

## Editor's introduction

This issue of *Canadian Studies in Population* features three articles and a research note based on social demographic concerns in the context of selected developing countries. In the first article Castro, Fajnzylber, and Fortunato compare socioeconomic inequalities in mortality by age in Brazil, El Salvador, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zambia. Intuitively, socioeconomic mortality ratios would be expected to increase with age because of the widely accepted idea of a cumulative economic advantage across the life cycle translating into a cumulative advantage in health and longevity for persons of upper socio-economic status relative to those of lower status. The empirical findings of Castro and colleagues are generally consistent with this proposition. They propose a number of ideas for further investigation on this topic.

The research of Onadja, Bignami, and Zunzunegui, concerning socio-economic variations in disability by age among adults across eighteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa, is presented in the second article. Across the countries, low education is correlated with poor functional health, and the gap in functional health between high and low education groups is shown to widen with age. These comparisons suggest that those with low levels of schooling are less successful in postponing disability to later ages. Differential income by education may explain a large part the differences in disability. Other causes likely involve psychosocial and behavioural factors.

In the third article, Nwogu and Okoro apply mathematical methods to adjust the reported population of Nigeria in the 1963, 1991, and 2006 censuses. Based on their extensive evaluation, it is recommended that the adjusted data should be used for estimating demographic parameters and population projections for Nigeria.

The research note by Sulaiman Bah reviews the literature on published life expectancies at birth for Saudi Arabia in the 2010s. The plausibility of the figures is discussed and recommendations are then made on possible options for improvement. It is noted that convincing evidence is lacking about the true level of life expectancy at birth for Saudi Arabia in the 2010s. What can be tentatively concluded is that expectation of life at birth is in the 70s, which is demographically plausible, given the large declines in infant and child mortality over recent decades and the country's epidemiological transition toward a prominence of chronic diseases. For the future, it is recommended that registered deaths be published in a timely manner, to allow for proper estimation of the completeness of death registration and thereby ensure the construction of accurate life tables for Saudi Arabia.

This issue of *Canadian Studies in Population* also features a Forum section centred on an erudite essay by Anatole Romaniuk on the desirability of a stationary population for Canada. Stationary population is addressed as a policy option from the point of view of national identity and social cohesion. In this context, incursions are made into the ideological dimensions of multiculturalism and the future of Canada as a cosmopolitan state. These and other aspects of the essay should be of central concern to population researchers; therefore it was felt appropriate to invite two prominent Canadian scholars, Professors Rod Beaujot and Gilles Paquet, to comment on the ideas expressed by Dr. Romaniuk. Readers will find the insights of these writers highly informative and thought-provoking. The "Perspectives on Canadian Population" forum concludes with Romaniuk's response to the commentaries. It is hoped that this special feature of *Studies* will serve to stimulate among readers further thought and debate on critical issues facing Canada's population as we approach the first quarter of this century. Other special features of this nature are also being planned.

Finally, the book review section begins with an excellent review essay by Anthony Masi, offering a scholarly and balanced overview of four recently published works that cover topics of interest to researchers, teachers, and students of international migration.

I take this opportunity to thank the readers of *Canadian Studies in Population* for their continued interest and support, wishing everyone the very best of the Holiday Season and a prosperous 2018.

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