



Contrasting Approaches to the Measurement of Children's Deprivation

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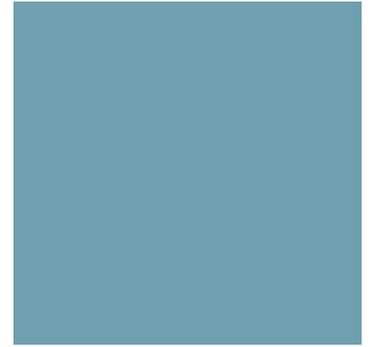
Setting the Scene...

- Purpose of presentation
- Overview of studies – *GUI, SILC & All You Need Is...*
- Some Key Findings
- Conclusions from different approaches



Purpose

- To describe three recent studies that measure aspects of child poverty & deprivation and discuss the implications of their findings for current research and policy in this area.



The 3 studies

- *Growing up in Ireland (GUI) – 9 year olds*
 - Williams, Greene, Doyle, Harris, Layte, McCoy, McCrory, Murray, Nixon, O'Dowd, O'Moore, Quail, Smyth, Swords, Thornton, (2009)



- *All you need is ... (AYN) – children age 9-11*
 - Swords, Greene, Boyd & Kerrins (2011)



- *Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), 2009 – all ages*
– focus here on children age 8-10



All You Need Is

- Socially perceived necessities approach to research on child deprivation and exclusion
- Two stages:
 1. Constructing a list of items necessary for an acceptable standard of living.
 - Kerrins, Greene & Murphy (in press): key domains = food/nutrition, clothing, development, housing & environment, education, participation & access to services.
 - Focus groups & pilot testing modified list to 49 items
 2. What items would form an index of children's deprivation and social exclusion indicators?



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- Participants:
 - 262 4th class children from schools across Dublin, Cork, Sligo and Westmeath
 - Children's parents completed the survey and provided information about their household situation - EU-SILC **Basic Deprivation Index**.

THINGS TO HAVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pocket money every week ▪ Three balanced meals a day with fruit/vegetables and meat/fish (if they eat meat/fish) ▪ Shoes that fit properly and are right for the weather ▪ Enough of the right clothes for different seasons, for example, a coat to keep warm and dry in winter ▪ A pony ▪ A bedroom of their own ▪ Separate bed (like single/bunk bed) and separate bedding (like quilt/duvet) of their own ▪ All the school uniform, books and equipment (e.g. pens, rulers, copybooks) prescribed ▪ A computer at home for all the family ▪ A trampoline ▪ A present to bring to a friend's birthday party ▪ Nice clothes for special days (like holy communion, confirmation, birthdays) ▪ Equipment for playing music (like a CD player or iPod) ▪ TV in their bedroom ▪ A birthday party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their own books for reading for fun ▪ A pet ▪ A TV at home for all the family ▪ A DVD player at home for all the family ▪ A bicycle ▪ Sports equipment and clothes (like football boots or a hockey stick) ▪ Fashionable clothing like their friends have ▪ New clothes, not ones that someone else owned ▪ A games console (like Playstation, X-box, DS-Lite) ▪ Computer games ▪ Internet at home ▪ Heating whenever they are cold ▪ A mobile phone ▪ Food and drinks for friends when they call over to play ▪ A musical instrument ▪ Treats (for example, a surprise from their parents like some chocolate) ▪ Safe places to play outdoors ▪ Own money for school activities or days out (for example school tours) ▪ Personal healthcare items of their own (like a toothbrush, hairbrush)
THINGS TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participating in clubs outside of school (like sports clubs, youth clubs, Scouts, Beavers) ▪ Going to a swimming pool at least once a month ▪ Going on a family holiday once a year (can be in Ireland or a different country) ▪ Going on at least one school trip in a school year (like a school tour) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Having a day out with the family at least twice a year (like going to the beach, fun fair, leisure centres) ▪ Seeing a movie at the cinema at least twice a year ▪ Going to a concert at least once a year ▪ Going to classes/lessons (like swimming, ballet, guitar) that cost money ▪ Going to a restaurant for a family meal at least twice a year
THINGS THAT HELP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A bank, post office or Credit Union account to save money ▪ Go to the doctor and dentist when need to ▪ Shops close to home (like food shops, clothes shops or chemists) ▪ Go to school ▪ Transport (like parents' car, bus, train) to get to things to do ▪ Go to the library 	

