

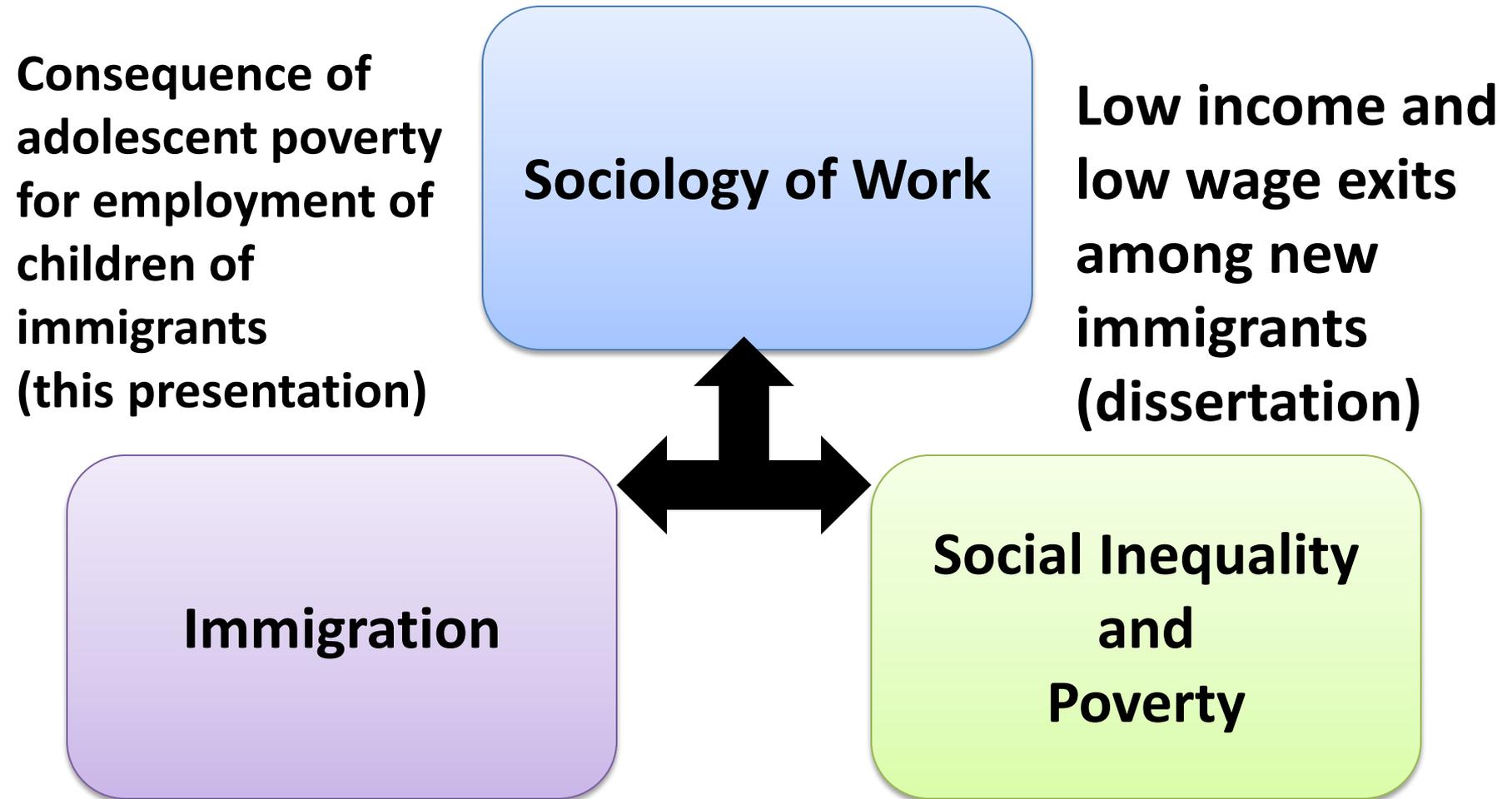
Too Poor to Work? Family Poverty and the Employment of Children of Immigrants

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My Research Interests



Research Questions

- 1) How does employment of children of poor immigrants compare with their non-poor counterparts?
- 2) Once employed, do they work more intensely?
- 3) Does poverty have longer-term impact on employment of children of immigrants?

