Whelan, C. T. (2011) 'Non-Monetary Indicators', in *Poverty and Deprivation in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199588435.001.0001.
- Novak, T. (2001) 'What's in a name? Poverty, the underclass and social exclusion', *Social Policy: A conceptual and theoretical introduction*. London: Sage.
- Nowak, M. (2001) 'The right to education', in *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Textbook*. Second. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Noy, C. (2008) 'Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(4), pp. 327–344. doi: 10.1080/13645570701401305.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2000) *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511841286.
- Nyström, M. (2018) 'Narratives of Truth: An Exploration of Narrative Theory as a Tool in Decolonising Research', in *Indigenous Efflorescence*, pp. 83–91.
- O'Neill, B. (2014) 'Cast Aside: Boredom, Downward Mobility, and Homelessness in Post-Communist Bucharest', *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(1), pp. 8–31. doi: 10.14506/ca29.1.03.
- Oakley, A. (1981) 'Interviewin women: a contradiction in terms', in Roberts, H. (ed.) *Doing Feminist Research*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 31–61.
- Oakley, A. (2016) 'Interviewing Women Again: Power, Time and the Gift', *Sociology*, 50(1), pp. 195–213. doi: 10.1177/0038038515580253.
- OECD (2009) *Ukraine Country Pension Design*.
- Offe, C. (2009) 'Epilogue: Lessons learnt and open questions', in Cerami, Alfio; Vanhuysse, P. (ed.) *Post-communist welfare pathways*. Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 237–247.
- Okulicz-Kozaryn, A. (2014) 'Winners and losers in transition: Preferences for redistribution and nostalgia for communism in Eastern Europe', *Kyklos*, 67(3), pp. 447–461. doi: 10.1111/kykl.12062.
- Onuch, O. (2014) 'Mapping Mass Mobilizations: Understanding Revolutionary Moments in Ukraine and Argentina'. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- van Oorschot, W. (2006) 'Making the difference in social Europe: Deservingness perceptions among citizens of European welfare states', *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(1), pp. 23–42. doi: 10.1177/0958928706059829.
- Van Oorschot, W. (2000) 'Who should get what, and why? On deservingness criteria and the conditionality of solidarity among the public', *Policy & Politics: Studies of local government and its services*, 28(1), pp. 33–48. Available at: <https://pure.uvt.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/388335/whoshould.pdf> (Accessed: 1 April 2019).
- Orenstein, M. A. (2009) 'What happened in East European (political) economies?: A balance sheet for neoliberal reform', *East European Politics and Societies*, 23(4), pp. 479–

490. doi: 10.1177/0888325409342109.

- Osipian, A. L. (2009) 'Corruption hierarchies in higher education in the former Soviet Bloc', *International Journal of Educational Development*, 29(3), pp. 321–330. doi: 10.1016/j.ijedudev.2008.08.006.
- Osipian, A. L. (2017) 'University autonomy in Ukraine: Higher education corruption and the state', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 50, pp. 233–243. doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2017.06.004.
- Oyserman, D., Destin, M. and Novin, S. (2015) 'The Context-Sensitive Future Self: Possible Selves Motivate in Context, Not Otherwise', *Self and Identity*, 14(2), pp. 173–188. doi: 10.1080/15298868.2014.965733.
- Padvalkava, K. (2011) *'Gambling with the state': Understanding retirement and pensions in contemporary Belarus*. University of Birmingham.
- Patino, J. (2008) *Consumption and social change in a post-Soviet middle class*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
- Pechurina, A. (2014) 'Positionality and Ethics in the Qualitative Research of Migrants' Homes', *Sociological Research*, 19(1), p. 4.
- Pesmen, D. (1999) *Normal and Not-Normal People in Perestroika Russia*, *Central States Anthropological Society*. Chicago.
- Pian Ka, D. LE, Van Oorschot, W. and Gelissen, J. (2019) 'Popular Explanations of Poverty: A Critical Discussion of Empirical Research', *Jnl Soc. Pol.* Cambridge University Press, 38, pp. 421–438. doi: 10.1017/S0047279409003092.
