

Old-Age, Survivors, Disability, and Health Insurance: Changes in the Beneficiary Population

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OVER THE YEARS there have been significant changes in the composition of the beneficiary rolls of old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance (OASDHI). Many of the changes since 1955 in the rolls of those receiving monthly cash benefits are the direct result of amendments to the Social Security Act, reflecting the evolution of social priorities in American life during these years:

—the disabled worker and his dependents had benefits provided through amendments in 1956, 1958, and 1960

—the proportion of women on the rolls was increased when the age at which they can become eligible for benefits was lowered in 1956

—men were permitted to get retirement benefits before age 65 through a 1961 provision

—following a 1965 change in the law, child beneficiaries, if they are attending school, may stay on the rolls until they reach age 22.

The nonwhite, because of their presence to a significant extent among some of the newly eligible groups, have been making up a relatively larger segment of the beneficiary population.

The main purpose of this article is to measure these changes since 1955 and to relate them to the Social Security Act in conjunction with demographic and economic factors.

During the forties the proportion of nonwhite beneficiaries increased from about 5 percent of the total to 6 percent. By 1955 the percentage who were nonwhite was 6.6, and by 1960 it had risen to 7.3. The increase to 9.9 percent by the end of 1967 showed an accelerated approach toward participation in relation to the number of nonwhite persons in the total population. During the entire period from 1940 to 1967 the relative number of the nonwhite in the population had risen only from 10 percent of the total to 11 percent.

Although, in the aggregate, nonwhite beneficiaries fall below the level that might be expected simply from their relative number in the

population, this situation is by no means true for individual types of beneficiaries. At the end of 1967, 19 percent of all children who were receiving benefits were nonwhite; the proportion nonwhite had been 13 percent at the end of 1955. Of all retired-worker beneficiaries, on the other hand, only 8 percent were nonwhite as 1967 ended, and only 6 percent had been nonwhite in the earlier year. There are, however, relatively more children among the nonwhite than among the entire population and relatively fewer persons aged 65 and over. These demographic factors, along with the program changes, help explain the relative increases in the number of nonwhite beneficiaries.

Trends in nonwhite participation may be followed by examining the data in the yearly table in the ANNUAL STATISTICAL SUPPLEMENT of the SOCIAL SECURITY BULLETIN entitled "Benefits awarded and in current-payment status for individuals: Number and average monthly amount, by type of beneficiary, color, age, and sex" (table 65 in the 1966 *Supplement*). Data for 1955 and 1960 and for 1967, the latest year for which the figures are available, are presented and summarized in this article; the years selected precede the effective date of significant amendments to the program.

Table 1 gives the basic information on the number of individuals, total and nonwhite, with benefits in current-payment status, as well as the average benefit amount at the end of the year, by type of beneficiary. Summary tables 2-6 focus the comparisons on particular groups—on men, women, and child beneficiaries; on those receiving benefits under the retirement, disability, or survivor parts of the program; and on those receiving reduced benefits. The comparisons are made in terms of ratios or percentages that demonstrate changing relationships among the groups of beneficiaries.

(Under 1966 legislation, first effective in October of that year, special monthly payments—now \$40, or \$60 for a couple—are made to certain

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TABLE 1.—Benefits in current-payment status and average monthly amount, by type of beneficiary and race, at end of 1955, 1960, and 1967

