



Analysis of the Effect of Health Service Quality on Patients in the Inpatient Room of Haji Hospital Medan

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Abstract

This qualitative study delves into the complicated dynamics of financial inequality through a phenomenological lens, aiming to uncover the lived experiences and perceptions of individuals from various socio-financial backgrounds. Using semi-structured interviews, a purposive sample of 20 members became engaged to explore their narratives concerning monetary mobility, perceptions of meritocracy, intersectional identities, and subjective understandings of wealth and poverty. The analysis found a complex interplay of factors, highlighting the pervasive effect of socio-economic backgrounds on opportunities and outcomes, nuanced perspectives on meritocracy and fairness, the intersectionality of identities in shaping financial trajectories, and subjective interpretations of well-being through economic measures. By evaluating and contrasting these findings with existing literature, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the multidimensional nature of financial inequality. The implications of these insights for policy interventions and future research directions are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

In modern-day swiftly evolving global panorama, the field of economics performs a pivotal function in shaping guidelines, riding growth, and fostering prosperity. Recent advancements in financial theory, coupled with empirical studies and actual-world packages, have shed new light on diverse sides of economic development. This advent aims to offer an outline of key developments and findings in cutting-edge economics, drawing on a wide range of new and applicable citations. One of the fundamental components of cutting-edge economics is the study of monetary growth and development (Chawla et al., 2023; Al-Emran, 2023; Merwin et al., 2009). As noted by means of Wang et al. (2023), know-how the drivers of lengthy-time period economic boom is vital for designing powerful policies that promote sustained prosperity. Recent studies by means of Urbano et al. (2020) highlights the importance of establishments in fostering economic development, emphasizing the function of inclusive establishments in promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and productiveness.

Furthermore, globalization remains a good-sized force shaping monetary dynamics global. According to Heimberger (2020), even as globalization has caused improved interconnectedness and exchange, it has additionally raised concerns about earnings inequality and the distributional results of change liberalization. Recent studies with the aid of Copeland (2021) delve into the nuanced affects of globalization on labor markets, highlighting the function of technological alternate and talent-biased innovation in shaping employment tendencies.

In addition to macroeconomic trends, current studies has additionally centered on microeconomic phenomena and behavioral economics. Gumbert (2022) discusses the concept of nudge economics, which emphasizes the position of behavioral insights in designing policies that encourage preferred behaviors without enforcing mandates. This approach has won traction in regions including public fitness, environmental sustainability, and retirement financial savings (Partridge & Olfert, 2011; Scicluna, 2024; Boguslaw & Kaufman, 2015; Diprose et al., 2019). The intersection of economics and generation has been a prime place of hobby in current years. As highlighted through Deschacht (2021), advances in artificial intelligence, automation, and digital platforms have transformed industries and reshaped hard work markets. The upward thrust of the gig financial system, characterized by freelance and on-demand work, has spurred debates approximately hard work rights, income security, and the destiny of labor (Stopforth, 2023; Prassl, 2018; Smallens, 2016).

Moreover, environmental sustainability has emerged as a urgent challenge in the realm of economics (Hariram et al., 2023; Allam et al., 2022). Demekas & Grippa (2021) underscores the urgency of addressing climate trade and transitioning to a low-carbon financial system. Delve into the monetary implications of weather rules, exploring techniques to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions even as ensuring financial performance and fairness. In the world of improvement economics, ongoing efforts are aimed at lowering poverty, improving livelihoods, and promoting inclusive boom. Simangunsong & Sihotang (2023) recommend for evidence-based totally processes to poverty comfort, emphasizing the importance of rigorous assessment and statistics-pushed interventions. Innovations in monetary inclusion, including mobile banking and digital payments, have also multiplied get entry to to economic services for underserved populations (Sapovadia, 2018; Goyal, 2017; Chuen & Deng, 2017). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has had profound economic ramifications, prompting researchers and policymakers to rethink traditional economic paradigms. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of economic policy, social protection nets, and resilience in economic structures. The crisis has additionally improved virtual transformation, remote work trends, and e-commerce adoption.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach to explore individuals' lived experiences and perceptions of economic inequality. The phenomenological method was chosen because it enables the researcher to uncover the subjective meanings and interpretations that participants assign to their economic circumstances and the broader structure of society. The research process consisted of three main stages: data collection, data analysis, and interpretation.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 participants who were purposively selected to represent diverse socio-economic backgrounds. This sampling strategy ensured that the study captured a wide range of perspectives on inequality, from those with limited resources to individuals with relatively greater access to economic opportunities. The interviews were guided by open-ended

questions that allowed participants to express their views freely, while also providing the flexibility to probe deeper into specific themes as they emerged during the conversations.

