



Are Social Policies Responsible for Inequalities in Children's Well-Being?...And, What Else Should We Be Asking?

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Social Policies are implicated through evidence on social determinants of health



Economic gradients in Emotional and Behavioral Problems, United Kingdom

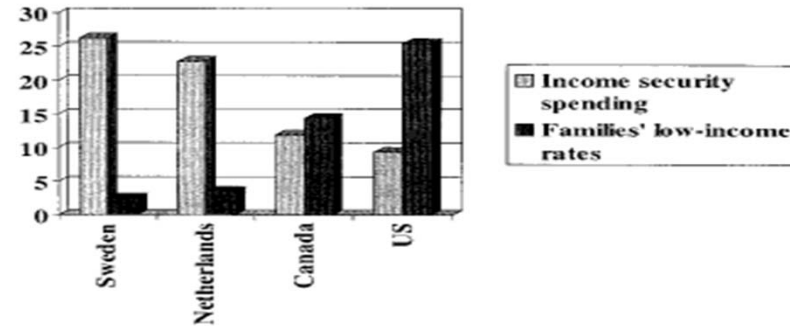
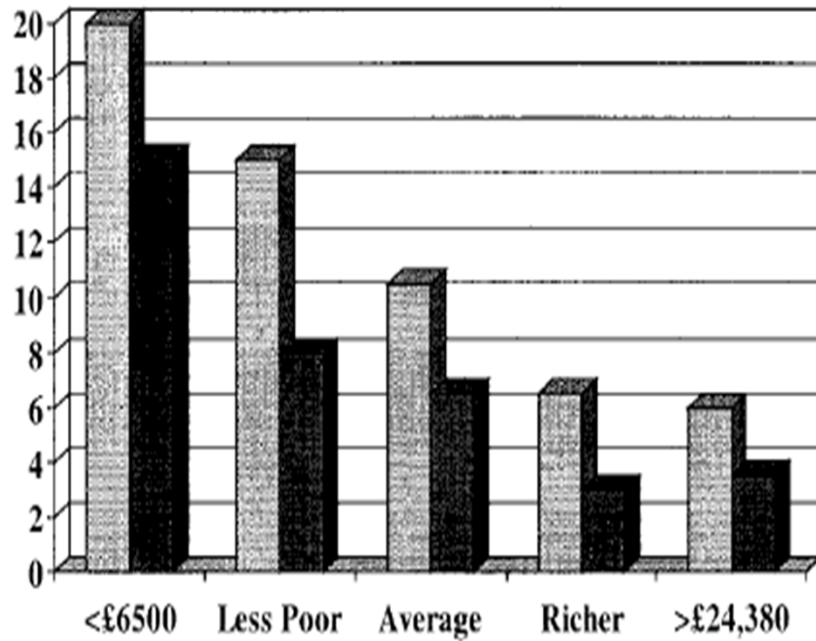


Fig 2. International comparisons of spending on income security compared with families' low-income rates.¹⁶

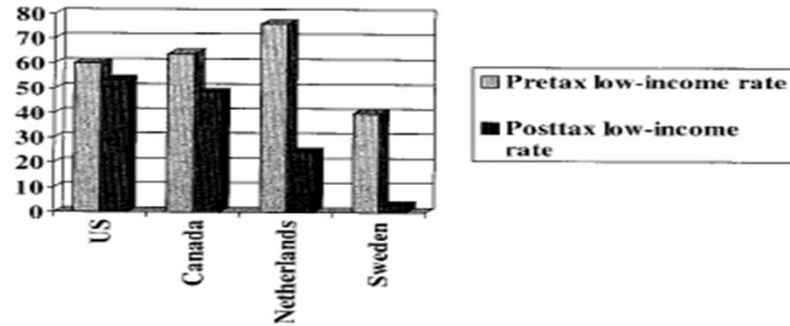


Fig 3. Low-income rate among single-parent households before and after taxes and transfers.¹⁶



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Cross-national patterns to infer a correlation between social policy 'orientations' of societies, and child health inequities



