

Are Education/Mortality Disparities Widening in Countries Other Than the US?: Twin-Differenced Models of Age and Cohort in IGEMS.

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Education is known to have a graded relationship with morbidity and mortality globally. The education/mortality gradient has been growing steeper as income inequality and educational disparities have been growing in the United States. However, much less is known about temporal trends in this relationship in more equitable countries with larger safety nets and lower levels of income inequality. Further, prior estimates of the educational gradient may be biased by family background and genetic effects that have been ignored in most population-based analyses. Our analysis seeks to explore temporal changes in the education/mortality gradient in countries other than the United States (Sweden, Australia, and Finland) using several harmonized cohorts of twins in the Consortium on Interplay of Genes and Environment across Multiple Studies (IGEMS). Findings show that while education/mortality gradients are largely robust to inclusion of controls for both family background and genetics, there is no evidence that these gradients are growing steeper in Sweden, Australia, and Finland, but rather, remain consistent across a wide range of historical birth cohorts.

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