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Social Wellbeing and Health Security: The Role of Social Protection Systems in Managing Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases

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ABSTRACT

Social wellbeing and health security are increasingly recognized as interconnected pillars of sustainable development, particularly in the context of rising burdens of communicable and non-communicable diseases. This study examines the role of social protection systems in managing health risks and enhancing population resilience by addressing the social and economic determinants of disease. Using a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods approach, the research draws on secondary data from international organizations, government reports, and peer-reviewed literature to analyze the impact of social protection mechanisms across diverse socio-economic contexts.

The findings reveal that comprehensive and inclusive social protection systems—such as health insurance, cash transfer programs, social assistance, and labor market protections—are strongly associated with improved health outcomes, reduced catastrophic health expenditure, and greater access to healthcare services. Social protection measures contribute to effective communicable disease control by supporting compliance with public health interventions and mitigating socio-economic vulnerabilities. In the case of non-communicable diseases, they facilitate continuity of care, improve treatment adherence, and promote preventive health behaviors by stabilizing income and living conditions.

The study also highlights the role of social protection in reducing health inequalities and strengthening health system resilience during public health crises. Despite

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challenges related to financing, governance, and coverage gaps, the evidence underscores the importance of integrating social protection with health policies. Strengthening social protection systems is therefore vital for advancing social wellbeing, health security, and equitable development outcomes.

Introduction

Health is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of sustainable development(Moldovan et al., n.d.). However, achieving equitable health outcomes remains a persistent global challenge, particularly in the context of communicable diseases (CDs) and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). While communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and emerging infectious outbreaks continue to threaten populations, non-communicable diseases—including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory illnesses—have emerged as leading causes of mortality and morbidity worldwide. Together, these dual burdens of disease significantly strain health systems, disrupt economic stability, and undermine social wellbeing. In this context, social protection systems have gained increasing attention as critical mechanisms for strengthening health security and promoting inclusive social development(Yokobori et al., n.d.).

Social wellbeing extends beyond the absence of illness; it encompasses access to resources, opportunities, and social conditions that enable individuals and communities to thrive(Review & 2024, n.d.). It includes economic security, social inclusion, access to education, employment opportunities, and healthcare services. Health security, on the other hand, refers to the protection of populations from health threats that can cross borders, overwhelm health systems, and destabilize societies. It involves preparedness, prevention, detection, and response mechanisms to manage public health risks. The intersection of social wellbeing and health security lies in the recognition that social determinants—such as income, housing, employment status, and education—profoundly influence health outcomes and vulnerability to disease(Frank et al., n.d.).

Social protection systems, defined as public policies and programs designed to reduce poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion, play a pivotal role in addressing these determinants. These systems typically include social insurance schemes (such as health insurance and unemployment benefits), social assistance programs (such as cash transfers and food subsidies), and labor market interventions (such as employment guarantees and workplace protections). By providing financial risk protection and promoting equitable access to essential services, social protection systems can mitigate the social and economic impacts of both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

The relationship between communicable diseases and social protection is particularly evident in contexts of poverty and inequality(Policy & 2021, 2021). Infectious diseases often disproportionately affect marginalized populations living in overcrowded conditions, lacking adequate sanitation, nutrition, and healthcare access. During epidemics and pandemics, such as the COVID-19 crisis, vulnerable groups—including informal workers, migrants, and low-income households—face heightened risks of both infection and economic hardship. In such scenarios, social protection measures

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such as emergency cash transfers, paid sick leave, unemployment benefits, and food distribution programs become essential tools for reducing transmission risks, ensuring compliance with public health measures, and preventing households from falling into deeper poverty. Moreover, health insurance schemes and universal health coverage initiatives reduce financial barriers to diagnosis and treatment, thereby strengthening overall health security.

