EXPLAINING THE CORRELATES OF CHILD'S MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA USING THE ALKIRE-FOSTER APPROACH

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ARTICLE INFO

Original Scientific Paper
Received: 12.07.2023
Revised: 21.11.2023
Accepted: 19.12.2023

DOI 10.7251/ACE2339067C
UDC
316.34423-053.2/.6(680)

Keywords: *Child Poverty, Multidimensional Poverty Index, Alkire-Foster, South Africa*

JEL Classification: I3, I30, I31, I32

ABSTRACT

Child's poverty remains one of the major concerns in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This study analyzed the determinants of child's multidimensional poverty in South Africa using the 2017, 2018 and 2019 General Household Survey (GHS) datasets. The Alkire-Foster's methodology was used to compute child's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), and its correlates were analyzed using the Tobit regression. The results revealed that some regional and areas of residence factors significantly influenced MPIs across the periods ($p<0.05$). Also, being a Coloured, Indian/Asian, and White child and biological children of the households' heads significantly reduced MPIs ($p<0.05$). Conclusively, policies and programs to address child's poverty must among others, be sensitive to some racial, provincial and gender factors. It is therefore recommended that the government needs to critically come with strategies to facilitate achievement of some SDGs as a prerequisite for reducing child's multidimensional poverty.

1. INTRODUCTION

In South Africa, reducing poverty has been a priority of aligned legislative and policy initiatives. The apartheid government selectively implemented economic development programmes with significant bias against some population groups. Therefore, the current manifestation of poverty and inequality in South Africa is the aftermath of past governance structure and selective implementation of social welfare packages as characterized by the apartheid era (Seekings & Nattrass, 2015). Although policy interventions to address poverty under democratic governance have yielded some positive results, the overall performance is still

falling short of people's expectations on improvement in standard of living and wealth creation.

The groundbreaking work of Amartya Sen provides the foundation upon which multidimensional poverty analysis is built (Sen, 2000). Sen (2000) stressed the need to understand actual poverty in terms of capability deprivation, which includes opportunities, choices, and entitlements. From that time, literature began to focus on the broader sense of poverty from its multidimensional perspective (Alkire & Santos, 2013). According to Bastos (2001), welfare concept analysis should focus on home living conditions rather than households' income levels. The multidimensional view of welfare is favored by both the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Alkire & Jahan, 2018).

From the unidimensional perspective, poverty seems to be endemic among South African children. Some statistics have shown that poverty increased by 11.1% between 1995 and 1999, while 11 million children were poor in 2002 (Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security, 2002; Omotoso & Koch, 2018). Moreover, Statistics South Africa (2020) submitted that 51.0% of South African children were uni-dimensionally poor. On the other hand, based on 2012 data, multidimensional child deprivation ratio for South Africa was 35.7%, which can be compared with 16.0% for Botswana and 29.30% for Namibia (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2015). Recently, 62.1% of South African children were multidimensionally poor in 2020, and majority simultaneously suffered multiple deprivations (Statistics South Africa, 2020). According to Statistics South Africa (2014), poor health, low level or no education, poor living conditions, inadequate income, lack of empowerment as well as threat from violence or crime are the factors that promote multidimensional poverty. It was discovered that the primary determinants of poverty include gender, unemployment, household size, marital status, and population group (Jansen et al., 2015; Makhalima, 2020; Omotoso & Koch, 2018).

In Burkina Faso, Fonta et al. (2020) found that using the Alkire-Foster MPI, child's multidimensional poverty reduced with maternal education, income, urban residence, but promoted by polygamy, residence in some rural areas, chronic illness among households' heads, debts and households' size. Nguetse Tegoum & Hevi (2016) used the multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) and hierarchical classification methods to analyze child's multidimensional poverty in Cameroon. It was found that multidimensional poverty was influenced by education, mother's age and presence in the household. Dutta (2021) analyzed the determinants of child's multidimensional poverty in India and Bangladesh

using the multidimensional overlapping deprivation approach (MODA). It was found that maternal education and empowerment reduced the chance of child's multidimensional poverty.

The objective of this paper is to determine the factors explaining multidimensional poverty indicator (MPI) among South African children. The MPI was computed with different attributes covered different dimensions of households' welfare. It was hypothesized that child's demographic characteristics do not significantly influence multidimensional poverty index (MPI) which was computed using the Alkire-Foster (AF). The majority of previous research studies have examined household multidimensional poverty in South Africa. However, the determinants of poverty from a multifaceted perspective with a focus on children are not well understood in general. This study will contribute to existing literature by filling this important research gap.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sampling Procedures for the Data

This study used the General Household Survey (GHS) datasets for 2017, 2018 and 2019, which were collected by the Statistics South Africa. The data were collected from every member of the household. The focus of this study was on multidimensional poverty among children. Therefore, information on households' members who were less than 18 years was used. The data collection for the three years used a Master Sample (MS) frame which was compiled in 2013 by Statistics South Africa (2017, 2018 and 2019). This sampling frame was designed with the 2011 Census, and comprised of 103,576 enumeration areas (EAs), 3,324 primary sampling units (PSUs) and 33,000 dwelling units (DUs). Each of the surveys also has sampling weights for ensuring representativeness of the samples. After the data were sorted and merged, a total of 25,915, 25,224, 20,083 and 71,711 of children were selected in the 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined datasets, respectively.

