

# Survey Design Part 2

## Concepts and Questions

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## Further refinement of concepts

- ▶ Concepts contain specific elements within them that relate to the broader idea of the concept.
- ▶ Concepts are composed of dimensions, sub-dimensions, and further sub-dimensions.
- ▶ Dimensions and sub-dimensions vary in relevance to the needs of the research.
- ▶ Identifying the most relevant dimensions and sub-dimensions of a concept is another step in clarifying concepts for measurement.

# Dimensions

- ▶ Different aspects of a common core experience
- ▶ Clear indication of what the concept entails – how broad it is
- ▶ Specify the most relevant aspects of a concept to the research question.
- ▶ What are key dimensions of:
  - Poverty?
  - Homelessness?
  - Middle Class?
  - Health?
  - Education?
  - Employment?

## Sub-dimensions

A sub-dimension is a further refinement of a dimension of a concept

Similar in nature to dimensions, but further reflect layers of complexity to do with a concept Identifying SD's allow greater focus and greater clarity for operationalization

Clearer way to develop valid and reliable indicators

- ▶ Health -> mental health -> personality disorders

What are the sub-dimensions of:

- ▶ Poverty?
- ▶ Homelessness?
- ▶ Middle class?

## Deciding on dimensions and sub-dimensions

Context – place, institutional, social, political, economic

Relevance - Which dimensions and sub-dimensions are relevant?

Necessity – Which are necessary and which are not?

Research question specific – Are they intuitive or clearly embedded in your research question?

Previous research – What has been done before? Do you need to innovate or expand on a concept and include dimensions and sub-dimensions?

The actual questions that populate a survey Questions that are measures of the concepts (dimensions and sub-dimensions) embedded in research questions and theories

Indicators need to be valid and reliable

- ▶ Validity – that the question measures exactly what it is supposed to measure
- ▶ Reliability – as a measure it produces similar results under similar conditions

# Validity

Three forms of validity for indicators Content validity – specific content, especially in dimensions and sub-dimensions

Criterion/expert validity – test against old measures, consult with relevant groups when developing an indicator

Construct validity – measures based on theories – is the measure sound/problematic or is the theory

## Reliability

A number of issues impact reliability Indicator construction – consistency, clear wording, and coding

Recall – issues with memory in answering questions

Testing and retesting – repeating questions to a sample should garner the same responses



## Considerations:

- ▶ How many indicators – need vs. want
- ▶ Design of indicators – wording and comprehension
- ▶ Arrangement of indicators in the survey – strategically placed so respondents can follow, continue, and complete the survey