

Editorial

This is the last IAOS Statistical Journal issue of calendar 2014. And, as a way of summing up, it may make sense to speak of the year as a whole, before discussing the current papers included in this issue.

State of the Journal. Overall, 2014 was another good, if very full year. Alas, I am still making mistakes, sophomore mistakes now; we are not freshmen anymore. But, still, mistakes! But we are beginning now to have an even better first team of editors, as we announced in the September issue. More on this below; but first some highlights on how the Journal did in 2014.

The number of submissions has gone way up. Readership has grown some too and there is some evidence that our ranking in the world of statistical journals is also up a little. This, however, is only anecdotal at the moment. We will be moving to an independent quantitative ranking measure next year as a way to hold ourselves accountable to authors, readers and IAOS Members. Of course, those of **you** reading this may be all three. Thanks!

Some Journal Highlights. At the August 2014 Joint Statistical Meetings (in Boston) we sought a stronger cooperative partnership with the Journal of Official Statistics (JOS). In our meetings with the JOS editors we stressed our common interests and looked for ways to cooperate more

Both journals, for example, serve largely the same community. JOS, though, seeks papers that are mainly methodological. Our Journal emphasizes issues that are more organizational or managerial. Now, as you know, the work of official statisticians does not neatly divide into these two parts. There is lots of overlap. In fact, most of the “good stuff” is in the overlap, especially with so many new technologies coming on line, often at the same time.

Now new technologies, almost by their nature, challenge existing work paradigms and related organizational arrangements. So, despite our less methodological focus we will continue to publish both. Those papers without a strong organizational orientation, though, will be sent on to the editors at JOS or elsewhere for consideration.

Two final points before getting to the individual¹ papers in this issue:

1. *Becoming an even more International Journal.* In our September issue, and again here, we have begun to seek discussion for the papers we publish. This will not always be possible; but we think it valuable to see the thoughts on a topic from a fellow expert with a similar background but from another country. We think this enhances technology transfer and emboldens us even to try ideas, not originally from one’s own country. We are taken with the idea that our Journal can showcase global collaborative in statistics (Science, October 3, 2014).
2. *Improving Article Quality.* Submissions to the Journal have been going up, not just in numbers but also in quality.

Official statisticians, it goes without saying, are very busy with their “day jobs.” Giving the extra attention needed to publish in a refereed journal borders, for some, on the heroic. And, yet, more and more of you are doing just that. Saying thanks (and we do it here and elsewhere) does not seem enough, though. So we will try to mount a workshop at the WSC in Rio tentatively titled *Tips for IAOS Journal Authors*.

In the DaNang Viet Nam Conference the Journal reached out to you, our readers/customers for your “Tips”. We learned a lot and will do this again The Journal’s Editors, with feedback like we got, can get better at their jobs too. Anyway, stay tuned and stay involved.

Papers in this issue

This December issue is fairly large. There is our now regularly featured interview with a distinguished colleague, plus many new papers. That means that this issue, combined with an exceptional year, is so large that with it we will have exceeded the original Journal

¹There are two in this issue and there was one in September.

page limit, set some years ago. A first! An achievement even!

In fact, with a greater emphasis on electronic publishing and other efficiencies we will be seeking to grow the Journal to be somewhat larger on an ongoing basis. Still, expect some authors who submit to this Journal to be sent elsewhere – maybe to JOS (?). In any event, a few authors might be encouraged in some cases to send their papers elsewhere for timely consideration – especially those that have very strong methodological content and that do not bring out the organizational impact of the ideas proposed.

Journal Interview with Dr. Jacob Siegel. For this December issue Kirsten West sought out and interviewed her former boss, Dr. Jacob (Jay) Siegel. The picture you have in this issue of Jay, now retired, shows him with two of his former employees: Greg Robinson another former boss of Kirsten's and our interview editor Kirsten herself.

Jay may be considered among the founders of Modern Demography, especially as an aid to the evaluation of decennial censuses. An example of the widespread influence of his work, just by happenstance, can be found in a paper from Armenia also being published in the issue. He, as you will read, was not only an original thinker and high achiever, but he mentored many others to do the same.

The upcoming March 2015 Journal Dr. Muriel Dow and Kirsten West interview Ms. Liengoane Mothoiso Lefosa. Ms. Lefosa heads up the Bureau of Statistics in the mountain kingdom of Lesotho, Africa. She has just been put up for the prestigious Mahalanobis Award for high statistical achievers in developing countries. Like the Interview with Jay, provided here, you will again find a deeper enrichment of the title, Official Statistician. Thanks Jay!!!

Income inequality Papers. The December issue will also feature two papers on income inequality. The first of these is by Joseph Gastwirth "*Median-based measures of inequality: Reassessing the increase in income inequality in the U.S. and Sweden*". This paper shows that the Gini index, G , underestimates inequality because a shift of income towards the top incomes increases both the numerator and denominator of G .

