Data Collection for AIAN Entrepreneurship

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Main Challenges

• Current data is not appropriate for entrepreneurship research
  – Academic example: Harvard Project
  – Government examples: SBA DSBS (dynamic small business search engine)

• Data is either:
  – Too macro/policy-oriented to be practical for individual firms
  – Too demographic to infer best practices
• Very few Management/Entrepreneurship scholars actively study AIAN issues
  – Daniel Stewart (Gonzaga)
  – Joseph Gladstone (New Haven)
  – Amy Klemm Verbos (Wisconsin)
  – Deanna Kennedy (Washington)
  – Stephanie Black (Albany)
  – Carma Claw (New Mexico State)

• Small numbers makes peer-review difficult
• Limited pipeline of incoming scholars
Research Challenges

• Early stage development of true AIAN theories:
  – “A difficulty of surveying AIAN entrepreneurs is fitting an AIAN entrepreneur in a box currently/generally based on western management styles. So then the surveys that we currently use, our academic scales, might be psychometrically constructed to overlook AIAN styles”
  – “We would need to incorporate cultural measures in a survey. This might be appropriate when surveying AIAN entrepreneurs.”
Research Challenges (continued)

• **Sample Size**
  – Population is small, samples even smaller
  – Difficult to generate statistical power

• **Subject preferences**
  – Many AIAN entrepreneurs dislike surveys and prefer interviews and open-ended questions
  – Creates difficulty generating quantitative databases

• → Predominantly case studies
Research Objectives

• “[Agency] reporting and data collection is probably geared toward some governmental objective and not necessarily to assist with economic development or other AI needs. Unless the [census] survey results in some sort of penalty, I know people who respond with bogus information, especially when it comes from a government ‘official’. Anecdotally, I have a cousin who wrote in ‘human’ under the race category in the last Census.”

• “Personally, I am more interested in hearing directly from AI entrepreneurs. While many AI entrepreneurs I have approached thus far have been graciously willing to discuss and share information, that is on a very small scale. In Indian Country, I know relationships are very important. With that in mind, is it possible to reach AI entrepreneurs on a grand scale? Is there a coalition or network to tap into that would allow researchers to assist in addressing research gaps or tackling problems within the AI business world?”
Progress

• Our small circle is productive
  – Working jointly with global “indigenous” scholars creates synergies
  – Similar themes across indigenous communities

• First American Indian-specific business textbook is in press (UW Press)