

## Socio-Economic Analysis of Child Homelessness in South Africa: Implications

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**Abstract :** Child homelessness remains a significant challenge in South Africa in the upcoming decade. Despite children making up a substantial portion of South Africa's population, the issue of child homelessness continues to pose a socio-economic crisis with diverse impacts. Achieving the UN 2050 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in terms of equality and non-discrimination, requires an effective approach to curb child homelessness. Addressing this issue will positively influence the economic trajectory of South Africa's evolving demographic landscape. This research uses content analysis through an extensive review of current literature on child homelessness in South Africa. Findings indicate alignment between national policies and international agendas in tackling child homelessness in South Africa. However, the following statistics depict the ongoing challenge: In metropolitan areas, homelessness stands at 74.1%, whereas non-metro regions account for 25.9%. The City of Tshwane has the highest number of homeless individuals at 18.1%, followed by the City of Johannesburg at 15.6%, while Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan has the lowest at 2.7%. Despite existing national policy frameworks, child homelessness persists. The lack of accurate data, compounded by issues such as economic challenges, the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, poverty, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and gaps in policy implementation, has exacerbated the problem. The consequences are dire, affecting children's physical and emotional health, education, and future opportunities. The study recommends reinforcing actionable policies to address child homelessness effectively. Bridging the urban-rural divide and establishing intra-community networks are crucial for tackling this issue comprehensively. This includes addressing multifaceted challenges such as access to education, disease susceptibility, and the overall vulnerability of homeless children.

**Keywords :** South Africa, child, homeless, SDGs, COVID, urban, rural

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