What happens if children of immigrants grow up in poverty?

1) Poverty research

- Consequence of poverty for childhood outcomes (e.g. cognitive, behavioural, educational)

Limitations:

Adolescent outcomes (Edin & Kissane 2010)

Focus on immigrant family

What happens if children of immigrants grow up in poverty? (continued)

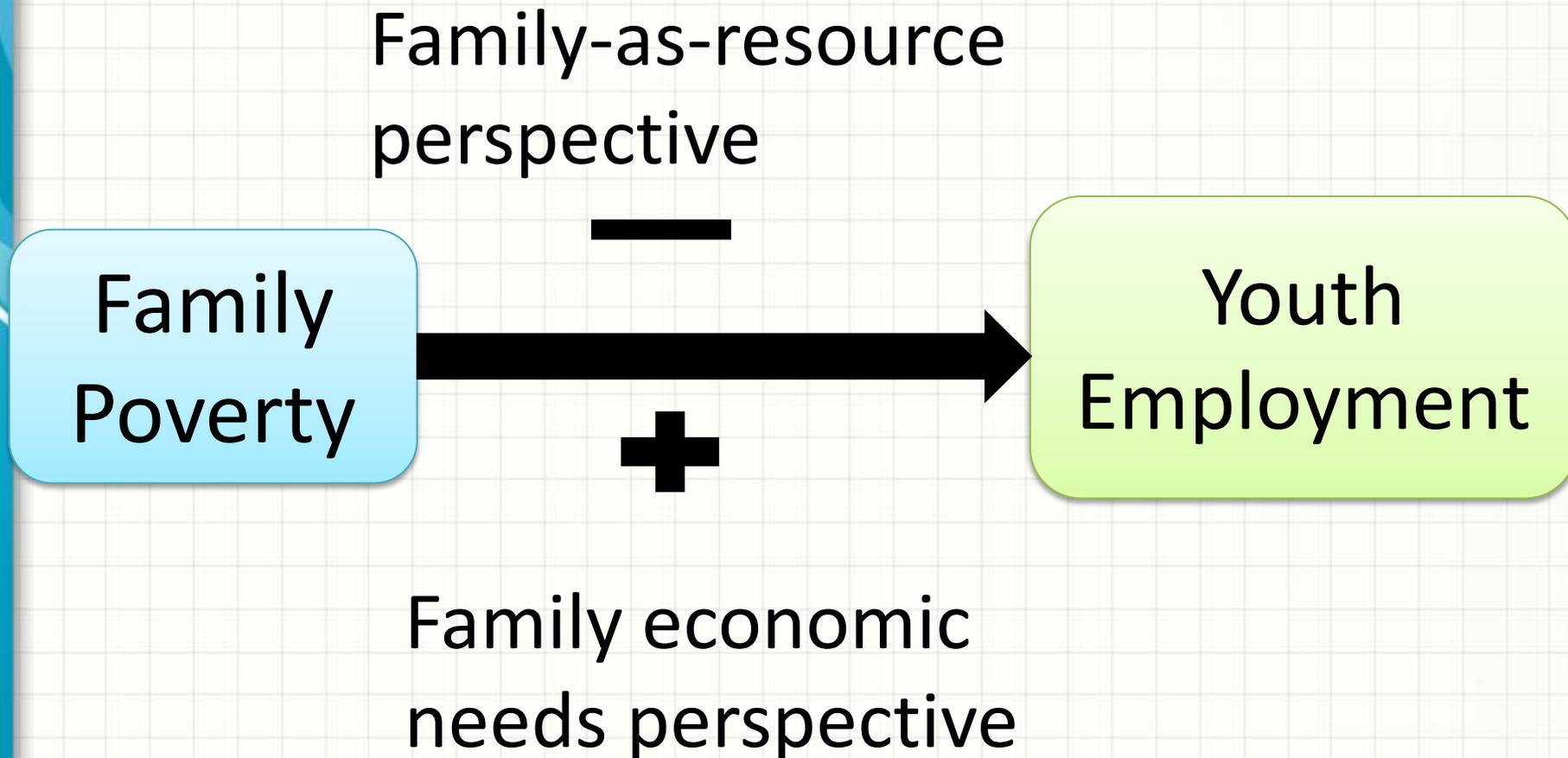
2) Immigration research

- Segmented assimilation theory: Parental human capital matters (Harris et al 2008)
- Qualitative research: Mixed results
- Limitation:
 - Direct impact of family low income
(→ Implications for Canada)
 - Focus on youth employment

Why youth employment matters?