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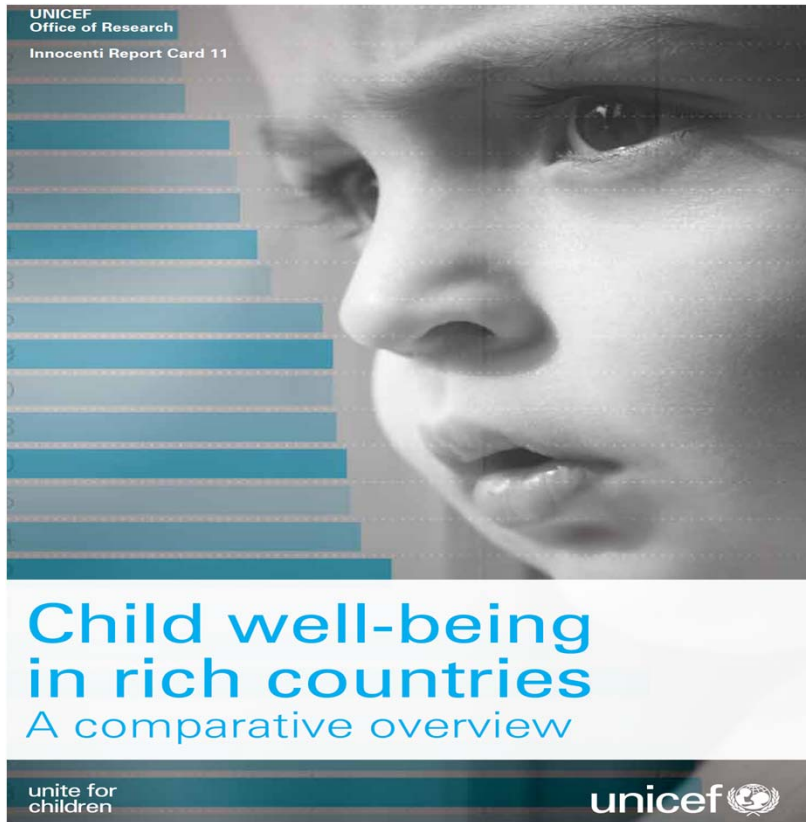
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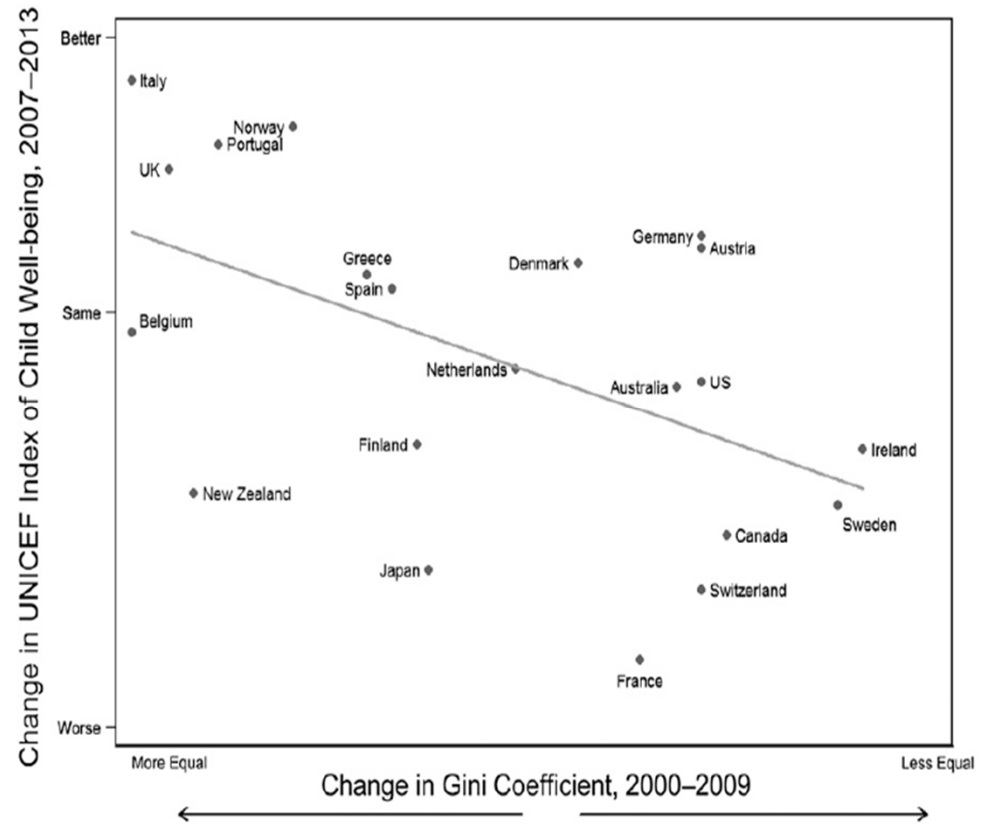
Cross-national and Cross-state (US) correlational studies to assess association between policy-relevant variables and child health inequities



