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Title:

Analyses of socio-economic inequalities in life expectancy using SOEP

Abstract (198 words):*Introduction*

Inequalities in life expectancy are a main focus concerning health inequalities in general. Germany's office of statistics can't provide data on inequalities in mortality. Evidence is available using SOEP, but recent results suggest that the survival rates of the respondents are overestimated. We will present an alternative specification that leads to better results.

Data and Methods

We are using the SOEP and period specific life tables for 1995-2005. Parametric regression models are fitted to estimate the relative mortality risk of five income groups. We controlled for overestimation of survival rates using the general period specific life tables.

Results

Unweighted data overestimates life expectancy at birth by approximately 6.5 and 4.1 years for men and women, weighted data are slightly better with 5.5 and 3.1 years. After applying a correction, we observed a difference to the highest income group of 10.8 and 8.4 years and an overall life expectancy of 70.1 and 76.9 years for men and women at risk of poverty.

Discussion

The presented specification can be applied to different status indicators and leads to more comparable results using SOEP. The small sample size for survival analyses however poses limits to potential international comparisons and trend analyses.

¹ The Robert Koch Institute is a Federal Institute within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Health.