

Health inequities: where does gender fit in?

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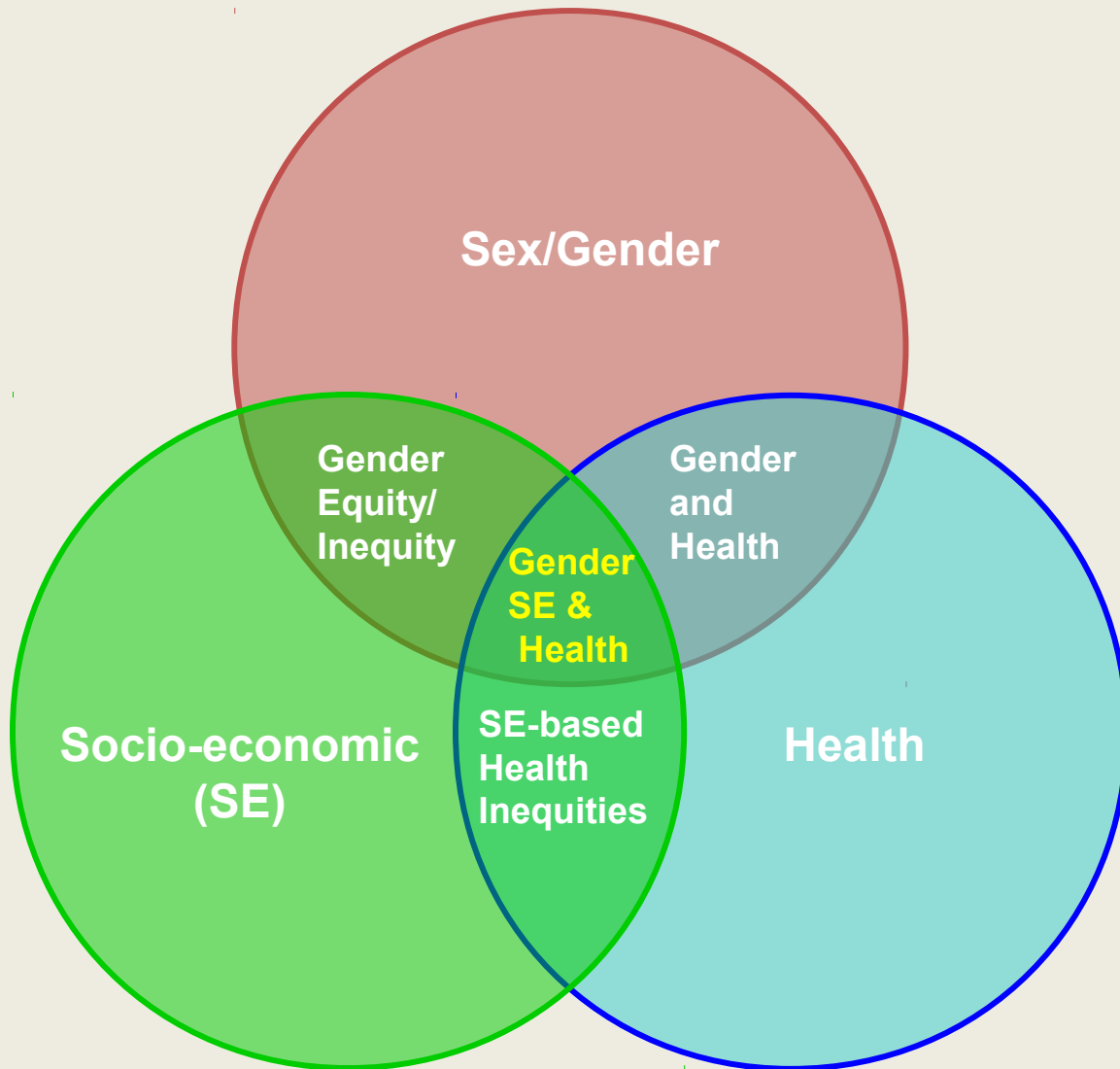
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Gender Equity/ Inequity

- “Fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men (World Health Organization 2001)”.
- Social and material resources and decision-making powers of households, communities or countries should be fairly and justly distributed between men and women.

