

A Tribe, a County, and a Casino: Socioeconomic Disparities between the Mohegan Tribe and New London County through Two Decades

Authors : Michaela Wang

Abstract : Since British established colonial settlements across the East Coast, Native Americans have suffered stark socio economic disparities in comparison to their neighboring communities. This paper employs the 1990, 2000, and 2010 United States Decennial Census to assess whether and to what extent the casino economy helped to close this socioeconomic gap between the Mohegan tribe and its surrounding community. These three Decennial Censuses cover two decades, from six years prior to the erection of Mohegan Sun casino to 14 years afterwards, including the Great Recession 2007-2009. Income, employment, education and housing parameters are selected as socio economic indicators. The profitable advent of the Mohegan Sun in 1996 dramatically improved the socio economic status of the Mohegan Tribe between 1990 and 2000. In fact, for most of these indicators—poverty, median household income, employment, home ownership, and car ownership—disparities shifted; tribal socioeconomic parameters improved from well below the level of New London County in 1990, to the same level or above the county rates in 2000. However, economic downturn in 2007-2009 Great Recession impacted Mohegan people remarkably. By 2010, disparities for household income, employment, home ownership, and car ownership returned. The casino bridged socio economic inequalities, but at the face of economic crises, the mono-product economy grew vulnerable.

Keywords : socio economic, indigenous, native American, disparity

Conference Title : ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development

Conference Location : Chicago, United States

Conference Dates : December 12-13, 2020