Cross-National Association between Income Inequality and Child Well-Being



Unicef, 2013



Pickett and Wilkinson, 2015



Cross-State Association between Income Inequality and Child Well-Being

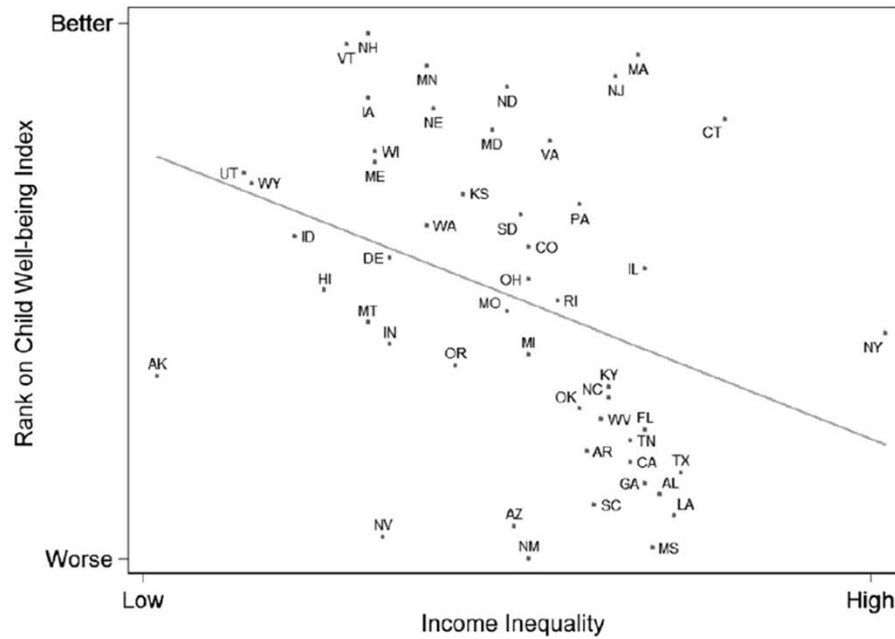


Table 2 | Correlations of measures of child wellbeing with income inequality, and average income across the 50 US states (including District of Columbia)

Measure of child wellbeing	Income inequality		Average income	
	<i>r</i>	P value	<i>r</i>	P value
Teenage births ¹²	0.72	<0.001	-0.55	<0.001
Juvenile homicides ¹²	0.31	0.03	0.00	0.99
Infant mortality*	0.55	<0.001	-0.20	0.15
Low birth weight*	0.65	<0.001	-0.01	0.99
Educational performance (combined maths and reading scores for 15 year olds)† ⁴	-0.69	<0.001	0.08	0.58
Dropping out of high school† ⁴	0.66	<0.001	-0.28	0.04
Overweight	0.64	<0.001	-0.07	0.63
Mental health problems	0.37	0.01	-0.14	0.33