Type of beneficiary	1955				1960				1967			
	Total		Nonwhite		Total		Nonwhite		Total		Nonwhite	
	Number	Average monthly amount	Number	Average monthly amount	Number	Average monthly amount	Number	Average monthly amount	Number	Average monthly amount	Number	Average monthly amount
All beneficiaries.....	7,960,616		526,087		14,844,589		1,088,863		22,976,410		2,281,115	
Retired workers.....	4,473,971	\$61.90	251,268	\$50.46	8,061,469	\$74.04	516,633	\$58.91	12,019,175	\$85.37	967,913	\$68.48
Men.....	3,251,670	66.40	194,873	53.31	5,216,668	81.87	337,420	65.42	7,160,469	94.49	581,447	76.16
Women.....	1,222,301	49.93	56,390	40.60	2,844,801	59.67	179,213	46.65	4,858,706	71.92	386,466	56.91
Disabled workers.....					455,371	89.31	57,215	79.00	1,193,120	98.43	182,591	85.97
Men.....					356,277	92.72	47,099	82.38	871,864	103.14	135,395	91.45
Women.....					99,094	77.03	10,116	63.22	321,256	85.64	47,196	70.26
Wives of retired workers.....	1,181,900	33.12	41,137	24.70	2,254,858	38.74	95,046	28.07	2,635,165	44.25	154,259	32.30
Wives of disabled workers.....					76,388	34.41	7,958	26.47	234,014	34.29	35,872	25.83
Husbands of retired workers.....	10,063	27.27	406	23.05	14,526	34.72	846	28.50	9,772	42.79	788	33.31
Husbands of disabled workers.....					211	34.67	10	20.13	536	30.70	32	24.23
Widows.....	700,294	48.70	24,189	39.79	1,541,790	57.69	65,142	46.77	2,766,736	74.99	159,910	61.12
Widows.....	1,066	46.51	55	38.94	53.81	131	42.31	2,882	71.22	35,872	59.78	
Parents.....	25,166	49.93	2,281	44.08	36,114	60.31	3,337	53.09	33,494	77.23	3,745	67.48
Widowed mothers.....	291,916	45.91	35,486	34.95	401,358	59.29	54,801	44.49	496,307	65.86	92,556	48.86
Children ¹	1,276,240		171,265		2,000,451		287,744		3,585,209		683,196	
Children of retired workers.....	122,042	20.01	18,047	13.77	268,168	28.25	40,090	18.05	510,225	33.10	109,263	23.08
Children of deceased workers.....	1,154,198	38.12	153,218	27.29	1,576,802	51.27	225,165	35.17	2,362,440	62.57	432,125	43.50
Children of disabled workers.....					155,481	30.21	22,489	21.14	712,544	31.38	141,808	22.41
Men.....	3,266,362		195,674		5,593,112		385,817		8,047,552		718,191	
Women.....	3,418,014		159,148		7,251,026		415,302		11,343,649		879,728	

¹ Includes persons aged 18 and over with childhood disability, 1960 and 1967. Source: *Annual Statistical Supplement to the Social Security Bulletin*; 1955,

table 33; 1960, table 50; and similar table in 1967 (in preparation).

persons aged 72 or over not insured under the regular or transitional provisions of the Social Security Act; for those who reach age 72 in 1968 or after, a gradually increasing amount of covered work will be required until it reaches that needed for regular retirement benefits. Data for these special payments are not included in the figures discussed here.)

In 1955, before disability benefits were payable, 73 percent of all beneficiaries were retired workers and their dependents, and 27 percent were survivors of deceased workers (table 2). More than half (59 percent) of the nonwhite beneficiaries were retired workers or their family members, but the survivor protection of the program was relatively more important for this group than for the white beneficiary group.¹ Of the 41 percent of all nonwhite survivor beneficiaries, most were children and their widowed mothers. Despite the relatively high frequency of widowed

mothers among the nonwhite, the proportion of all beneficiaries who were women was much lower for nonwhite beneficiaries than for white beneficiaries. Relatively fewer nonwhite wives and aged widows and retired women workers were receiving benefits.² Most striking, however, was the difference in the relative importance of children who were receiving benefits: 33 percent of nonwhite beneficiaries and 16 percent of all beneficiaries.

DISABILITY INSURANCE BENEFITS ADDED

By 1960 some 687,000 disabled workers and their dependents—nearly 88,000 of them non-

¹ Data for the white beneficiaries have not been computed, but the percentages would not differ greatly from those shown for all beneficiaries. Comparisons of percentages for the nonwhite and for all beneficiaries understate somewhat the differences that would result from direct comparisons with white beneficiaries.

² Data for parent beneficiaries have not been shown by sex in table 1, but such data are available in the *Annual Statistical Supplements of the Bulletin*, and the appropriate distribution has been made here in the summaries for men and women. Only 10 percent or fewer of the parent beneficiaries are men; they therefore form a very small proportion of the total. The categories of widows and of the husbands of retired workers and disabled women are also very small, and together with male parents comprise less than one-tenth of 1 percent of both white and nonwhite beneficiaries.

