

Reassessing the Continuum of Social Determinants: A Critical Re-evaluation of Health Equity Interventions in Low-Income Urban Populations

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Abstract. The persistent health inequities in low-income urban populations necessitate a critical re-evaluation of the social determinants of health (SDOH). This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative analysis of health outcome disparities with qualitative interviews of public health practitioners. Our findings indicate that traditional health equity interventions inadvertently perpetuate systemic inequities due to a lack of contextual understanding. We propose a paradigm shift towards integrative frameworks that prioritize community engagement and contextualized interventions. This research underscores the urgency for public health policies that not only address immediate health outcomes but also dismantle the structural barriers contributing to health disparities.

Keywords: health equity, social determinants of health, urban health disparities, public health interventions, community engagement, structural barriers, policy reform

Introduction

The global health landscape is increasingly characterized by stark inequities, particularly within low-income urban populations. As we approach the years 2024 to 2026, the implications of these health disparities are more pressing than ever, exacerbated by the ongoing impacts of economic instability, urbanization, and social fragmentation. Health inequities driven by social determinants of health (SDOH) such as socio-economic status, education, and access to healthcare are not merely statistical anomalies; they represent a profound moral and ethical challenge for public health systems worldwide. Recent studies have elucidated the multifaceted nature of these determinants, revealing that health

outcomes are oftentimes a reflection of structural inequities entrenched within societal frameworks. However, despite growing recognition of the importance of SDOH, public health interventions frequently fall short of addressing the root causes of health disparities. This paper aims to critically assess the prevailing health equity interventions and their efficacy in addressing these systemic issues. Through rigorous analysis and empirical evidence, we explore the limitations of traditional approaches, which often prioritize symptom management over structural change. Furthermore, we investigate innovative frameworks that align more closely with community needs and advocate for policies that enable sustainable health equity. Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to the discourse on redefining health equity in the context of urban populations, offering insights that are informed by both quantitative data and qualitative experiences from health practitioners. The structure of the paper will be as follows: we will begin with a detailed overview of the SDOH framework, followed by an analysis of current health equity interventions, and conclude with recommendations for policy reform that could pave the way for more equitable health outcomes.

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References

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