- Youth employment
 - Resources for higher economic attainment in adulthood (e.g. job references, work ethics) (Estrada & Hondagneu-Sotelo 2011; Wilkinson 2008)
 - But intense work may impede school performance (Staff et al. 2011)
- Limited research on immigrant youth (Perreira et al. 2007)

How does family poverty influence youth employment?



Immigrant family as unique case?

- Immigrant parents' limited job network
- Immigrant parents' limited exposure to North American norm of youth employment (Lauer et al 2012)
 - Child's greater aspiration
 - Parent's higher expectation for postsecondary education

Methods

- Data: Youth in Transition Survey (YITS) Cohort A (15 year olds), Cycles 1 & 2
- Sample: High school students aged 15 whose parent(s) participated in Cycle 1
 - Children of immigrants (1+ FB parent)
 - Children of Canadian born

- **Dependent variables**

- 1) Paid work during school year, age 15, 17

1: Worked 1+ hour/week

0: Didn't work

- 2) Intense work during school year, age 15, 17

1: Worked 20+ hrs/week

0: Worked <20 hrs/week

- **Independent variable:** Family poverty status, age 15 (based on Low Income Measure)

1: Parental income below LIM

0: above LIM

- **Control variables**

- Children's characteristics
- Parental characteristics
- Family characteristics
- Contextual characteristics

- Immigrant family-specific characteristics

Analytical Techniques

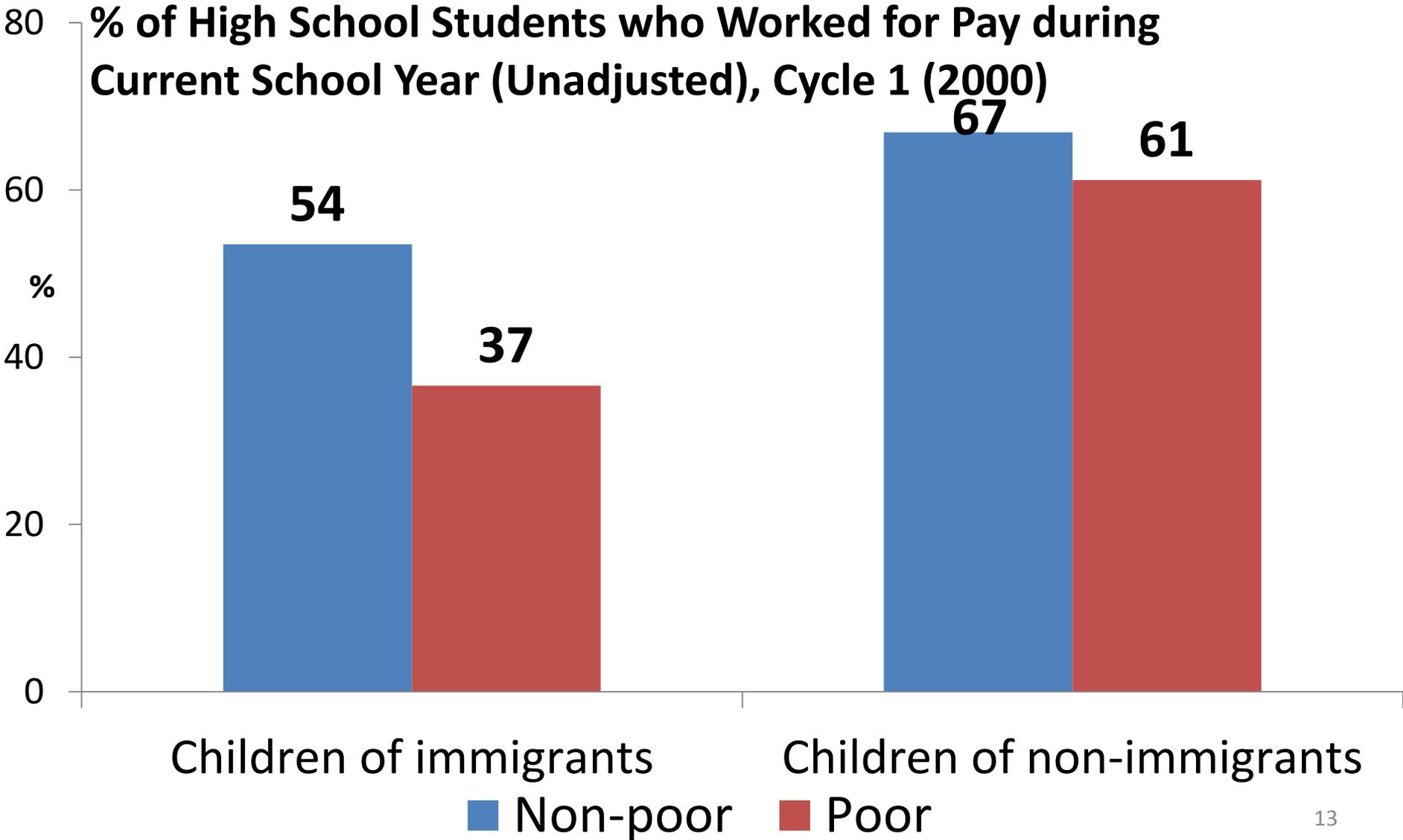
DV1: Paid work
(binary)