TABLE 2.—Percentage distribution of benefits in current-payment status by type of beneficiary, by race, at end of 1955, 1960, and 1967

Type of beneficiary	Total			Nonwhite		
	1955	1960	1967	1955	1960	1967
Total number.....	7,960,616	14,844,589	22,976,410	526,087	1,088,863	2,281,115
Total percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Retired workers and dependents.....	72.7	71.4	66.0	59.0	60.0	54.0
Men.....	40.8	35.1	31.2	37.0	31.0	25.5
Women.....	15.4	19.2	21.1	10.7	16.5	16.9
Wives.....	14.8	15.2	11.5	7.8	8.7	6.8
Husbands.....	.2	.1	(¹)	.1	.1	(¹)
Children.....	1.5	1.8	2.2	3.4	3.7	4.8
Disabled workers and dependents.....		4.6	9.3		8.0	15.8
Men.....		2.4	3.8		4.3	5.9
Women.....		.7	1.4		.9	2.1
Wives.....		.5	1.0		.7	1.6
Husbands.....		(¹)	(¹)		(¹)	(¹)
Children.....		1.0	3.1		2.1	6.2
Survivors of deceased workers.....	27.3	23.9	24.6	40.8	32.0	30.3
Widows.....	8.8	10.4	12.0	4.6	6.0	7.0
Widowers.....	(¹)					
Parents.....	.3	.2	.1	.4	.3	.2
Widowed mothers.....	3.7	2.7	2.2	6.7	5.0	4.1
Children.....	14.5	10.6	10.3	29.1	20.7	18.9
Men.....	41.0	37.7	35.0	37.2	35.4	31.5
Women.....	43.0	48.8	49.4	30.2	38.2	38.6
Children.....	16.0	13.5	15.6	32.6	26.4	30.0

¹ Less than 0.05 percent.

Source: See table 1.

white—were receiving benefits authorized for workers aged 50–64 under the 1956 amendments (extended in 1958 to their dependents). They accounted for 5 percent of all the beneficiaries in 1960 and 8 percent of the nonwhite beneficiaries. By 1967 the disability program (by then without an age limitation) had grown to the extent that 9 percent of all beneficiaries and 16 percent of those nonwhite were disabled workers and their dependents. It is clear that the disability provisions of the program have been of special importance to the nonwhite, who are more likely to be in hazardous occupations and to have a higher morbidity rate than white workers.

The total number of beneficiaries had nearly doubled between 1955 and 1960 and increased an additional 50 percent between 1960 and 1967. The relative importance of the retired and survivor groups declined, however, when the disabled were added to the program (table 2). By 1967, 66 percent of all beneficiaries were retired workers and their dependents and 25 percent were survivors; for the nonwhite, the corresponding proportions were 54 percent and 30 percent.

Among the nonwhite the relative importance of children of deceased workers and their widowed mothers had shifted from 36 percent in 1955 to 26 percent in 1960 and to 23 percent in 1967. The proportion of retired men also declined

both among all beneficiaries and among the nonwhite. The number of women beneficiaries, on the other hand, continued to increase, both relatively and absolutely, during this period, especially between 1955 and 1960. There were 2.1 times as many women beneficiaries in 1960 as in 1955, and 2.6 times as many nonwhite women; the corresponding 1960 figures for men and for children were less than twice the numbers in the earlier year. The proportion of those receiving benefits who were women rose from 43 percent in 1955 to 49 percent in 1960; for the nonwhite it rose from 30 percent to 38 percent. The proportion who were women also increased between 1960 and 1967, though the rise was less than 1 percentage point.

Lowered Retirement Age

The major program changes that help explain the rising number of women beneficiaries were the amendments of 1956 and 1958 that permitted retired women workers or wives of retired or disabled workers to receive actuarially reduced benefits at ages 62–64. The 1956 provision lowered to 62 the minimum age for widows without an eligible child present and for a dependent female parent. In 1965 the retirement age for a widow

TABLE 3.—Nonwhite beneficiaries with benefits in current-payment status and average monthly benefit as percent of total, by type of beneficiary, at end of 1955, 1960, and 1967

Type of beneficiary	Nonwhite beneficiaries as percent of total			Nonwhite average monthly benefit as percent of total		
	1955	1960	1967	1955	1960	1967
Total.....	6.6	7.3	9.9	-----	-----	-----
Retired workers and dependents.....	5.6	6.4	8.1	-----	-----	-----
Men.....	6.0	6.5	8.1	80.3	79.9	80.6
Women.....	4.6	6.3	8.0	81.3	78.2	79.1
Wives.....	3.5	4.2	5.9	74.6	78.5	78.0
Husbands.....	4.0	5.8	8.1	84.5	82.1	77.8
Children.....	14.8	14.9	21.4	68.8	63.9	69.7
Disabled workers and dependents.....	-----	12.8	15.3	-----	-----	-----
Men.....	-----	13.2	15.5	-----	88.8	88.7
Women.....	-----	10.2	14.7	-----	82.1	82.0
Wives.....	-----	10.4	15.3	-----	76.9	75.3
Husbands.....	-----	4.7	6.0	-----	58.1	78.9
Children.....	-----	14.5	19.9	-----	70.0	71.4
Survivors of deceased workers.....	9.9	9.8	12.2	81.7	-----	81.5
Widows.....	3.5	4.2	5.8	83.7	81.1	83.9
Widowers.....	5.2	6.4	8.8	88.3	78.6	87.4
Parents.....	9.1	9.2	11.2	76.1	88.0	74.2
Parental mothers.....	12.2	13.7	18.6	71.6	75.0	69.5
Children.....	13.3	14.3	18.3	-----	68.6	-----
Men.....	6.0	6.9	8.9	-----	-----	-----
Women.....	4.7	5.7	7.8	-----	-----	-----
Children.....	13.4	14.4	19.1	-----	-----	-----

