Native American Intergenerational Mobility – What We Know and What We Would Like to Learn

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Prepared for a the NAS Panel on Policies and Programs to Reduce Intergenerational Poverty

July 22, 2022

American Indian Economic Conditions, ACS 2016 5-year

	On Reservation	Total in US	US Total
AIAN alone pop count	549,408	2,597,817	318,558,162
AIAN alone/in comb	581,117	5,431,402	318,558,162
Tribally enrolled	?	?	
HS or more	80%	79%	87%
College or more	8%	8%	30%
Median HH income	37,020$	38,502$	55,322$
Unemployment rate	18%	8%	7%

American Indian Economic Conditions – Children in Poverty

	1990	2000	2010	2015
Percent AI alone, children in poverty	38%	32%	33%	34%
AI alone or in combination, children in poverty		27%	29%	31%
		On reservations		
Percent AI alone, children in poverty	55	44	44	47
AI alone or in combination, children in poverty		44	43	46

Conceptual Framework – Intergenerational Mobility

- What can we do to improve intergenerational mobility? Will these levers be effective for Native American populations?

- Programs targeted at (young) children, usually administered in community or school settings

- Programs "treating" the family

- Conditional transfers

- Unconditional transfers

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- **Who designs and executes the policies?**

- Political, historical and institutional context is complex

- Understanding the context is costly

- Nuances of tribal sovereignty are often not well understood

- Interventions and data collection could be sensitive because of issues of racial identities

Factors Affecting the Measurement of Intergenerational Mobility

- Distrust due to prior discrimination and exploitation of Native American subjects by researchers in various fields

- Data availability for small groups, particularly in publicly available data (e.g. the NHIS has 120-150 observations for AIAN children)

- Data connectivity across different datasets and across generations

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- Self-reported detailed race information not available in Census data until 2000. For individuals that passed before 2000, we need alternative race data sources.

- Differential mortality (e.g. due to income) across race could make analyses based on racial identification in 2000 problematic.

Factors Affecting the Measurement of Intergenerational Mobility

- Racial identification:

- within individual across surveys or survey waves (Liebler, Bhaskar and Rastogi Porter, 2014)

- within family across generations

- Affected by:

- AIAN identity awareness

- high prevalence of forced child removals, and thus a high percentage of AIAN children growing up in non-AIAN households

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- high prevalence of forced child removals, and thus a high percentage of AIAN children growing up in non-AIAN households

- Substantial implications for the measurement of intergenerational mobility – do we assign race based on the child's response or based on the parents'?

- Tribal affiliation not available in any large data source (CENSUS, IRS, CMS, etc)

Examples of Existing Research on Native American Mobility

- Two major strands:
1. survey-based (Akee, Copeland, Simeonova, co-authors)
2. large restricted-use datasets (Chetty, Hendren, Jones and Porter, 2020)

Examples of Existing Research on Native American Mobility

- Survey-based: the GSMS longitudinal survey of the EBCI
- Unconditional cash transfers, similar to UBI, appr. $4000-$5000 per member in the late 1990s

- Criminality decreases for both parents and children

- Relationships between parents, and between parents and children improve

- HS graduation improves for children

- Personality traits improve in children up to age 16

- Prevalence of mental health issues decreases for adolescents

- Economic wellbeing, broadly defined, improves for children, and in particular for those who initially suffered from worse mental health

- The probability of voting in any election in adulthood increases for children

Akee, et al (AEJ, 2010), Akee, Simeonova Copeland et al (2013, 2018, 2020, 2022)

