

Lack of education reduces life expectancy

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Higher educational inequality is linked to more inequality in life expectancy, according to new research by Vienna University of Economics and Business.

The research, conducted by researchers Clemens Danler and Katharina Pfaff, examined the relationship between inequality in education and inequality in life expectancy in 31 European countries.

The study revealed that countries whose population have unequal levels of education, are also more likely to be unequal in their life expectancy.

It highlights that not only education is a crucial factor for health outcomes, but also whether everyone has equal chances for education.

For this reason, the researchers recommend policy makers to address educational inequalities when intending to flatten out inequalities in life expectancies.

“Equal access to education, fair evaluation of performance, and an inclusive school system that does not favour people of a certain socio-economic background are factors that can be influenced by adequate policies,” says Katharina Pfaff.

The researchers say that the standardisation of education, examination procedures, and grading systems can create a uniform standard and equal opportunities, as long as assessors are objective.

“When intergenerational mobility within a country is not perfect, educational policies are a powerful public health tool which individuals can profit from throughout their lifetime,” says Katharina Pfaff.

The research was published in the Journal SSM – Population Health, and can be accessed here (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352827321002299>).

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