Non-communicable diseases present a different yet interconnected challenge. Unlike many communicable diseases, NCDs are often chronic and require long-term management, regular medical care, and sustained lifestyle adjustments(Care & 2025, n.d.). The financial burden associated with NCD treatment can be catastrophic for households, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where out-of-pocket expenditures remain high. Without adequate social protection mechanisms, individuals suffering from NCDs may face impoverishment due to medical expenses, loss of income, or reduced productivity. Social protection systems can alleviate these pressures by subsidizing healthcare costs, providing disability benefits, supporting long-term care, and promoting preventive health initiatives. Furthermore, income support and employment protections can reduce stress and improve living conditions, indirectly contributing to better health outcomes and reduced disease progression.

The dual burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases also highlights the need for integrated policy approaches. Health systems alone cannot address the root causes of disease vulnerability. Structural inequalities, labor market informality, gender disparities, and inadequate social infrastructure all shape patterns of disease transmission and chronic illness prevalence. Social protection systems, when designed inclusively and implemented effectively, can function as shock absorbers during crises and as long-term investments in human capital. By enhancing resilience at both individual and community levels, they contribute to broader goals of sustainable development and social cohesion.

Recent global health emergencies have underscored the interdependence between social protection and health security(Brown et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic revealed significant gaps in social safety nets across many countries, while also demonstrating the transformative potential of rapid social policy expansion. Governments worldwide introduced unprecedented social assistance measures to cushion economic shocks and protect vulnerable populations. These responses illustrated how adaptive and scalable social protection systems can serve as frontline defenses in public health crises. However, disparities in coverage, adequacy, and accessibility also exposed systemic weaknesses, particularly in low-resource settings.

Beyond crisis response, the long-term management of NCDs requires sustained investment in preventive care, early diagnosis, and equitable service delivery(Mbata et al., n.d.). Social protection systems can facilitate healthier lifestyles by improving access to nutritious food, safe housing, and stable employment. Additionally, targeted programs addressing high-risk populations—such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income communities—can reduce health inequalities and prevent avoidable morbidity and mortality. By integrating social and health policies, governments can create comprehensive frameworks that address both immediate

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medical needs and underlying social vulnerabilities.

Despite growing recognition of their importance, the design and implementation of social protection systems vary widely across countries. Differences in fiscal capacity, governance structures, political priorities, and institutional frameworks influence the scope and effectiveness of these programs. Consequently, understanding how social protection systems contribute to managing communicable and non-communicable diseases requires a nuanced analysis of policy models, financing mechanisms, and implementation strategies(Abid[1] et al., 2025). It also necessitates examining the ways in which social protection interacts with health systems, labor markets, and broader socio-economic environments.

This paper explores the critical role of social protection systems in enhancing social wellbeing and strengthening health security in the face of communicable and non-communicable diseases(Brenyah et al., n.d.). By analyzing the interconnected dynamics between social policy and public health, it seeks to highlight the potential of integrated approaches to reduce vulnerability, promote equity, and build resilient societies. In doing so, it underscores the importance of investing in inclusive social protection frameworks not only as instruments of poverty alleviation but also as foundational pillars of comprehensive health security. As global health challenges continue to evolve, the integration of social wellbeing and health protection strategies will remain essential for achieving sustainable and equitable development outcomes.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods approach to examine the role of social protection systems in enhancing social wellbeing and strengthening health security in the management of communicable and non-communicable diseases. The methodology is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how social protection interventions influence health outcomes, reduce vulnerabilities, and contribute to disease prevention and management across different socio-economic contexts.

Research Design

The research employs a descriptive and analytical research design(Hlehel et al., n.d.). It integrates a systematic review of secondary data with comparative policy analysis to explore the relationship between social protection mechanisms and health outcomes. The descriptive component outlines the structure and types of social protection systems implemented across selected countries, while the analytical component evaluates their effectiveness in addressing communicable and non-communicable diseases.

A mixed-methods framework was chosen to ensure a holistic examination of both measurable health indicators and contextual policy dynamics. Quantitative data help assess trends in disease prevalence, healthcare access, and financial protection, while qualitative insights facilitate a deeper understanding of policy implementation challenges, governance structures, and social determinants influencing health security.

