Predictors of Trust in Low-income, Minority Neighborhoods in Texas

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Abstract: Given the importance of trust to economic growth and population health, it is important to understand individual and neighborhood predictors of trust in low-income and minority communities. In this paper, we investigate predictors of trust in residents of 98 low-income and minority neighborhoods in Texas. Census data and survey data on 1966 residents provided information on individual and neighborhood characteristics. Predictors of trust were modeled using multi-level probit models. We found that linguistic heterogeneities, but not racial/ethnic diversity nor income inequality, were associated with general trust. More detailed analyses indicated that people tend to trust people in the neighborhood more than those who belong to the same racial/ethnic group. Interventions in diverse communities should focus on increasing social integration among residents in order to reach higher levels of trust, contributing to positive health outcomes.