- Pilapil, R. (2011) 'Hans-Christoph Schmidt am Busch and Christopher F. Zurn (eds), The Philosophy of Recognition: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives, Critical Horizons', *A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory*, 12(1), pp. 99–102. doi: 10.1558/crit.v12i1.99.
- Pini, B. (2005) 'Interviewing men: Gender and the collection and interpretation of qualitative data', *Journal of Sociology*, 41(2), pp. 201–216. doi: 10.1177/1440783305053238.
- Piven, F. and Minnite, L. (2016) 'Poor People's Politics', in Brady, D. and Burton, L. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pop-Eleches, G. and Tucker, J. (2017) *Communism's shadow: historical legacies and contemporary political attitudes*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Posel, D. and Rogan, M. (2014) 'Measured as Poor versus Feeling Poor: Comparing Money-metric and Subjective Poverty Rates in South Africa', *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 17(1), pp. 55–73. doi: 10.1080/19452829.2014.985198.
- Powdthavee, N. (2010) 'How much does money really matter? Estimating the causal effects of income on happiness', *Empirical Economics*, 39(1), pp. 77–92.
- Van Praag, B. M. S. and Ferrer-i-Carbonell, A. (2008) 'A multidimensional approach to subjective poverty', in Kakwani, N., & Silber, J. (ed.) *Quantitative Approaches to Multidimensional Poverty Measurement*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan., pp. 135–154. doi: 10.1057/9780230582354.
- Van Praag, B. (1971) 'The welfare function of income in Belgium: An empirical investigation', *European Economic Review*, 2, pp. 337–369.
- Rainwater, L., Smeeding, T. M. and Coder, J. (2003) 'Poverty across states, nations, and

- continents', in *Child Well-Being, Child Poverty and Child Policy in Modern Nations. What Do We Know*. 2nd edn. The Policy Press University of Bristol, pp. 33–74.
- Rank, M. R. (2010) *One nation, underprivileged: Why American poverty affects us all*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195101683.001.0001.
- Ransome, B. (2010) 'Sen and Aristotle on Wellbeing', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 45(1), pp. 41–52. doi: 10.1002/j.1839-4655.2010.tb00162.x.
- Ravallion, M. (2014) 'Poor, or Just Feeling Poor? On Using Subjective Data in Measuring Poverty Happiness and Economic Growth: Lessons from Developing Countries Poor, or Just Feeling Poor? On Using Subjective Data in Measuring Poverty', in *Happiness and Economic Growth: Lessons from Developing Countries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198723653.001.0001.
- Ravallion, M. and Lokshin, M. (2000) 'Who wants to redistribute?: The tunnel effect in 1990s Russia', *Journal of public Economics*, 76(1), pp. 87–104.
- Ravallion, M. and Lokshin, M. (2001) 'Identifying Welfare Effects from Subjective Questions', *Economica*, 12(48), pp. 335–357. doi: 10.1111/j.l468-0335.2008.00718.x.
- Ravallion, M. and Lokshin, M. (2002) 'Self-rated economic welfare in Russia', *European Economic Review*, 46(8), pp. 1453–1473. doi: 10.1016/S0014-2921(01)00151-9.
- Rawls, J. (1971) *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ray, D. (2006) 'Aspirations, poverty, and economic change', in Banerjee, Abhijit V; Benabou, Roland; Mookherjee, D. (ed.) *Understanding poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 409–421.
- Razafindrakoto, M. and Roubaud, F. (2006) *The determinants of subjective poverty: A comparative analysis between Madagascar and Peru*. Paris, France.
- Reed-Danahay, D. (1996) *Education and identity in rural France : the politics of schooling*. Cambridge University Press.
- Reicher, S. (2004) 'The Context of Social Identity: Domination, Resistance, and Change', *International Society of Political Psychology*, 25(6), pp. 921–945. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3792283> (Accessed: 24 April 2020).