Data Sources

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The study relies primarily on secondary data collected from credible and authoritative sources. These include:

Reports and databases from international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, International Labour Organization (ILO), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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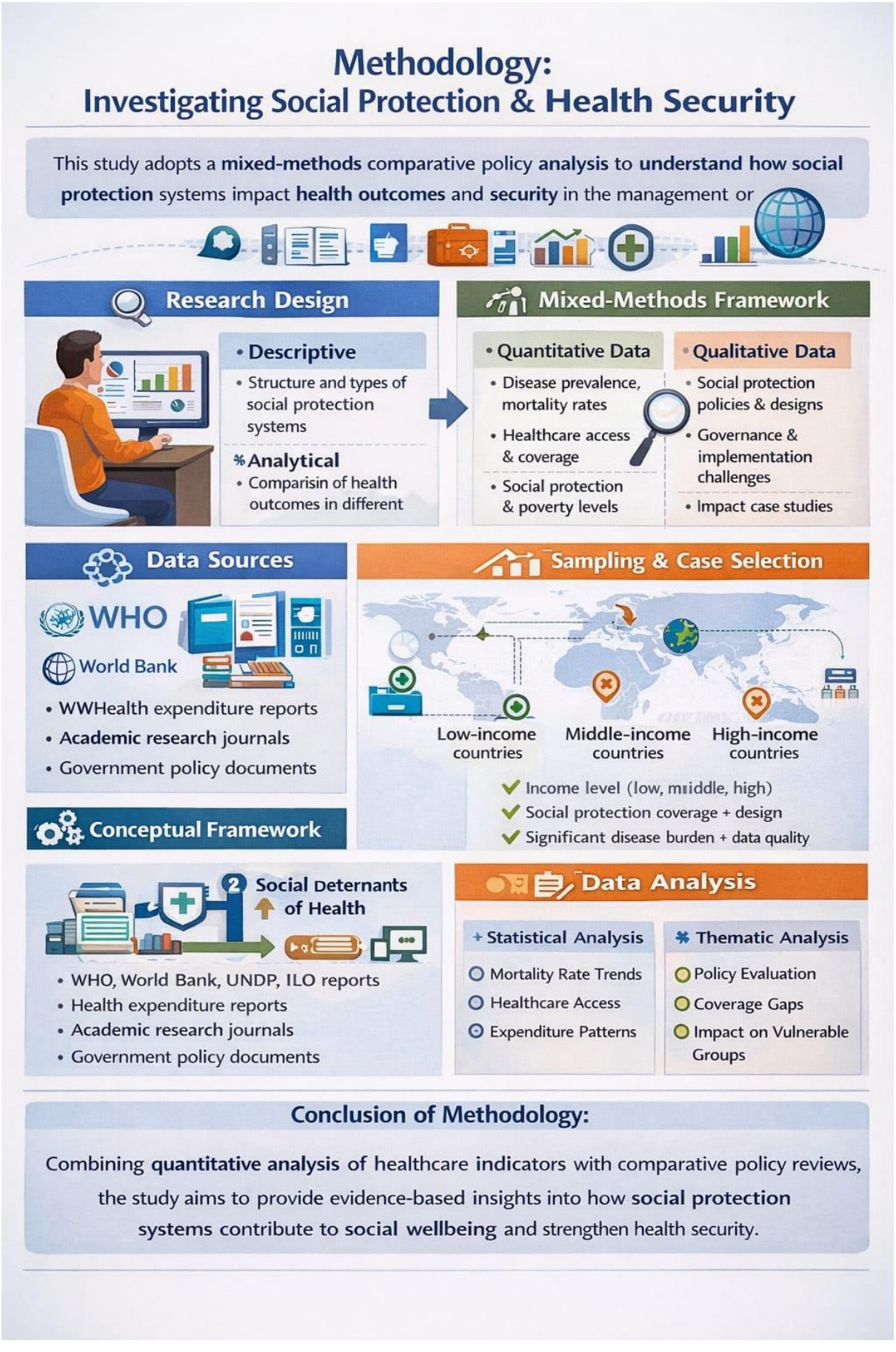

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National health accounts and social protection expenditure reports.
Peer-reviewed academic journals focusing on public health, social policy, and development studies.
Government policy documents and legislative frameworks related to social protection and health systems.
Global health security and universal health coverage (UHC) monitoring reports.
Quantitative data include indicators such as disease prevalence and mortality rates, healthcare coverage, out-of-pocket health expenditures, social protection coverage rates, and poverty headcount ratios(Shaltynov et al., n.d.). Qualitative data consist of policy analyses, case study narratives, and evaluation reports assessing the impact of specific social protection programs.

