

Evaluating the Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis: A Comprehensive Analysis of Access to Primary Care Physicians and Healthcare Disparities in Eastern Quebec

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Abstract

This study assess the relationship between the deficiency of medical care accessibility in rural areas, with a particular focus on the most susceptible and vulnerable segments of the population. The study employed the Enhanced Two-Step Floating Catchment Area (E2SFCA) methodology and examined its implications for the Spatial Mismatch Theory in line with the Central Place Theory. The results indicates that the Central Place Theory appears more suitable for elucidating access levels and that the provision and accessibility of primary care services remain inextricably intertwined with, and dependent upon, the existence of sufficient road infrastructure. As such, individuals residing at substantial distances from the primary road network may experience severely compromised access to such services. This study contributes to our understanding of the challenges facing rural populations in accessing essential medical care and highlights the need for further research and policy interventions to address these issues.

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