



Role of Policy and Population Health Social Security and Mortality

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DESCRIPTION

Low socioeconomic status has consistently been linked to a higher burden of disease and death in the United States and other nations, as determined by various metrics such as poverty, income, wealth, education, or occupation. It is surprising that the major social programs that were created to reduce the burden of poverty or otherwise enhance the economic well-being of the US population have only rarely been examined with regard to health and disease, despite the fact that this has been one of the most consistent findings in social and epidemiological research for decades [1]. Social Security is the most significant and effective income support program ever implemented in the United States. Millions of Americans, especially the elderly, have praised it for easing the burden of poverty. According to recent census data, Social Security keeps more than 40% of Americans 65 and older out of poverty. The lowest income group of Social Security recipients has seen an improvement in their financial situation thanks to Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which offers money or benefits.

The Social Security system receives the majority of media and political attention from the general population, which is primarily focused on its long-term financial issues [2]. As a means of tackling our long-term federal budget deficits, some economists and policymakers have been advocating for reductions in Social Security payouts. To address the country's long-term budgetary crisis, President Obama established the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, which has advocated actions to change Social Security by reducing payments and raising payroll taxes, among other things. Much less focus has been placed on the program's unparalleled success in eradicating poverty and offering an aged safety net. The potential impact on the public's health receives even less consideration. Socioeconomic differences in mortality and health have been found to be significant in infancy and early childhood, decline through very early adulthood, widen considerably during middle age and early old life, and then decline in old age[3]. There are several possible reasons why socioeconomic differences in health and death are decreasing as

people get older, but few of these have been thoroughly investigated. Different mortality rates by socioeconomic class at earlier ages may not be the main cause, according to some data.

Despite the crucial function of Social Security's financial support and the well-established link between socioeconomic position and health, remarkably little research has attempted to show a connection between Social Security payouts and health outcomes. Additionally, they discovered that SSI has a greater effect on mortality than Social Security benefits, which they attributed to the program's exclusivity for senior people who are poor or near-poor. Their research revealed that recipients who received less payout were more inclined to work and had reduced post-65 mortality rates [4]. Their findings appear to indicate that the source of money was just as significant as the amount of income. They come to the conclusion that time spent working reduced social isolation, which is a contributing factor to death, indicating that labor had a beneficial effect on health. One criticism of their study is that the results did not account for the impact on older people in poverty rather they examined the effect of increases for recipients who were wealthier and healthier. It is evident that the difference in the slowing of non-infectious disease mortality between the older and younger age groups across the relevant eras is significant enough to accept explanation by a factor specifically impacting the elderly, namely Social Security, as non-infectious disease mortality accounted for more than 90% of the drop in all-cause mortality. Security enhanced older health through enhancing living conditions and expanding access to healthcare[5]. The fact that Social Security helps millions of Americans escape poverty and may enhance seniors' health status should serve as a warning to lawmakers as they prepare to drastically change the course of Social Security for future generations.

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