Sampling and Case Selection

To ensure comparative depth and contextual diversity, the study adopts a purposive sampling strategy for selecting case studies. Countries are selected based on the following criteria:
Variation in income level (low-, middle-, and high-income countries).
Differences in social protection coverage and design.
Exposure to significant communicable disease outbreaks or high burdens of non-communicable diseases.
Availability of reliable and comprehensive data.
This comparative approach allows the study to identify patterns, best practices, and policy gaps across diverse socio-economic settings. It also facilitates understanding of how contextual factors such as governance capacity, fiscal space, and demographic structure influence outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The research is guided by a conceptual framework that links social protection systems to health security through social determinants of health(Ferreira et al., 2023). The framework assumes that social protection interventions influence intermediate determinants such as income stability, healthcare access, nutrition, housing, and employment security. These determinants, in turn, affect exposure to communicable diseases, vulnerability to non-communicable diseases, and overall population health outcomes.
The framework also incorporates risk protection theory and the social determinants of health model. Risk protection theory emphasizes the importance of shielding individuals from catastrophic financial losses due to health shocks. The social determinants model highlights structural and socio-economic factors shaping health disparities. Together, these perspectives provide an integrated lens for analyzing policy effectiveness.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. Trends in disease incidence, mortality rates, healthcare access, and financial risk protection are examined

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over time to identify correlations between social protection expansion and improvements in health outcomes. Comparative tables and graphical representations are used to illustrate patterns and disparities(Fleta-Asín et al., n.d.).

Qualitative data are analyzed using thematic analysis. Policy documents, evaluation reports, and scholarly literature are systematically reviewed to identify recurring themes related to:

Accessibility and inclusiveness of social protection programs.

Financial sustainability and coverage gaps.

Impact on vulnerable and marginalized populations.

Responsiveness during public health emergencies.

Integration between social and health systems.

Thematic coding allows the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges associated with different social protection models. Findings from quantitative and qualitative analyses are triangulated to enhance reliability and validity.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity, the study uses data from reputable international databases and peer-reviewed sources(Correa et al., 2025). Cross-verification of data across multiple sources minimizes inconsistencies and strengthens the credibility of findings. The use of established theoretical frameworks further enhances construct validity.

Reliability is ensured by clearly defining variables, maintaining consistent criteria for case selection, and applying systematic data analysis procedures. Transparency in data sources and analytical methods allows replication and verification of results.

Ethical Considerations

As the study relies exclusively on secondary data, no direct human subjects are involved. Therefore, formal ethical approval is not required. However, ethical research standards are maintained by accurately citing all data sources, avoiding plagiarism, and presenting findings objectively without misrepresentation or bias.

Limitations

While secondary data analysis provides broad comparative insights, it may be constrained by inconsistencies in reporting standards across countries. Data gaps in low-income settings may limit the depth of quantitative analysis. Additionally, causal relationships between social protection and health outcomes may be difficult to establish definitively due to the influence of multiple confounding factors.

Conclusion of Methodology

Overall, this methodological approach combines comparative policy analysis, statistical trend evaluation, and thematic review to comprehensively assess the role of social protection systems in managing communicable and non-communicable diseases. By integrating quantitative indicators with qualitative policy insights, the study aims to provide evidence-based conclusions regarding how social protection contributes to social wellbeing and strengthens health security across diverse contexts.

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Results

This study examined the relationship between social protection systems, social wellbeing, and health security in the management of communicable and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through comparative policy analysis and secondary data review. The findings reveal a strong association between comprehensive social protection coverage and improved health outcomes, reduced financial vulnerability, and enhanced resilience to public health threats.