Deprivation Items

AYN – Considered essential, lacked by 3%+	GUI, SILC – BASIC items (Adult)
Three balanced meals each day	Two pairs of strong shoes
Right clothes for different seasons	A warm waterproof overcoat
Own separate bed & bedding	Buy new (not 2nd-hand) clothes
Own books for reading for fun	Protein meal every second day
Food / drinks for friends -play	Roast joint or equiv, weekly
Own money for school activities /trips	Go without heating in last year
Family holiday once a year	Keep the home adequately warm
Day out with family (2 /year)	Presents for family /friends (ann.)
Family restaurant meal (2 /year)	Replace any worn out furniture
Bank etc. account to save money	Invite family /friends -drink /meal
Shops close to home	Time out -last 2 weeks (entertainment)
Access to the library	

Some AYN Results ...

- 30.5 per cent of children lacked one or more of the 12 items
- 12.6 per cent lacked 2 or more.
- When parents were asked about these same items ...
 - General agreement between parents and children re which were essential
 - On several items, parents less likely than children to report that they wanted item for their children but could not afford them, e.g. 3 balanced meals, books, food and drink for friends, own money, shops close to home (differences tended to be small)
 - On other items, parents more likely than children to report wanting items for child, but unable to afford, e.g. family holiday, restaurant meal, bank/post office account for saving (differences tended to be larger).

Growing Up in Ireland



- Focus of survey is on lives of children
- Focus here on data from 9 year old Child Cohort Wave One, N=8,500, 2007-2008
- Data on Income and EU SILC Basic Deprivation Index (11 item scale)
 - enabling comparison with EU-SILC.
 - Different measure of income.

Growing Up in Ireland: Findings



- Proportion reporting enforced lack of items- on Basic Deprivation Index 11 ranged from **0.2 to 6.4**
- Lower than EU-SILC: Proportion of households with 8-10 year-olds in EU-SILC 2008 – range from **2.1 to 13.4**
- Level of consistent poverty for children in GUI substantially lower than in EU-SILC in 2008 (2.9% vs. 5.1% for this age group).
- **Why the difference?**
- Context bias? Parents in GUI primed to think about children and their resources, although questions relate to household.
- Nonetheless, social patterning and correlates as expected

SILC 2009



- Part of European project to measure income distribution, poverty and deprivation among households
- N= 5000 + households, 12,000+ individuals. (c. 600 age 8-10).
- Detailed measurement of income
 - Interview with all adults in household, ask about all potential sources on income
- Measurement of deprivation – common goods and services household lacks *because it cannot afford*
- PLUS in 2009, special module with child-specific deprivation items (asked of householder)

SILC 2009 – Child-specific Deprivation

- Questions asked of parent/guardian on items children have or can do
 - where there are children age 0-15 in household
- Also have Basic Deprivation for same households
- How does child-specific deprivation compare to basic deprivation?
 - How does **focus on children**, rather than on household as a whole, affect the reported deprivation level?

Child-Specific Deprivation, SILC 2009

SILC 2009, Child-specific Items (13 items)	SILC – BASIC items (Household, 11 items)
Eat daily protein meal	Protein meal every second day
New (not 2nd-hand) clothes	Buy new (not 2nd-hand) clothes
Invite friends to play	Invite family /friends -drink /meal
Properly fitting shoes	Two pairs of strong shoes
Afford to go on school trip	Time out -last 2 weeks (entertainment)
Eat 3 meals a day	Roast joint or equiv, weekly
Eat fruit & vegetables	Go without heating in last year
Have indoor games	A warm waterproof overcoat
Have books at home	Keep the home adequately warm
Have outdoor leisure equipment	Presents for family /friends (ann.)
Suitable place for homework	Replace any worn out furniture
Have parties or celebrations	
Participate in regular leisure activities	

SILC 2009 – Child-specific Deprivation & Basic Deprivation



	Per cent of children (age 0-15)	
	Child-specific Deprivation (13 items) %	Basic Deprivation, (11 items) %
Lack none	88.3	62.7
Lack one or more	11.6	37.3
Lack 2 or more	4.9	23.9