- Reichner, S. (2004) 'The Context of Social Identity : Domination , Resistance , and Change Author (s) : Stephen Reicher Source : Political Psychology , Vol . 25 , No . 6 , Symposium : Social Dominance and Intergroup Published by : International Society of Political Psycholog', *Political Psychology*, 25(6), pp. 921–945.
- Reilly, J. O. et al. (2016) 'Brexit: understanding the socio-economic origins and consequences', *Socio-Economic Review*, 14(4), pp. 807–854. doi: 10.1093/ser/mww043.
- Riabchuk, A. (2009) 'The Implications of Adaptation Discourse for Post-communist Working Classes', *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 17(1), pp. 55–64. doi: 10.1080/09651560902778378.
- Ridge, T. (2009) *Living with poverty: A review of the literature on children's and families' experiences of poverty*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 594.
- Ringen, S. (1988) 'Direct and Indirect Measures of Poverty', *Journal of Social Policy*, 17, pp. 351–365.
- Robeyns, I. (2018) *Wellbeing, freedom and social justice: The capability approach re-*

- examined. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers.
- Rocha, L. E. C. *et al.* (2017) 'Respondent-driven sampling bias induced by community structure and response rates in social networks', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series A: Statistics in Society*, 180(1), pp. 99–118. doi: 10.1111/rssa.12180.
- Rofel, L. (1999) *Other modernities: Gendered yearnings in China after socialism*. Univ of California Press.
- Romaniuk, P. and Semigina, T. (2018) 'Ukrainian health care system and its chances for successful transition from Soviet legacies', *Globalization and Health*, 14(1), p. 116. doi: 10.1186/s12992-018-0439-5.
- Romanova, V. and Umland, A. (2019) *Ukraine's Decentralization Reforms Since 2014: Initial Achievements and Future Challenges*, Chatham House Research Paper. Available at: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/oecd-territorial-reviews-ukraine-2013_9789264204836-en.
- Room (1995) *Beyond the threshold: the measurement and analysis of social exclusion*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Rose, D. (2006) "'Social Comparisons and Social Order: Issues Relating to a Possible Re-study of W.G. Runciman's Relative Deprivation and Social Justice", ISER Working Paper 2006-48'. Available at: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/pubs/workpaps/>.
- Roseneil, S. (1993) 'Greenham Revisited: Researching Myself and My Sisters', in *Interpreting the Field: Accounts of Ethnography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 177–208.
- Rosling, H., Rönnlund, A. R. and Rosling, O. (2018) *Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong about the World and why Things are Better Than You Think*. London: Sceptre. doi: 10.1016/B978-1-85617-803-7.50008-0.
- Rossetto, K. R. (2014) 'Qualitative research interviews: Assessing the therapeutic value and challenges', *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 31(4), pp. 482–489. doi: 10.1177/0265407514522892.
- Rothstein, B. and Uslaner, E. M. (2005) 'All for All: Equality, Corruption, and Social Trust', *World Politics*, 58. Available at: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/wpot58&id=55&div=7&collection=journals> (Accessed: 12 February 2019).
- Roulston, K. (2014) 'Analysing interviews', in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, pp. 297–312.
- Round, J. and Williams, C. (2010) 'Coping with the social costs of "transition": Everyday life in post-soviet russia and Ukraine', *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 17(2), pp. 183–196. doi: 10.1177/0969776409356158.
- Round, J., Williams, C. C. and Rodgers, P. (2008) 'Everyday tactics and spaces of power: the role of informal economies in post-Soviet Ukraine', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 9(2), pp. 171–185. doi: 10.1080/14649360701856110.
- Round, J., Williams, C. and Rodgers, P. (2010) 'The Role of Domestic Food Production in Everyday Life in Post-Soviet Ukraine', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. doi: 10.1080/00045608.2010.520214.
- Rowntree, B. S. (1901) *Poverty: A study of town life*. Macmillan.
- Runciman, W. G. (1989) *A treatise on social theory*. Cambridge University Press.

