Obesity Plagues the Bronx: A Rising Epidemic

Research Question

Objective
- To explore how food outlets in New York City contribute to childhood obesity in the Bronx
- Can New York City’s access to food outlets contribute to obesity in the Bronx?
- Does one’s environment affect one’s obesity?

Empirical Findings

Health Status: Bronx
- The Bronx has the highest rate of obesity,
- 85% risk of being obese than people in Manhattan.
- 9 of 12 districts in the Bronx have too few food supermarkets

Who is affected
- Percentage of overall obesity in the Bronx - 59%
- Percentages range from ages 5-18
- Hispanic Males 222% & Females 18.8%
- White: Males 13.9% & Females 13.2%
- Black: Males 17.5% & Females 12.6%
- Asian: Males 11.4% & Females 9.6%

Introduction

Defining Obesity
- Having a BMI (Body Mass Index) of 30 or higher determines obesity for an adult
- Determining obesity for children, BMI greater than the 95th percentile

Hidden Impact of Obesity in Children
- Physical effects: Hypertension, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea, breathing complications
- Physiological effects: Depression, anxiety
- 85% of children with two obese parents become obese themselves

Possible Contributors
- National fast food chains
- Local fast food chains
- Pizzerias
- Convenience stores
- Locally owned stores, “bodegas”
- More access = greater chance obesity?

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Negative Impact
- The Supermarket Need Index shows that children in the Bronx have:
  - High diabetes rate
  - Low consumption of fruits and vegetables
  - Low capacity for new supermarkets
  - Low amount of retailers for fresh food

Conclusions

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- The Bronx lacks healthy food options for families
- Parents are forced to feed their children unhealthy food

Research Limitations
- Lack of attention to:
  - Income
  - Population density
  - Capacity for new stores
  - Household access to cars
  - School meal programs
  - Forums

Authors
Bryan Mulholland, Amanda Garcia, Jackeline Amado, Fara Zaman, & Thomas Gresia

LC 06 – Soc 101,
Professors Janice Johnson-Dias & Karen Ulrich