Gender, SE & Health

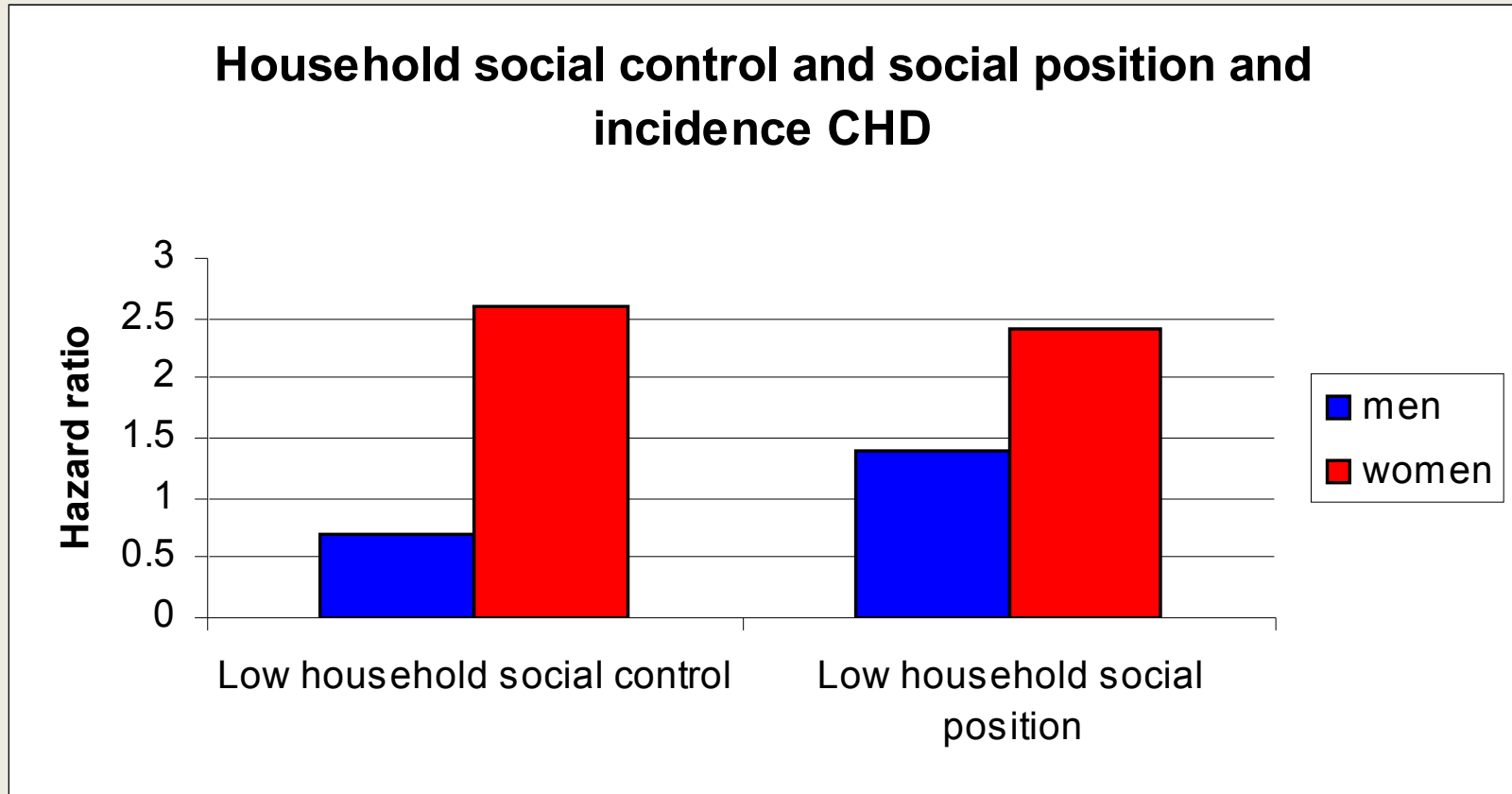
- Do the relationships between health and socio-economic circumstances vary by gender?
- How does gender equity affect health and do these relationships differ by gender?