- Runciman, W. G. (1997) *Pluralism and the Personality of the State*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rupnik, J. (2007) 'Is East-Central Europe Backsliding? From Democracy Fatigue to Populist Backlash From Democracy Fatigue to Populist Backlash', *Journal of Democracy*, 18(4), pp. 17–25.
- Ryabchuk, A. (2012) 'Nostalgia and Solidarity. Social Suffering in Post-Communist Societies', in Fisher, S., Pleines, H., and Schroder, H.-H. (eds) *Movements, migrants, marginalization. Challenges of societal and political participation in Eastern Europe and the enlarged EU*. Hannover, Germany: Ibidem-Verlag, pp. 213–221.
- Ryabchuk, A. (2014) 'Right revolution? Hopes and perils of the Euromaidan protests in Ukraine', *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 22(1), pp. 127–134. doi: 10.1080/0965156X.2013.877268.
- Ryan, R. M. and Deci, E. L. (2000) 'On Happiness and Human Potential: A Review of Research on Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), pp. 141–166. Available at: www.annualreviews.org (Accessed: 20 March 2019).
- Rylko-Bauer, B. and Farmer, P. (2016) 'Structural Violence, Poverty, and Social Suffering', in Burton, B. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sachweh, P. (2011) 'The moral economy of inequality: popular views on income differentiation, poverty and wealth', *Socio-Economic Review*, 10(3), pp. 419–445.
- Sági, M. (2011) 'Determinants of Satisfaction with Living Standards in Transition Societies', *International Journal of Sociology*, 41(4), pp. 55–78. doi: 10.2753/ij0020-7659410403.
- Salvatore, J. and Shelton, N. (2007) 'Cognitive Costs of Exposure to Racial Prejudice', *Psychological Science*, 18(9), pp. 810–815.
- Sambo, C. (2018) *A Relational Analysis of Poverty as a Social Phenomenon*. University of Oxford.
- Sandel, M. (2008) *What money can't buy: the moral limits of markets*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. doi: 10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004.
- Saraceno, C. and Keck, W. (2008) *The institutional framework of intergenerational family obligations in Europe: A conceptual and methodological overview*. Berlin. Available at: www.multilinks-project.eu (Accessed: 25 March 2019).
- Sassen, S. (2010) 'A savage sorting of winners and losers: Contemporary versions of primitive accumulation', *Globalizations*, 7(1–2), pp. 23–50. doi: 10.1080/14747731003593091.
- Scheffler, S. (2003) 'What Is Egalitarianism?', *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 31(1), pp. 5–39.
- Schimmack, U., Oishi, S. and Diener, E. (2005) 'Individualism: A Valid and Important Dimension of Cultural Differences Between Nations', *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 9(1), pp. 17–31. Available at: https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:7218/doi/pdf/10.1207/s15327957pspr0901_2 (Accessed: 3 April 2019).
- Schneider, F. (2012) *The shadow economy and tax evasion: What do we (not) know?*, IZA Discussion Paper Series No. 6423.
- Schneider, F. and Klinglmaier, R. (2004) *Shadow Economies Around the World: What Do We*

- Schneider, S. M. (2019) 'Why Income Inequality Is Dissatisfying — Perceptions of Social Status and the Inequality-Satisfaction Link in Europe', *European Sociological Review*, 35(3), pp. 409–430. doi: 10.1093/esr/jcz003.
- Schoon, I. et al. (2013) *Wellbeing of children: Early influences*. London.
- Schweiger, G. (2013) 'Recognition and Social Exclusion: A Recognition-Theoretical Exploration of Poverty in Europe', *Ethical Perspectives*, 20(4), pp. 529–554. doi: 10.2143/EP.20.4.3005349.
- Schweiger, G. (2014a) 'Recognition theory and global poverty', *Journal of Global Ethics*, 10(3), pp. 267–273. doi: 10.1080/17449626.2014.969439.
- Schweiger, G. (2014b) 'Recognition theory and global poverty Recognition theory and global poverty', *Journal of Global Ethics*. Taylor & Francis, 10(3), pp. 267–273. doi: 10.1080/17449626.2014.969439.
- Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Sen, A. (2000) *Social exclusion: Concept, application, and scrutiny*. Asian Development Bank.
- Sen, A. (2017) *Collective Choice and Social Welfare: Expanded Edition*. London: Penguin.
- Shafiro, M. V, Himelein, M. J. and Best, D. L. (2003) 'Ukrainian and US American females: Differences in Individualism/Collectivism and Gender Attitudes', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34(3), pp. 297–303. doi: 10.1177/0022022103253143.
- Shanahan, M. J. (2000) 'Pathways to Adulthood in Changing Societies: Variability and Mechanisms in Life Course', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, pp. 667–692.
- Shavalyuk, L. (2012) *The Secrets of Ukrainian Inflation*. Available at: <http://ukrainianweek.com/Economics/62435>.
- Sheridan, V. and Storch, K. (2009) 'Linking the Intercultural and Grounded Theory: Methodological Issues in Migration Research', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 10(1). doi: 10.17169/fqs-10.1.1217.
- Shildrick, T. and MacDonald, R. (2013) 'Poverty talk: how people experiencing poverty deny their poverty and why they blame `the poor`', *The Sociological Review*, 61(2), pp. 285–303.
- Shropshire, J. and Middleton, S. (1999) *Small Expectations: Learning to be Poor?* York Publishing Services.
- Siep, L. (2010) 'Recognition in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit and Contemporary Practical Philosophy', in Schmidt am Busch, H.-C. and Zurn, C. F. (eds) *The Philosophy of Recognition*. Lexington Books.
- Silver, H. (2007) *The process of social exclusion: the dynamics of an evolving concept*. 95.
- Silverstein, M., Cong, Z. and Li, S. (2006) 'Intergenerational Transfers and Living Arrangements of Older People in Rural China: Consequences for Psychological Well-Being', *Journal of Gerontology*, 61B(5), pp. 256–266.
- Simai, M. (2006) *Poverty and Inequality in Eastern Europe and the CIS Transition Economies*.
- Smeeding, T. M. (2018) 'Poverty Measurment', in Brady, D. and Burton, L. (eds) *Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi:

10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199914050.013.3.

- Smith, L. (2010) *Psychology, poverty, and the end of social exclusion: Putting our practice to work*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Smith, L. and Redington, R. (2010) 'Class Dismissed: Making the Case for the Study of Classist Microaggressions', in Sue, D. W. (ed.) *Microaggressions and Marginality: Manifestation, Dynamics, and Impact*. New Jersey: Wiley, pp. 269–286.
- Smith, N. (2009) 'Work and the struggle for recognition', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 8(1), pp. 46–60. doi: 10.1177/1474885108096959.
- Smith, R. and Leach, C. W. (2010) 'Envy, Inferiority, and Injustice : Three Bases of Anger About Inequality', in *Envy: Theory and Research*, pp. 1–27. doi: 10.1093/acprof.
- Smyth, M. and Williamson, E. (2004) *Researchers and Their 'subjects': Ethics, Power, Knowledge and Consent*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- South, S. and Lei, L. (2015) 'Failures-to-launch and boomerang kids: Contemporary determinants of leaving and returning to the parental home', *Social Forces*, 94(2), pp. 863–890. doi: 10.1093/sf/sov064.
- Spector, P. E. et al. (2001) 'Do National Levels of Individualism and Internal Locus of Control Relate to Well-Being: An Ecological Level International Study', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 22(8), pp. 815–832. doi: 10.1002/job.118.
- Spicker, P., Leguizamon, S. and Gordon, D. (2007) *Poverty: An International Glossary*. Second. London and New York: Zed Books.
- Standing, G. (1997) 'The Folly of Social Safety Nets: Why Basic Income Is Needed in Eastern Europe', *Social Research*, 64(4).
- Standing, G. (2010) *Work after globalization: Building occupational citizenship*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Stepurko, T. and Belli, P. C. (2018) 'Innovating Health-Care Governance in Ukraine: Formal and Informal Practices', in Zvonareva, O., Popova, E., and Horstman, K. (eds) *Health, Technologies, and Politics in Post-Soviet Settings*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-64149-2_8.