Source: See table 1.

without an eligible child was lowered to 60 but with the benefits actuarially reduced. Provisions for early retirement of men were not enacted until 1961; the analysis of the data for men with and without reduced benefits therefore relate to those for 1967.³

In 1960, some 902,000 women who otherwise would not have been eligible were receiving benefits under these provisions. Most of them (686,000) were retired workers or the wives of retired or disabled workers who chose to take reduced benefits; the rest were widows or parents aged 62-64 who became eligible because of the lower age requirements (table 4). The 902,000 women represented 6.1 percent of all beneficiaries—nearly one-fourth of all women receiving benefits in 1960—and they also account for almost one-fourth of the increase in the total number of women on the rolls between 1955 and 1960.

In 1967, almost the same percentages of all beneficiaries were women receiving benefits under these provisions: 6.0 percent receiving benefits

³ A further provision for reduced benefits, enacted in 1967, applies to disabled widows (or dependent widowers) aged 50 or over. These new groups with reduced benefits will not appear in the statistics until 1968. This change will probably tend to lift the proportion of the nonwhite on the beneficiary rolls.

because of lower age requirements and 4.6 percent receiving reduced benefits (table 4). The total number with reduced benefits, including those who reached age 65 after choosing early retirement, continued to increase throughout the period, however. In 1960, women receiving reduced benefits comprised 12 percent of all beneficiaries; in 1967 they were 19 percent of the total.

Nonwhite women shared in the gains in number through these provisions, particularly retired workers and aged widows and parents. However, the nonwhite wives of retired and disabled workers who chose reduced benefits formed a smaller proportion of all such beneficiaries than did those without reductions. Thus in 1967, among those without reduced benefits, 7 percent

CHART 1.—Percentage distribution of beneficiaries with benefits in current-payment status, by race and type of benefit, end of 1955, 1960, and 1967

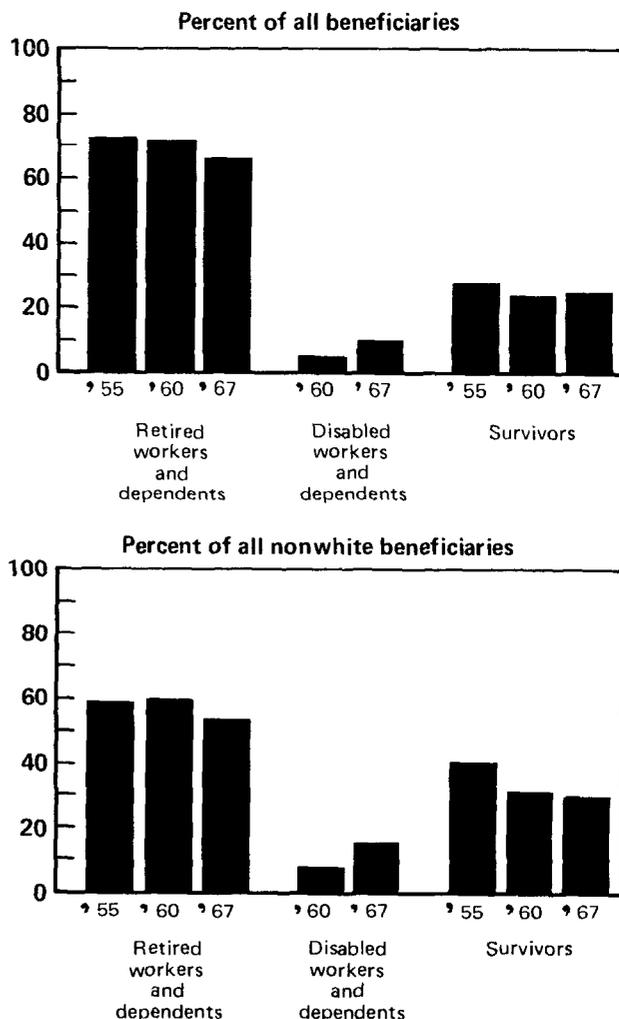


TABLE 4.—Women beneficiaries with and without reduction in benefits for early retirement and those under age 65 with benefits in current-payment status, by selected type of beneficiary and race, at end of 1960 and 1967