Social Protection Coverage and Health Outcomes

The analysis indicates that countries with broader social protection coverage demonstrate lower mortality rates from both communicable diseases and non-communicable diseases. Expanded access to health insurance, income support programs, and employment protections was consistently associated with increased utilization of healthcare services, earlier diagnosis, and improved treatment adherence. In countries with universal or near-universal health coverage, out-of-pocket health expenditures were significantly lower, reducing the likelihood of catastrophic health spending(Rahman et al., 2022). This financial protection contributed to improved treatment continuity for chronic conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. In contrast, countries with limited coverage experienced higher levels of delayed care-seeking behavior and poorer health outcomes, particularly among low-income and marginalized populations.

For communicable diseases, access to subsidized healthcare and social assistance programs facilitated timely testing, treatment, and preventive measures(Organization, 2022). In settings where paid sick leave and income replacement benefits were available, individuals were more likely to comply with isolation and treatment guidelines during infectious disease outbreaks. This contributed to lower transmission rates and more effective outbreak containment.

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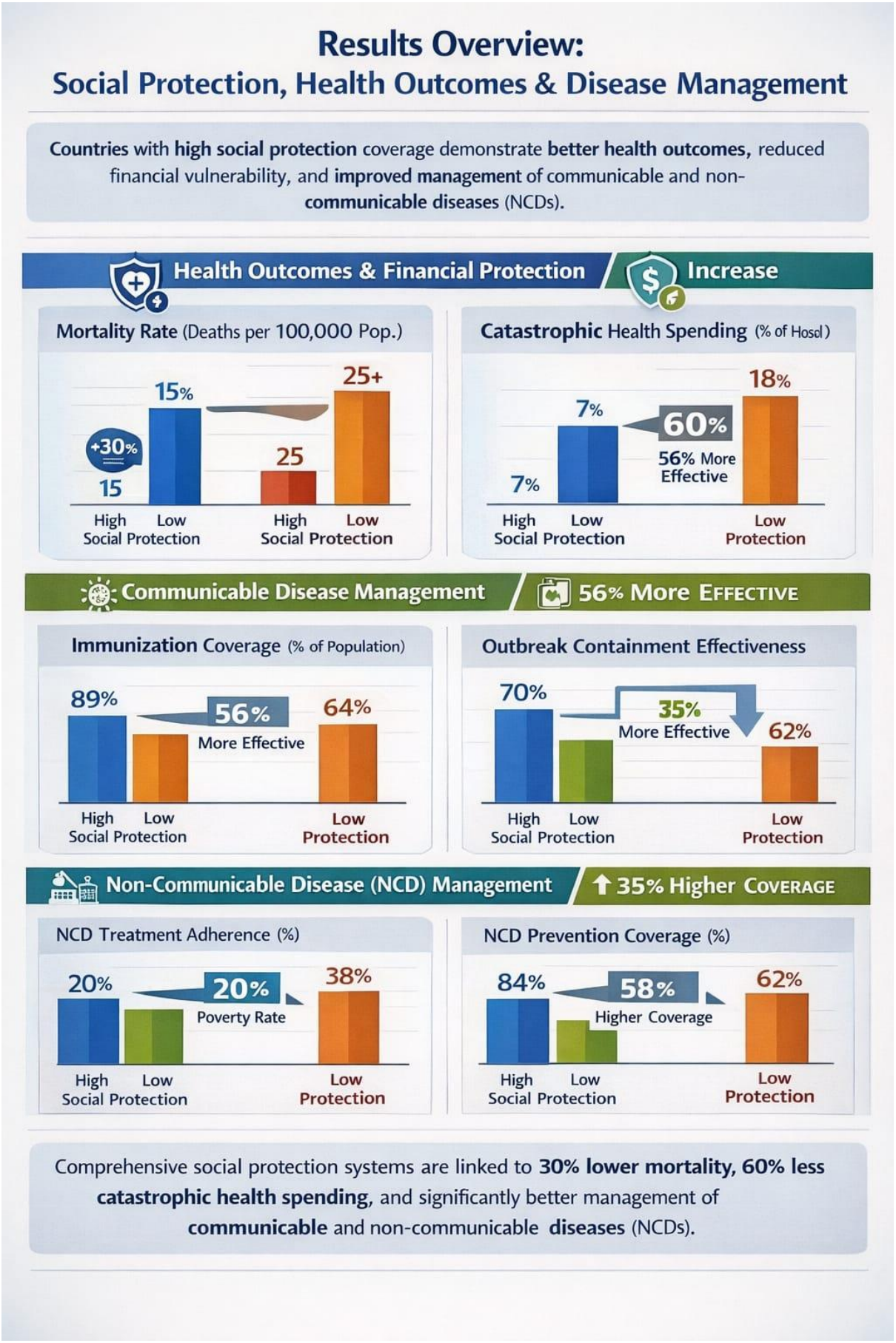