The data analysis followed an inductive process. Interview transcripts were systematically coded and categorized, leading to the identification of recurring patterns and significant statements. These codes were then organized into broader themes and sub-themes that reflected participants' perceptions of economic inequality. This thematic structure provided a coherent narrative that integrated individual accounts into a collective understanding of the phenomenon. Throughout this process, reflection and iterative refinement were employed to ensure that the themes accurately represented participants' lived experiences.

To enhance the rigor of the study, several strategies were applied to ensure validity, credibility, and transferability. Peer debriefing was conducted to minimize researcher bias and strengthen the trustworthiness of interpretations. Member checking was also employed, allowing participants to review and confirm the accuracy of the findings drawn from their interviews. In addition, ethical considerations were strictly followed, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' rights, ensuring that the research was conducted responsibly and ethically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study explored the lived experiences and perceptions of economic inequality through a phenomenological case study involving 20 participants from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The case study focused on individuals representing lower-, middle-, and upper-income groups in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, providing a rich context for understanding how inequality is experienced in everyday life. Participants were drawn from varied occupations, including informal workers, small entrepreneurs, civil servants, and university students, ensuring multiple perspectives. This diversity allowed the study to highlight not only structural disparities but also the subjective meanings attached to wealth, poverty, and social mobility.

The analysis generated four key themes: (1) socio-economic background and mobility, (2) contested perceptions of meritocracy, (3) intersectionality of identities, and (4) subjective meanings of wealth and poverty. Each theme is discussed below with supporting narratives from participants, followed by interpretive insights that situate these findings within the broader literature.

Socio-Economic Background and Mobility

A recurring theme across interviews was the powerful influence of family background in shaping opportunities. Participants from lower-income families often described facing "invisible walls" that limited their social mobility. One participant remarked:

"No matter how hard I try, connections and family wealth always seem to matter more than effort."

This observation shows that inequality is not only material and deprivation, but also institutionalized and supported by the social networks and unequal access to the resources. Education, employment and mobility opportunities are frequently mediated by acquaintances and networks a person belongs to, and not only by merit and work. Family wealth and social capital in these settings act as gatekeepers to establish what those involved referred to as an invisible wall that prevents upward mobility. This is an indication that inequality is not just perpetuated by differences in the amount of income or assets only but also by the means by which institutional arrangements favor some groups and oppress others. More importantly, it is important to note that inequality should not be regarded as an individual choice but as a structural phenomenon. As long as these social systems are subject to

established social hierarchies, resource access is not open to the poor, even when they prove able or willing. The generation of inequality entrenched in networks and the allocation of resources hence perpetuates intergenerational cycles of disadvantage. It is in this light that there should be policy interventions that should target, not just redistribution of material, but also structural impediments enshrined in the education, workplace, and governance systems that still reproduce inequities.

This observation is consistent with Lahtinen et al. (2023), who highlight the intergenerational reproduction of socio-economic status, according to which the benefits and harms are brought up generation after generation. Nevertheless, the current case study does more than just that and proves the existence of these structural barriers not only as the external ones but also internalized by individuals. The respondents reported that they believed that they had been predetermined in their opportunities by their family background and this created a feeling of resignation and low aspiration. Through this, inequalities will not only be based on material resources distribution but also on the psychological conditioning of the subjects which will come to view limited possibilities as a new normal.

The replication of inequality both at the structural and psychological level shows the atavistic nature of inequality. The mechanisms that have a persistent disadvantage include structural ones (inequality of access to education or job networks, etc.) and psychological ones (the formation of self-perceptions, agency limitation, etc.). Such dual reproduction indicates that inequality is still present where there seems to be formal opportunities, as people might not have the confidence or resources, or seem legitimate to act on such opportunities. These insights lead to the necessity to develop interventions that address not only the systemic aspects of inequality but also the psychological aspects of inequality, which will empower along with the systemic change.

Contested Perceptions of Meritocracy

Perceptions of meritocracy were highly contested. Some participants believed that hard work and persistence could still lead to success. As one middle-class entrepreneur expressed:

“If you innovate and keep working, opportunities will come.”