Child's multidimensional poverty index and its decomposition using Alkire-Foster Method

This study used the Alkire & Foster (2011) method to compute the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) using some selected child's welfare attributes from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 GHS datasets. Table 1 shows the selected welfare dimensions and attributes. Four dimensions were identified which are standard of living, health, education, and perceived happiness. The Table reveals

that in all, there were ninety-one (91) welfare attributes of which seventy-six (76) belonged to the standard of living category, eleven (11) belonged to health, two (2) belonged to education, and two (2) belonged to perceived happiness. The standard of living was broken into six (6) indicators, while health was broken into two (2). The Alkire-Foster method begins with proper definition of poverty cutoff for identifying the children that were multidimensionally poor. Each of the selected attributes was coded as 1 for the deprived children and 0 for the non-deprived. The ninety-one selected attributes are defined in Table 1 following Omotoso & Koch (2018) and Fonta et al. (2020).

Table 1. Child MPI dimensions, indicators, Deprivation cut-offs and weights

Dimension (Weight)	Indicator (Weight)	Attributes' Coding Method
Standard of living (76/91)	Assets (22/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household does not own each of the following assets: motor vehicle; radio ot television set; swimming pool; DVD player/blu-ray player /pay TV (M-Net/DSTV/ Top TV) subscription; air conditioner (excluding fans); computer/ desktop/laptop; vacuum cleaner/floor polisher; dish washing machine; washing machine; tumble dryer deep freezer – free standing; refrigerator or combined fridge freezer; electric stove; microwave oven; built-in kitchen sink; home security service; home theatre system; geyser providing hot running water; solar hot water geyser; and solar electrical panel
	Telecom-munica-tions (7/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household does not have access to the following: home Internet connection; Internet in a library or community hall/Thusong centre; Internet for students at a school/ university/college; Internets at place of work; Internet Café ≤2km from the household; Internet Café and Telephone.
	Waste removal (6/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household has the following: irregular or no waste removal; littering, water pollution, outdoor/ indoor air pollution; land degradation; and excessive noise.
	Housing charac-teristics (10/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household possesses each of the following: informal/traditional dwelling type (shack, caravan or other); without bricks or cement for walls and without materials such as tile, corrugated iron, asbestos, and others for roof; with unimproved floor materials; more than two persons per room; using unimproved drinking water; distance of water source from the dwelling more than 30 minutes; using unimproved toilet facilities; and sharing toilet facilities.
Standard of living (76/91)	Safety (10/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household responded yes to each of the following: motor vehicle injury; bicycle related injury; gun shots wounds; severe trauma due to violence, assault, or beating; crime-related injury; fire or burn; accidental poisoning; intentional poisoning; sports related injuries; and other form of injuries.
	Energy (21/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household possesses each of the following features: lack access to electricity; uses paraffin for lighting; uses candles for lighting; uses no energy source for lighting; uses other unclean sources for cooking; uses paraffin for cooking; uses wood for cooking; uses coal for cooking; and uses animal dung for cooking.

Dimension (Weight)	Indicator (Weight)	Attributes' Coding Method
Health (11/91	Nutrition/ hunger (8/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household responded yes to each of the following: run out of money to buy food; run out of money 5 or more days in the past 30 days; cut the size of meal or skip any meals; cut size of meals 5 or more days in the past 30 days; skipped meals; skipped meals 5 or more days in the past 30 days; smaller variety of food; and smaller meals 5 or more days in the past 30 days
	Healthcare Facilities and Health Status (3/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household responded yes to each of the following: not covered by any medical aid scheme; it takes more than 30 minutes to reach the health facility; and the child has a fair or poor health status.
Education (2/91)	Early Childhood Devel-opment (ECD) (2/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if each of the following holds: a child of 0-59 months is not attending any ECD centre; a child who is old enough to attend school (6-18 years) does not attend and school/ education institution.
Perceived happiness (2/91)	Perceived Happiness (2/91)	A child was coded to be deprived if the household's head says they are poor; and the head is not happy or same as before.

Source: Own Computation, 2023

After coding the selected attributes as either 0 or 1, the Alkire-Foster method begins with definition of the cut-off, which identifies whether a child is multidimensionally poor based on his or her total weighted deprivation. In this study, the ninety-one attributes were equally weighted and the sum of the attributes in each dimension defines the assigned weight. In other words, the cut off is a portion of weighted deprivations a child must have in order to be considered poor, and it is symbolized with p. Therefore, a child is considered poor if his/her deprivation score is equal or greater than the poverty cut-off i.e., a child is poor if $c_j \geq p$.

