

Trends in Memphis Poverty with Detailed Poverty Tables, 2012-2015 | 2016

Poverty Rates by Demographic Characteristics & Location

Key Findings:

- Poverty rates in Memphis generally continue to increase for all groups, with certain apparent decreases at the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) level.
- The overall poverty rate in the United States decreased from 15.9% to 15.5% from 2012 to 2014, despite the population increasing by more than 2.7 million.
- The poverty rate in Tennessee increased over this same period of time, rising from 17.9% to 18.3%. All races accounted for in this study (Hispanic or Latino, Non-Hispanic White, and African American) experienced a rise in poverty; however African Americans witnessed the largest growth in poverty, afflicting 30.9% of the population in 2014 compared to 25.2% of the population in 2012.
- The overall percentage of unmarried female householders living in poverty decreased from 31.8% to 30.5% over the three years studied. African American women experienced the sharpest drop in this area, from 38.8% to 36.8%
- The percent of Hispanic and Latino female householders living in poverty rose from 57.3% to 65% in Tennessee. This was the largest contribution to the overall growth in this category for all races from 36% to 36.9% in Tennessee.
- The percentage of white Tennesseans under the age of 18 living in poverty was reduced from 18.2% to 17.8%. However, this number increased by 3 percentile points for African Americans and 2.3 percentile points for Hispanic and Latino youth.
- The percentage of Hispanic or Latino Tennesseans aged 65 and older that live in poverty shrank from 17.15 in 2012 to 10.1% in 2014. This occurred despite the fact that the poverty rate for all elderly Tennesseans increased by 0.1% during this span of time.
- The poverty rate for African Americans in Shelby County rose from 26.3% to 31.7% despite a population decline of roughly 4,000.
- Poverty among children rose 2.7% overall in Shelby County. The percentage of white youth in poverty decreased slightly, but rose by nearly 5% among African Americans

- The percentage of impoverished, white, female householders with no husband present in Shelby County rose 6.3% to 17.6%. The percentage of this population with children rose 11.2% to 29.6% or nearly one third.
- The number of white residents of Shelby County decreased by over 4,000. More than 0.01 percent. Simultaneously, the poverty rate from this demographic rose by 0.7 percentile points.
- The population of African Americans in Memphis rose by 10, 218. Simultaneously, the poverty rate for this group rose 5.1 percentile points to 35.1%. The number of African American youth living in poverty in the City of Memphis is now solidly over half at 53.3%.
- Shifts in poverty among the elderly in the City of Memphis were drastic over these three years, falling from 15.9% to 11.6% from 2012 to 2013, only to rise again to 14.5% in 2014.
- Percentages of female householders with no husband present who have children under the age of 5 dropped significantly among Non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans in the City of Memphis. The percentage of Non-Hispanic Whites of this description fell from 65.3% in 2013 to 52.8% in 2014, while African American women of the same demographic decreased by 2% to 60% in the same timeframe. However the percentage of Non-White female householders with children under the age of 18 increased drastically in the city of Memphis, rising from 20.8% to 39.2% in 2014.
- As the Hispanic and Latino and African American populations within the Memphis TN-MS-AR Metro Area grew over the three years studied, so did their poverty rates at 1.6% and 0.6% respectively. The population of Non-Hispanic Whites dropped by several hundred during this time, yet poverty rate for this group also rose by 1.2%.
- The percentage of African American families with children under 18 in the Memphis Metro Area increased from 33.1% to 35.4%. However, for families within this group with children under the age of 5, the poverty rate decreased from 37.1% to 28.8%.
- As always, changes from one year to the next do not indicate a trend and may simply constitute a statistical anomaly. As a result, these numbers must be interpreted with extreme caution.