In contrast, others from marginalized backgrounds rejected this notion, highlighting systemic unfairness:

“Hard work alone doesn’t change anything if the system is already against you.”

These contrasting views resonate with the argument of Mijs & Savage (2020), who contend that the myth of meritocracy often obscures deep structural inequalities by framing success as the outcome of individual effort rather than systemic advantage. In the present case study, the narratives of participants reveal how this myth functions differently depending on one’s social position. For individuals from middle-income or relatively privileged backgrounds, the belief in meritocracy provided a motivating framework. They perceived that hard work and innovation could open doors, reinforcing optimism about social mobility. One participant explained:

“If you are persistent and creative, you can still make progress, even if it is slow.”

In contrast, participants from marginalized or economically disadvantaged backgrounds expressed strong skepticism toward the idea that effort alone determines outcomes. For them, the meritocratic narrative served as a reminder of exclusion rather than possibility. A respondent noted:

“People always say to work harder, but no matter how much I try, I see others with the right connections get ahead while I stay in the same place.”

The passage captures a profound disillusionment with meritocracy by showing how structural inequalities limited access to social networks, unequal educational opportunities, and unequal access to capital systematically frustrate the promise that effort alone leads to success. This feeling of disappointment is not merely a subjective grievance; it is an empirically observable response to systems that reward inherited advantage and gatekeep mobility. Critically, when people experience repeated setbacks despite effort, their frustration signals that meritocratic rhetoric is failing as an organising principle: it promises mobility while the institutional architecture quietly reproduces privilege. Treating this reaction as a personal deficit impatience, entitlement, or a lack of grit misconstrues a political and structural problem as an individual psychological one, thereby depoliticising what is in fact a distributional question about opportunity and power.

The contrasting interpretations of success in the case study elucidate how meritocracy operates ideologically. For advantaged actors, meritocratic narratives function as legitimating stories: success is framed as proof of deservingness, and inherited or networked advantages become invisible or reinterpreted as personal virtue. For those excluded by the same system, meritocracy reads as a delegitimising discourse that blames victims for structural failures. This asymmetry is not accidental. It is built into the rhetoric of individual responsibility that sustains neoliberal governance: by locating failure in personal choices and lack of effort, it forecloses inquiries into institutional design, funding choices, and historical patterns of exclusion. Thus the debate is never just about values; it is about which explanations of social outcomes are politically permissible.

Recognising inequality as both material and ideological compels a shift in how policy and public discourse are structured. If meritocracy's cultural work is to naturalise inequality to make unequal outcomes appear fair or inevitable then interventions must do more than expand formal opportunities. They must also expose and contest the narratives that mask structural barriers. Practically, this means designing policies that combine redistributive measures (scholarships targeted at historically excluded groups, progressive financing for small entrepreneurs, public investment in under-resourced schools) with civic education and media strategies that problematise “pure merit” explanations. In Indonesia, for example, this could involve pairing expanded access to higher education with curricula and public campaigns that foreground historical and structural explanations for inequality, and with mechanisms that make elite networks and recruitment practices more transparent and accountable.

Last, breaking the meritocratic myth requires fostering institutions that open and stabilise actual pathways for mobility rather than symbolic gestures. This involves long-term commitments to building social infrastructure: early-childhood programs in disadvantaged areas, sustained mentorship and apprenticeship schemes that bypass nepotistic hiring, and public credit facilities that make start-up capital accessible on non-discriminatory terms. Equally important is creating spaces where people can articulate grievances without being shamed for “not trying hard enough.” Policy design should therefore be attentive to dignity as well as distribution: measures that enable people to see systemic causes for inequality help mobilise collective action for structural reform rather than internalised resignation. Only by combining material redistribution, narrative change, and institutional redesign can societies move from a meritocratic myth that excuses inequality to a politics that genuinely opens opportunities for all.

Intersectionality of Identities

The study also revealed how overlapping identities such as gender, ethnicity, and education compound experiences of disadvantage. A female participant from a minority group explained:

“As a woman from my community, I need to prove myself twice, once because of my gender and again because of where I come from.”

This observation is similar to the work of Haslam et al. (2021), who state that it is impossible to explain inequality by considering the independent variables of income or education separately. Rather, various identity markers (gender, ethnicity, social class) interact to create different disadvantages. The case study illustrates that those participants who are members of more than one marginalized group experience double difficulties. In case of example, women belonging to minority groups explained that they were not only evaluated by their gender but also by their ethnicity as their access to the jobs was restricted and it further contributing to their social isolation.

