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The phenomenon of rejection of poverty status among people with higher education

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Abstract. Abstracts of the report on the study of the standard of living of students in the period 2018-2021. The study revealed mental problems of rejection of poverty among people with higher education. This phenomenon should be taken into account when forming the design of social research.

Key words: poverty, standard of living, household income, students, data distortion, tolerance to poverty, higher education.

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Starting in 2018, the authors and a group of students began studying the standard of living of students and the problems of poverty at the Siberian Federal University.

The selected focus group was the most accessible for research and promising for assessing the human capital index.

The purpose of the study is to ensure human well-being.

Research tools and methods. Stress test to assess the standard of living of students and their families. Experimental quantitative data

In 2018, we set the task for students to form an image of a student in the status of poverty.

In Russia, the level of poverty was determined on the basis of a cost approach to a basic set of necessary things, products, medicines and services. In 2019, the cost of such a minimum set was 11642 rubles (\$ 162).

As a research method, the students chose the formation of a request addressed to students and recent graduates of Krasnoyarsk. The survey was conducted using the stress testing methodology: the survey was conducted within 1 day through appeals to student groups in social networks.

The study was conducted during a day and received an instant response, 84 respondents aged 14 to 30 years took part in it, mostly women (70.2 %). According to the survey, the predominant form of employment of respondents is study – 56 % (47 people), almost a quarter of respondents combine study and work – 21.4 % (18 people), 21.4 % of respondents work (18 people) and 1.2 % do not study and do not work (1 person).

The survey results were incredibly depressing. More than a third of respondents stated that they have extremely low monthly income per family member and are below the poverty line.

Testing showed that the level of poverty among our respondents is almost 2.5 times higher than the level of poverty in Russia. The standard of living of people who traditionally grow up in families of parents with higher education is extremely low.

Then we drew the students' attention to the researcher's trap: being below the poverty line, 77 % of respondents do not consider themselves poor and only 23 % consider themselves poor.

Interviews conducted with families with higher education confirmed that their real incomes and their ideas about a decent standard of living differ. A third of all respondents turned out to have a higher education in at least 3 generations of the family, had an income below the standard poverty level, but people did not consider themselves poor. That is, claiming an extremely low income per family member, people did not recognise themselves as poor.

We changed the research methods to quantitative ones. We asked another group of students to take part in a quantitative study.

For 3 years, we have been forming groups in which we ask students to provide data on their monthly income and expenses, checked their validity and systematised the general data.

It turned out that the economic structure of students is more complex and depends, among other things, on the type of education. For example, at faculties studying mathematics and computer science, students are most often from more affluent families or have the opportunity to earn independently.

The results of the study.

The choice of design and research method can significantly distort the results of social research. In the described case, information about poverty among people with higher education was popular (it accounted for

about 30 % of cases), but was not confirmed by quantitative data. On the one hand, persons with higher education willingly distort information about their level of well-being. On the other hand, they are most tolerant of a decrease in income. Overcoming such research traps is associated with the mentality of the social structure of the society and requires the choice of an adequate research design.

The obtained quantitative data allowed us to conclude that the standard of living of students in Krasnoyarsk allows for a good educational level at a very competitive price.

Gratitude

We thank our friend Timothy Bayon, who helped us in finding and systematizing similar studies of our colleagues from the USA and a number of other countries, for example: [1], [2].

This gave us the opportunity to make sure that research methods, as a rule, are standards all over the world. However, indicators and problems have some differences that characterize society.

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