- Stewart, F. (2000) 'Crisis Prevention: Tackling Horizontal Inequalities', in *World Bank Conference on Evaluation and Poverty Reduction*. Available at: https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:bc57f717-7bc4-498c-af44-add00037923d/download_file?file_format=pdf&safe_filename=Frances_Stewart_Paper.pdf&type_of_work=Journal+article (Accessed: 3 April 2019).
- Stewart, F. (2014) 'Why Horizontal Inequalities are Important for a Shared Society', *Development*. Nature Publishing Group, 57(1), pp. 46–54. doi: 10.1057/dev.2014.30.
- Strier, R. (2005) 'Gendered realities of poverty: men and women's views of poverty in Jerusalem', *Social Service Review*, 79(2), pp. 344–367.
- Sullivan, J and Transue, J. (1999) 'The psychological underpinnings of democracy: A selective review of research on political tolerance, interpersonal trust, and social capital', *Annual review of psychology*, 50(1), pp. 625–50. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.50.1.625.
- Swanson, J. (2005) 'Recognition and Redistribution', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 22(4), pp. 87–118. doi: 10.1177/0263276405054992.
- Sy, I. (2013) 'The subjective approach as a tool for understanding poverty: The case of

- Senegal', *Journal of Economic Inequalities*, 5, pp. 336–345.
- Symonchuk, E. (2003) 'Srednij klass: liudi i statusy [Middle Class: People and Statuses]', *Kyiv, Ukraine*.
- Szalai, J. (2005) 'Poverty and the Traps of Postcommunist Welfare Reforms in Hungary: The new challenges of EU-accession', *Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 4(1), pp. 309–333.
- Szalai, J. (2012) 'Fragmented Social Rights in Hungary's Postcommunist Welfare State', in Evers, A. and Guillemard, A.-M. (eds) *Social Policy and Citizenship: The Changing Landscape*. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199754045.001.0001.
- Szeptycki, A. (2011) 'Ukraine as a Postcolonial State', *The Polish Quarterly of Foreign Affairs*, 20(1), pp. 5–29.
- Sztompka, P. (1993) 'Civilizational Incompetence: The Trap of Post-Communist Societies', *Zeitschrift Far Soziologie*, 22(2), p. 85.
- Taylor, J. (2011) 'The intimate insider: negotiating the ethics of friendship when doing insider research', *Qualitative Research*, 11(1), pp. 03–22. doi: 10.1177/1468794110384447.
- Taylor, S. (2009) *Poverty Dynamics: Childhood Experience on a Low Income*. University of Oxford.
- Thomas, S. A. and Gonzalez-Prendes, A. A. (2009) 'Powerlessness, anger, and stress in African American women: Implications for physical and emotional health', *Health Care for Women International*, 30(1–2), pp. 93–113. doi: 10.1080/07399330802523709.
- Thomas, V. and Azmitia, M. (2014) 'Does Class Matter? The Centrality and Meaning of Social Class Identity in Emerging Adulthood', *Identity*, 14(3), pp. 195–213. doi: 10.1080/15283488.2014.921171.
- du Toit, A. (2008) 'Living on the margins: the social dynamics of economic marginalisation', *Development Southern Africa*, 25(5), pp. 135–150. doi: 10.1080/03768350802090493.
- Tomlinson, M. and Walker, R. (2009) *Coping with complexity: child and adult poverty*. London: Child Poverty Action Group.
- Toolis, E. E. and Hammack, P. L. (2015) 'The Lived Experience of Homeless Youth : A Narrative Approach', *Qualitative Psychology*, 2(1), pp. 50–68.
- Tosi, M. and Grundy, E. (2018) 'Returns home by children and changes in parents' well-being in Europe', *Social Science & Medicine*, 200, pp. 99–106. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2018.01.016.