*Similar findings have been reported elsewhere.^{11 40}

†Similar findings have been reported elsewhere.¹¹

Pickett and Wilkinson, 2007; 2015



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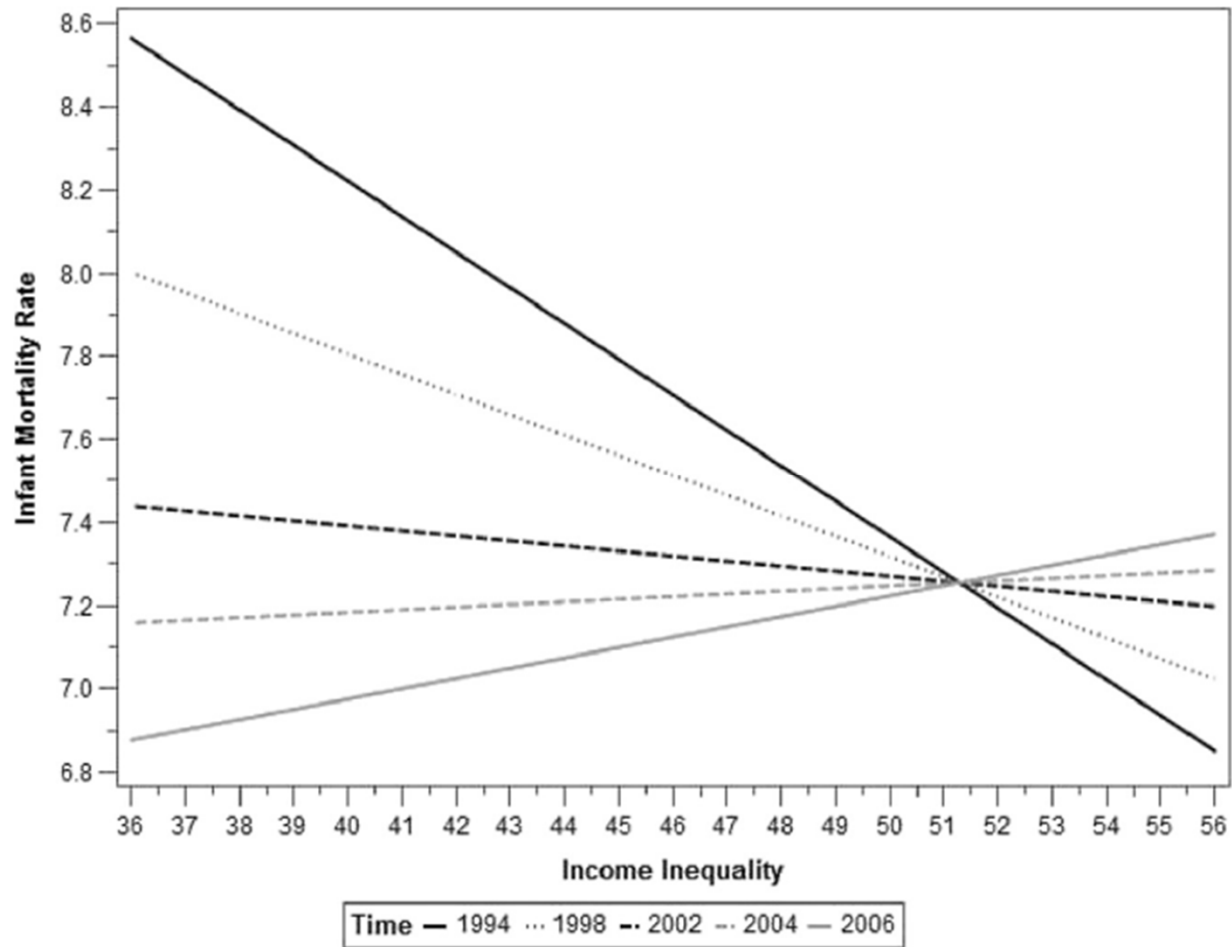
Cross-national and Cross-state (US) correlational studies to assess association between policy-relevant variables and child health inequities



Causal Inference?



Longitudinal Association Between State-Level Income Inequality and Infant Mortality



Siddiqi, Jones and Erwin, 2015



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Causal Inference?

Specific Social Policies?



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Causal Inference?

Specific Social Policies?

Specific Characteristics of Social Policies?