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Population Group	United States															
	All Races				Non-Hispanic White				Hispanic or Latino				Black or African American			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Population		316,128,839	318,857,056	321,418,821		197,392,411	197,409,353	234,940,100		53,986,412	55,279,452	56,496,122		38,807,755	39,267,149	40,695,277
Overall Poverty Rate	15.9%	15.8%	15.5%	14.7%	11.0%	11.1%	10.8%	12.2%	25.3%	24.8%	24.1%	22.6%	28.1%	27.5%	26.9%	25.4%
Under 18	22.6%	22.2%	21.7%	20.7%	13.6%	13.5%	13.0%	16.7%	33.4%	32.8%	32.1%	30.5%	39.6%	39.1%	38.5%	36.5%
18-64	14.8%	14.8%	14.6%	13.9%	11.2%	11.4%	11.2%	11.9%	21.4%	20.9%	20.4%	18.8%	24.5%	24.1%	23.6%	22.2%
Over 65	9.5%	9.6%	9.5%	9.0%	7.3%	7.4%	7.3%	7.7%	19.3%	19.5%	19.4%	18.5%	19.0%	18.2%	17.8%	16.8%
People in Families	13.4%	13.1%	12.8%	12.0%	7.9%	7.8%	7.5%	9.4%	23.9%	23.1%	22.5%	20.9%	26.0%	25.3%	24.5%	22.9%
All Families Under Poverty		11.6%	11.3%	10.6%		7.3%	7.1%	8.3%		22.3%	21.7%	20.1%		23.6%	22.9%	21.6%
Families with Children Under 18	18.8%	18.5%	18.0%	17.1%	12.3%	12.1%	11.7%	13.8%	29.1%	28.6%	28.0%	26.3%	33.2%	32.9%	32.0%	30.5%
Families with Children Under 5	19.3%	18.3%	17.5%	16.4%	14.2%	13.3%	12.8%	13.5%	27.5%	25.6%	24.7%	22.8%	36.2%	36.0%	33.8%	31.6%
Married-Couple Families (MCF)	5.8%	5.8%	5.6%	5.2%	3.9%	3.9%	3.7%	4.5%	15.4%	14.8%	14.3%	13.0%	8.4%	8.5%	8.0%	7.5%
MCF with Children Under 18	8.7%	8.5%	8.2%	7.7%	5.4%	5.3%	5.0%	6.7%	19.5%	18.7%	18.2%	16.5%	11.0%	11.3%	10.6%	9.8%
MCF with Children Under 5	7.1%	7.0%	6.5%	5.9%	5.1%	5.0%	4.6%	5.2%	15.8%	14.8%	13.0%	11.4%	10.7%	10.3%	10.4%	9.3%
Female Householder No Husband Present	31.8%	30.9%	30.5%	29.0%	24.5%	24.1%	23.5%	25.4%	40.7%	40.2%	40.0%	38.2%	38.8%	37.5%	36.8%	35.2%
FHNHP with Children Under 18	41.5%	41.0%	40.6%	39.2%	34.2%	34.1%	33.6%	35.7%	48.6%	48.7%	48.4%	47.1%	47.5%	46.5%	46.0%	44.6%

Tables and charts prepared by Elena Delavega, PhD, MSW, Department of Social Work, University of Memphis, from US Census2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates, 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201; 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201; and 2012 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201

