

P-616 - INCOME INEQUALITY, DEATH, AND DEPRESSION: AN ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF US STATES

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Introduction: Income inequality has been shown to be associated with mortality across US states, i.e. more unequal states have higher mortality. Recent survey results have also shown a significant variation on depression prevalence across the US state, and depression has been shown to increase morbidity and mortality.

Objectives: To measure the effects of income inequality on mortality taking in account depression prevalence.

Aims: To test whether the relation between income inequality and mortality found among US states is due to different rates of depression.

Methods: Data comes from the US Census Bureau (income inequality) and from the Center for Disease Control (mortality and depression prevalence). Simple and multiple linear regression models were estimated.

Results: Income inequality is positively associated with mortality across US states ($p=.039$). Depression prevalence was strongly associated with mortality across US states ($p<.001$). In a multiple regression model including income inequality and depression prevalence, the effect of income inequality is no longer statistically significant ($p=.79$) while depression prevalence remains significant ($p<.001$).

Conclusions: Depression prevalence accounts for the inequality effect and is a powerful predictor of mortality variation across US states.