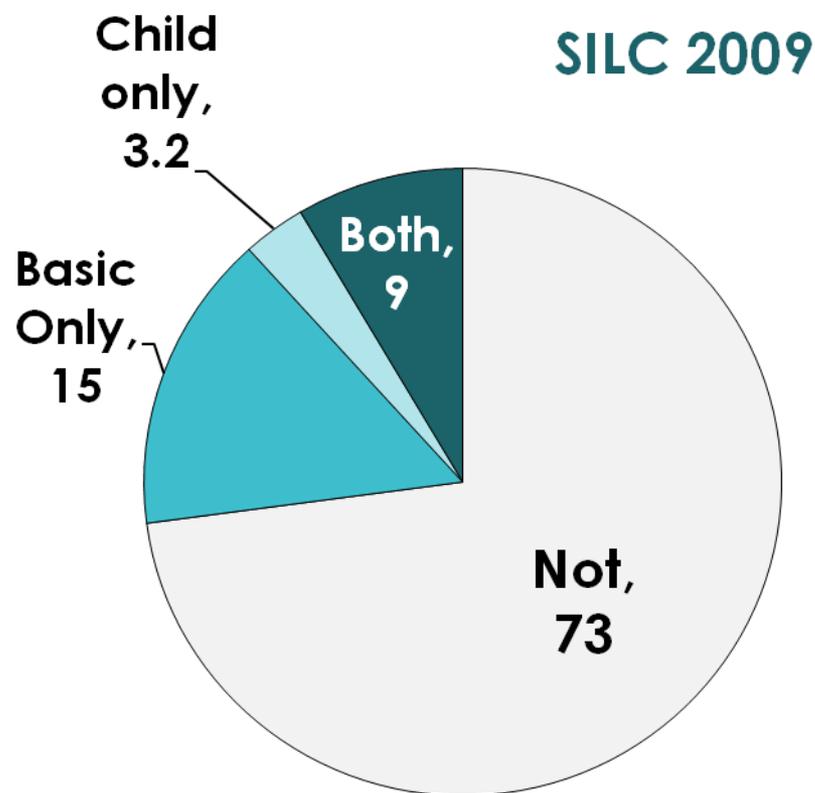
From Whelan and Maître, 2011, Table 5.

Basic deprivation measure shows higher level of deprivation than child-specific deprivation measure

Less than one in eight children are in households where a child lacks any child-specific item.

But over one third of children are in households lacking 1+ of the basic items.

SILC 2009 & AYN – overlap between Child-specific & Basic deprivation



- AYN also found differences:
 - 28% of children in non-deprived (basic) households lacked 1+ child specific item
 - 58% of children in deprived (basic) households lacked none of child-specific items.

From Whelan and Maître, 2011, Table 13.

What accounts for Difference?

- Protected children (15% , SILC 2009) – in households experiencing basic deprivation, but no deprivation on child-specific items.
- Children exposed to child-specific deprivation in households not experiencing basic deprivation (3% of children, SILC 2009)
- Whelan and Maître, 2011, early results -
 - Child-specific deprivation only – may be linked to marital separation or single parenthood
- Context of Survey: GUI – lower rate on same Basic (household) Deprivation Index when parent had been oriented to thinking about the child and the child's access to resources.

Conclusions 1



- While household deprivation is related to child-specific deprivation, they are not the same phenomenon.
 - In some instances, parents may be going without in order to ensure that their children's needs are met.
 - When children are asked directly, they emphasise different items and report more deprivation on some of them
 - Some children may experience deprivation in households where income and/or adult access to resources is adequate

Conclusions 2



- The approach to the measurement of deprivation matters:
 - Items selected (household focused, child focused)
 - Who responds (children or adults)
 - Survey Context & goals
- Taken together, the findings indicate that
 - the distribution of resources within the family is complex and
 - there is a need to identify the factors and processes that influence whether or not children experience deprivation - how and why.

Conclusions 3



- Implications for current measurement of child consistent poverty
 - Different approaches produce different estimates of level of deprivation and poverty, but broadly similar patterning across risk groups
 - SILC - Combination of income and Basic Deprivation Index (household) is an important advance in poverty measurement. Strength = allows comparison of children with other groups; allows comparisons over time; allows comparison across countries.
 - GUI strength = allows examination of impact of poverty and deprivation on a wide range of child outcomes.
 - AYN – important insight into children’s experience of deprivation and differences in perspective between parents and children

Conclusions 4



- In many families positive processes may minimise impact of household poverty on children-
 - but at what cost to parents?
- When do parents fail to protect their children?
 - What is the experience of children living in these stressed households?