Title: Access to Disaster Resources in each Zip Code of New Hanover County Based on

Poverty Percentages

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Access to Disaster Resources in each Zip Code of New Hanover County Based on

Poverty Percentages

Background

The injustices that individuals that are in poverty face in New Hanover County

housing and other social institutions, seemed to be magnified by the hurricane. As

UNCW students also affected by the hurricane, it was important to analyze different

aspects of the hurricane's effect on the community, especially for our community

partner Support the Port. Evaluating these disparities lead our class to three different

subprojects. My research focused on where resources were placed in the ten zip codes

of New Hanover County, and the poverty rates in each of these zip codes.

Primarily my data came from the United States Census Bureau American

Community Survey that supplied poverty rates in New Hanover County to map if

resource centers were in areas with low or high poverty.

Methods

Research Question

The question that I will be researching is as follows: What is the distribution of

resource centers post hurricane Florence for low poverty (0-10%), moderate poverty

(11-20%) and high poverty (21-33%) zip codes in New Hanover County?

Using features of google maps, our research group created a map that outlined

the boundaries of New Hanover County. One member of the group outlined where the

resources were placed throughout the county, and the other group member outline the most damaged areas per data collected from The Red Cross after the hurricane.

The resources were labeled as follows: a green plus is used to symbolize medical facility resources, a green fork symbolizes food shelters (these shelters did have food, and medical care), a green house symbolizes shelter, and green flags represent PODs or points of distribution. Red houses represent resource centers that failed. The ten zip codes of New Hanover County were used to display percentages of poverty (low, moderate, and high percentages of poverty). Low Poverty (0-10%) was represented by green shading in the zip code, moderate poverty (11-20%) was shown through yellow shading, and red shading was used to symbolize high poverty (21-30%).

Results

The 28401-area code has the higher rate of poverty in all of New Hanover County, and there were ten resource centers that included one medical center, four food shelters, three housing Shelters, one point of distribution, and one shelter that flooded. There were ten resources centers spread throughout the 28403-area code with six medical centers, three food shelters and one homeless shelter (High Poverty average (29.6% poverty population)). The 28412-area code had nine resources centers that included one Point of distribution, three homeless Shelters, two medical facilities, two food Shelters that were stationed around the area but not close enough to the hardest hit areas (18.3% poverty population). The 28405-area code had six resource centers which were not placed near the hardest hit areas, they were just placed throughout the zip code (Moderate poverty (16.6%poverty population)) that included three failed shelters, one medical centers and two food shelters. In the 28428 there were no resource centers and a lot of damage on one side of the zip code and little to no

damage on the other side, (Moderate poverty (12.6% poverty population)). No resource centers in 28449 (6.6% poverty population) and 28480 (Low poverty (6.1% poverty population)) area codes. There was one medical resource center in the 28409-area code (low poverty (8.3% poverty population)). There were three resource centers in the 28411area code (low poverty (9.4% poverty population.) There was one resource center in the 28429-area code where there is moderate poverty and it was a point of distribution.

Figure one: This is a representation of resources in each area code of New Hanover County.

Discussion

One of the hypothesis that I wanted to analyze was that there are a lot of underlining inequality issues in New Hanover County that were magnified by the

hurricane, but I was not able to address this hypothesis because the data did not support this claim. The data actually showed that the places that needed the resource centers the most had them spread throughout the zip code. With these maps we found that resource centers were placed throughout the county, and the most resources were placed in areas where there is higher poverty. There were resources placed in communities and these resources failed giving less aid to the community. Some counties had no resources at all, and the most resources that any county had was ten resources, and some of these failed.

References

2013-2017 American Community Survey 5- Year Estimates.
    https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?
    src=CF