

**TITLE:** The Influence of Perceived Social Status on Eating Behavior and Obesity Risk in Hispanic Youth

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## **RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Background:** Obesity and cardiometabolic risk disproportionately affects Hispanic American (HA) adolescents relative to their white counterparts. The reasons for such differences appear to be both biological (physiological) and non-biological (environmental). Socioeconomic status (SES) has been consistently used as a proxy for environmental exposure, and an association between lower SES, obesity and cardiometabolic risk has been demonstrated during adolescence and adulthood. In adolescents, recent studies are demonstrating that *perceptions* of social status are better indicators of obesity risk than traditional SES. However, the nature of perceived social status and its relationship to eating behavior and obesity risk are poorly understood. The objective of this study is to investigate the effect of manipulation of social status condition on eating behavior and obesity risk in 15-18 year old Hispanics.

**Hypothesis:** Adolescents will consume a greater number of calories, fat, and sugar following the low social status condition when compared to the high social status condition. Obese adolescents will consume a greater number of calories, fat, and sugar following the low social status condition when compared to normal weight adolescents.

**Methods:** This aim will be accomplished using a randomized crossover design to place adolescents in experimental high and low social status conditions. We will evaluate how much adolescents eat in an ad libitum buffet meal following the manipulation of social status.

**Role of medical student:** The medical student(s) will be expected to assist in the data collection and data analysis to examine the role of psychosocial outcomes on eating behavior and obesity risk in youth. Expected outcomes include a poster presentation at UF and possibly national meetings and manuscript preparation. In addition, the student(s) will gain joint mentorship and exposure from faculty with the Institute for Child Health Policy, the Department of Health Psychology, the Department of Health Outcomes and Policy, and the Department of Pediatrics.

**Funding and relevant publications:** Current internal efforts by Health Outcomes and Policy allow for this integrated research. Previous funding for pilot study allotted from University of Colorado and University of Alabama's Nutrition Obesity Research Centers.

1. Cardel MI, Johnson SL, Beck J, Dhurandhar E, Keita AD, Tomczik A, Pavela G, Huo T, Janicke D, Peters JC, Hill JO, Allison DB. The Influence of Experimentally Manipulating Social Status on Acute Eating Behavior: A Pilot Study. *Physiology and Behavior* (under review as of December 1, 2015).
2. Cardel M, Bellows L, Boles RE, Davies P, Gavin W, and SL Johnson. Self-Concept and Obesity Risk in Low Income Diverse Preschoolers. Presented as an oral presentation at *American Society of Nutrition*, 2015.