Bottom line, Gastwirth proposes the indicator, G_2 , in which the mean/median is multiplied by the Gini coefficient, as a better measure of income inequality in such circumstances. Essentially, he is proposing that we replace the mean with the median, since the median will be less sensitive to shifts in the upper tail of the distribution and, hence, measure inequality better.

Similarly, there is a related paper by Christina Faulkner who builds on Gastwirth's insights. Her paper is entitled, *Using G_2 to measure Income Inequality in Two Latin American Upper Middle Income Countries*, in particular, Faulkner considers whether G_2 data is a useful measure in Brazil and Mexico of income inequality, again she compares, as Gastwirth did, G_2 to the traditional Gini, G , but in two more countries.

Why you might ask are these two papers in this Journal? Well our answer is that in all four of the countries in question, and in many others, the topic of income inequality has been gaining prominence e.g., *Science* (May 23, 2014).

What has not happened is that, until now, there has been little, if any, discussion of what measure of income inequality to use. These papers in part, fill that gap. Both G and G_2 are constructed solely from official statistical sources, however, and so the topic is fair game for this Journal.

Frankly, the data dimensions both within and across the countries the authors are looking at are challenging. We debated waiting until we got clarifications on these data issues from each of these four countries before publishing. But, in the end, we decided to put these two papers out now and to publish comments about data quality and data definitional concerns in the March 2015 issue of the Journal. Plus, maybe, discuss still other income inequality measures that might arise in the meantime; Anyway, expect much more to be said in March, fueled even by this Journal.

Armenia. The paper *Sustaining Improved Estimates of Poverty in Armenia: An Application of Multivariate Raking Ratio Adjustment* by Armenuhi Arushanyan et al. is really the tale of an internationally successful technology transfer. The story started with a suggestion that a little-used method be applied to an existing survey. The success came when the idea was adapted and made to work in Armenia. Along the way the team also added important refinements that fit the local circumstance. Specifically, the goal was to help improve the measurement of poverty in Armenia. This goal was achieved and more. What has happened in the end is not just technology transfer but technology enhancement. Kudo's to Armenia!

Haiti. The Kim paper has a very long but descriptive title *A Nationally Representative Economic Survey Five Months after the Haitian Earthquake: Radical Changes in Household Members and Gender Discrepancy in Employment Retention* by Ryung Kim et al. There is also a discussion by Nilupa Gunaratna. This paper and its discussion focus on how Statistics with-

out Borders (SwB) conducted a nationally representative sample survey to examine economic impact using a random digit dial sample of mobile phone numbers after the 2010 Haiti Earthquake. SwB is not yet now nor will it be as well-known as Doctors without Borders. But the group has begun to make a difference in places where an extra (statistical) hand is needed. Right now, for example, there are SwB teams working on Iraq and in support of efforts to deal with Ebola. And who are they helping? Official Statisticians!

England and elsewhere. The paper by Richard Alldrift, *Towards an International Framework for Statistical Councils of National Statistical Systems*, brings together some ideas and arguments about the role and future of such bodies. This material was presented at a Special Topic Session on this theme at the World Statistics Congress in Hong Kong in August 2013. Whilst the discussion at the WSC session tended to reject the concept of an internationally agreed set of standards that a statistical council body should demonstrate in order to achieve international recognition as a national statistical council, there was nonetheless wide support for an open dialogue.

Ireland. The paper *Laying the Foundations for a New Approach to Census Taking in Ireland* by John Dunne and Steve MacFreely presents the case for a National Data Infrastructure in Ireland based on 3 basic registers (persons, businesses and property). The paper outlines the benefits in terms of efficient and effective public administration and between such bodies to share information about their roles and experience. The paper makes a start on how such a foundation could be started.

Transformational Methodological Papers. Eva Elvers organized and has introduced a very fine set of

papers from a Hong Kong session on the transformational changes now going on in various NSIs around the world. Traditional work streams are being altered (or should be altered) given these new methodologies and related new technologies now coming or in place. Wherever your NSI is in its attempts at keeping up with change, these papers should be of interest; indeed, they enrich the vocabulary of the language that we all are learning now to communicate better with each other regarding change.

New Zealand Indigenous Paper. Again, as in recent issues of the IAOS Statistical Journal, there is an indigenous paper. This paper, like the others in this series, focuses on Indigenous populations issues. The paper *Ethnicity, Race and Māori Life Expectancy in Aotearoa New Zealand* by John Waldon and Kim Dunstan looks at the challenges for New Zealand's official statistics agencies in tracking the quality of data on Indigenous birth, morbidity and death data that has resonance with Indigenous New Zealanders.

Rounding out this December issue are three more papers that we want to include here; these were already preprinted: Bart F.M. Bakker, Johan van Rooijena and Leo van Toora, *The system of social statistical datasets of Statistics Netherlands: An integral approach to the production of register-based social statistics*; Daina Šķiltere and Svetlana Jesiļevska, *Data quality evaluation in statistical data processing*. P.A. Smith, *Redesign in a statistical office – socio-demographic statistics in the Office for National Statistics*.

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