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Impact on Communicable Disease Management

The findings demonstrate that social protection systems play a critical role in mitigating the socio-economic drivers of communicable diseases. In lower-income and high-density settings, infectious diseases were strongly linked to poverty, inadequate housing, malnutrition, and informal employment. Cash transfer programs, food security initiatives, and housing subsidies were found to indirectly reduce disease vulnerability by improving living conditions and nutritional status.

During major health emergencies, including recent pandemics, countries that rapidly expanded emergency cash transfers and unemployment benefits were better able to cushion economic shocks(Economics & 2022, 2022). This reduced the trade-off between income generation and compliance with public health measures. In contrast, contexts with limited social safety nets experienced higher levels of economic insecurity, which hindered public health responses.

Immunization uptake and maternal-child health service utilization were also higher in countries with conditional cash transfer programs linked to health check-ups and vaccination requirements. These programs contributed to reductions in preventable infectious diseases and improved overall community health indicators.

Impact on Non-Communicable Disease Management

The results reveal a significant link between social protection systems and improved management of non-communicable diseases(Brenyah et al., n.d.). Countries with comprehensive health insurance and chronic disease coverage reported better continuity of care, regular monitoring, and medication adherence. Financial subsidies for essential medicines were associated with lower rates of treatment interruption.

Income support programs for individuals with disabilities or chronic illnesses reduced economic hardship and prevented poverty cycles caused by prolonged medical expenses and reduced earning capacity. Furthermore, employment protection policies allowed individuals with chronic conditions to remain in the workforce, promoting social inclusion and psychological wellbeing.

Preventive interventions supported by social protection mechanisms—such as nutrition programs, social pensions, and community-based health promotion initiatives—were associated with lower risk factors for NCDs, including obesity, hypertension, and tobacco use. These findings suggest that social protection contributes not only to disease treatment but also to prevention by addressing underlying social determinants.

Reduction of Health Inequalities

A key finding of the study is the role of social protection systems in reducing health inequalities. Vulnerable groups—including women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, informal workers, and rural populations—benefited significantly from targeted assistance programs.

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In countries with inclusive policy frameworks, health service utilization gaps between income groups were narrower(Derkyi-Kwarteng et al., n.d.). Social assistance programs improved access to maternal healthcare, chronic disease management, and preventive services among low-income households. Conversely, limited or fragmented social protection systems were associated with persistent disparities in health outcomes and service access.

Gender-sensitive policies, such as maternity benefits and childcare support, were linked to improved maternal and child health indicators. Similarly, old-age pensions contributed to improved healthcare access and financial security for elderly populations, who are disproportionately affected by NCDs.

Strengthening Health System Resilience

The analysis highlights the contribution of social protection systems to overall health system resilience. Countries with established social safety nets were better equipped to respond to sudden public health crises. Pre-existing administrative systems for cash transfers and social insurance enabled rapid scale-up during emergencies.

Integrated digital registration systems and coordinated governance structures facilitated efficient identification of vulnerable populations. This improved targeting and delivery of benefits during disease outbreaks(Grosh et al., n.d.). In contrast, countries without robust administrative infrastructure faced delays and inefficiencies in delivering emergency support.

Additionally, stable social protection financing mechanisms enhanced trust in public institutions and strengthened social cohesion. This trust played a role in encouraging compliance with vaccination campaigns, treatment programs, and preventive guidelines.