Probit regression
+ Blinder-Oaxaca
decomposition technique
(for non-linear regression)

DV2: Work intensity
(binary)

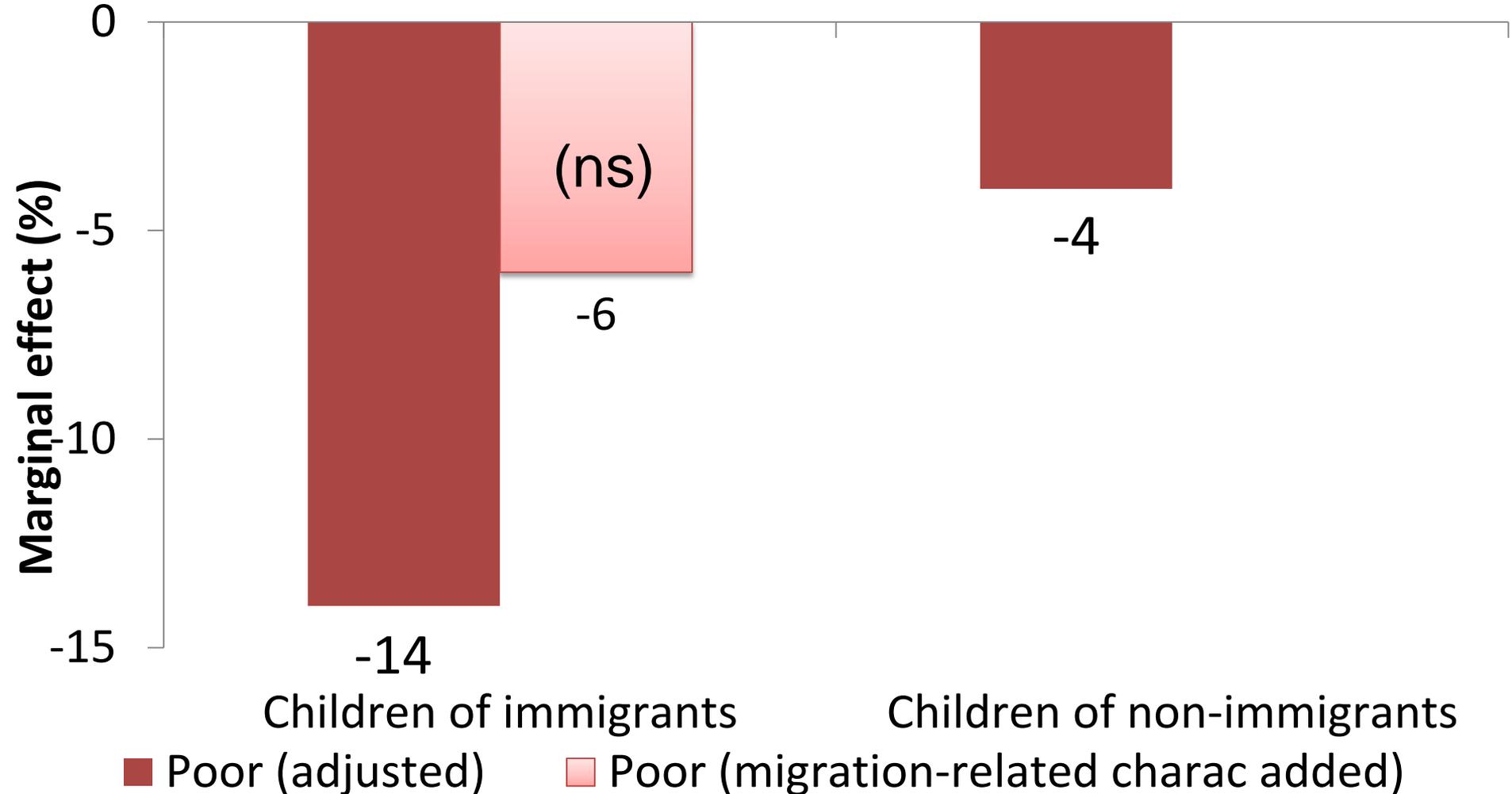
Heckman probit
(with sample selection)

