

Mortality Inequalities by Parental Education among Children and Young Adults in Finland 1990–2004

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the presence and strength of the association between parental education and mortality during different periods of childhood and early adulthood, and changes in the association over time. Using longitudinal individual level data, we calculated mortality rates and relative indices of inequality (RII) in a 15-year register follow-up of the Finnish population aged 1–24 at death. Lower parental education was consistently associated with a higher risk of mortality during the whole study period 1990–2004. The differentials were, however, distinctively patterned by sex, age group, and cause of death. Largest differentials among 1–4-year-old children (RII=2.4, 95% CI 1.57-3.56 for males and RII=4.5, 2.71-7.32 for females) and among young men aged 15–19 (RII=2.4, 2.00-2.98) indicated convergence of mortality differentials in late childhood, and re-emergence of differentials in early adulthood, particularly for accidental and violent causes of death among young men.