Type of beneficiary	Total		Nonwhite		Nonwhite as percent of total
	Number	Percent of all beneficiaries	Number	Percent of all beneficiaries	
1960					
All beneficiaries.....	14,844,589	100.0	1,088,863	100.0	7.3
Retired female workers.....	2,844,801	19.2	179,213	16.5	6.3
Without reduction.....	1,895,597	12.8	109,621	10.1	5.8
With reduction.....	949,204	6.4	69,592	6.4	7.3
Under age 65.....	357,255	2.4	24,946	2.3	7.0
Wives of retired workers.....	2,254,858	15.2	95,046	8.7	4.2
Without reduction.....	1,483,878	10.0	63,296	5.8	4.3
With reduction.....	770,980	5.2	31,750	2.9	4.1
Under age 65.....	317,128	2.1	12,706	1.2	4.0
Wives of disabled workers.....	76,388	.5	7,958	.7	10.4
Without reduction.....	60,999	.4	7,055	.6	11.6
With reduction.....	15,389	.1	903	.1	5.9
Under age 65.....	11,806	.1	616	.1	5.2
Widows.....	1,541,790	10.4	65,142	6.0	4.2
Under age 65.....	214,384	1.4	11,267	1.0	5.3
Parents.....	32,737	.2	3,026	.3	9.2
Under age 65.....	1,656	(1)	219	(1)	13.2
Total with reduction.....	1,735,573	11.7	102,245	9.4	5.9
Under age 65.....	686,189	4.6	38,268	3.5	5.6
1967					
All beneficiaries.....	22,976,410	100.0	2,281,115	100.0	9.9
Retired female workers.....	4,858,706	21.1	386,466	16.9	8.0
Without reduction.....	2,338,085	10.2	166,438	7.3	7.1
With reduction.....	2,520,621	11.0	220,028	9.6	8.7
Under age 65.....	553,798	2.4	46,718	2.0	8.4
Disabled female workers.....	321,256	1.4	47,196	2.1	14.7
Without reduction.....	314,171	1.4	46,217	2.0	14.7
With reduction under age 65 ²	7,085	(1)	979	.1	13.8
Wives of retired workers.....	2,635,165	11.5	154,259	6.8	5.9
Without reduction.....	1,179,395	5.1	80,659	3.5	6.8
With reduction.....	1,455,770	6.3	73,600	3.2	5.1
Under age 65.....	349,629	1.5	18,181	.8	5.2
Wives of disabled workers.....	234,014	1.0	35,872	1.6	15.3
Without reduction.....	204,735	.9	33,514	1.5	16.4
With reduction.....	29,279	.1	2,358	.1	8.1
Under age 65.....	19,293	.1	1,221	.1	6.3
Widows.....	2,766,736	12.0	159,910	7.0	5.8
Without reduction.....	2,457,880	10.7	134,014	5.9	5.5
Aged 62-64.....	328,525	1.4	27,129	1.2	8.3
With reduction.....	308,856	1.3	25,896	1.1	8.4
Under age 62.....	122,743	.5	9,719	.4	7.9
Parents.....	31,465	.1	3,469	.2	11.0
Under age 65.....	969	(1)	189	(1)	19.5
Total with reduction.....	4,321,611	18.8	322,861	14.2	7.5
Under age 65 ³	1,052,548	4.6	76,818	3.4	7.3

¹ Less than 0.05 percent.

² Benefits actuarially reduced since they were payable to a disabled worker already entitled to a reduced retired-worker or widow's benefit.

³ Includes widows under age 62.

Source: See table 1.

of both retired-worker beneficiaries and the wives of retired workers were nonwhite; among those with reduced benefits, 9 percent of the retired-worker beneficiaries but only 5 percent of the wives of retired workers were nonwhite. In total, 4.6 percent of all nonwhite beneficiaries in both 1960 and 1967 were women who had become eligible through these provisions. By 1967, 14 percent of all nonwhite beneficiaries were women receiving

reduced benefits, compared with 19 percent for the total.