Following recommendation from Alkire & Foster (2011), the child's MPI assumes a one-third poverty cut off which, based on the ninety-one attributes constitutes 30.33 MPI. Therefore, a child is multi-dimensionally poor if he/she has a deprivation score higher than or equal to 30. For children with a deprivation score that is below the poverty cut-off, even if it is non-zero, it is replaced by zero '0'. This is referred to as censoring in poverty measurement. Using the notation $c_j(z)$ for the censored deprivation, such that when $c_j \geq z$, then $c_j(z) = c_j$, but if $< z$, then $c_j(z) = 0$ hence, $c_j(z)$ is the deprivation score of those who are poor. Like with the weights, the choice of poverty cut-off is also flexible in the Alkire-Foster method, depending on a particular context. The child's MPI, which is expected to lie between 0 and 1 is the product of poverty incidence and poverty

intensity. Poverty incidence is the child's multidimensional headcount ratio (H) which is expressed as:

$$H = \frac{m}{N} \tag{1}$$

Where m is the number of children who are multidimensionally poor, and N is the total population of children. Also, intensity of multidimensional poverty is computed as:

$$I = \sum_{j=1}^{m} c_j(z) \tag{2}$$

Where $c_j(z)$ is the censored deprivation score of child j. Mathematically, the child MPI is the product of H and A. Therefore,

$$MPI = H \cdot A \tag{3}$$

MPI can be decomposed into its component dimensions and censored indicators. The MPI decomposition can be expressed as:

$$MPI(x;y;z) = \frac{n(x)}{n(x;y)} MPI(x;z) + \frac{n(y)}{n(x;y)} MPI(y;z) \tag{4}$$

Where $n(x)$ refers to the number of individuals in x (the same goes for $n(y)$ and n(x;y)

For this study child MPI was decomposed by province, race, and sector of residence.

Tobit Regression Model of the Determinants of Child's MPI

The Tobit regression model was employed to analyze the factors influencing child's multidimensional welfare indicators. Tobit model is among the best regression models when the dependent variable can be censored. Since the dependent variable lies between 0 and 1, we applied the censored regression following some previous studies (Oyekale, 2023; Oyekale & Molelekoa, 2023; and Mosasane & Oyekale, 2021). The model can be specified as:

$$Y^* = \phi_0 + \varphi_{kj} \sum_{k=1}^{d} X_{ij} + e_i \tag{4}$$

$$Y^* = 0 \text{ if } y \leq 0,\ y = Y^* \text{ if } y > 0$$

Y^* = Multidimensional poverty

βs = estimated parameter or coefficient

ei = error term and is normally distributed with zero mean and constant variance.

Xi= explanatory variables which are difficulty with seeing (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), difficulty with hearing, (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), difficulty with walking (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), difficulty with remembering (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), difficulty with selfcare (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), difficulty with communication (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Eastern Cape (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Northern Cape (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Free State (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), KwaZulu-Natal (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), North West (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Gauteng (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Mpumalanga (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Limpopo (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), child's gender (male = 1, 0 otherwise), child age (years), coloured (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Indian/Asian (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), White (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), son or daughter of household's head (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), father alive (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), father part of household (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), mother alive (yes = 1, 0 otherwise); mother part of household (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), domestic worker service (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), household size, traditional area (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), farms (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), salaries/wages commission (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), Income from business (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), pensions (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), grants (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), social grants (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), sales of farming products/service (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), other income sources (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), backyard garden (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), school garden (yes = 1, 0 otherwise), and communal garden (yes = 1, 0 otherwise).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Decomposition of Children's MPI

The results presented in Table 2 show the intensity, incidence, and the multidimensional poverty inicator (MPI) across the different provinces, population groups and geographical residence of the children. The results revealed that children from the Western Cape had the lowest multidimensional poverty incidence, severity and MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and the combined data. The incidences of deprivation were 39.00%, 39.00%, 32.00% and 2.00% in 2017, 2018, 2019 and the combined data, respectively. The intensity of poverty showed that children from the Western Cape province were deprived in 39.00%,

39.00%, 88.00% and 52.00% of the weighted indicators in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data, respectively. The results further revealed that Eastern Cape province had the highest MPI with 34.00%, 33.00%, 29.00% and 6.00% in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data, respectively. The incidences of multidimensional poverty deprivation were 43.00%, 43.00%, 32.00% and 7.00% in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data, respectively. The intensity of poverty showed that children from Eastern Cape province were deprived in 79.00%, 78.00%, 33.00%, and 82.00% of the weighted indicators in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data, respectively. The Table also presents the intensity, incidence and MPI across children's population groups, and geography type. The results presented in the Table revealed that Black/African children were the most multidimensionally poor population group, followed by the Coloured, White and Indian/Asian children. Across the children's geography type, the results revealed that children from traditional areas were more deprived compared to those in farms and urban areas.