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Population Group	Tennessee															
	All Races				Non-Hispanic White				Hispanic or Latino				Black or African American			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Population		6,495,978	6,549,352	6,600,299		4,862,093	4,881,929	5,129,336		309,224	322,339	333,460		1,095,847	1,098,287	1,110,412
Overall Poverty Rate	17.9%	17.8%	18.3%	16.7%	14.1%	14.2%	14.3%	14.5%	34.3%	33.9%	35.5%	30.7%	25.2%	28.8%	30.9%	25.4%
Under 18	25.8%	26.5%	26.2%	24.2%	18.2%	19.3%	17.8%	19.8%	44.1%	45.5%	46.4%	40.4%	42.4%	43.7%	45.5%	37.8%
18-64	16.8%	16.4%	17.4%	15.7%	14.2%	14.1%	14.6%	14.3%	28.9%	27.0%	29.1%	24.4%	24.5%	23.9%	26.4%	21.1%
Over 65	10.0%	9.7%	10.1%	9.8%	8.7%	8.6%	9.0%	8.6%	17.1%	16.6%	10.1%	19.6%	19.9%	17.6%	18.9%	19.1%
People in Families	15.4%	15.2%	15.5%	14.0%	11.1%	11.1%	10.9%	11.5%	33.4%	34.5%	36.3%	30.5%	27.4%	27.5%	29.2%	23.2%
All Families Under Poverty		13.3%	13.7%	12.3%		10.2%	10.2%	10.4%		30.7%	34.3%	28.0%		25.2%	26.9%	21.5%
Families with Children Under 18	21.9%	22.0%	22.4%	20.2%	16.8%	17.1%	16.6%	17.2%	39.1%	38.4%	42.7%	35.0%	34.9%	36.3%	38.1%	31.0%
Families with Children Under 5	23.3%	23.6%	22.9%	22.7%	17.0%	18.3%	18.1%	19.7%	37.5%	42.8%	40.6%	36.2%	38.9%	39.7%	38.2%	35.1%
Married-Couple Families (MCF)	6.8%	6.5%	6.6%	6.0%	5.9%	5.7%	5.6%	5.6%	24.7%	21.7%	24.9%	22.8%	7.5%	8.2%	9.2%	7.6%
MCF with Children Under 18	10.1%	9.8%	10.0%	9.0%	8.5%	8.5%	8.2%	8.4%	30.4%	27.8%	31.7%	29.2%	10.0%	9.4%	12.2%	8.8%
MCF with Children Under 5	8.6%	9.0%	9.5%	7.0%	6.4%	7.1%	8.0%	6.7%	29.3%	29.6%	29.0%	22.1%	9.2%	14.6%	13.8%	3.7%
Female Householder No Husband Present	36.0%	35.6%	36.9%	31.8%	31.6%	31.3%	31.4%	30.7%	57.3%	61.1%	65.0%	51.1%	40.1%	39.9%	42.0%	33.3%
FHNHP with Children Under 18	46.4%	47.9%	48.7%	42.7%	42.6%	43.6%	42.4%	41.9%	63.7%	65.8%	69.7%	58.1%	48.7%	51.2%	53.8%	43.5%
FHNHP with Children Under 5	56.3%	54.0%	56.3%	54.6%	51.4%	52.7%	54.8%	57.0%	71.7%	76.0%	68.4%	70.6%	59.5%	51.9%	55.4%	50.7%

Tables and charts prepared by Elena Delavega, PhD, MSW, Department of Social Work, University of Memphis, from US Census2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates, 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201; 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201; and 2012 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201

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Population Group	Shelby County, Tennessee											
	All Races				Non-Hispanic White				Black or African American			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total population		939,465	938,803	938,069		352,708	348,359	371,647		494,397	493,330	498,328
Overall Poverty Rate	21.7%	21.8%	22.9%	20.1%	8.1%	7.6%	8.8%	10.5%	26.3%	29.8%	31.7%	26.4%
Under 18	32.8%	35.8%	35.5%	32.4%	8.9%	10.0%	7.8%	15.6%	43.2%	46.3%	48.1%	40.2%
18-64	18.7%	18.3%	20.0%	16.8%	8.7%	7.8%	10.4%	10.1%	25.3%	24.2%	26.1%	21.5%
Over 65	12.7%	9.1%	10.6%	10.9%	4.9%	4.2%	3.8%	5.6%	23.5%	15.6%	20.1%	18.0%
People in Families	19.0%	20.6%	21.5%	18.4%	4.9%	5.0%	5.2%	8.2%	28.7%	29.2%	30.9%	24.9%
All Families Under Poverty		17.2%	18.2%	15.2%		4.6%	5.4%	6.8%		25.8%	27.3%	22.0%
Families with Children Under 18	25.8%	27.5%	29.1%	25.2%	7.0%	7.2%	8.3%	13.6%	35.0%	37.7%	39.6%	31.6%
Families with Children Under 5	28.0%	29.1%	27.1%	19.7%	10.6%	6.0%	10.4%	6.1%	36.1%	44.0%	36.1%	30.0%
Married-Couple Families (MCF)	5.7%	6.1%	6.5%	5.4%	2.9%	2.2%	2.6%	3.1%	7.0%	8.8%	9.9%	7.4%
MCF with Children Under 18	7.7%	8.6%	8.8%	8.9%	4.3%	2.1%	2.5%	6.8%	7.4%	10.3%	12.1%	8.3%
MCF with Children Under 5	8.3%	6.8%	9.9%	4.9%	6.2%			NA		11.4%	14.6%	5.0%
Female Householder No Husband Present (FHNHP)	37.4%	36.8%	38.2%	30.7%	11.3%	17.0%	17.6%	23.8%	41.3%	39.4%	41.7%	32.4%
FHNHP with Children Under 18	47.2%	49.0%	54.3%	42.1%	18.4%	24.0%	29.6%	35.1%	50.4%	51.7%	56.4%	43.1%
FHNHP with Children Under 5	54.9%	58.6%	58.7%	40.9%	27.6%	32.5%	48.9%	NA	59.7%	61.0%	60.0%	42.8%