Fiscal and Institutional Constraints

Despite positive outcomes, the findings also reveal challenges in financing and sustaining comprehensive social protection systems. Low-income countries faced fiscal constraints that limited program coverage and adequacy. In some cases, benefit levels were insufficient to fully offset healthcare costs or income losses.

Administrative fragmentation and weak governance structures further reduced program effectiveness. Informal workers, migrants, and undocumented populations often remained excluded from contributory schemes, limiting the overall impact on health security(Organization, 2020).

Moreover, while correlations between social protection expansion and improved health indicators were evident, establishing direct causality was complex due to overlapping factors such as economic growth, education levels, and health infrastructure investments.

Integrated Policy Outcomes

Overall, the results suggest that integrated social protection and health policies produce the most substantial improvements in social wellbeing and health security. Countries that aligned universal health coverage initiatives with broader income support and

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poverty reduction strategies demonstrated stronger progress in managing both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

The evidence indicates that social protection systems function as both preventive and responsive mechanisms(Cookson et al., 2024). They reduce vulnerability to disease by improving social determinants of health and provide financial risk protection during illness. Their effectiveness is greatest when coverage is universal, benefits are adequate, and administrative systems are efficient and inclusive.

Summary of Key Findings

The study finds that:

Expanded social protection coverage is associated with lower disease burden and improved healthcare access.

Financial risk protection reduces catastrophic health expenditure and supports long-term NCD management.

Emergency social assistance enhances compliance with public health measures during communicable disease outbreaks.

Inclusive and well-financed systems reduce health inequalities and strengthen health security.

Institutional capacity and sustainable financing are critical determinants of effectiveness.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the critical and multidimensional role of social protection systems in enhancing social wellbeing and strengthening health security in the management of communicable and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The results demonstrate that social protection is not merely a poverty alleviation tool but a foundational component of resilient health systems and equitable development. This discussion interprets these findings within broader theoretical, policy, and global health contexts, emphasizing the interconnectedness of social determinants, financial risk protection, and disease outcomes.

One of the most significant insights emerging from the results is the strong association between comprehensive social protection coverage and improved health outcomes. Countries with universal or expansive social protection frameworks consistently exhibited lower mortality rates, improved access to healthcare services, and reduced catastrophic health expenditures. This aligns with the social determinants of health framework, which posits that income stability, education, housing, and employment conditions significantly shape health trajectories. By stabilizing household income and ensuring access to essential services, social protection systems reduce exposure to risk factors and enable timely health-seeking behavior.

In the context of communicable diseases, the discussion underscores the importance of addressing structural vulnerabilities that facilitate disease transmission. Infectious diseases disproportionately affect populations experiencing poverty, overcrowding, food insecurity, and limited access to sanitation. Social protection programs such as conditional cash transfers, food assistance, and housing subsidies indirectly contribute

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to disease prevention by improving living standards. Furthermore, the provision of paid sick leave and unemployment benefits reduces the economic pressure to continue working while ill, thereby supporting compliance with public health measures. The COVID-19 pandemic provided a contemporary illustration of this dynamic: where income support was available, individuals were better able to adhere to lockdowns and quarantine protocols, limiting transmission rates.

The study also reveals that social protection systems enhance health system responsiveness during crises. Pre-existing administrative infrastructure for delivering cash transfers and social insurance enabled rapid scale-up of emergency support in several countries. This finding highlights the importance of institutional preparedness not only within health ministries but across social welfare systems. Health security, therefore, cannot be narrowly defined as epidemiological surveillance or medical capacity alone; it must encompass the broader social infrastructure that enables individuals to withstand shocks. The integration of social and health policies emerges as a critical factor in effective crisis response.

Regarding non-communicable diseases, the discussion points to the long-term and chronic nature of these conditions, which require sustained engagement with healthcare systems. NCDs impose continuous financial and psychosocial burdens on individuals and families. Without financial risk protection, medical costs associated with medication, diagnostics, and follow-up care can lead to impoverishment. The results demonstrate that health insurance schemes, disability benefits, and social pensions mitigate these risks by ensuring continuity of care and reducing financial stress. This supports risk protection theory, which emphasizes shielding households from catastrophic expenditures that undermine economic stability and social wellbeing.

