Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

Gentrification, measures of neighborhood change, and infant mortality in Michigan

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Objective
Determine the association of infant mortality (IM) and gentrification, a composite measure of rising neighborhood income, education, and housing costs.

Study design
Retrospective cohort analysis of 672,432 infants born 2010–2019 across metropolitan Michigan. Multilevel multivariable regression models examined the association of gentrification and IM. Gentrification components were evaluated in separate models.

Results
Gentrification was not associated with IM, but some of its components were. Living in a census tract with an above median rise in income or education attainment was associated with lower odds of IM, compared to below median change (Income: aOR=0.88; 95% CI: 0.82–0.95; Education: aOR=0.93; 95% CI: 0.86–0.997). Rent increases above the median were linked to higher IM among term infants and lower IM among infants <32 weeks' gestation. The association of IM with rising home values varied by maternal insurance status.

Conclusions
Indicators of increasing community affluence, often combined to define gentrification, have opposing relationships with IM.

Journal:

Journal of Perinatology
Authors: Murosko D, Passarella M, Montoya-Williams D, Mehdipanah R and Lorch S