Call for Chapter Contributions

Inequality and its Solutions in Latin America and the Caribbean

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INTRODUCTION

This edited collection aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the complex issue of inequality in the region and explore potential solutions to address this critical challenge. Its rationale stems from the urgent need to address the region's pervasive and multifaceted nature of inequality. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is a region characterised by stark socio-economic disparities, with high levels of income inequality, unequal access to education and healthcare, and systemic barriers that perpetuate inequality along racial, ethnic and gender lines. The region's history of colonisation, slavery, and economic exploitation has contributed to the entrenched nature of inequality broadly, making it imperative to explore its root causes and identify effective strategies for reducing inequality and promoting social justice. By bringing together contributions from scholars, researchers, and practitioners, the book seeks to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration, generating new insights and approaches to address inequality in LAC.

It is recognised that over human history, there has been a movement towards greater equality, though nonlinearly and often because of revolutions and struggles. Recent literature has pointed to growing levels of income inequality globally and within developed countries (Alvaredo et al., 2013; Piketty, 2014), which harms economic growth, human development, and stable societies. Equally important for developing countries is the connection between inequality, poverty, economic growth and the achievement of continued progress in human development as outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Understanding the drivers of inequality and how these have changed over time and place can provide insights into how countries in LAC may advance their economies and societies.

Though the literature has focused on the causes and consequences of income distribution in developed countries, scholars have paid little attention (possibly due to the lack of data) to the measurement and effects of inequality in developing countries, where the causes and consequences of inequality are more persistent. Overlooking the impact and sources of inequality in developing

countries is surprising because developing countries have poor fiscal capacities (to provide welfare support), weak state bureaucracies, and weak democratic institutions vulnerable to political capture by populist political elites. Thus, adding inequality to the myriad of economic, social, and political woes already facing developing countries is likely to push developing countries further away from their development frontier, because inequality makes it more difficult for social cohesion and grievances to be resolved. Understanding the causes and consequences and potential solutions to inequality in developing countries will advance the literature and inform policymakers' understanding of how to address inequality.

There is general agreement in the literature that LAC is the region with the highest level of inequality globally and, more recently, the region most severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The literature on inequality in the region embraced the structuralist and or dependency approach, which gained prominence in the 1960s and 70s but, in more recent times, has gone silent on the cleavages of inequality, creating a gap in the literature and our understanding beyond the computation of Gini coefficients. The cleavages perceived as the most important between people, classes, gender, or ethnic groupings are not always the same. It's therefore important to examine the key forces shaping inequality at this juncture as these change over time and in different societies or between societies in the region. The book approaches inequality broadly, embracing a pluralist/normative view (health, education, nutrition, political power, etc.) as well as a historical and positivist approach on how income/consumption distribution across individuals and classes is shaped and evolved. As suggested above, addressing inequality recognises that individuals experience inequalities in combination (interacting with other disadvantages), which restrict their functional capabilities and contribution to society and the economy.

KEY THEMES

The themes to be covered by the collections are (but not limited to):

1. Income/consumption inequality, social classes, wealth distribution;
2. Race or ethnic inequality;
3. Inequality in quality social services (health, education, housing, disability, mental health, the social welfare system (the COVID-19 response), etc.);
4. Inequality in the justice system (police, courts, prisons, immigration laws and regulations);
5. Crime, inequality, and remittances;
6. Inequality in regional development (urban, rural);
7. Religion and social inequality;
8. Regional inequalities (societies or member states, economic unions- OECS/CARICOM/ Mercosur);
9. Historical roots and evolution of inequality in the region, including colonial legacies, socio-economic structures, and policy decisions;

10. Current state of inequality, including income inequality and disparities in access to education, healthcare, and other essential services;
11. Factors contributing to inequality, such as economic policies, social structures, political systems, globalisation, internationalisation and cultural factors;
12. Effects of inequality on individuals, communities, and society as a whole, including social cohesion, mobility, and economic development;
13. Policy solutions to reduce inequality, such as progressive taxation, social welfare programs, education and healthcare reforms, and efforts to promote economic inclusion and social mobility;
14. Future trends and challenges related to inequality in the region and the implications for sustainable development and social progress;
15. Strategies to reduce inequality; lessons learned and best practices.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Deadline for the submission of abstracts: September 5, 2024@11:59 (EST)
- Acceptance notification deadline: September 10, 2024@11:59 (EST)
- Deadline for complete chapters (if the abstract is accepted): November 30, 2024@11:59 (EST)
- Expected publication date (if the chapter is accepted) (TBD).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS FOR CONSIDERATION
Contributors should present proposals for chapters in English in the form of an abstract of a maximum of 300 words, including key terms. Proposals should include the authors' personal data: names, affiliations, and addresses.

Queries and submissions should be sent to kevin.williams@uwimona.edu.jm, wbenfield@bmcc.cuny.edu and dacia.leslie@uwimona.edu.jm