Table 2. Alkire-Foster multidimensional poverty intensity and incidence across South African provinces

	2017			2018			2019			Combined Data		
	A	H	MPI	A	H	MPI	A	H	MPI	A	H	MPI
Province												
Western Cape	39.00	39.00	15.00	39.00	39.00	15.00	88.00	32.00	28.00	52.00	2.00	1.00
Eastern Cape	79.00	43.00	34.00	78.00	43.00	33.00	90.00	32.00	29.00	82.00	7.00	6.00
Northern Cape	56.00	40.00	22.00	56.00	39.00	22.00	87.00	31.00	27.00	65.00	2.00	1.00
Free State	59.00	40.00	24.00	60.00	39.00	23.00	86.00	32.00	27.00	67.00	2.00	2.00
KwaZulu-Natal	76.00	41.00	31.00	73.00	41.00	30.00	90.00	32.00	29.00	79.00	9.00	7.00
North West	67.00	41.00	27.00	67.00	40.00	27.00	85.00	31.00	27.00	72.00	3.00	2.00
Gauteng	42.00	40.00	17.00	43.00	39.00	17.00	87.00	32.00	27.00	56.00	6.00	3.00
Mpumalanga	76.00	41.00	31.00	73.00	40.00	29.00	88.00	32.00	28.00	78.00	4.00	3.00
Limpopo	75.00	38.00	29.00	72.00	38.00	28.00	86.00	31.00	27.00	76.00	5.00	4.00
Population Group												
Black/African	69.00	41.00	28.00	68.00	40.00	27.00	88.00	32.00	28.00	74.00	37.00	28.00
Coloured	39.00	39.00	15.00	37.00	39.00	15.00	87.00	31.00	27.00	52.00	2.00	1.00
Indian/Asian	7.00	37.00	3.00	6.00	39.00	2.00	84.00	31.00	26.00	30.00	0.00	0.00
White	4.00	40.00	2.00	3.00	41.00	1.00	85.00	31.00	26.00	28.00	0.00	0.00
Geographical Location												
Urban	48.00	40.00	19.00	47.00	39.00	19.00	86.00	31.00	27.00	59.00	18.00	11.00
Traditional	84.00	41.00	34.00	83.00	41.00	34.00	90.00	32.00	29.00	85.00	21.00	17.00
Farms	77.00	44.00	33.00	77.00	43.00	33.00	91.00	33.00	30.00	81.00	2.00	1.00
Total	64.00	40.00	26.00	63.00	40.00	25.00	88.00	32.00	28.00	71.00	40.00	28.00

Source: Own Computation based on South Africa GHS data in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
Note: A - denotes poverty intensity; H- denotes poverty incidence

Correlates of Child Multidimensional Welfare

The Tobit regression results for Alkire-Foster MPI are presented in Table 3. Multicollinearity among the analyzed variables was scrutinized. This was done by computing the variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics. The mean VIF for the independent variables were 3.76, 3.49, 2.92 and 3.42 for 2017, 2018, 2019 and all the years combined, respectively. These results showed that the models did not suffer from serious problem of multicollinearity. The models also produced good fits for the data given the statistical significance of the Likelihood Ratio Chi Square at 1% level.

Table 3 shows the effects of some disability variables such as child's being unable to see, walk, hear, take care of self, remember things and communicating on MPI. The results revealed that inability to see, walk, take care of yourself, and communicate significantly affected Alkire-Foster MPI (henceforth denoted as AF MPI) in some of the results. The parameters of hearing impairment in Table 3 did not show statistical significance in all the results. Similarly, the parameters of being unable to see did not show statistical significance in 2017 at 10% level. However, the estimated parameters for the 2018, 2019 and combined dataset showed statistical significance at 5% level. These results imply that children who had eyesight problems had lower AF MPI in 2018, 2019 and combined dataset.

Investigations on poverty and disability have gained momentum and this is influenced by the work done by Sen on the capability approach. White and Yamasaki (2017) examined multidimensional poverty among the native-and foreign-born in the United States and considered the disability aspect. Their results are in alignment with the results of this study since they found out that people with disabilities were likely to suffer multiple deprivation. Moreover, numerous studies conducted on poverty and disability found out that disabled people are more likely to be poor compared to people without disabilities (Brucker et al., 2015, Pinilla-Roncancio, 2018, Banks et al. 2021, DeBeaudrap et al. 2020). Banks et al. (2021) found that multidimensional poverty was related to an individual having a functioning limitation that affects cognitive reasoning and self-care.