Finally, the overlap of identities was also found to be notable especially in the stories of female participants who believed that their efforts were underestimated both at home and in the workplace. One participant stated:

“Being a woman, I should care about the family first, but due to my ethnicity, I feel excluded as well because the opportunities are something other people preorganize and use.”

This brings out the role of layered identities in forming numerous layers of inequality which support one another. Instead of being disadvantaged on one axis, people face the burden of cumulative disadvantages of cross-cultural barriers that compound their frailty.

The case study enhances existing literature by placing these experiences in the framework of intersectionality, which presents how cultures, institutions, and economic systems intersect to make lived realities. Economic inequality is not only in terms of inequitable allocation of material resources, but also in terms of how social hierarchies interrelate to limit access to opportunities. Indicatively, some participants indicated that they could not optimally exploit educational opportunities given, some of them, even in instances where educational opportunities existed. This shows that inequality can only be solved by focusing on the cultural beliefs and institutional inequalities that promote exclusion.

This results have important implications on policy and practice. Inter-marginalized people could have compounding disadvantages that the program aimed at solely reducing income or access to education would miss. Interventions should therefore be responsive to the overlaying aspects of identity and how they support inequality. The situation in Indonesia is that this cannot be done with just gender-responsive and pro-poor policies, but also with ethnic and regional factors incorporated into the economic planning. Lacking intersectional approaches, any attempt to limit inequality can result in some groups being helped unwillingly, and the most vulnerable ones remaining even further behind.

Subjective Meanings of Wealth and Poverty

Finally, participants articulated nuanced interpretations of wealth and poverty that moved beyond financial measures. For instance, one respondent noted:

“I may not have much money, but being respected in my neighborhood and having time with my family makes me feel wealthy.”

This is similar to the capabilities approach that focuses on the quality of life and human flourishing, and does not just focus on income. The case study indicates that the presence of subjective well-being in the state of material deprivation is quite

possible and this indicates that the issue of economic inequality should be assessed in the context of wider social and cultural aspects.

The findings of this paper provide useful information concerning the way in which economic inequality is experienced and experienced by persons in the different socio-economic groups in Indonesia. In contrast to the strictly quantitative researches that focus on income distribution or macroeconomic variables, the current study shows the realities of inequality, as lived, and how structural obstacles are internalized, fought, and reimagined through personal accounts. By basing these subjective experiences, the study contributes to the existing knowledge by demonstrating that inequality is not merely the result of quantifiable consequences but also the sense-making that can provide people with the sense of their possibilities and constraints.

Even though the results depict clear themes, i.e. the persistent impact of the socio-economic background, the problematic concept of meritocracy, the interplay of identities, and the subjectivity of definitions of wealth, it is imperative to place them in the broader scholarly and policy discourse. As an example, the identification of background as a predictor of life opportunities proves the old evidence regarding intergenerational inequality (Lahtinen et al., 2023), but the research gives the discussion a new dimension as it demonstrates how these obstacles are internalized psychologically. To the same extent, the contentious views of meritocracy are echoed by Mijs & Savage (2020), yet the case study is more nuanced as it demonstrates that the perception of meritocracy serves differently when various social positions are taken into account.

Intersectionality theme is also concerned with world discussion of the interplay of various aspects of identity, gender, ethnicity, and class, to influence the results (Haslam et al., 2021). The findings reflect the need to develop policies that are not one-dimensional solutions by showing that disadvantage is frequently multiplied when it comes to people who occupy more than a single marginalized identity. Lastly, the personalized definitions of wealth and poverty coincide with the capabilities approach of Sen, in which the focus is not entirely on economic indicators, but rather on the general concept of well-being. It implies that inequality in Indonesia can be discussed in the future incorporating structural changes and acknowledgment of other definitions of prosperity that communities themselves prioritize.

By putting these themes in the broader context of literature, policy, and theory, the multidimensionality of inequality is emphasized. Theoretically, the results can be added to phenomenological descriptions of lived experience, whereby people describe inequality in a manner that cuts across cultural and institutional realms. Politically, the research recommends that to overcome inequality issues, a redistributive approach is necessary and that further actions should be taken to overcome systemic obstacles, eliminate exclusionary norms, and scale up marginalized voices. Combined, the results and discussion illustrate that the structural, psychological, and cultural approaches need to be integrated to gain a better understanding and response to the challenges of economic inequality in Indonesia.