Characteristics of Policies

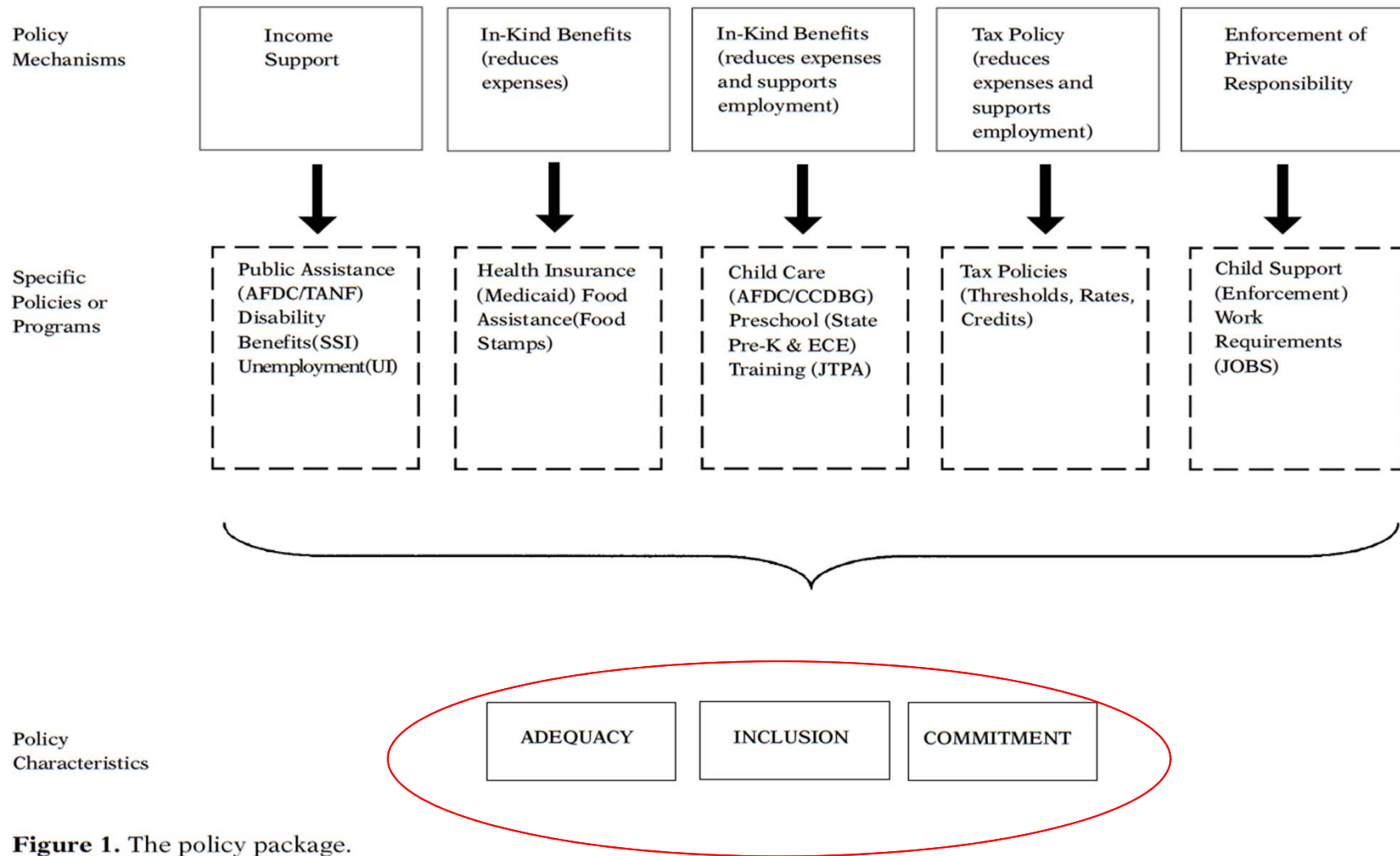


Figure 1. The policy package.