The results in Table 3 revealed that the parameters for children who were unable to walk in 2018, 2019 and combined dataset did not show statistical significance at 10% level. However, in the 2017 dataset, there was statistical significance at 1% level. This implies that children who were unable to walk had a higher AF MPI increased in 2017, when compared with their counterparts with no such diasability. The results further revealed that estimated parameters for children who were not able to care for themselves in 2017 and 2019 showed statistical

significance at 5% level. These results imply that children who were not able to care for themselves had higher AF MPI in 2017 and in the combined dataset, when compared with those without such diasability. The estimated parameters for communication impairment in 2018 and combined datasets showed statistical significance at 5% level of significance. This implies that the children who were suffering from some form of communication impairment had higher AF MPI in 2018 and in the combined dataset.

These results are in line with those of Mitra et al. (2011) who revealed that people with disabilities were found to be multidimensionally poor compared to those without disabilities. They further mentioned that disabled people had four times higher chances of being multidimensionally poor compared to people without disabilities. UNICEF (2007) mentioned that people with disabilities are affected by poverty because it lowers households' incomes due to their inability to work. It was further stipulated by Opoku et al. (2017) that even though disabled people do not depend on anyone, that is, are employed, they are more likely to be underemployed or underpaid due to their incapacitation. Grut et al. (2012) found that there are unique challenges facing disabled people in South Africa in accessing health care and other form of social services. Mutwali and Ross (2019) submitted that in South Africa, disabled people have poor physical access to health care facilities in terms of not being covered under any medical aid scheme, using public facilities, and taking longer time to reach the facilities when compared to those without disabilities. According to a study conducted by Mkabile and Swartz (2020) in the Western Cape province of South Africa, it was revealed that caregivers and parents of children living with disabilities could not utilize intellectual disability service because of financial challenges and community stigmatization.

The results in Tables 2 further showed the effect of provincial and geographical factors on child's AF MPI. The parameters for Eastern Cape province did not show statistical significance at the 10% level in 2019. However, the estimated parameters for 2017, 2018 and combined dataset showed statistical significance at 1% level. These results imply that when compared with children from Western Cape province and holding other variables constant, children from the Eastern Cape had higher AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined dataset. These results are related to those of Mosasane and Oyekale (2021) who revealed that Eastern Cape was one of provinces with the highest level of multidimensional poverty in South Africa. Megbowon (2018) also submitted that although the South African government has made progress in alleviating poverty since the end of apartheid in 1994, there is still existence of poverty in the provinces with Eastern Cape being one of poorest. According to Noble et al. (2014), Eastern Cape province

remains the largest receipient of social grants and has the highest level of welfare deprivations.

The Tobit regression results in Table 3 further show that Northern Cape parameters did not show statistical significance at 10% level in 2017, 2018 and combined dataset. However, the estimated parameters for 2019 showed statistical significance at 1% level. These results imply that compared to children from the Western Cape and holding other variables constant, children in the Northern Cape had lower AF MPI in 2019. The results of this study are also related to those of Mosasane and Oyekale (2021) who also found out that the Northern Cape Province respondents had lower AF MPI than Western Cape. These results are in line with those of Ndhlovu (2010) who also revealed that the Northern Cape province was one of the provinces that experienced a significant decline in poverty.

The parameters of Free State in Table 3 did not show statistical significance in 2017, 2018 and combined data. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level in 2019. These results imply that in 2019, children from the Free State had lower AF MPI when compared with those from the Western Cape and holding other variables constant. The parameters of KwaZulu-Natal in Table 3 did not show statistical significance in 2019. However, the estimated parameters in 2017, 2018 and combined dataset showed statistical significance at 5% level. These results imply that when compared to children from the Western Cape and holding other variables constant, children from KwaZulu-Natal province had higher AF MPI in 2017 and combined dataset, but had a lower AF MPI in 2019.

The North West province parameter in 2019 and combined dataset did not show statistical significance. However, in 2017 and 2019 the estimated parameters show statistical significance at 5% level. These results imply that when compared to children from the Western Cape and holding other variables constant, children from the North West province had higher AF MPI in 2017 and lower value in 2019. The parameter for Gauteng province did not show statistical significance in 2019. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level in 2017, 2018 and combined dataset. These results imply that when compared to children from the Western Cape and holding other variables constant, children from Gauteng province had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined dataset. Fransman and Yu (2019) also revealed the findings that are similar to the one of this study where respondents from Gauteng and Western Cape provinces had their MPI reduced. Jackson and Yu (2023) also found Gauteng respondents to have increased MPI.