- Tourangeau, R. and Yan, T. (2007) 'Sensitive Questions in Surveys', *Psychological Bulletin*, 133(5), pp. 859–883. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.133.5.859.
- Townsend, P. (1979) *Poverty in the United Kingdom: a Survey of Household Resources and Standards of Living*. London: Allen Lane.
- Townsend, P. (1993) *The International Analysis of Poverty*. New York; London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Trani, J.-F., Biggeri, M. and Mauro, V. (2013) 'The multidimensionality of child poverty: Evidence from Afghanistan', *Social Indicators Research*, 112(2), pp. 391–416.
- Tucker, J. A. et al. (2016) 'Utility of Respondent Driven Sampling to Reach', *Journal of*

- Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 27(352), pp. 194–208.
- Tufford, L. and Newman, P. (2012) 'Bracketing in qualitative research', *Qualitative Social Work*, 11(1), pp. 80–96.
- UNHCR (2017) *Ukraine: Operational Update*.
- UNICEF (2000) 'A league table of child poverty in rich nations'.
- USAID (2019) *Voluntary private pensions in ukraine: assessment and recommendations*. Kyiv.
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H. and Bondas, T. (2013) 'Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study', *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 15(3), pp. 398–405. doi: 10.1111/nhs.12048.
- Valletta, R. G. (2006) 'The ins and outs of poverty in advanced economies: Government policy and poverty dynamics in Canada, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States', *Review of Income and Wealth*, 52(2), pp. 261–284. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-4991.2006.00187.x.
- Versfeld, A. (2012) *All pay and no work: spheres of belonging under duress*. doi: 10.1590/S0034-71402004000300002.
- Vicol, D.-O. (2019) *Hope, help, duty and disappointment: Romanian mobility and its discontents*. University of Oxford.
- Viebrock, E. and Clasen, J. (2009) 'Flexicurity and Welfare Reform: a Review', *Socio-Economic Review*, 7(2), pp. 305–331.
- Wagle, U. R. (2007) 'Poverty in Kathmandu: What do subjective and objective economic welfare concepts suggest?', *The Journal of Economic Inequality*, 5(1), pp. 73–95.
- Walker, A. and Smith, L. (2018) 'Social Class Oppression as Social Exclusion: A Relational Perspective', in Hammack, P. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social Psychology and Social Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Walker, G. and Day, R. (2012) 'Fuel poverty as injustice Integrating distribution, recognition and procedure in the struggle for affordable warmth', *Energy Policy*, 49, pp. 69–75. doi: 10.1016/j.enpol.2012.01.044.
- Walker, R. (2014) *The shame of poverty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Walter, A., Van der Brug, W. and van Praag, P. (2014) 'When the stakes are high: Party competition negative campaigning', *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(4), pp. 550–573.
- Wanner, C. (1998) *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Ward, P. S. (2016) 'Transient Poverty, Poverty Dynamics, and Vulnerability to Poverty: An Empirical Analysis Using a Balanced Panel from Rural China', *World Development*, 78, pp. 541–553. doi: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.10.022.
- Waterman, A. S. (1993) 'Two Conceptions of Happiness: Contrasts of Personal Expressiveness (Eudaimonia) and Hedonic Enjoyment', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64(4), pp. 678–691.
- Waterman, A. S. et al. (2010) 'The Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being: Psychometric properties, demographic comparisons, and evidence of validity', *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(1), pp. 41–61. doi: 10.1080/17439760903435208.

- Weisstanner, D. and Nolan, B. (2020) *Rising inequality and the divergence between objective economic circumstances and subjective status perceptions over time*.
- Whelan, C. T. and Maître, B. (2013) 'Material deprivation, economic stress, and reference groups in Europe: An analysis of EU-SILC 2009', *European Sociological Review*, 29(6), pp. 1162–1174. doi: 10.1093/esr/jct006.
- White, S. (2000) 'Social Rights and the Social Contract - Political Theory and the New Welfare Politics', *British Journal of Political Science*, 30(3), pp. 507–532. Available at: <https://about.jstor.org/terms> (Accessed: 2 November 2019).