Effects of Various Policy 'Types': A Heuristic

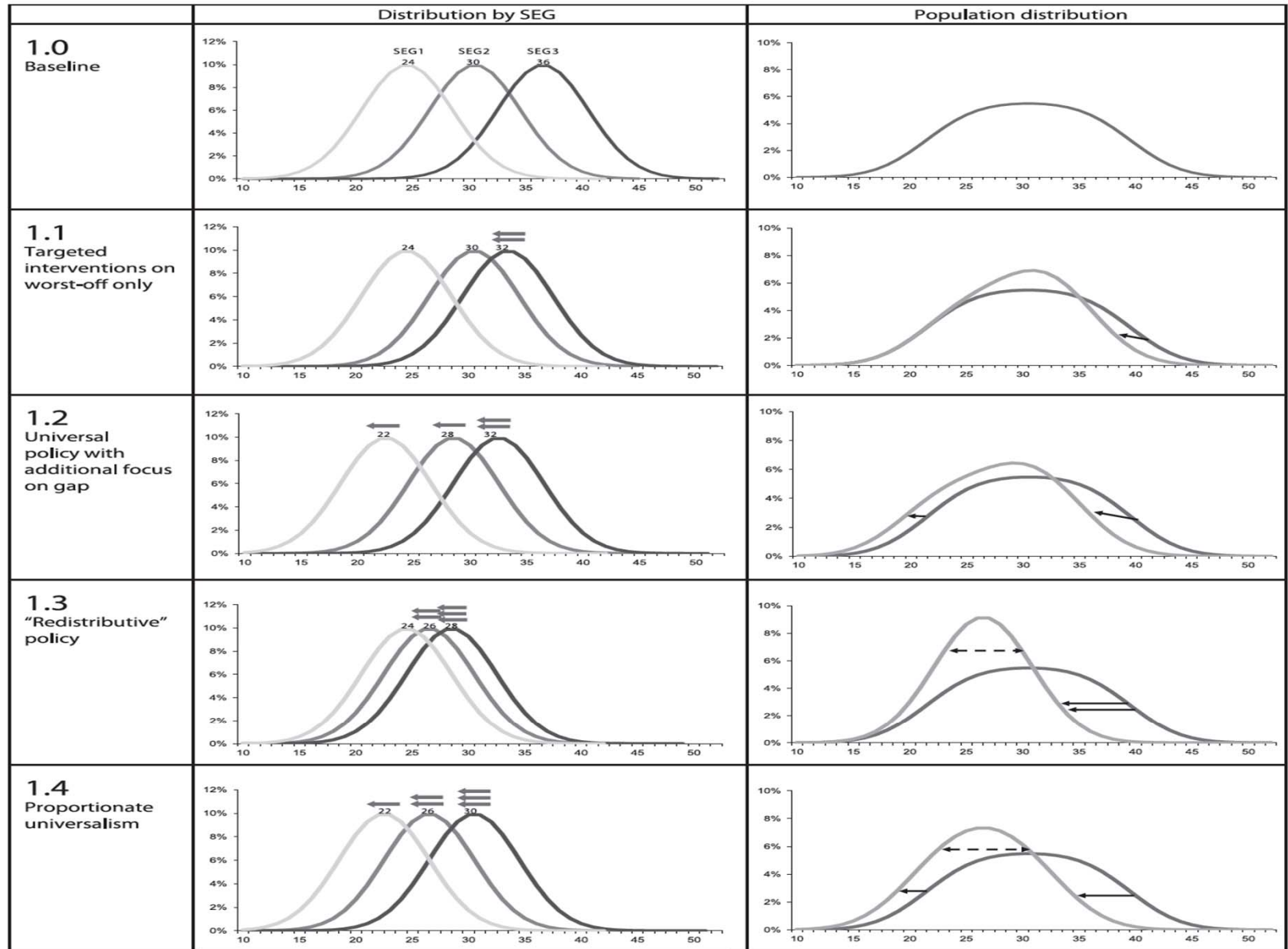


Figure 1 Typology of four policy scenarios of health inequalities reduction with their effects on risk-factor distributions by socioeconomic group (SEG) and in the whole population.



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Causal Inference?

