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# MISSING DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY DATA

## *The Ability to Go About Without Shame*

### A Proposal for Internationally Comparable Indicators of Shame and Humiliation

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October 2007

This document contains the actual survey questions proposed in the paper *The Ability to Go About without Shame: A Proposal for Internationally Comparable Indicators of Shame and Humiliation* (Zavaleta 2007) prepared for the May 2007 Workshop on Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data. The proposal is that these questions – or a refinement of them – might be considered a ‘module’ that could be added to nationally representative individual or household surveys. Based on existing indicators from related fields, the following module suggests eight indicators to measure specific aspects of shame and humiliation that could start an in-depth debate around this topic. The indicators are the following:

#### *Shame*

1. Stigma of poverty: whether respondents would feel shame if they were poor
2. Shame proneness

#### *External experience of humiliation*

3. Perceptions of respectful treatment,
4. Perceptions of unfair treatment
5. Perceptions of prejudiced treatment
6. Perceptions of ethnic, racial or cultural discrimination affecting respondent’s chances of obtaining employment, services and education.
7. Perceptions of whether economic conditions affect respondent’s chances of obtaining employment, services and education.

#### *Internal experience of humiliation*

8. Levels of accumulated humiliation.

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<sup>1</sup> Zavaleta (2007) elaborates on the selection of these indicators and questions, and the research questions that could be addressed were these questions adopted into multi-topic individual or household surveys.

## SHAME

*Indicator 1. Whether respondents would feel shame if they were poor.*

Do you agree/disagree with the following statement:

1. I would be ashamed if I was poor.
2. I would be ashamed if someone in my family was poor.
3. People living in poverty should be ashamed of themselves.
4. People who are not poor make people who are poor feel bad.

How do you think most people in your community would answer the previous questions?

5. I would be ashamed if I was poor.
6. I would be ashamed if someone in my family was poor.
7. People living in poverty should be ashamed of themselves.
8. People who are not poor make people who are poor feel bad.

Source: Adapted from USAID 2006.

*Indicator 2. Levels of shame proneness.*

For each of the following listed feelings please place a number from 0 to 4, reflecting how common the feeling is for you.

- 4 = you experience the feeling continuously or almost continuously
- 3 = you experience the feeling frequently but not continuously
- 2 = you experience the feeling some of the time
- 1 = you experience the feeling rarely
- 0 = you never experience the feeling

1. Embarrassment
2. Feeling ridiculous
3. Self-consciousness
4. Feeling humiliated
5. Feeling “stupid”
6. Feeling “childish”
7. Feeling helpless, paralyzed
8. Feelings of blushing
9. Feeling laughable
10. Feeling disgusting to others

Source: PFQ2, Harder and Zalma (1990).

## HUMILIATION

### External experience of humiliation

#### *Indicator 3. People that feel they are treated with respect.*

Please circle the rating that best describes your feelings from “Not at all” (0) to “A great deal (6)”, including an option for Don’t know.

1) To what extent do you feel that people treat you with respect?

Source: European Social Survey, Round 3 (Personal and Social Wellbeing Module).

#### *Indicator 4. People that feel they are treated unfairly.*

Please circle the rating that best describes your feelings from “Not at all” (0) to “A great deal (6)”, including an option for Don’t know.

1) To what extent do you feel that people treat you unfairly?

Source: European Social Survey, round 3 (Personal and Social Wellbeing Module).

#### *Indicator 5. Experiences of prejudiced treatment during the past three months due to one or more grounds for discrimination.*

1. Have you been treated in a way that you felt was prejudiced during the past three months? (Response alternatives: No; Yes, occasionally; Yes, on several occasions)

2. Who treated you in a way that you felt was prejudiced? (Response alternatives: Health care services, School/work, Employment office, Police/judicial system, Social services, Social insurance office, Shops/restaurants, Bank/insurance company, Landlord/local housing office, Close relative, Unknown person in a public place, Other – open question).

3. Why were you treated in a way that you felt was prejudiced? (Response alternatives: Ethnic or racial background, Gender, Sexual orientation, Age, Disability, Religion, Other – open question, Don’t know)

Source: Adapted from the National Institute of Public Health, 2006.

#### *Indicator 6. Whether ethnic, racial, or cultural background affect the chances of getting jobs, services and education.*

1. Do you think that someone’s ethnic, racial, or cultural background affects their chances of getting: (Response alternatives: No, yes, I don’t know)

- a. Access to public services/infrastructure
- b. Government jobs
- c. Government contracts
- d. Private sector formal jobs
- e. Public housing
- f. Educational opportunities at the pre-university level
- g. Educational opportunities at the university level

Source: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) 2006.

***Indicator 7. Whether economic conditions affect the chances of getting jobs, services and education.***

1. Do you think that someone's economic condition affects their chances of getting:  
(Response alternatives: No, yes, I don't know)

- a. Access to public services/infrastructure
- b. Government jobs
- c. Government contracts
- d. Private sector formal jobs
- e. Public housing
- f. Educational opportunities at the pre-university level
- g. Educational opportunities at the university level

Source: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) 2006.

**Internal experience of humiliation**

***Indicator 8. Levels of accumulated humiliation.***

Please read each item below carefully and circle the rating that best describes your feelings from "Not at all" (1) to Extremely (5)

Throughout your life how seriously have you felt harmed by being...

- 1) ...excluded?
- 2) ...put down?
- 3) ...ridiculed?
- 4) ...discounted?
- 5) ...cruelly criticized?
- 6) ...called names or referred to in derogatory terms?

Source: Adapted from Cumulative Humiliation Subscale, Hartling and Luchetta (1999).

## References

CRISE (2006) **CRISE Perception Survey**, University of Oxford.

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