Examples of Existing Research on Native American Mobility

- Income mobility within a generation – Akee, Jones and Rastogi-Porter (2019)
- Native Americans are more likely to experience downward income mobility than whites in the period 2000-2014
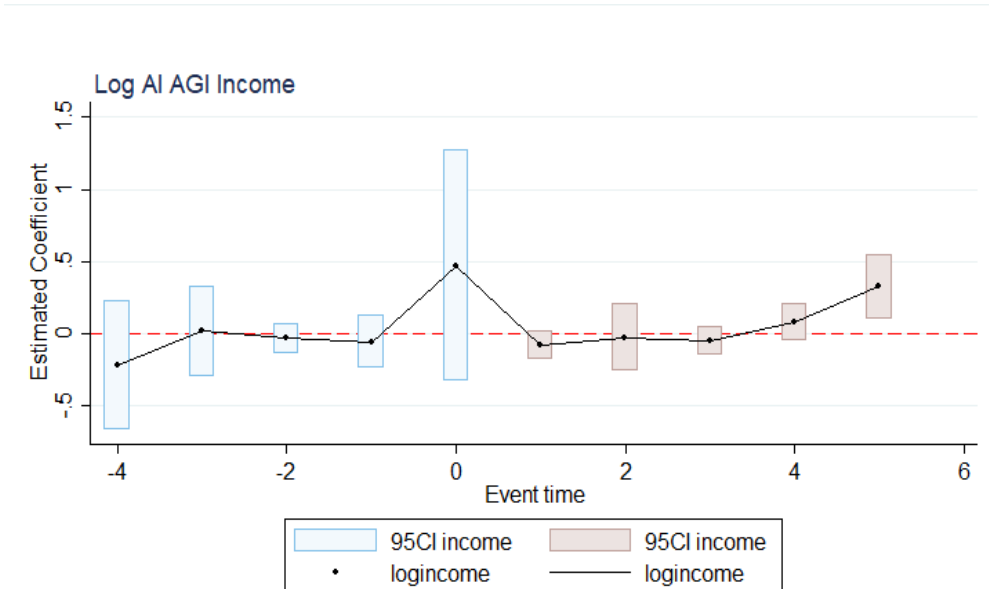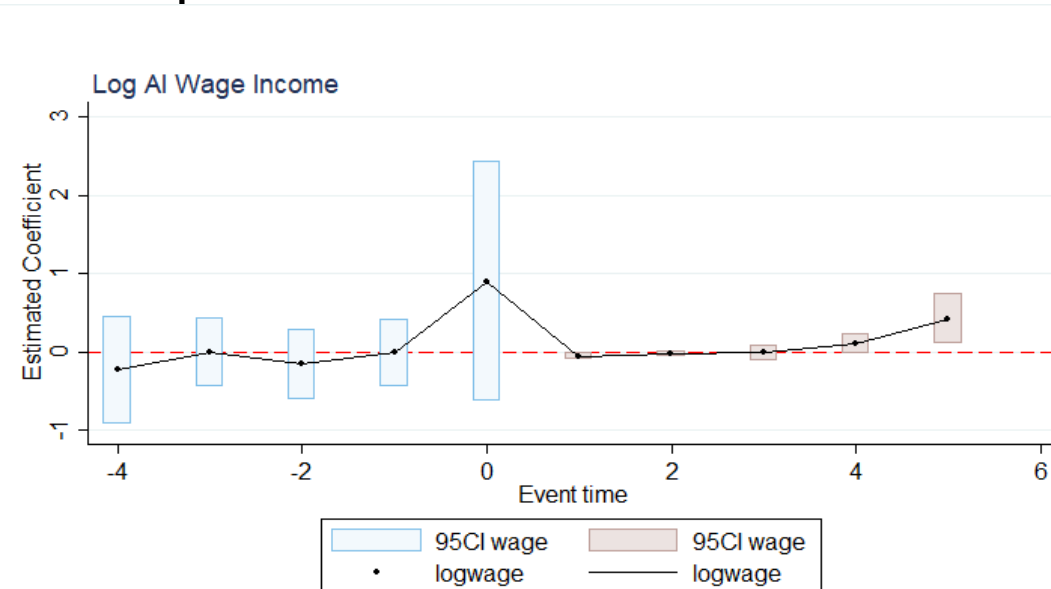
High School or Less
2014

AIAN	1	2	3	4	5
1	58.17	26.71	9.47	3.94	1.71
2	33.81	31.27	21.65	9.71	3.56
3	23.54	25.7	24.87	18.11	7.77
4	13.78	17.11	24.09	27.93	17.08
5	9.48	7.2	12.9	24.02	46.4

(2000 on vertical axis)

More Than High School
2014

AIAN	1	2	3	4	5
1	44.13	30.98	15.02	6.64	3.23
2	24.27	28.27	25.32	15.54	6.6
3	15.72	22.13	25.46	23.2	13.5
4	10.26	13.58	23.97	29.97	22.22
5	6.03	6.84	11.2	24.55	51.38

(2000 on vertical axis)

Rank income transition matrices for AIAN individuals, 2000-2014; 1040 IRS data, Akee, Jones and Rastogi-Porter (2019)