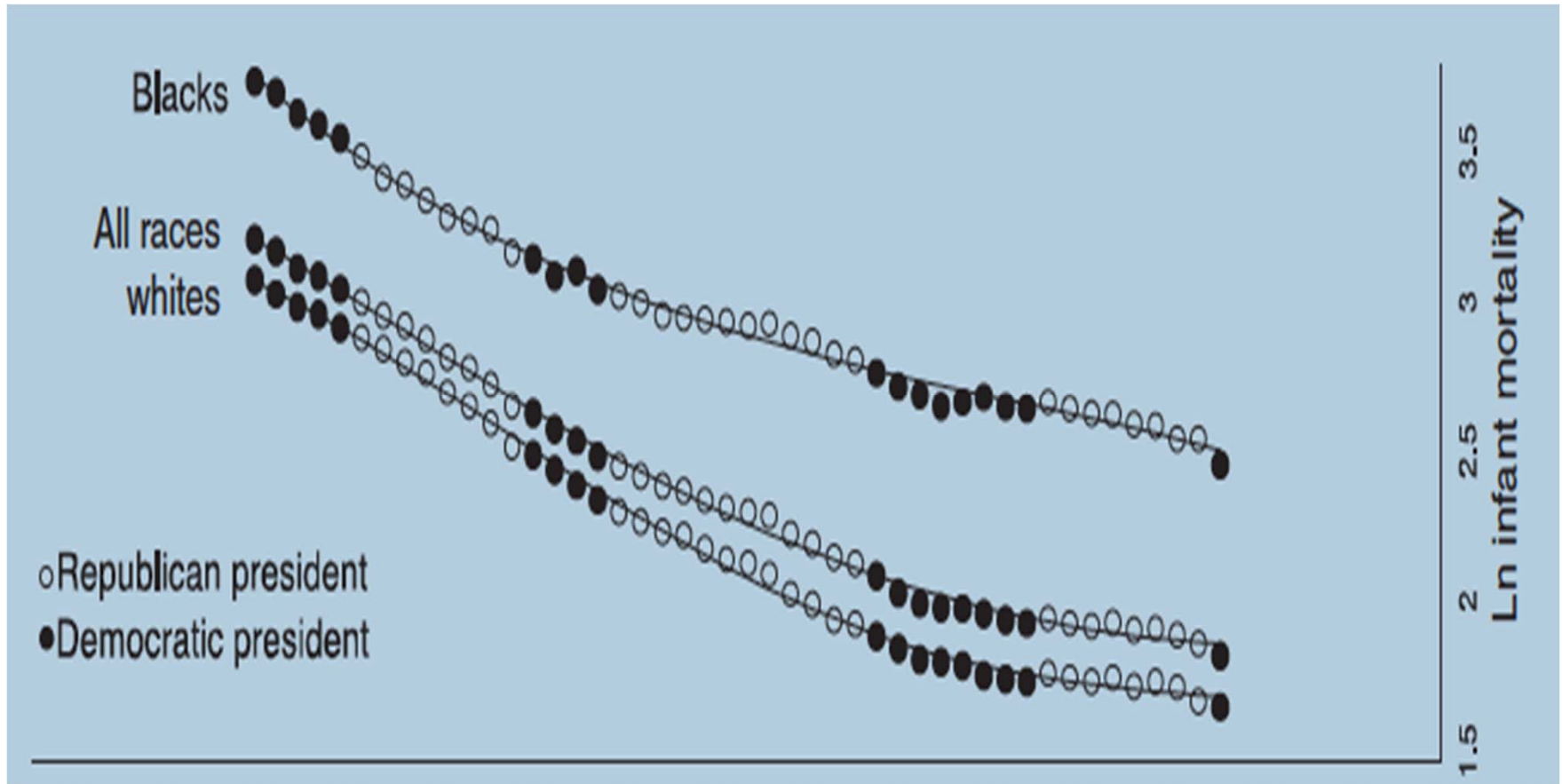
Specific Social Policies?

Specific Characteristics of Social Policies?

Other Related Factors?



Party of the President and Infant Mortality in the United States



Rodriguez, Bound and Geronimus, 2014

CONCLUSIONS: Children born into socioeconomically disadvantaged families suffer worse child well-being and its lifelong implications, in all societies, worldwide. Our analyses show, however, that some wealthy societies are able to mitigate these inequalities; these societies have better child well-being, on average. This outcome has less to do with specific welfare policies or targeted interventions for poor children than to a societal commitment to greater equality.
Pediatrics 2015;135:S39–S47