1) Children of poor immigrants are far less likely to work than non-poor counterparts



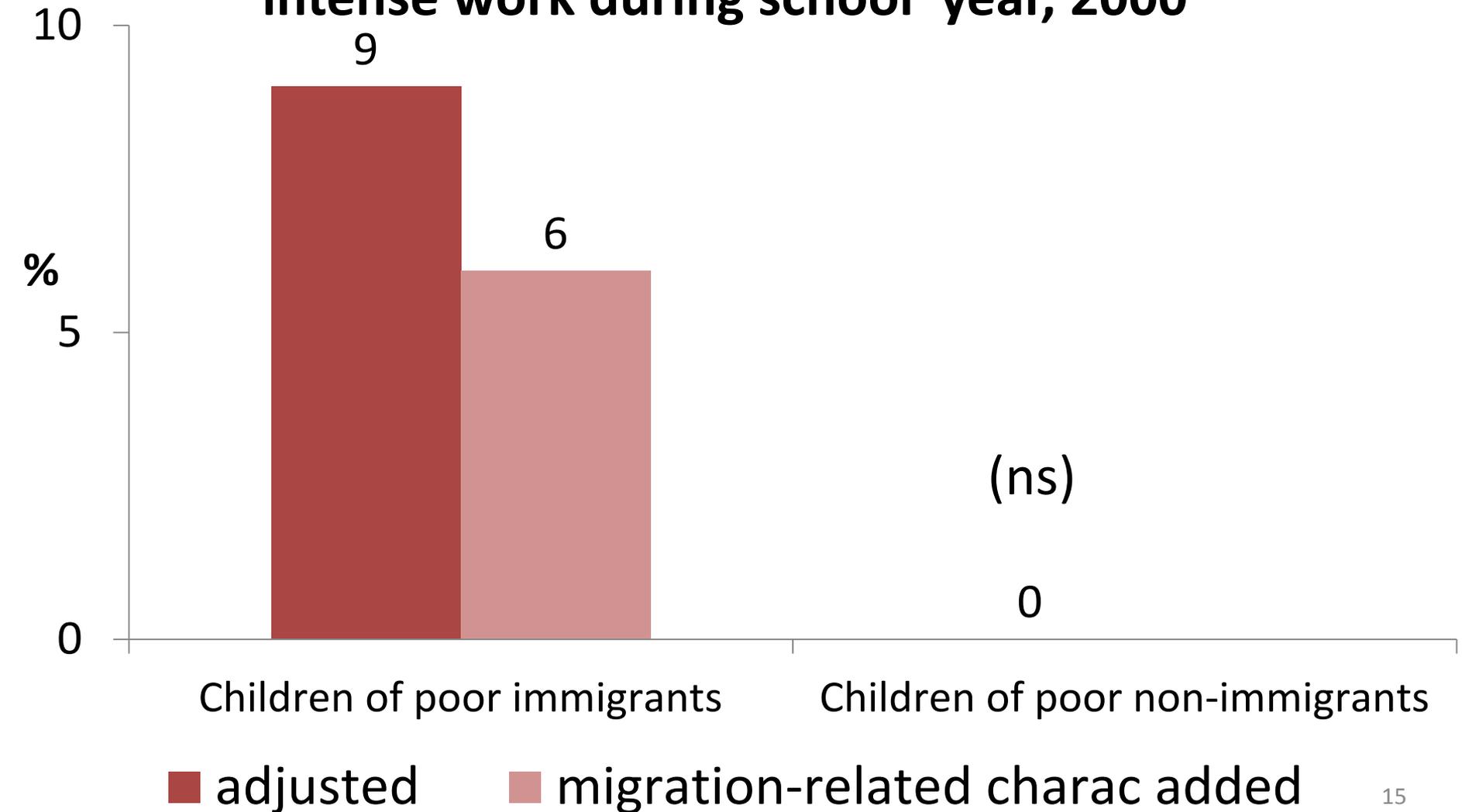
2) Greater impact of poverty for children of immigrants is partly explained by their family migration experience