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Population Group	Memphis city, Tennessee											
	All Races				Non-Hispanic White				Black or African American			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total population		653,450	656,876	655,760		178,557	171,427	172,475		410,080	420,298	415,300
Overall Poverty Rate	28.3%	27.7%	29.8%	26.2%	11.9%	9.8%	13.9%	13.0%	30.0%	33.3%	35.1%	30.1%
Under 18	44.3%	45.7%	46.9%	43.0%	14.0%	9.9%	13.1%	19.4%	49.2%	52.6%	53.3%	47.0%
18-64	24.0%	23.2%	25.7%	22.0%	12.7%	11.1%	16.5%	13.7%	28.1%	27.2%	29.0%	24.5%
Over 65	15.9%	11.6%	14.5%	12.9%	6.8%	4.9%	4.9%	5.4%	23.2%	16.9%	22.0%	18.8%
People in Families	27.3%	27.1%	29.2%	25.1%	7.3%	5.7%	8.4%	8.9%	32.9%	33.0%	34.5%	29.0%
All Families Under Poverty		22.9%	24.9%	20.8%		5.8%	8.2%	7.9%		29.1%	30.4%	25.7%
Families with Children Under 18	35.7%	36.2%	39.6%	34.1%	11.2%	10.1%	14.1%	17.6%	40.4%	43.2%	44.7%	37.3%
Families with Children Under 5	33.9%	39.7%	35.0%	24.9%	8.8%	11.9%	14.5%	7.2%	39.8%	51.4%	40.1%	33.1%
Married-Couple Families (MCF)	8.7%	8.5%	10.3%	8.1%	4.7%	2.4%	4.1%	1.8%	8.7%	9.9%	12.0%	9.4%
MCF with Children Under 18	12.4%	13.2%	16.2%	13.7%	7.7%	3.5%	5.0%	4.1%	9.2%	13.2%	17.2%	10.8%
MCF with Children Under 5	11.2%	12.2%	15.7%	7.1%	8.6%		5.0%	NA		21.2%	18.4%	NA
Female Householder No Husband Present (FHNHP)	42.5%	40.9%	42.1%	34.6%	14.2%	21.4%	20.8%	31.2%	43.9%	42.2%	43.8%	34.8%
FHNHP with Children Under 18	53.1%	54.5%	58.5%	48.1%	20.8%	33.9%	39.2%	50.3%	54.5%	55.2%	58.6%	47.0%
FHNHP with Children Under 5	58.1%	63.5%	60.0%	44.0%		65.3%	52.8%	70.1%	62.0%	61.7%	60.0%	44.6%