Lived Experiences and Dimensions of Economic Inequality

The continuity of socio-economic background as the determinant of life chances is one of the problems that can be discussed first. This validates the findings of other scholars across the globe that the inequality is typically intergenerational (Lahtinen et al., 2023; Duong, 2023; Yang & Wei, 2024). However, in comparison with the actual research that is quantitative in nature, this research reveals the subjective side whereby the respondents do not simply observe these obstacles but view them as the invisibility fences. This gives an emotive aspect to earlier acquired knowledge, which means that there is a need to make sure that the policies do not just aim at

combating the structural inequalities but also work to enhance psychological empowerment in order to perturb inequalities in disadvantage.

The controversial views on meritocracy determine a large gap in ideology. On the one hand, the belief in hard work as a means to enable success is a motivational discourse to actors of the middle classes. At the same time, the marginal members feel that meritocracy is a farce, something that reinforces the feeling of being sidelined. This is similar to the arguments that can be presented by Mijs & Savage (2020), who indicate that the concept of meritocracy typically promotes inequality rather than eliminates it. What it implies is that policy discourse in Indonesia, in this instance, should be cautious to propagate meritocratic ideals blindly since this ideology can be deployed to blind structural barricade, which is experienced by the disadvantaged communities.

Intersectional lens is also needed, as seen in the results. The inequality process cannot be reduced to income level only since it is defined by gender, ethnicity and education simultaneously. This goes in line with Haslam et al. (2021) who put emphasis on compounded vulnerabilities due to intersecting identities. As the ethnic and regional inequalities continue to exist in the Indonesian context, intersectionality will offer the critical approach to policy making where more inclusive policies are developed to deal with the inter-laced disadvantages.

Another aspect that is important is that the participants subjectively defined the concepts of poverty and wealth. Contrary to the traditional economic indicators that are interested in the income or consumption, non-material indicators cited by the respondents include social respect, autonomy, and family time. This is near Sen capabilities approach which sees development to be liberties and chances of individuals to live valuable lives. This implies that inequality cannot be alleviated simply by allocating resources because it must be accompanied by the environment where human beings are able to attain meaningful lives in various respects. All these together suggest that economic inequality in Indonesia is multidimensional because it occurs not only through structural disadvantages, but also through cultural discourses and mind practices. This is an extension of the existing literature with respect to how individuals negotiate, rationalize and sometimes even resist the existence of inequality.

The policy level discussion aims at three priorities. Firstly, structural and psychological obstacles should be addressed by implementing interventions at the redistributive measures level and empowerment. Second, meritocracy tales should be debated in the discourse of the people in order to avoid legitimizing inequality. Third, the policies must be informed in an intersectional manner hence ensuring the intersectional disadvantages are not overlooked in the quest to achieve economic growth. In summary, this research study is very helpful in its own capacity, however, it also signifies the flaws of the qualitative research. The sample size is a weakness to generalization and it is possible that there will be researcher subjectivity. The beauty of the data, however, lies in the fact that it is able to capture lived realities that can barely be detected in large survey. Subsequent research would be better placed to enhance this by use of mixed method and longitudinal designs that could be capable of capturing the subjective experiences as well as the structural changes over time.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative studies on financial inequality via a phenomenological method has furnished wealthy insights into the lived experiences and perceptions of people. These findings verify the multidimensional nature of economic inequality, highlighting the interaction of socio-economic heritage, perceptions of meritocracy, intersectional identities, and subjective understandings of wealth and poverty. By

evaluating and contrasting these consequences with current literature, this study contributes to a deeper information of the complexities surrounding monetary inequality. The diffused views captured in this research call for a holistic approach to addressing monetary disparities, one that recognizes the interacting elements that form individual possibilities and outcomes. Policy interventions aimed at reducing monetary inequality ought to do not forget now not only structural limitations but also subjective interpretations and price systems that impact ideals about equity and entitlement.

Additionally, promoting inclusive monetary increase requires attention to intersectional dynamics, spotting the precise demanding situations marginalized communities face because of overlapping dimensions of inequality. Although this have a look at provides precious insights, it's far vital to well-known its limitations, along with small pattern size and potential researcher bias. Future research ought to intention for larger and more numerous samples, longitudinal designs, and cross-disciplinary collaborations to higher reveal the complexity of economic inequality. Through speak among teachers, policymakers, and society, we are able to work toward a more just and inclusive society wherein all of us has the possibility to thrive.

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