

Migration, Social Security and Health Disparities among Urban Older Residents

Migration is a key factor contributing to regional development disparities. Social security system serves as a crucial mechanism for adjusting welfare differences. However, the impact of large-scale migration on the health disparities among urban older residents and operational mechanisms of social security remain unclear. Based on microdata from the 1% National Population Sample Survey in 2005 and 2015 and panel data at the provincial level from 2010 to 2020, this paper tried to identify the impact of migration on self-rated health and social security benefits among urban older residents by using shift-share instrument. The results showed that migration led to an 8.92 percentage point increase in the regional disparity of self-rated "health" probabilities among urban older residents between 2010 and 2015. The health effects of population in-migration are primarily concentrated among older residents with local Hukou registration in urban areas with lower socioeconomic status. The key mechanism lies in the promotive effects of migration on the supply of social security resources by enhancing fiscal revenue and social insurance funds in the recipient areas, and the limited utilization of social security resource by migrants. Hence, migrants provide cross-subsidies for local older residents with lower socioeconomic status in terms of social security benefits. The paper suggests that the slowdown in the growth of the rural-urban migration and the deepening of population aging may bring pressure on social security treatment for cities experiencing insufficient growth in migration. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the efficiency of social security resource utilization and expand the sources of social security funds.