

# Mih512-demography and health (module 3- slp)



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The first census of Canada occurred in 1861. At that time there were 3, 689, 000 people in Canada. Currently there are 32, 248, 600 according to the 2006 census. Brazil's first census was in 1871. This census found that about 10, 000, 000 people were living in Brazil at that time. The current population of Brazil is about 190, 000, 000 people. One fact about both of these countries is that much of their early and rapid population growth came not from native population births or from a drop in mortality, but from immigration from Europe, Africa and Asia (Kohli, 2007) (Seyferth, 2009). This population increase led to the societal changes proposed by Durkheim, namely that an increase in population would lead to a more dense society with more specialization. This in turn would then influence future patterns of population growth or decrease.

The growth in both countries is very similar. Rapid population growth in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was caused by an influx of emigrants. Neither one of these nations has experienced any significant amount of out-migration. Traditionally they have been the destination for immigrants. Both countries also show aspects of the Theory of Demographic Transition. The projected population shows a leveling of growth over the next few decades. This growth is then shown to decrease indefinitely for some time afterwards. The burning question is can these countries sustain continued growth for the next few decades before an overall decline is realized, or are we already at the threshold of the carrying capacity of our ecosystem. Some neo-Malthusians would argue that the greatest hope for humanity is an increase in the death rate, thus slowing the growth of the population. Canada and Brazil are both countries with vast natural resources and lots of open space. The advanced economy of Canada and the growing economy of Brazil seem

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to indicate that they will be able to provide growth and a high standard of living for much of their population into the near future. But as Eberstadt points out in his article, population growth or decline is largely determined by culture, so projections of growth or decline are tricky to make (Eberstadt, 2003).

According to the Rule of 69, Canada's population is expected to double in about 68 years. This is calculated based on the current change in population change from 2007-2008 of 1.01%. Brazil is expected to double its population in about 73 years based on an annual growth of .96%. It does not seem likely that this doubling will happen based on current trends, because most projections show both countries entering a period of population decline within the next four decades. If this holds true, Brazil will never double from its current population of 190,000,000 and Canada will never double their 32,248,800. Most would agree that for human health, this is very good news indeed. The quality of life in these countries is high for many people, but common sense shows that dividing finite resources among an ever-increasing population will result in more and more people enjoying fewer and fewer of the goods and services we now enjoy.

#### Works Cited

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