

研究会・シンポジウム報告

2024年6月13日（木） 定例研究会報告

テーマ： Participatory approaches to understanding and acting on poverty in the UK.

報告者： Dr. Gill Main (Founder, Social Research Collective; Visiting Professor,
School of Economics, Senshu University)

時間： 16:00-18:00

場所： 生田校舎2号館スタジオ202

参加者数：51名

報告内容概略：

In this lecture Dr. Gill Main spoke about the issues of poverty and social exclusion, focusing on the United Kingdom. She provided details about the current state of poverty in the UK, where more than one in five people, and 30% of children, are living in poverty. This is the result of years of austerity policies which have created extreme poverty and destitution. As the fifth largest economy in the world, there is no need for anyone to experience poverty – it exists because of political choices.

There is a long history of scientific studies of poverty in the UK which confirm that structural change is needed to end poverty. However, this has resulted in limited policy action, and media narratives about poverty often blame people in poverty for their own conditions. To address the lack of action, Dr. Main proposed the need for more participatory research, in which the expertise from people who are living in poverty is treated as equal to that of academic experts and policy makers.

Two projects were presented, showcasing this type of research. The first project was called ‘A Different Take’, in which panels of experts by experience, academics, and policy makers met to discuss priorities for addressing poverty. This project resulted in policy changes and the creation of resources which communities can use to advocate for their needs. For example, a new child poverty strategy was adopted by Leeds City Council, and reports were written in a way that people living in poverty can easily understand them. The second project was called ‘Youth Voices’. In this project, young people with experience of poverty and the care system were trained to conduct peer research into the links between poverty and social work interventions. They were given support to identify their own research questions and lead on different aspects of the project, including sharing written submissions and speeches for the United Nations Consultation on the Rights of Children in Alternative Care.

Dr. Main concluded that including experts by experience can result in policy changes which have a positive impact on those who are worst impacted by poverty. In the discussion session, questions were raised about how to grasp the well-being of children in poverty, how to understand various characteristics of participatory approaches, and their relations to labour movements. These meaningful dialogues further benefited the participants to understand such important and long-ignored issues of poverty.

記：専修大学経済学部・飯沼健子