**Marginal Effect of Family Poverty on Paid Work in 2000,
Children of Immigrants and Non-immigrants**



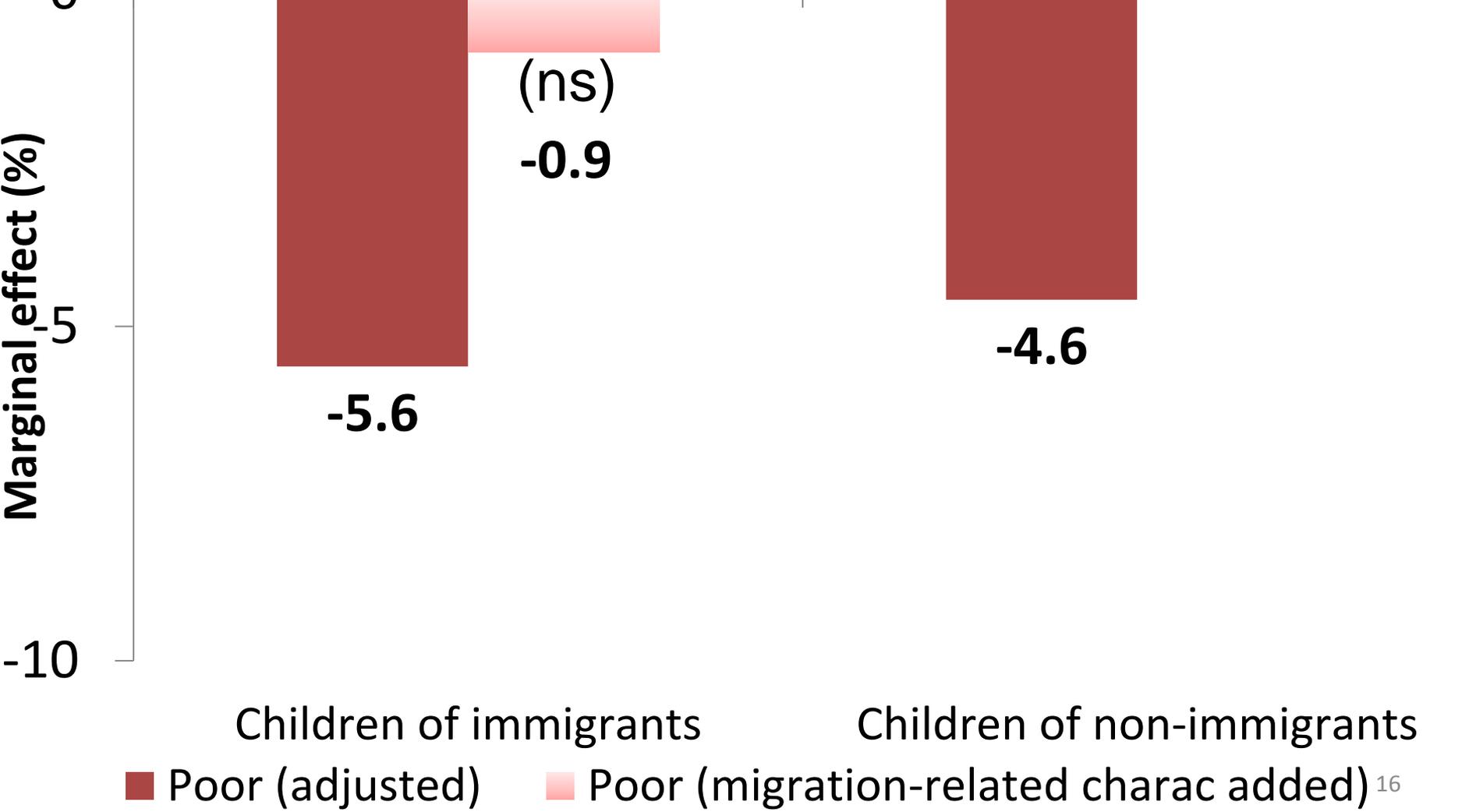
3) Once employed, children of poor immigrants work more intensely

