Unobserved Population Heterogeneity: 30 Years of Frailty Models in Demography

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Unobserved population heterogeneity and its impact on life-table estimates motivated the introduction of frailty models three decades ago. The concept of latent individual differences repeatedly proved useful in applications and led to important insights, in demography and beyond. This talk reviews the influence that the seminal paper by Vaupel et al. had on demographic research in general and presents some recent demographic applications of frailty models.