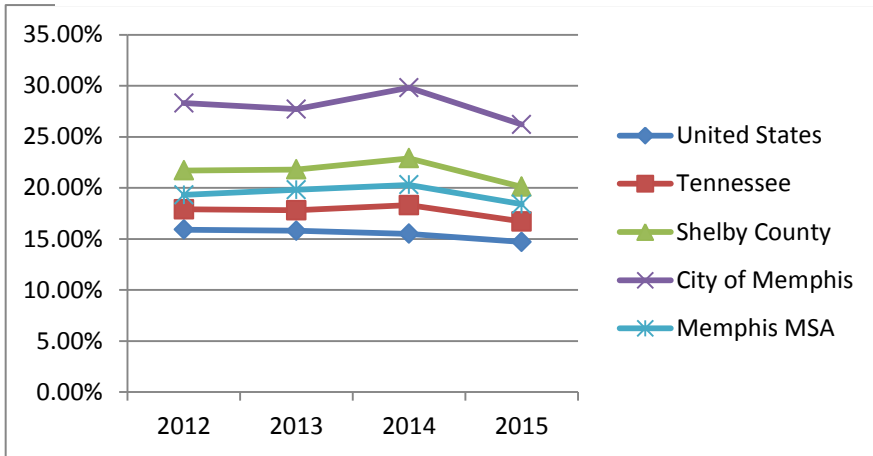
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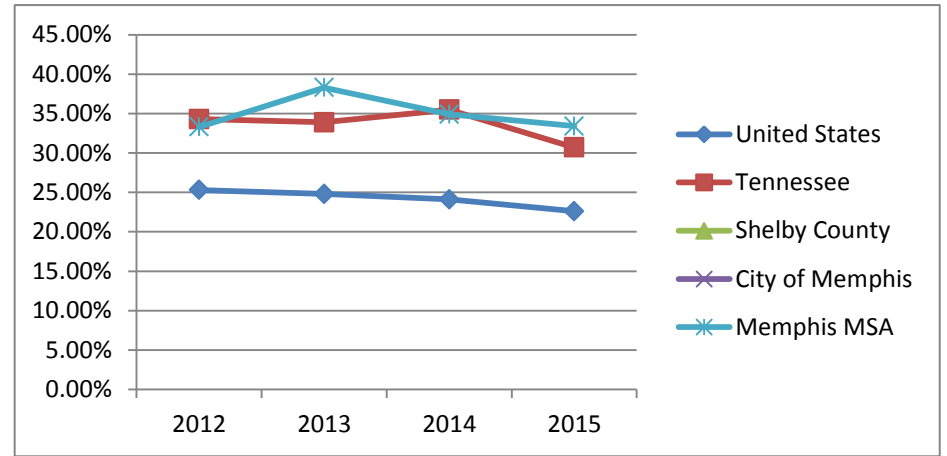
Population Group	Memphis, TN-MS-AR Metro Area															
	All Races				Non-Hispanic White				Hispanic or Latino				Black or African American			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Population	1,325,160	1,343,850	1,344,121	1,343,572	605,602	608,326	605,252	634,193	69,623	69,241	69,927	71,118	602,966	613,019	617,261	626,698
Overall Poverty Rate	19.3%	19.8%	20.3%	18.4%	8.1%	8.4%	9.2%	10.2%	33.30%	38.30%	34.90%	33.4%	29.20%	29.60%	29.80%	25.9%
Under 18	28.8%	30.6%	30.8%	28.8%	9.7%	9.8%	10.0%	14.4%	44.90%	52.40%	46.00%	45.2%	41.20%	42.70%	44.60%	38.8%
18-64	16.8%	17.0%	17.9%	15.8%	8.1%	8.3%	10.1%	10.0%	26.00%	29.80%	28.30%	26.0%	24.60%	24.70%	24.50%	21.3%
Over 65	11.0%	10.8%	10.7%	10.2%	5.8%	7.3%	5.3%	5.7%	20.00%	18.00%	24.00%	5.3%	20.90%	20.80%	21.00%	18.5%
People in Families	17.8%	18.2%	18.4%	16.5%	5.9%	5.8%	6.3%	8.0%	33.50%	39.80%	36.10%	33.4%	28.10%	28.60%	28.60%	24.3%
All Families Under Poverty	15.2%	15.4%	15.9%	13.8%	5.7%	5.3%	6.5%	6.8%	32.30%	37.10%	31.40%	25.7%	24.90%	25.60%	25.30%	21.5%
Families with Children Under 18	22.8%	23.9%	25.0%	22.0%	8.9%	7.7%	10.5%	11.5%	39.00%	44.00%	42.20%	33.8%	33.10%	34.80%	35.40%	30.3%
Families with Children Under 5	25.6%	24.1%	22.1%	17.9%	12.3%	5.8%	13.0%	5.1%	38.40%	46.40%	45.00%	24.6%	37.10%	40.20%	28.80%	31.9%
Married-Couple Families (MCF)	5.5%	6.0%	6.0%	5.1%	3.0%	2.9%	3.2%	3.4%	24.30%	25.70%	22.60%	23.6%	7.60%	8.60%	9.30%	7.6%
MCF with Children Under 18	7.7%	8.1%	8.0%	7.7%	3.8%	3.2%	3.6%	5.3%	29.50%	33.10%	31.60%	31.8%	8.80%	10.10%	11.40%	9.1%
MCF with Children Under 5	8.8%	5.1%	7.4%	4.3%	4.3%	1.3%	2.9%	NA	N/A	40.10%	40.70%	35.0%	9.00%	7.90%	10.90%	5.8%
Female Householder No Husband Present	34.1%	34.2%	36.4%	30.0%	18.1%	18.0%	22.7%	23.0%	64.40%	69.60%	65.20%	37.8%	38.70%	38.90%	39.50%	32.2%
FHNHP with Children Under 18	42.6%	45.5%	50.2%	40.2%	25.8%	25.2%	37.0%	32.2%	66.50%	72.30%	75.30%	44.8%	46.80%	48.30%	51.50%	42.1%
FHNHP with Children Under 5	50.4%	51.8%	52.1%	43.4%	38.0%	31.6%	52.7%	37.8%	100.00%	N/A	68.80%	N/A	54.30%	59.30%	51.60%	46.5%

