

LIVABLE LIVES INITIATIVE

Paradoxes in Public Health: Identifying Protective Factors in the Relationship between Social Inequality and Well-Being

Abstract: While the pernicious effects of social inequalities upon health status are well understood, there is relatively less understanding of the protective factors that can preserve well-being despite economic hardship. In this proposal, we use data from the World Health Organization's recently released World Health Survey to identify protective factors operating at the individual, community, and environmental levels in over 70 countries around the globe. We examine how the effects of these factors are moderated by the health system within which these individuals reside. Findings from this study have the potential to conceptualize the Livable Lives framework within a global health paradigm, to identify novel factors that may preserve health despite poverty, and to inform the design of health systems to better address the health care needs of disadvantaged populations.

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