Fuel poverty and transport poverty in the UK: a critical examination of their future evolution in relation to government policy.

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**The point of the research**

Critically examine the links between fuel poverty and transport poverty, which form part of wider socioeconomic problems affecting UK society since the 2007/08 recession.

Seeks to make a methodological contribution to field by looking at the connections between these two issues, which are not being handled effectively in the current climate.

**Research Outcomes**

1. Improved understanding of fuel poverty and transport poverty as complex, interconnected phenomena by conducting of their consolidated study on empirical and policy levels.
2. Fuel poverty and transport poverty policy recommendations for decision makers in local and national government.
3. Contributions to methodological enquiry through recommendations on how to improve the identification and classification of those affected by fuel poverty and transport poverty.

**Methodology**

- This research project has adapted a multiple and mixed methodology, as the subject matter is heterodox and the project seeks to avoid limitations in the use of data and methods (Cronin, 2016).
- The project will seek to utilise a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, using triangulation to look for a convergence in the results and eliminate errors (Cronin, 2016).
- Methodology to include:
  - Statistical analysis of government supplied secondary longitudinal data on fuel poverty and transportation.
  - Semi-structured interviews with a range of people working on fuel poverty and transport poverty, including policy decision makers in central and local government, academics and representatives from unions and third sector organisations, to be analysed using pattern analysis.
  - Government policy analysis, to be compared to the outcome of the interviews.

**Research Plan 2018/19**

- Obtain ethical approval from the UREC (completed January 2018)
- Carry out interviews (February – March 2018)
- Transcribe and analyse interview data (April 2018)
- Statistical analysis of data (May 2018)
- Government policy analysis (June 2018)
- Write up research and submit thesis (Spring 2019)

**References**


**Descriptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fuel Poverty</th>
<th>Transport Poverty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuel poverty in the UK emerged as a campaigning issue in 1975 (Boardman, 2010).</td>
<td>A precise definition of transport poverty does not exist in the current literature (Lucas et al., 2016).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fuel poverty definition (old) – homes with low levels of energy efficiency that couldn’t meet their energy needs within 10% of household income (Boardman, 1991).</td>
<td>Transport poverty is not defined by UK Government policy at this time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fuel poverty definition (current) – household fuel poor if:</td>
<td>Transport poverty has been used by campaigners to raise the profile of the fact that some individuals and households have difficulty in paying for essential journeys (Titheridge et al., 2014).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Income is below the poverty line (including energy costs);</td>
<td>• Energy costs are typically higher for household type. (Department for Energy and Climate Change, 2013).</td>
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**Aim of research**

- The aim of this research is to critically evaluate the main factors (location, income levels, consumer behaviour/demographics, quality of housing stock, the influence of energy providers, fuel pricing, access to a car, public transport provision and cost of use) that determine the levels of fuel poverty and transport poverty in the United Kingdom, and examine the impacts of government legislation and policy, on the issues.

**Objective**

1. Identify the policy reform that is needed to eliminate fuel poverty in the UK.
2. Identify the policy reform that is needed to eliminate transport poverty in the UK.
3. Identify the links between fuel poverty and transport poverty.

**Fuel Poverty in the UK**


**Principle research questions**

What is the current state of fuel poverty in the UK, and how has it evolved since its inception as the subject of United Kingdom Government policy in 1997?

What is transport poverty and what are the challenges in reaching a definition of the issue that is acceptable to the United Kingdom government and other interested stakeholders?