Discrete change in predicted probability of intense work during school year, 2000



4) Family poverty has longer-term impact on employment, but its impact on children of immigrants declines

Marginal Effect of Family Poverty on Paid Work in 2002, Children of Immigrants and Non-immigrants



5) Family poverty has greater impacts on employment outcomes of children of immigrants

- Children of immigrants

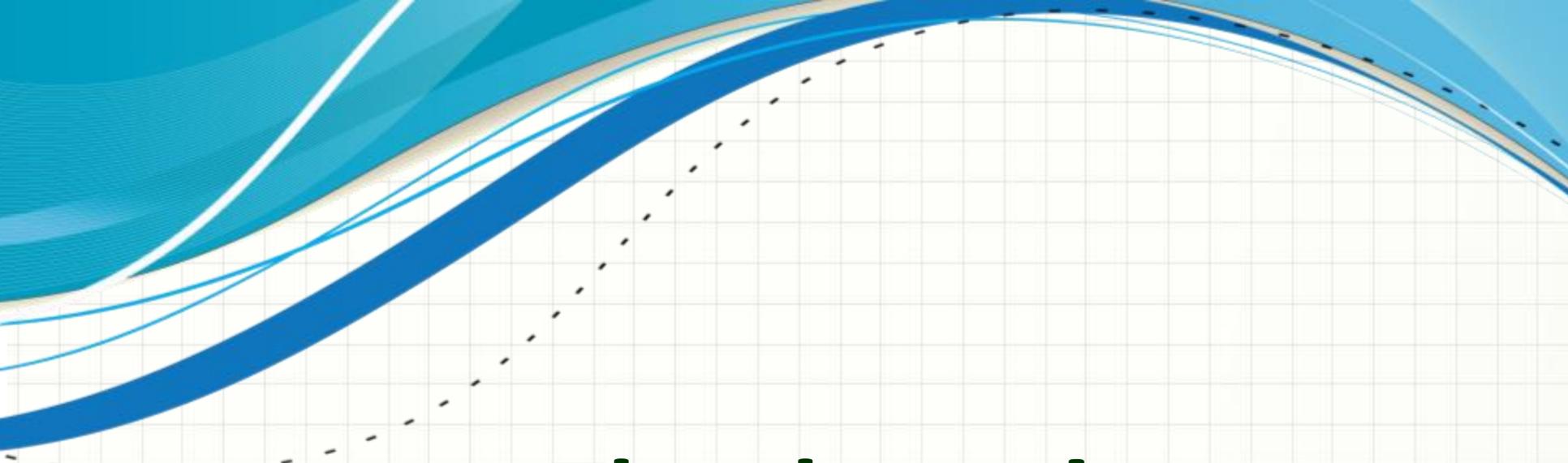


- Children of non-immigrants



Conclusions

- Family poverty has a direct impact on lowering employment rates of children of immigrants
 - Consistent with family-as-economic-resource perspective
 - Implication for segmented assimilation theory
- Children of poor immigrants work more intensely
 - Consistent with family economic needs perspective
 - Negative impact on academic performance?



Thank you!

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