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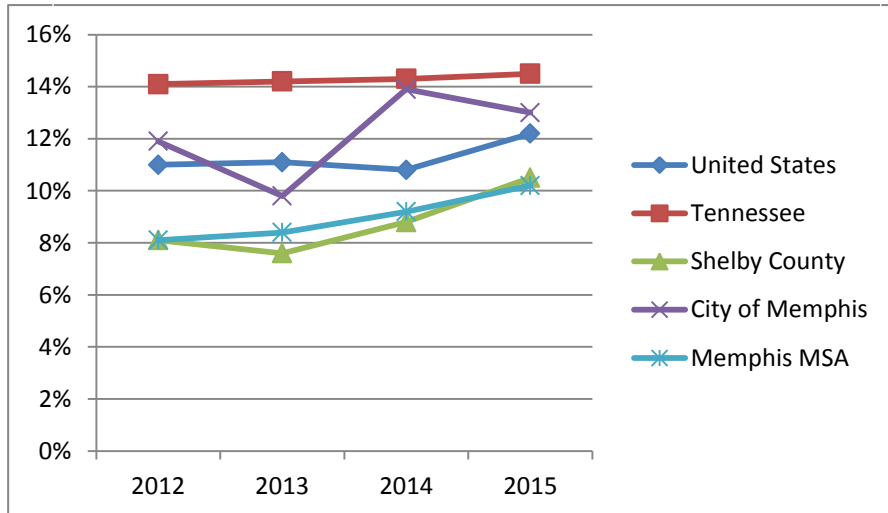
Overall Poverty - All Races