The fivefold increase in the number of nonwhite women beneficiaries between 1955 and 1967 (sevenfold for nonwhite retired women workers) may be accounted for in part, but only in small part, by the lowering of the age for eligibility for benefits. The major factors were undoubtedly the increasing employment of women and the inclu-

TABLE 5.—Men beneficiaries with and without reduction in benefits for early retirement and those under age 65 with benefits in current-payment status, by selected type of beneficiary and race, at end of 1967

Type of beneficiary	Total		Nonwhite		Nonwhite as percent of total
	Number	Percent of all beneficiaries	Number	Percent of all beneficiaries	
All beneficiaries.....	22,976,410	100.0	2,281,115	100.0	9.9
Retired male workers.....	7,160,469	31.2	581,447	25.5	8.1
Without reduction.....	5,214,676	22.7	376,666	16.5	7.2
With reduction.....	1,945,793	8.5	204,781	9.0	10.5
Under age 65.....	486,286	2.1	50,196	2.2	10.3
Disabled male workers.....	871,864	3.8	135,395	5.9	15.5
Without reduction.....	846,292	3.7	133,001	5.8	15.7
With reduction (under age 65) ¹	25,572	.1	2,392	.1	9.4
Husbands of retired workers.....	9,772	(?)	788	(?)	8.1
Without reduction.....	8,263	(?)	627	(?)	7.6
With reduction.....	1,509	(?)	161	(?)	10.7
Husbands of disabled workers.....	536	(?)	32	(?)	6.0
Without reduction.....	270	(?)	16	(?)	5.9
With reduction.....	266	(?)	16	(?)	6.0
Parents.....	2,029	(?)	276	(?)	13.6
Under age 65.....	64	(?)	12	(?)	18.0
Total with reduction.....	1,973,140	8.6	207,352	9.1	10.5
Under age 65.....	513,633	2.2	52,767	2.3	10.3

¹ Benefits actuarially reduced since they were payable to a disabled worker already entitled to a reduced retired-worker benefit.

² Less than 0.05 percent.
Source: See table 1.

sion of domestic workers by 1950 and 1954 amendments.

The 1961 provisions permitting early retirement of men with a reduction in benefits have clearly been utilized to a greater extent, proportionately, by the nonwhite. By 1967, 9.1 percent of all nonwhite beneficiaries were men with reduced benefits, though men with such reduced benefits represented 8.6 percent of all beneficiaries (table 5). The proportion of all men retired workers with reduced benefits who were nonwhite was 10.5 percent, compared with 7.2 percent among the retired workers whose benefits were not reduced.

Effect of Changes on Child Beneficiaries

Children under age 18, as dependents of deceased and retired workers, have formed an important segment of the nonwhite beneficiary group throughout the period. In 1955, nearly a third of all nonwhite beneficiaries were children under age 18, most of them children of deceased workers. Among all beneficiaries, children were only half as important a group (16 percent). Major reasons for the notably large proportion of all children receiving benefits who are nonwhite are demographic—the higher morbidity rate among nonwhite male workers, as well as their larger families. In recent years, 13–14 per-

cent of all children in the population under age 18 are nonwhite.

With the additions to the beneficiary population arising from the disability and early-retirement provisions, the relative numbers of child beneficiaries were somewhat less in 1960 and 1967 than in 1955, but on the whole the proportions have been quite stable at about 15 percent for the total and 30 percent for the nonwhite.

The provisions for benefits to the disabled and their dependents did of course add to the number of child beneficiaries. In 1960, children of the disabled were only 1 percent of all beneficiaries and 2 percent of nonwhite beneficiaries, but by 1967 these proportions had increased to 3 percent and 6 percent (tables 2 and 6).

In 1956, provision was made for payment of benefits to a disabled child after age 18 if his disability began before that age. The group receiving benefits under this program is small in number—less than 1 percent of all beneficiaries. Since most of this type of beneficiary are adults (about four-fifths of them over age 24), they are children only in the sense of dependency on a retired, deceased, or disabled parent. Nonwhite beneficiaries made up only 5 percent of this small group in 1960 and 8 percent in 1967.

The 1965 amendment providing benefits for children aged 18–21 if they attend school added a group that comprised 1.8 percent of all beneficiaries in 1967 and 2.3 percent of all nonwhite beneficiaries (table 6).