The estimated parameters for Mpumalanga did not show statistical significance in 2018. However, in 2017, 2019 and combined dataset, the parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level. These results imply that when compared to children from the Western Cape and holding other variables constant, children from Mpumalanga had higher AF MPI in 2017 and combined dataset and lower value in 2019. These results are related to those of Mosasane and Oyekale (2021) who compared Western Cape to Mpumalanga and found that MPI in Mpumalanga was higher. The estimated parameters for Limpopo also showed statistical significance at the 1% level across all the years. These imply that when compared to children in the Western Cape and holding other variables constant, children from Limpopo province had lower AF MPI across the years. These results are contrary to those of Jackson and Yu (2023) who revealed that the Limpopo households had higher MPI.

Regarding the geographical location of children, the results in Table 3 showed statistical significance at 1% level for the children residing in traditional areas for 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined dataset. The results presented in Table 3 showed that when compared to children from urban areas and holding other variables constant, children from traditional areas had higher AF MPI across the years. Similarly, the parameters for farm residents showed statistical significance at 1% level across the years. These imply that compared to the children in urban areas and holding other variables constant, children from farms had higher AF MPI across the years.

The estimated parameters for racial identity showed that Coloured parameter did not show statistical significance for 2019, but significant in 2017, 2018 and combined data at 1% level. These results imply that when compared with Black/African children, Coloured children had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data. The Indian/Asian parameters did not show statistical significance ($p>0.10$) in Table 3. However, the estimated parameters for 2017, 2018 and combined dataset were significant ($p<0.10$). The results presented in Table 3 imply that when compared to Black/African children and holding other variables constant, Indian/Asian children had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data.

Table 3. Tobit Regression Estimates of the Determinants of Children's Alkire-Foster MPI

	2017	2018	2019	Combined Data
	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient
Disability				
Seeing	-1.25e-07	-3.52e-07***	-1.66e-07**	-2.38e-07***
Hearing	1.49e-07	-2.16e-08	-8.69e-08	-5.08e-08
Walking	3.33e-07**	1.37e-07	4.87e-08	1.44e-07*
Remembering	-6.21e-08	2.03e-09	-2.62e-08	-2.57e-08
Selfcare	6.24e-08	1.64e-07**	1.10e-09	9.83e-08***
Communication	-1.31e-07	3.54e-07**	2.79e-08	2.04e-07***
Province				
Eastern Cape	6.64e-07***	5.26e-07***	-6.34e-08	4.63e-07***
Northern Cape	8.93e-08	-6.32e-10	-2.37e-07***	3.78e-08
Free State	-3.96e-08	-1.05e-07	-2.32e-07***	-6.65e-08
KwaZulu-Natal	3.98e-07***	5.24e-08	-1.56e-07**	1.78e-07***
North West	1.74e-07**	-5.54e-08	-4.58e-07***	-9.84e-09
Gauteng	-2.55e-07***	-3.91e-07***	-8.91e-08	-2.03e-07***
Mpumalanga	3.88e-07***	1.37e-08	-2.65e-07***	1.28e-07***
Limpopo	-3.64e-07***	-5.76e-07***	-4.87e-07***	-4.51e-07***
Child gender	-6.83e-08**	-4.24e-08	-2.97e-08	-5.54e-08***
Child age	-9.71e-09**	-1.17e-08**	1.92e-08***	2.57e-09
Population group				
Coloured	-8.10e-07***	-9.29e-07***	-3.50e-08	-6.26e-07***
Indian/Asian	-1.26e-06***	-1.20e-06***	-1.36e-07	-9.56e-07***
White	-8.41e-07***	-9.36e-07***	-1.14e-07	-7.24e-07***
Son or daughter	6.14e-07***	5.57e-07***	1.05e-07***	4.39e-07***
Father alive	-1.20e-07***	-1.19e-07***	1.30e-08	-8.34e-08***
Father part of household	-3.17e-07***	-3.21e-07***	-6.69e-08**	-2.69e-07***
Mother alive	-2.00e-08	-1.46e-07**	1.95e-08	-7.20e-08**
Mother part of household	-1.20e-07***	-1.20e-07***	-1.11e-07***	-1.32e-07***
Domestic worker service	1.18e-06***	1.31e-06***	4.18e-07***	1.11e-06***
Household size	9.92e-09	3.32e-08***	-1.28e-08***	2.60e-08***
Geography type				
Traditional	1.05e-06***	1.14e-06***	2.96e-07***	8.56e-07***
Farms	1.38e-06***	1.53e-06***	5.30e-07***	1.19e-06***
Salaries/wages commission	-8.70e-07***	-9.08e-07***	-1.02e-07***	-7.98e-07***
Income from business	-6.22e-07***	-6.87e-07***	-1.45e-08	-4.48e-07***
Remittances	-3.38e-07***	-4.24e-07	1.57e-08	-3.40e-07***
Pensions	-1.01e-06	-9.55e-07	-4.62e-08	-8.68e-07***
Grants	9.00e-07***	7.93e-07***	-4.06e-08	5.93e-07***
Social grants	-7.34e-07	-6.27e-07***	-1.98e-07***	-6.69e-07***
Sales of farming products/ service	-1.16e-07	-2.73e-07***	-2.05e-08	-1.29e-07***
Other income sources	-5.44e-07***	-4.82e-07***	-1.26e-08	-4.84e-07***
Backyard garden	2.94e-07***	2.92e-07***	-4.24e-08	3.33e-07***
School garden	8.30e-07	-4.65e-07	4.61e-07	4.47e-07*
Communal garden	-3.64e-08	5.36e-07**	1.74e-07	4.24e-07***
_Cons	2.20e-06***	2.21e-06***	4.67e-06***	2.80e-06***
Var (e,mpi)	5.29e-12	5.35e-12	3.43e-12	5.37e-12
LR Chi2	9969.90	9230.63	577.61	17448.17
Prob Chi2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Pseudo R2	-0.0169	-0.0161	-0.0012	-0.0106
Log Likelihood	299666.44	291533.92	242348.05	828736.54
Mean VIF	3.76	3.49	2.92	3.42