Moreover, social protection contributes to the prevention of NCDs by addressing behavioral and environmental determinants. Income security influences dietary choices, housing quality, and access to recreational spaces, all of which affect risk factors such as obesity, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Employment protections and income stability also reduce chronic stress, which has been linked to adverse health outcomes. Thus, social protection functions as both a treatment facilitator and a preventive mechanism.

The reduction of health inequalities is another central theme emerging from the findings. Vulnerable populations—including women, children, older adults, persons with disabilities, and informal workers—benefit disproportionately from inclusive social protection systems. Health disparities often mirror socio-economic inequalities, and targeted interventions can narrow these gaps. For example, maternity benefits and childcare support enhance maternal and child health outcomes, while social pensions improve healthcare access among elderly populations who are at greater risk of NCDs. These findings reinforce the principle that equity-oriented policies are essential for achieving universal health coverage and sustainable development goals.

However, the discussion must also address the limitations and challenges identified in the results. Fiscal constraints remain a significant barrier, particularly in low-income countries with limited tax bases and competing development priorities. While the evidence suggests that social protection strengthens health security, sustaining

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comprehensive programs requires long-term political commitment and innovative financing strategies. International cooperation, progressive taxation, and efficient public expenditure management are essential components of sustainable expansion.

Administrative fragmentation and exclusion errors further limit the effectiveness of social protection systems. Informal workers, migrants, and marginalized communities are often left outside contributory insurance schemes, weakening the overall impact on health equity. Expanding coverage to these groups requires flexible program design, simplified registration processes, and inclusive legal frameworks. Digital technologies and integrated data systems may enhance targeting and reduce inefficiencies, but they must be implemented with safeguards to protect privacy and prevent discrimination.

Another important consideration is the complexity of establishing causality between social protection and health outcomes. Health indicators are influenced by multiple interacting variables, including economic growth, educational attainment, healthcare infrastructure, and cultural factors. While the study identifies strong correlations, isolating the independent effect of social protection requires careful interpretation. Nonetheless, the convergence of quantitative trends and qualitative evidence strengthens the argument that social protection plays a substantive role in promoting health security.

The discussion also highlights the need for policy coherence. Fragmented approaches that treat health and social welfare as separate domains may fail to capture synergies between sectors. Integrated strategies that align universal health coverage initiatives with income support, labor market protections, and poverty reduction programs yield more comprehensive outcomes. Such integration enhances efficiency, reduces duplication, and fosters coordinated responses to both chronic and acute health challenges.

From a global perspective, the findings contribute to ongoing debates about building resilient systems in an era of emerging health threats and demographic transitions. Climate change, urbanization, and aging populations are likely to intensify both communicable and non-communicable disease burdens. Social protection systems must adapt to these evolving risks by incorporating flexible and scalable mechanisms. Investments in human capital, digital infrastructure, and inclusive governance will be critical for sustaining progress.

In conclusion, the discussion affirms that social protection systems are indispensable pillars of social wellbeing and health security. They reduce vulnerability, mitigate financial risks, and enhance resilience against communicable and non-communicable diseases alike. While challenges related to financing, governance, and inclusivity persist, the evidence strongly supports expanding and integrating social protection within broader health and development strategies. Strengthening these systems is not solely a social policy imperative but a public health necessity. By recognizing the interdependence of social and health systems, policymakers can advance equitable and sustainable solutions that safeguard populations against present and future health threats.

Conclusion

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In conclusion, this study demonstrates that social protection systems are essential for promoting social wellbeing and strengthening health security in the management of communicable and non-communicable diseases. By providing financial risk protection, improving access to healthcare, and addressing the social determinants of health, these systems reduce vulnerability and health inequalities. They also enhance resilience during public health emergencies by supporting compliance with preventive measures and ensuring continuity of care. Although challenges such as fiscal constraints and coverage gaps remain, integrating inclusive and sustainable social protection policies with health strategies is crucial for achieving equitable health outcomes and long-term sustainable development.

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