

The Process of Social Exclusion: The Dynamics of an Evolving Concept

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Overview

- Social Exclusion:
 - Commonalities with the Chronic Poverty approach
 - Exclusion vs. Poverty: evolving concepts
- Micro studies of social ex/inclusion:
 - Life-course
 - ECHP embedded in social/institutional context
 - Institutional/policy impacts on dynamic "spirals"
- Meso-level multidimensional ex/inclusion
 - Exclusion of groups
 - Boundary processes
- Macro-level processes: policy dynamics
 - Activation processes
 - Inclusion/Integration policies

Part I: The Concepts of Social Exclusion and Inclusion

- Commonalities with the Chronic Poverty approach:
 - Emphasis on social relations (rupture of social bond; Sen; humiliation; social isolation)
 - Dynamic processes (though not perfect antonyms): social “disaffiliation” or “disqualification”; exclusion vs. “differential inclusion”; duration dependence, scarring effects, etc. work through social forces like stigma
 - Multi-dimensionality
 - Contextual/institutional variation vs. universal causes

Exclusion vs. Poverty: Evolving Concepts

- Both material and non-material, resources and relations, economic and social dimensions
- Horizontal ties of belonging and vertical redistribution: sociological assumptions underlying “rupture of social bond” vs. “durable inequality”
- Both individual and group dynamics
- Exclusion is about the excluders as well as the excluded (poor)
- National and local contexts – from the law to the social organization of time and life course to cultural understandings -- shape the meaning and experience of exclusion, regardless of poverty.

Indicators of Social Exclusion: A Still-Evolving Concept

- No “Exclusion Threshold”?
 - Back to the “Unterschicht” (8% of Germany – 20% in East/4% in West)
- Laeken indicators and revisions (LTU also in HDI)

EU Common Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion [Dynamic Ones in Bold *Primary Indicators* (broken down by age and gender)

- At Risk of Poverty (household size- and composition-adjusted disposable income relative to 60 percent of nationally equivalent median income with OECD equivalence scales, before and after social transfers) by economic activity; household type; housing tenure.
- Income inequality (top 20-percent-to-bottom-20-percent quintile share ratio)
- **Persistent** at-risk-of poverty (share of the population below the poverty line for current year and at least two of three preceding years)
- Relative median poverty risk gap (ratio of median income of those at risk of poverty and the at risk of poverty threshold)
- Regional cohesion (coefficient of variation of employment rates among territorial regions)
- **Long-term** unemployment rate (share of 15-64 year olds in active population who were unemployed by ILO definition for 12 months or more)
- Share of children and working age adults living in jobless households
- **Early** school leavers not in education or training (proportion of 18-24 year olds with only lower secondary education and not in education or training in the prior four weeks)
- Life **expectancy** at birth
- Self-defined health status (as bad or very bad) by bottom and top of income distribution

Source: Commission, Joint Report on Social Inclusion. Brussels, July 2003, Appendix

What is “Inclusion”?

- Inclusion is not the opposite of exclusion
 - Inclusion as exclusive: Woodward and Kohli
- Inclusion on whose terms?
 - Social exclusion as “adverse incorporation”
- Ideological underpinnings of concepts of “integration” (normative, legal, spatial, economic, etc.)
- Participation vs. Empowerment
 - Voice vs. Agency
 - The exclusive nature of groups
 - Capacity-building challenges (remoteness and access; cultural/linguistic differences; federative models)

Part II: What Have We Learned?

(A) Micro studies of social ex/inclusion:

Increasing availability of longitudinal and panel data:

- US PSID, NLS, SIPP
- European National Data: UK, Germany
- ECHS
- Developing countries: longitudinal Ethiopian Rural Household Survey; Vietnam national household panel survey.
- Also survey data on youth in three poor urban neighborhoods in Fortaleza in Northeast Brazil to assess intergenerational poverty transmission; South African data on asset dynamics 1993-98

(1) Life-course

- Early literature on exclusion dynamics emphasized social assistance and welfare dynamics (e.g., Duncan; Ellwood and Bane; Leisering and Leibfried; Saraceno)
- Life-course Events:
 - Transitions in/out of paid work: Welfare to work vs. Work to welfare (Alcock et al.)
 - Family/household transitions
 - Health/Illness and other events

(2) ECHP embedded in social/institutional context: Welfare Regimes and Social Exclusion

- Gallie and Paugam
- Muffles and Fouarge
- Papadopoulos and Tsakloglou
- Apospori and Millar
- Whelan, Layte, and Maitre
("persistent poverty")

Institutional/policy impacts on dynamic “spirals”

- Segregation mechanisms (Schelling; Farley)
- Graham Room on school segregation processes
- “Exclusion Traps” (Silver 2006)

(B) Meso-level multidimensional ex/inclusion

- Exclusion of groups:
 - Groups → Individual:
 - Memberships Theory of Poverty (Durlauf): Group Affiliations → poverty
 - Neighborhood Effects Literature
 - Group Inequalities:
 - Institutional Racism, Exclusion Laws
 - Participation and group organization to overcome isolation can ironically encourage exclusion of weakest

Boundary processes

- Barth: cultural dualisms
- Elias: Oldtimers have organization and information vs. newcomers
- Parkin: Dual closure
- Tilly:
 - Boundary Change Mechanisms (inscription/erasure; de/activation; site transfer; relocation)
 - Causes of Boundary Change (encounter; imposition; borrowing; conversation; incentive shift)
 - Consequences of Boundary Change: (coordinated attack; coordinated defence; mutual aid)

(C) Macro-level processes: policy dynamics

- Decline in Solidarity: European (and global) integration reduces national integration
- Exclusionary laws and institutions (e.g., corporatism)
- Inclusionary potential and exclusion prevention of safety net and foreign aid programs
- National trends: progress towards targets and the OPC
 - UK Social Exclusion Unit review
 - NAPs for Social Inclusion
 - National differences in cultural cleavages impede comparison and coordination

Macro-Level: Activation policies

- Assumptions about processes:
 - Unemployment → exclusion
 - Paid work → inclusion
 - Participation/unpaid work -?-> inclusion
- Some “activation” policies can → exclusion: stigmatization of “workfare” and “exclusion traps”

Macro: Inclusion/Integration Policies as Anti-Poverty Policies

- Assumptions about causal processes
- EU Gender and Racial Directives:
enforcing anti-discrimination laws
- Integration Policies for Target Groups

Conclusions

- Began with some commonalities between ex/inclusion perspective and that of chronic poverty, but...

Some Critical Observations about Chronic Poverty Approach

- Historically, elites and policymakers always making distinctions among the poor
- Danger in emphasizing the worst-off few with cumulative disadvantages rather than the larger number of precarious and vulnerable
- Stress on participation and group organization to overcome isolation can ironically encourage exclusion of weakest
- Context-specificity vs. comparability: measurement trade-offs
- Some approaches to social exclusion suffer similar weaknesses