SEP and health, relationships by gender

- And the answers is: Well it depends... on the outcome
 - Strong relative socio-economic differences between education and income and obesity for women but not for men. Longitudinally women and men in lower status occupations have greater weight gain perhaps stronger for women.
 - Relative socio-economic inequalities in all-cause mortality, cancer mortality, mortality from external causes greater for men while social gradient for CVD mortality is larger for women (Saurel-Cubizolles, 2009)
 - Stronger SEP gradients for metabolic syndrome in women. The gradient was better explained by health behaviours for women (Louks, 2007)

SEP and health, relationships by gender

and it depends on the socio-economic measure



Gender and socio-economic disadvantage shape health

- Women are more likely to be in precarious employment
- Women in precariously employed are 12 times more likely to experience sexual harassment at work than the permanent employees (Lamontagne 2009)

Relationships between health and socio-economic circumstances (health selection)

- Obesity

- National Longitudinal Study of Youth, US. For white women, increase 2 standard deviations from mean weight (+ 64 pounds) was associated with 9% reduction in wages (equivalent to 1.5 years education, 3 years work) (Cawley 2004)
- Several other studies including Hammarström A, et al. Soc Sci Med. 2005

Gender equity and health

I. Kawachi et al. / Social Science & Medicine 48 (1999) 21-32

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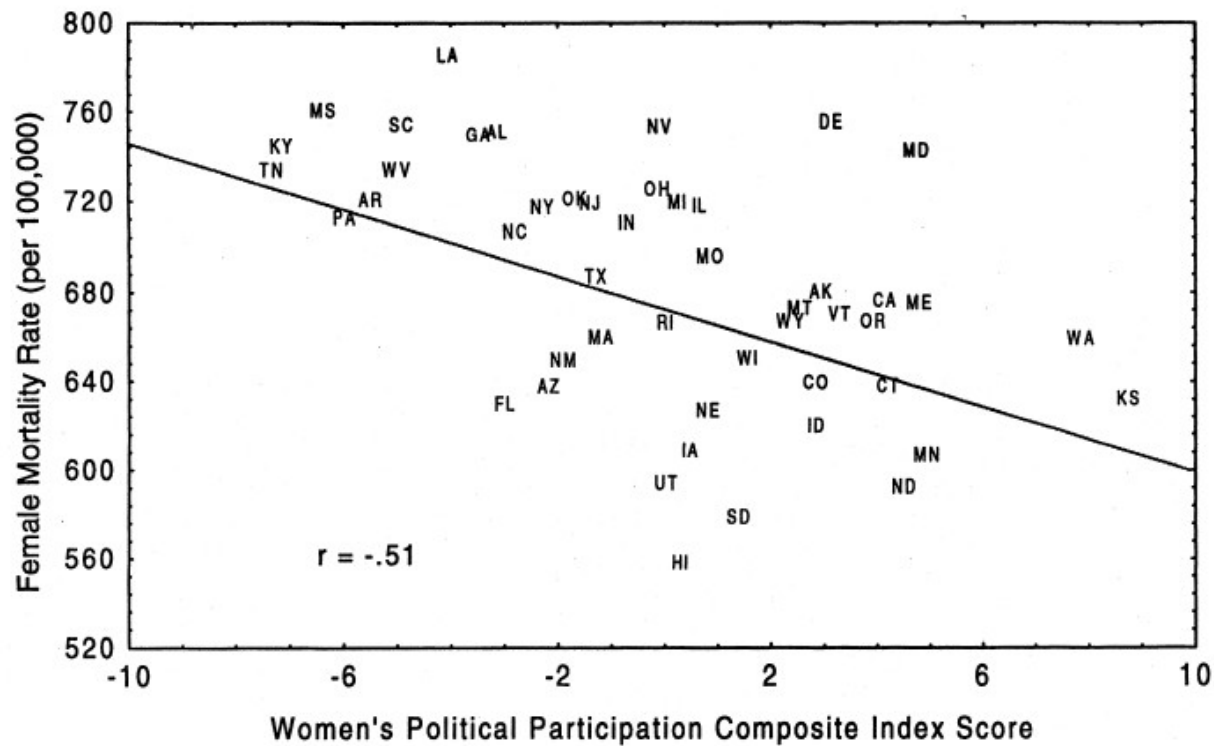


Fig. 1. Women's political participation and female mortality rates.

More evidence

- Female life expectancy increases with increases in women status incl. educational status, economic status, reproductive autonomy (Soci Sci Med 1997;45(2):305-17)
- Maternal mortality rates: increases in women's status incl. education, age of first marriage, reproductive autonomy associated with reduced maternal mortality and multinational corporate investment associated with increases in mat mortality (Soc Sci Med 1997;49(2):197-214)

Gender equity and men and women's drinking

- Men in all countries drink more than women
- Gender differences in alcohol consumption decreased with modernisation and with increased gender equity

(Rahav, 2006)

Conclusion

- So does gender matter for understanding socio-economic inequalities in health
 - YES and in many different ways