Source: Own Computation based on South Africa GHS data in 2017, 2018 and 2019
Note: ***, ** and * imply statistically significant at 1%, 5% and 10% levels, respectively.

The estimated parameter for White children did not show statistical significance in 2019. However, those for 2017, 2018 and combined data showed statistical significance at 1% level. The results imply that when compared to Black/African children and holding other variables constant, White children had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data. These results are related to those of Statistics South Africa (2021) that revealed that Black children had a higher level of MPI compared to children in the other population groups.

The parental factors influencing AF MPI results are presented in Table 3. The son/daughter parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level for 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The results imply that non-biological children in the household had higher levels of AF MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The father alive parameter did not show statistical significance in 2019. However, the estimated parameters for 2017, 2018 and combined dataset showed statistical significance The results presented in Table 3 imply that children whose fathers were alive had their lower AF MPI being in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data.

The father part of the household parameters showed statistical significance at 5% level in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The results in Table 3 imply that children who their father were part of the household had lower AF in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The mother alive parameters did not show statistical significance ($p>0.10$) in 2017 and 2019. However, the estimated parameters for 2018 and combined dataset showed statistical significance at 5% level. The results imply that children whose mothers were alive had lower AF MPI in 2018 and combined dataset. Also, the parameters of mother residing in the same households with the child showed statistical significance at 1% level in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The results imply that children who were residing in the same households as their mothers had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The results are related to those of the UNICEF (2020) which also revealed that children with a mother or father alive have reduced chance of being multiply deprived.

In Table 3, the parameter of child's gender did not show statistical significance at 10% for 2018 and 2019. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level for 2017 and combined dataset. The results imply that male children had lower AF MPI in 2017 and combined dataset. The results presented in Table 3 show child age parameters, The child age parameters did not show statistical significance in combined dataset. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level for 2017, 2018 and 2019. These results imply that as a child's age increases, their AF MPI reduced in 2017,

2018, 2019 and combined data. These results are related to those of Aboaba et al. (2019) who found out that age had a negative relationship with poverty.

The domestic worker parameter showed statistical significance at 1% level in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The results imply that children whose households had domestic workers had higher AF MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. These findings might be associated with the circumstance that having to pay the worker(s) reduces the household purchasing power or per capita income. The household size parameters showed statistical significance at 5% level in 2018, 2019 and combined data. These results imply that as a household adds one additional member, child's AF MPI increased in 2018 and combined dataset and reduced in 2019. The results of this study are related to those of Makhalima (2020) who also revealed that the larger the household size, the higher the likelihood of a child being multidimensionally poor.

Income is a significant measure of wellbeing. The salaries/wages commission parameters showed statistical significance in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. These results imply that children from household that were receiving salaries/wages commission had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The parameters of receipt of income from business did not show statistical significance in 2019 at 10% level. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level in 2017, 2018 and combined dataset. These results imply that children from households that were earning income from businesses had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data. The remittances parameter did not show statistical significance in 2019. However, for 2017, 2018 and combined dataset the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level. These results imply that children from households that were receiving remittances had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data.

Pension's parameters in Table 3 did not show statistical significance for 2019. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance ($p<0.01$) for 2017, 2018 and combined dataset. The results imply that children from households that were receiving pensions had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data. These results are related to those of Aboaba et al. (2019) and Ashagidigbi et al. (2020) who revealed that people earning income had their poverty declining. The grants parameters did not show statistical significance in 2019. However, the estimated parameters for 2017, 2018 and combined dataset were statistically significant at 1% level. The results imply that children from households that were receiving grants had higher AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data. These results might be associated to the circumstance that the social security grants money is not enough to be able to provide for their basic needs.

