

Ontario Marginalization Index (ON-Marg)

Introduction

ON-Marg is a census and geographic based index and seeks to:

- Show differences in marginalization between areas; and
- Understand inequalities in various measures of health and social well-being, either between population groups or between geographic areas.

ON-Marg is an Ontario-specific version of the Canadian Marginalization Index (CAN-Marg). ON-Marg is multifaceted, allowing researchers and policy and program analysts to explore multiple dimensions of marginalization in urban and rural Ontario. It contains four dimensions:

- Material deprivation
- Residential instability
- Dependency
- Ethnic concentration.

ON-Marg can be used for 1) planning and needs assessment, 2) resource allocation, 3) monitoring of inequities; and 4) research.

Methods

The index was developed using a theoretical framework based on previous work on deprivation and marginalization. Following a literature review, 42 variables were selected from the 2001 Canadian census for potential inclusion in the index. Principal component factor analysis yielded four factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1. Of the original variables, 18 were included in the four factors (see Table 1). Factor loadings were used to compute a separate index for each of the four dimensions. Each dimension is an asymmetrically standardized scale.

The 2001 index was created from two core files with 49,153 dissemination areas (DAs) and 4,757 census tracts (CTs). The index was replicated using 2006 data with 52,973 DAs and 5,017 CTs.

ON-Marg applies to areas, not individual people. Scores for each dimension are available for every census tract and dissemination area in Ontario, except where data is suppressed.

ON-Marg was developed by researchers at the Centre for Research on Inner City Health at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto and McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

Data Sources

2001 and 2006 Census, Statistics Canada.

Table 1. Dimensions of marginalization and their respective indicators.

Residential Instability	Material Deprivation	Dependency	Ethnic Concentration [^]
Proportion of the population living alone	Proportion of the population aged 20+ without a high-school diploma **	Proportion of the population who are aged 65 and older	Proportion of the population who are recent immigrants (5yr)
Proportion of the population who are non-youth (16+)*	Proportion of families who are single parent families	Dependency ratio (total population 0-14 and 65+/total population 15-64)	Proportion of the population who self-identified as visible minority
Crowding - average number of persons per dwelling*	Proportion of the population receiving government transfer payments	Proportion of the population not participating in labour force (15+)*	
Proportion of dwellings that are apartment buildings	Proportion of the population 15+ who are unemployed		
Proportion of the population that is single/divorced/ widowed*	Proportion of households that are low-income**		
Proportion of dwellings that are not owned*	Proportion of households living in dwellings that are in need of major repair		
Proportion of the population who moved within the past 5 years			

[^] Aboriginal indicators did not load on any of the factors.

* Indicators were reverse coded, meaning it is coded opposite of the measure (e.g. %married becomes %single/divorced/separated/widowed).

** For the 2006 index, the indicator is the proportion of the population 25+ without a certificate, diploma or degree. This is due to a change in the Statistics Canada definition.

*** * Low income is defined as below the Low Income Cut-off (LICO), a Statistics Canada measure that is adjusted for community size, family size and inflation.