



HOME

[Publications](#) > [Policy Research Division Working Papers](#) > Working Paper No. 189

RESEARCH AREAS

RESEARCH LOCATIONS

PROGRAMS

PUBLICATIONS /
RESOURCES



No. 189, 2004

Kaneda, Toshiko, Zachary Zimmer, and Zhe Tang. "Differentials in life expectancy and active life expectancy by socioeconomic status among older adults in Beijing," *Policy Research Division Working Paper* no. 189. New York: Population Council. ([PDF](#))

Abstract

The study compares estimates of life expectancy and active life expectancy across indicators of socioeconomic status for a cohort of older adults in Beijing Municipality. Our aim is to determine whether associations found are consistent across indicators and with those typically observed in Western industrialized countries. A multistate life table method is used to estimate expected years of total and active life, defined as life spent without limitation in functions necessary for performing daily tasks. We find that men of higher status experience advantages with respect to life and active life expectancies. Among women, only active life expectancy is significantly greater for those of higher status, but the difference by income is not statistically significant. With respect to the proportion of life spent in an active state, both men and women of higher status benefit in comparison to their lower status counterparts. Finally, we find that disparities by socioeconomic status generally increase with age. Despite several inconsistencies across socioeconomic status indicators by sex, findings generally confirm inequalities within a society that is organized very differently socially, economically, and politically from countries in the West.



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This page updated
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▼ **JOURNALS**

- Population and Development Review
- PDR Supplements
- Studies in Family Planning

▼ **WORKING PAPERS**

- Poverty, Gender, and Youth Working Papers
- South and East Asia Working Papers

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- Population Briefs
- Momentum
- Quality/Calidad/Qualité
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▶ **Publications en français**

▶ **إصدارات عربية**

▶ **Software**

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