The social grants parameters were statistically significant at 1% level in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The results imply that children from households that were receiving social grants had lower AF MPI in 2017, 2018, 2019 and combined data. The sales of farming-products/services parameters were insignificant in 2017 and 2019. However, the estimated parameters were statistically significant at 1% level in 2018 and combined dataset. These results imply that children from households that realized incomes from sales of farming products/services had lower AF MPI reduced in 2018 and combined data. Other income sources parameters in were insignificant for 2019 and combined dataset. However, the estimated parameters were statistically significant at 1% level for 2017 and 2018. These results imply that children from households with other income sources had lower AF MPI in 2017 and 2018. The results on are related to those of Makhalima (2020) who revealed that children from households that were earning some form of income were less likely to be poor.

Table 3 also reveals that cultivation of backyard garden parameter was statistically insignificant at 10% level in 2019. However, the 2017, 2018 and combined dataset parameters were statistically significant at 1% level. These results imply that children whose households had backyard gardens had higher AF MPI in 2017, 2018 and combined data. The school garden parameters did not show statistical significance for 2018 and 2019. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance for 2017 and combined data. These results imply that children who had school gardens had higher AF MPI in 2017 and combined data. The communal garden parameters did not show statistical significance for 2017 and 2019. However, the estimated parameters showed statistical significance at 1% level for 2018 and combined dataset. These results imply that children who had communal gardens had higher AF MPI in 2018 and combined dataset.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study highlighted the dimensions of multidimensional deprivation among South African children using the Alkire-Foster approach. The study is making some contributions to literature by expanding the dimensional composition of poverty indicators covering ninety-one attributes. More importantly, a nationally representative samples for 2017 to 2019 were used. This ensure robustness of estimated poverty indicators, which had been further analyzed econometrically. The results indicated some critical highlights of provincial, racial and sectoral differences among the children's multidimensional poverty index (MPI). More importantly, several households' demographic and socio-economic variables had

some significant influences on children's multidimensional poverty. Due to the spatial differences in child's MPI, government needs to critically come up with strategies to facilitate achievement of some SDGs as a prerequisite for reducing child's multidimensional poverty. It is also evident that when compared to Black/ African children, all population groups had their MPIs reduced. Moreover, compared to children from urban areas, children from traditional areas and farms had their AF MPI increased. It was also indicated that children whose household received grants had their MPI significantly increased. This underscores the fact that households on grants are often poor and may need further interventions to lift them out of poverty. The livelihood component of our variables revealed the role of remittances, business income, wage employment and other supplementary income sources in facilitating households' welfare and child's poverty reduction. There is therefore the need for interventions for the promotion of income generating opportunities to enhance households' welfare. Moreover, poverty reduction interventions in South Africa should marginally address the needs of different geography types with farm and traditional areas requiring top priorities. There is also the need for racial consideration given that Black children showed a higher level of deprivation in multidimensional poverty. Finally, the role of biological parents in raising healthy and happy children have been underscored in the results with significant reduction in MPI. Therefore, promotion of cultural and institutional mandates for enhancing the presence of biological parents in child's household holds significant prospects for reducing MPI.

Limitations of the Study

This study had some limitations. The main limitation concerns missing variables such as maternal education. In some other instances, some important attributes like child mortality were missing.

Acknowledgments

The financial support of the North-West University towards the completion of the PhD thesis from which this article had been drafted is gratefully acknowledged.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

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ОБЈАШЊЕЊЕ КОРЕЛАЦИЈА МУЛТИДИМЕНЗИОНАЛНОГ СИРОМАШТВА ДЈЕТЕТА У ЈУЖНОЈ АФРИЦИ КОРИШЋЕЊЕМ ПРИСТУПА АЛКИРЕ-ФОСТЕР

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Сажетак

Сиромаштво дјеце остаје једна од главних брига у циљевима одрживог развоја (СДГ). Ова студија анализирала је детерминанте вишедимензионалног сиромаштва дјеце у Јужној Африци. Коришћени су подаци Опште анкете о домаћинствима (ГХС) из 2017, 2018. и 2019. године. Алкире-Фостерова методологија је коришћена за израчунавање индекса мултидимензионалног сиромаштва дјеце (МПИ), а корелације су анализиране коришћењем Тобитове регресије. Резултати су открили да су неки регионални фактори и фактори подручја пребивалишта значајно утицали ($p<0,05$) на МПИ у свим периодима. Такође, код обојене, индијско/азијске и бијеле дјеце, те биолошке дјеце главе домаћинстава значајно су смањени МПИ ($p<0,05$). Коначно, политике и програми за рјешавање проблема сиромаштва дјеце морају, између осталог, бити осјетљиви на неке расне, покрајинске и родне факторе. Стога се препоручује да влада критички приступи стратегијама за олакшавање постизања неких циљева одрживог развоја, као предуслова за смањење вишедимензионалног сиромаштва дјеце.

Кључне ријечи: *сиромаштво дјеце, индекс вишедимензионалног сиромаштва, Алкире-Фостер, Јужна Африка*