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Are Differences in Disability-Free Life Expectancy by Gender, Race, and Education Widening at Older Ages?

P. 1-18

Aïda Solé-Auró - Hiram Beltrán-Sánchez...

Abstract

To examine change from 1991 to 2001 in disability-free life expectancy in the age range 60–90 by gender, race, and education in the United States. Mortality is estimated over two 10-year follow-up periods for persons in the National Health Interview Surveys of 1986/1987 and 1996/1997. Vital status is ascertained through the National Death Index. Disability prevalence is estimated from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys of 1988–1994 and 1999–2002. Disability is defined as ability to perform four activities of daily living without difficulty. Disability-free life expectancy increased only among white men. Disabled life expectancy increased for all groups—black and white men and women. Racial differences in disability-free life expectancy widened among men; gender differences were reduced among whites. Expansion of socioeconomic differentials in disability-free life at older ages occurred among white men and women and black women. The 1990s was a period where the increased years of life between ages 60 and 90 were concentrated in disabled years for most population groups.

The Long Arm of Adolescent Health Among Men and Women: Does Attained Status Explain Its Association with Mid-Adulthood Health?

P. 19-48

Anna Zajacova - Katrina M. Walsemann...

Abstract

A growing body of research has established the effect of early health on later-life health. This study extends the literature by (1) examining multiple dimensions of mid-adulthood health including physical and mental conditions, (2) analyzing attained status (education and income) as a potential pathway through which health problems in adolescence may impact later health, and (3) considering the role of gender in these life course processes. Using over 20 years of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Youth 1979 cohort (NLSY79), we test the associations between adolescent health limitations and eight adult health measures for men and women, and whether these associations are mediated by status attainment. We find strong links between adolescent health limitations and mid-adulthood health, especially among women. Among men, the associations are strong for measures of physical health but somewhat weaker for mental and general health measures—taking into account the men's demographic characteristics, family background, and skills, the effects of adolescent limitations become non-significant for these dimensions. These patterns are largely independent of attained socioeconomic status; that is, education and income do not appear to be critical pathways from adolescent to adult health. Understanding how early health influences the long-term trajectory of health and social capital accumulation for men and women is critical for developing social and health research and policy, in order to optimize health over the entire life course.

The Relationship Between Duration of U.S. Residence, Educational Attainment, and Adult Health Among Asian Immigrants

P. 49-76

Jing Li - Robert A. Hummer

Abstract

There is substantial educational heterogeneity among Asian immigrants to the United States, suggesting that the association between duration of U.S. residence with their health outcomes and behaviors may vary considerably by educational attainment. Using data from the 2003 New Immigrant Survey ($N = 2,373$), we find strong evidence that the detrimental associations between duration of U.S. residence and self-reported health, activity limitation status, chronic health conditions, and current smoking are concentrated among Asian immigrants with less than a high school education; in contrast, the health outcomes and behaviors of Asian immigrants who have at least a high school degree exhibit very few differences by duration of U.S. residence. These distinct duration–health patterns by educational attainment are not explained by duration-related differences in country of origin, class of admission, or English speaking skills. We also find a stronger duration relationship with current smoking than those with the health status measures among the least educated Asian men, indicating a potential behaviorally based explanation for poorer health among Asian immigrant men with longer duration of residence.

Socioeconomic Stratification from Within: Changes Within American Indian Cohorts in the United States: 1990–2010

P. 77-112

Jennifer E. Glick - Seung Yong Han

Abstract

Socioeconomic inequality in the United States persists with disparities in education, earnings, and health evident across racial and ethnic groups. Somewhat less attention has been given to the importance of inequality within minority racial and pan-ethnic groups. This paper considers the increasing divergence of socioeconomic status within cohorts of American Indian and Alaskan Native (AIAN) adults in the United States. The analyses rely on US Census data for 1990, 2000, and 2010 to examine the relative contribution of demographic change and change in self-identification to the size of AIAN adult cohorts over time. Decomposition analyses demonstrate that declines in poverty within the AIAN cohorts are largely attributable to the more advantaged status of individuals who select AIAN in combination with other racial identifications.

Bucking the Trend: Is Ethnoracial Diversity Declining in American Communities?

P. 113-139

Barrett A. Lee, Lauren A. Hughes

Abstract

Although increasing diversity at the national scale is a well-documented trend, substantial variation in patterns of ethnoracial change occurs across American communities. Our research considers one theoretically implied path: that some communities are 'bucking the trend,' becoming more homogeneous over time. Using 1980 through 2010 decennial census data, we calculate panethnic (five-group) entropy index scores to measure the magnitude of diversity for nearly 11,000 census-defined places. Our results indicate that while certain places reach their diversity peak in 1980 or 1990, they are few in number. Moreover, they experience a variety of post-peak trajectories other than monotonic diversity decline. Decreasing diversity is concentrated in the South and West, among places with higher levels of diversity and larger proportions of Hispanic or black residents at the beginning of the study period. These places exhibit complex shifts in racial–ethnic structure, but Hispanic succession predominates.

Race-Ethnic Differences in the Non-marital Fertility Rates in 2006–2010

P. 141-159

Yujin Kim - R. Kelly Raley

Abstract

Research in the 1980s pointed to the lower marriage rates of blacks as an important factor contributing to race differences in non-marital fertility. Our analyses update and extend this prior work to investigate whether cohabitation has become an important contributor to this variation. We use data from the 2006–2010 National Survey of Family Growth to identify the

relative contribution of population composition (i.e., percent sexually active single and percent cohabiting) versus rates (pregnancy rates, post-conception marriage rates) to race-ethnic variation in non-marital fertility rates ($N = 7,428$). We find that the pregnancy rate among single (not cohabiting) women is the biggest contributor to race-ethnic variation in the non-marital fertility rate and that contraceptive use patterns among racial minorities explain the majority of the race-ethnic differences in pregnancy rates.
