

Title: Child poverty in urban China

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Abstract:

This thesis examines the changes in the extent and nature of child poverty in urban China using all waves of the China Health and Nutrition Survey Data (CHNS) between 1989 and 2011. It also explains how household demographic and socioeconomic characteristics impact on child poverty. A combined measure of income and deprivation is employed to measure child poverty in urban China. The number of poor children in urban China with both a low income and a low standard of living declined from 1989 to 2011. However, the number of children who were not deprived but were income poor increased sharply during this period. They are vulnerable to sinking into poverty in the future if their household income remains low. A disaggregated analysis shows that the extent of child deprivation remains a problem in 2011 including sanitation, nutrition and shelter deprivation. The analysis using a Cox proportional hazard model shows that parents' work units and the hukou type of the family exert the greatest influences on child poverty. This thesis provides strong evidence that child poverty in urban China is mainly caused by structural rather than individual factors. This calls for a fundamental reform by Chinese policy makers to remove the structural barriers to child survival and development and to ensure that all children in urban China can have equal access to social security and associated cash and in-kind benefits.