TABLE 6.—Child beneficiaries with benefits in current-payment status, by type of child beneficiary, age, and race, at end of 1955, 1960, and 1967

Type of beneficiary	Total		Nonwhite		Percentage distribution by type		Nonwhite as percent of total
	Number	Percent of all beneficiaries	Number	Percent of all beneficiaries	Total	Nonwhite	
1955							
All beneficiaries.....	7,960,616	100.0	526,087	100.0			6.6
Children under age 18.....	1,276,240	16.0	171,265	32.6	100.0	100.0	13.4
Children of retired workers.....	122,042	1.5	18,047	3.4	9.6	10.5	14.8
Children of deceased workers.....	1,154,198	14.5	153,218	29.1	90.4	89.5	13.3
1960							
All beneficiaries.....	14,844,589	100.0	1,088,863	100.0			7.3
All children.....	2,000,451	13.5	287,744	26.4	100.0	100.0	14.4
Children of retired workers.....	268,168	1.8	40,090	3.7	13.4	13.9	14.9
Under age 18.....	214,343	1.4	37,459	3.4	10.7	13.0	17.5
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	53,825	.4	2,631	.2	2.7	.9	4.9
Children of deceased workers.....	1,576,802	10.6	225,165	20.7	78.8	78.3	14.3
Under age 18.....	1,529,535	10.3	222,436	20.4	76.5	77.3	14.5
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	47,267	.3	2,729	.3	2.4	.9	5.8
Children of disabled workers.....	155,481	1.0	22,489	2.1	7.8	7.8	14.5
Under age 18.....	152,519	1.0	22,271	2.0	7.6	7.7	14.6
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	2,962	(1)	218	(1)	.1	.1	7.4
Under age 18.....	1,896,397	12.7	282,166	25.8	94.8	98.1	14.9
Children of retired workers.....	214,343	1.4	37,459	3.4	10.7	13.0	17.5
Children of deceased workers.....	1,529,535	10.3	222,436	20.4	76.4	77.3	14.5
Children of disabled workers.....	152,519	1.0	22,271	2.0	7.6	7.7	14.6
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	104,054	.7	5,578	.5	5.2	1.9	5.4
Children of retired workers.....	53,825	.4	2,631	.2	2.7	.9	4.9
Children of deceased workers.....	47,267	.3	2,729	.3	2.4	.9	5.8
Children of disabled workers.....	2,962	(1)	218	(1)	.1	.1	7.4
1967							
All beneficiaries.....	22,976,410	100.0	2,281,115	100.0	100.0		9.9
All children.....	3,585,209	15.6	683,196	30.0	14.2	100.0	19.1
Children of retired workers.....	510,225	2.2	109,263	4.8	9.6	16.0	21.4
Under age 18.....	345,272	1.5	91,477	4.0	2.6	13.4	26.5
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	92,866	.4	7,423	.3	2.0	1.1	8.0
Students aged 18-21.....	72,037	.3	10,363	.5	65.9	1.5	14.4
Children of deceased workers.....	2,362,440	10.3	432,125	18.9	53.9	63.3	15.3
Under age 18.....	1,933,850	8.4	387,193	17.0	3.5	56.7	20.0
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	125,252	.5	10,813	.5	8.5	1.6	8.6
Students aged 18-21.....	303,338	1.3	34,119	1.5	19.9	5.0	11.2
Children of disabled workers.....	712,544	3.1	141,808	6.2	18.1	20.7	19.9
Under age 18.....	649,162	2.8	133,295	5.8	.3	19.5	20.5
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	11,540	(1)	1,346	.1	1.4	.2	11.7
Students aged 18-21.....	51,842	.2	7,167	.3		1.0	13.8
Under age 18.....	2,928,284	12.7	611,965	26.8	81.7	89.6	20.9
Children of retired workers.....	345,272	1.5	91,477	4.0	9.6	13.4	26.5
Children of deceased workers.....	1,933,850	8.4	387,193	17.0	53.9	56.7	20.0
Children of disabled workers.....	649,162	2.8	133,295	5.8	18.1	19.5	20.5
Disabled, aged 18 and over.....	229,658	1.0	19,582	.9	6.4	2.9	8.5
Children of retired workers.....	92,866	.4	7,423	.3	2.6	1.1	8.0
Children of deceased workers.....	125,252	.5	10,813	.5	3.5	1.6	8.6
Children of disabled workers.....	11,540	(1)	1,346	.1	.3	.2	11.7
Students aged 18-21.....	427,267	1.8	51,649	2.3	11.9	7.6	12.1
Children of retired workers.....	72,037	.3	10,363	.5	2.0	1.5	14.4
Children of deceased workers.....	303,338	1.3	34,119	1.5	8.5	5.0	11.2
Children of disabled workers.....	51,842	.2	7,167	.3	1.4	1.0	13.8

¹ Less than 0.05 percent.

