PIAAC Papers on Digital Literacy and Low-Skilled Service Workers

Lisa Hudson
2018 PIAAC Research Conference
Dec. 7, 2018
Take-Away: Adults with Low Skills are Not Who You Think

- Most low-skilled adults have a high school credential, are white, and are native born.
- Low skills is not (just) a problem among those at the margins of American society; it is a problem among mainstream America.
Digital Literacy Paper

• Digitally non-literate are disproportionately:
  • Low education
  • Older
  • Minority
  • Foreign born
  • In low-skilled jobs

• Documentation is important

• Multiplicity of disadvantages
Expanding Digital Literacy Analysis

• Additional characteristics to examine:
  – Earnings
  – Supervisory work
• Multivariate analysis
• Combining digital non-literacy and digital problem-solving
Low Skilled Adults in Service Sector

• Intersection of two areas of interest
  – Documents large pool of workers with both skill and job disadvantages

• Combines qualitative and quantitative data to provide richer analysis
Expanding the Low-skilled Service Worker Analysis

- Comparison of workers across occupation sectors
  - Manufacturing, health care, IT
- Longitudinal data
  - PIAAC or high school longitudinal studies?
  - Collaboration between Education and Labor?
- Integrate quantitative and qualitative data
Communicating PIAAC Results

• Low literacy is vague, difficult to explain concept
  – We need easy-to-understand findings

• Is PIAAC measuring ability to handle complexity?
  – Might be more relevant outcome