

(b) Using Extract B and Figures 2 and 3, assess whether poverty reduction policies are the most effective way of dealing with the obesity crisis in the UK.

(10)

Poverty reduction policies are implemented across the UK in order to increase equality and reduce the great poverty gap seen between the rich and the poor. Poverty reduction strategies may include higher levels of ^{investment and} ~~education and~~ ^{increased} government welfare. Extract B states that obesity levels are 'double among women with unskilled jobs', acknowledging that there is a 'correlation' between UK obesity levels and 'different levels of socioeconomic status'.

From figure 2 it is clear that ~~men~~ ^{women} in the lowest-income quintile have an obesity prevalence of '30.6%' compared to that of 19.5% in the highest income quintile. This could be due to lower incomes aren't being stretched far enough for wholesome food, so instead the only option are cheaper alternatives such as fast-food outlets such as McDonald's, due to a lack of regulation in the food market. It is clear that due to the vast gap between obesity prevalence and income levels, poverty reduction policies are vital as they could reduce the income gap and give those on a lower income the ability to purchase higher quality foods, which in turn will be healthier.

However, although it seems at first glance that the ~~p~~ inequality gap is the cause of the high obesity rates, figure 2 shows that men in the lowest



P 5 2 1 4 1 A 0 7 2 4

income quintile have an obesity prevalence of 24.7%, only 0.5% higher than men in the highest income quintile. This indicates that perhaps poverty reduction strategies will only be effective for certain demographics such as women, or to reduce the vast gap shown in figure 3 between children in more deprived areas. Furthermore, poverty reduction strategies may only become useful in the long-term, not the short-term due to the time lags seen by similar policies. Also, government intervention in the form of indirect taxes on fast food outlets and subsidies on fresh fruit and vegetables may be a more efficient and effective way of reducing obesity prevalence amongst those on lower incomes, due to the restriction put on their diets due to the cost of healthy foods. Lastly, it is clear that the ~~real~~ problems of obesity needs to be rectified, perhaps education, especially the young would be more effective.

