DETERMINANTS OF LIFE EXPECTANCY AMONG THE INDIAN MINORITY GROUP IN MALAYSIA: A STUDY

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Résumé / Abstract
The life expectancy among three major ethnic groups in Malaysia, namely, the Bumiputera, Chinese and Indian varies. The Indian male minority ethnic group, more specifically shows a lower life expectancy compared to that of the Bumiputera, Chinese and the national average. This study therefore compares the determinants of life expectancy between the Indian male and female gender. The key findings of the study are: First, access to healthcare and literacy are important determinants of life expectancy for both Indian males and females. Second, income displays a significant negative relationship with life expectancy for Indian males. Third, the speed of adjustment to equilibrium for life expectancy of the Indians is somewhat sluggish and is marginally lower for the male vis-à-vis the female gender. Future research should focus on the reasons for the lower life expectancy of the Indian males more specifically by identifying the possible influences of lower income opportunities (beyond a postulated threshold income level) for this minority group vis-à-vis the other ethnic groups.