Examples of Existing Research on Native American Mobility

- Linked IRS-Census data, individuals residing on or close to reservations in 1989
- Treatment: tribal casino operations
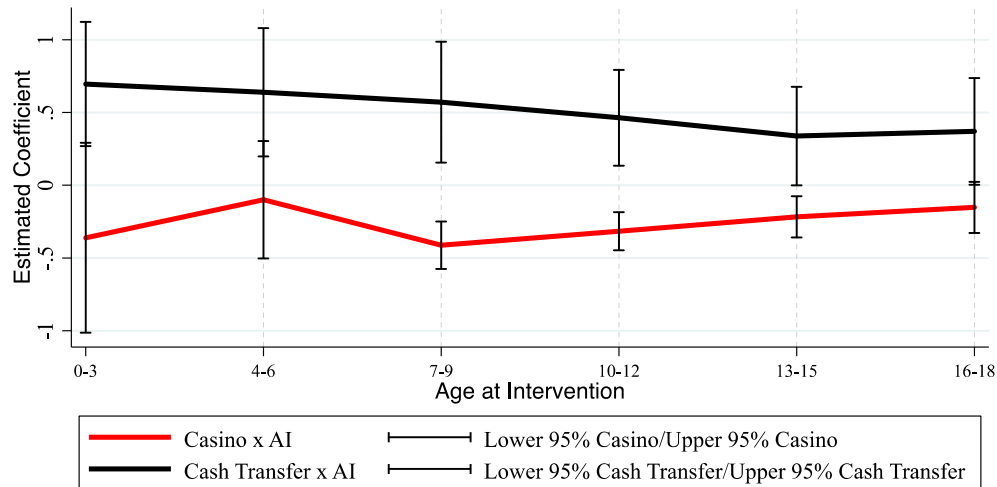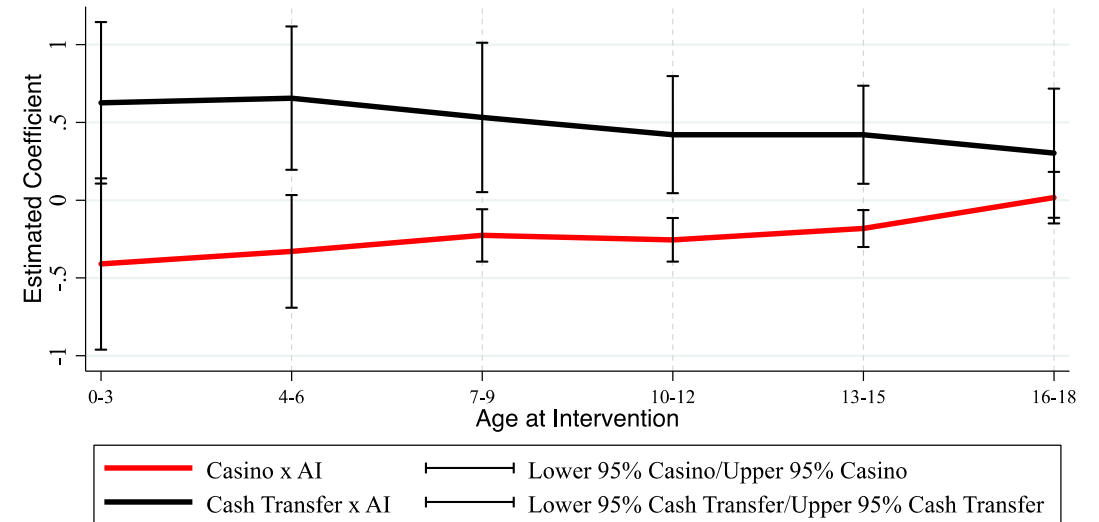- Sample: adults in 1989

Simeonova, Jones and Akee (2022)

Children's Outcomes – Earnings

- Treatment: Tribal casino operations

Males

Females

Simeonova, Jones and Akee (2022)

Any views expressed are those of the authors and not those of the U.S. Census Bureau. The Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board and Disclosure Avoidance Officers have reviewed this data product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and have approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied to this release. DRB approval number CBDRB-FY22-CES014-025.

Potential Solutions

- Over-sampling in established data sources: (PSID~240; SCF~62; NLSY~126; HRS~200)

- Facilitate linkages between existing data sources

- Medicare and Medicaid and Indian Health Service (IHS)

- IHS, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Census

- Improve racial identification data in e.g. SSA data and Medicare/Medicaid data

- Inform, consult, and involve tribal communities in the planning, execution, and research evaluation (e.g. tribal advisory boards, tribal Institutional Review Boards)

- Create opportunities for Native American students to get involved in social science research