Source: See table 1.

DIFFERENCES IN AVERAGE MONTHLY BENEFITS

Almost as striking as the increasing proportion of the nonwhite among the beneficiary categories is the lack of any discernible trends in the relationship of the average monthly benefits paid to the nonwhite in each class and the average amounts paid to all beneficiaries in the class. There are differences among the classes but no

consistent change in the relative levels of payments over the period considered (table 3).⁴

⁴ The percentages shown in table 3 would be somewhat less if the average monthly benefits of white beneficiaries had been compared with those going to nonwhite beneficiaries. In 1967, for example, the average benefit amount for nonwhite retired men beneficiaries was 79.2 percent of the average for white beneficiaries and 80.6 percent of the average for all retired men beneficiaries; for women retirees, the difference was less than 0.05 percent.

The average benefit going to nonwhite children has been about 70 percent of the average level for all children, for retired nonwhite workers the average has been around 80 percent of the level for all retired workers, and disabled nonwhite men receive slightly less than 90 percent of the average for all disabled men. The relatively low benefits of nonwhite children result from the application of the family maximum on benefits: nonwhite families are larger than white families and are therefore affected by the maximum to a greater extent.

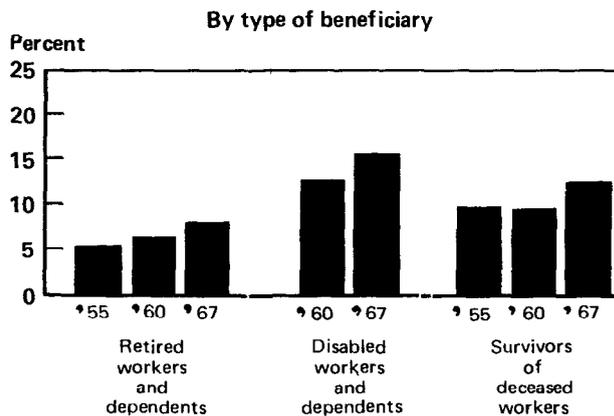
The amount of the benefit is, of course, geared to average earnings, and the average earnings of the nonwhite are notably below those of white workers. The benefits of the nonwhite, however, are larger in relation to their earnings than are those of the white beneficiaries because the benefit formula is weighted in favor of the low-income group. The median incomes of nonwhite males aged 14 and over have been about 50-60 percent of the median for white males.⁵ Median income of nonwhite females aged 14 and over have been increasing in relation to those of white females since 1948 from about 50 percent to 75 percent, as a result of shifts in the North and the West to higher-paid occupations and to more fulltime work. If this trend is maintained, the average monthly benefits of nonwhite women workers should also increase in relation to the level for all women retirees.

SUMMARY

One-fifth of the 23 million persons on the benefit rolls at the end of 1967 would not have been there had it not been for amendments to the Social Security Act enacted in the past dozen years. Nearly half these beneficiaries were dis-

⁵ These data have been computed from Mary F. Henson, *Trends in the Income of Families and Persons in the United States, 1947-1964* (Bureau of the Census Technical Paper No. 17), 1967.

CHART 2.—Nonwhite beneficiaries with benefits in current-payment status as a percent of all beneficiaries, by type of benefit, end of 1955, 1960, and 1967



abled workers and their dependents. For the nonwhite, a larger proportion—more than one-fourth of the 2.3 million nonwhite beneficiaries—are on the rolls because of the provisions outlined above, and three-fifths of them were disabled workers and their dependents.

The persistent increase in the proportion of the nonwhite in every beneficiary category is clearly evident (chart 2). The nonwhite form a particularly large proportion of certain types of beneficiaries—children, the disabled, widowed mothers—and a particularly small proportion of wives of retired workers and aged widows.

Explanations of these differences and of the trends have been offered in terms of demographic factors (the large families among nonwhites, the greater morbidity rates, the fewer elderly in the total population), economic factors (the increasing employment of women, for example), and program changes (expansion of coverage, the addition of the disabled to the program, the changing age requirements).

It is also probable, though it cannot be demonstrated, that less tangible factors have been affecting the relative numbers of nonwhite beneficiaries: an increasing understanding and awareness that account for their greater participation in the social security program currently than in earlier years.