The Mortality Consequences of Home Ownership

Flash Session: Socioeconomic Inequalities in Health, Life Expectancy, and Mortality

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April 8, 2022
Research Question

- Far from a complete understanding of how social characteristics and positionality in young adulthood contribute to later life health and longevity
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Does home ownership in young adulthood have a causal impact on later-life longevity?
Causal pathways

Figure: Causal pathways between home ownership and longevity
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Causal Pathways

Shared Confounders
Ambition / Socioeconomic Background / Early Life Health

Home Ownership
- Stronger Social Networks
- Wealth accumulation
- Lower health risks from substandard housing
- Security / Lower Risk

Mortality

Figure: Causal pathways + confounders between home ownership and longevity
CenSoc-DMF Brothers (N = 38,000)

- IPUMS 1940 Full-Count Census\(^1\) linked to Social Security Death Master File\(^2\)

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\(^1\)IPUMS-USA (Ruggles et al., 2020)
\(^2\)Censoc (Goldstein et al., 2021)
\(^3\)Census Linking Project (Abramitzky et al., 2020)
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- Identified brothers by linking back to IPUMS Full-Count 1920 Census\(^3\)

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Home ownership in 1940

Figure: Proportion of male household heads who own their home in 1940
Methods

- OLS regression on age of death

- Sibling fixed effects identification strategy: control for hard-to-measure confounders (e.g., shared family background)
Association between home ownership and longevity

Figure: Baseline model with birth year fixed effects
Association between home ownership and longevity

Figure: Add controls for education, race, occupation, marital status, state, and urbanicity
Association between home ownership and longevity

Figure: Baseline model + controls + sibling fixed effects + birth order
Conclusions

- Our results suggest a causal impact of home ownership in early adulthood (for men) on longevity

Policy Implications: policies that subsidize and facilitate home ownership can help mitigate mortality disparities
Conclusions

- Our results suggest a **causal impact** of home ownership in early adulthood (for men) on longevity.

- The brother who owns a home lives 6 months longer.
Conclusions

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- The brother who owns a home lives 6 months longer

**Policy Implications:** policies that subsidize and facilitate home ownership can help mitigate mortality disparities
References


Thank You

▶ Questions?

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