- Whitefield, S. (2002) 'The Political Economy of Welfare Reform and Poverty Alleviation in Ukraine Welfare Reform and Poverty Alleviation in Ukraine', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 18(1), pp. 71–90.
- Whitehead, M., Dahlgren, G. and Evans, T. (2001) 'Can low-income countries escape the medical poverty trap', *The Lancet*, (September), pp. 833–36. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(01)05975-X.
- Wilkinson, R. G. and Pickett, K. E. (2009) 'Income Inequality and Social Dysfunction', pp. 493–514. doi: 10.1146/annurev-soc-070308-115926.
- Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. (2018) *The inner level: how more equal societies reduce stress, restore sanity and improve everybody's wellbeing*. London: Allan Lane.
- Wilson, G. (1996) 'Toward a revised framework for examining beliefs about the causes of poverty', *The Sociological Quarterly*, 37(3), pp. 413–428.
- Wolff, J. (1998) *Fairness, Respect, and the Egalitarian Ethos*, *Philosophy & Public Affairs*. Available at: <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:4228/stable/pdf/2672834.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ae5e6f71f384f5bcb06159fabdb8ae3a> (Accessed: 28 March 2019).
- Wolff, J. (2010) 'Fairness, Respect and the Egalitarian Ethos Revisited', *The Journal of Ethics*. Springer Netherlands, 14(3–4), pp. 335–350. doi: 10.1007/s10892-010-9085-8.
- Wolff, J. and De-Shalit, A. (2007) *Disadvantage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wolff, J., Lamb, E. and Zur-Szpiro, E. (2015) *A philosophical review of poverty*. York.
- Wolff, L. (1994) *Inventing Eastern Europe: the map of civilization on the mind of the enlightenment*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Wright, E. O. (2005) *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yang, L. et al. (2020) 'Determining Dimensions of Poverty Applicable in China : A Qualitative Study in Guizhou Determining Dimensions of Poverty Applicable in China : A Qualitative Study', *Journal of Social Service Research*. Routledge, 0(0), pp. 1–18. doi: 10.1080/01488376.2020.1734712.
- Yar, M. (2010) 'Beyond Nancy Fraser's "perspectival dualism"', *Economy and Society*, 30(3), pp. 288–303. doi: 10.1080/03085140120071206.
- Yost, M. R. and Chmielewski, J. F. (2013) 'Blurring the Line Between Researcher and Researched in Interview Studies: A Feminist Practice?', *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 37(2), pp. 242–250. doi: 10.1177/0361684312464698.
- Young, I. M. (1994) 'Gender as seriality: Thinking about women as a social collective', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 19(3), pp. 713–738.

- Yurchak, A. (2003) 'Soviet hegemony of form: Everything was forever, until it was no more', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 45(3), pp. 480–510.
- Yurchak, A. (2005) *Everything was forever, until it was no more: The last Soviet generation*. Princeton University Press.
- Yurchak, A. (2006) 'Everything was forever, until it was no more: the last Soviet generation Princeton University Press', *Princeton NJ*.
- Zeidan, J. (2015) *Are Comparisons Luxuries? Subjective Poverty and Positional Concerns in Indonesia*. Marseille, France. Available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/p/aim/wpaimx/1505.html>.
- Zelizer, V. A. R. (1997) *The social meaning of money*. Princeton University Press.
- Zhurzhenko, T. (2004) 'Families in Ukraine: Between postponed modernisation, neo-familialism and economic survival', *Contemporary Perspectives in Family Research*, 5, pp. 187–209. doi: 10.1016/S1530-3535(04)05012-5.
- Zlobina, O. (2004) 'Osobystist jak subject socialnyh zmin [Personality as a Subject of Social Changes]', *Kyiv, Ukraine: IS NASU*.
- Zurn, C. F. (2003) 'Identity or Status? Struggles over "Recognition" in Fraser, Honneth, and Taylor', *Constellations*, 10(4), pp. 519–537. doi: 10.1046/j.1351-0487.2003.00351.x.