

May 23, 2018

Prof Alfredo Morabia
Editor-in-Chief,
American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)

Dear Editor,

We are pleased to submit our paper entitled “**Homicides in Mexico increased inequality of lifespans and slowed down life expectancy gains in 2005-2015**” for consideration as a research article in the *American Journal of Public Health*

(1) A description of what the paper adds to current knowledge, in particular with respect to material previously published in AJPH, and if systematic reviews exist on the topic.

There is extensive literature in AJPH on the public health impacts of homicides and violent deaths in the US; however, little is known of the public health significance of raising homicides in other countries such as Mexico. In this paper we focus on Mexico and quantify the impact of homicides and medically amenable conditions on life expectancy and on lifespan inequality—a marker of heterogeneity in ages at death at the population level and uncertainty in the timing of death at the individual level— since 2005.

(2) The public health importance of the paper.

Our analyses revealed that after 2005, life expectancy remains stagnant and it has been accompanied by an increasing inequality in lifespans among young Mexicans, particularly males. Put simply, Mexican males are not only living shorter lives, on average, but are also facing more uncertainty in their age at death due to the increase in homicidal violence.

(3) One sentence summarizing the main message(s) of the paper, which may be used to disseminate the paper on social media.

There is an urgent need for comprehensive strategies to mitigate the impact of homicides on Mexicans’ population health; new policies cannot continue to be dismissive of the extensive evidence documenting negative health impacts of the war on drugs on the population.

We hope you will find our paper of interest *AJPH*’s readers and we hope you see our paper as fitting in *AJPH*’s rich history of publishing serious explorations of epidemiological surveillance, health inequalities, consequences of violence, and public health policy. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

José Manuel Aburto
Hiram Beltrán-Sánchez