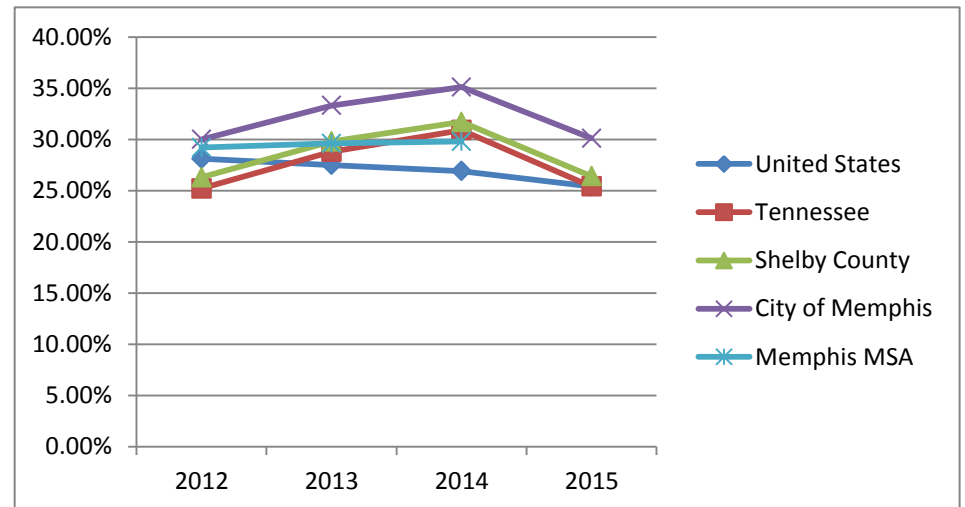
Hispanic Poverty - All Ages



Non-Hispanic White Poverty- All Ages

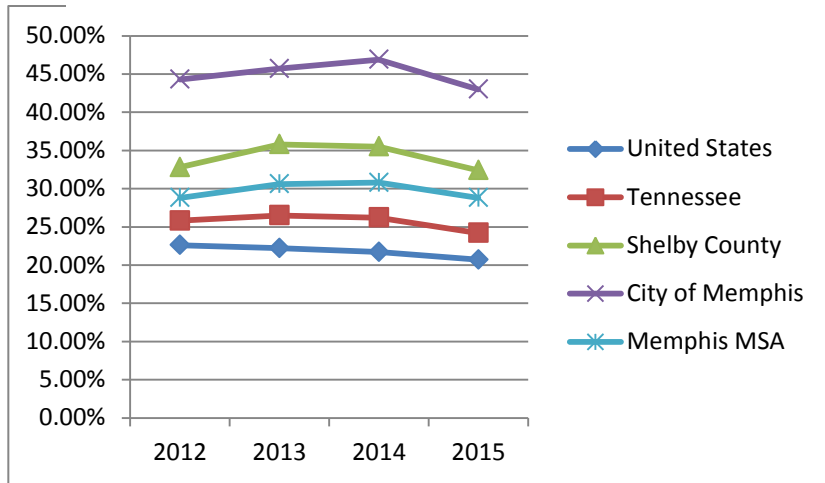


African American Poverty- All Ages

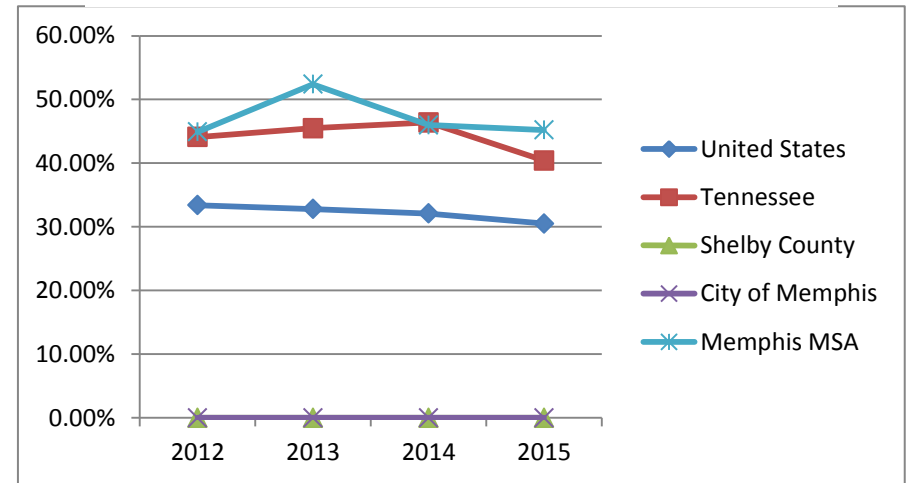


Tables and charts prepared by Elena Delavega, PhD, MSW, Department of Social Work, University of Memphis, from US Census2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates, 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201; 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201; and 2012 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 3-Year Estimates, Table S0201

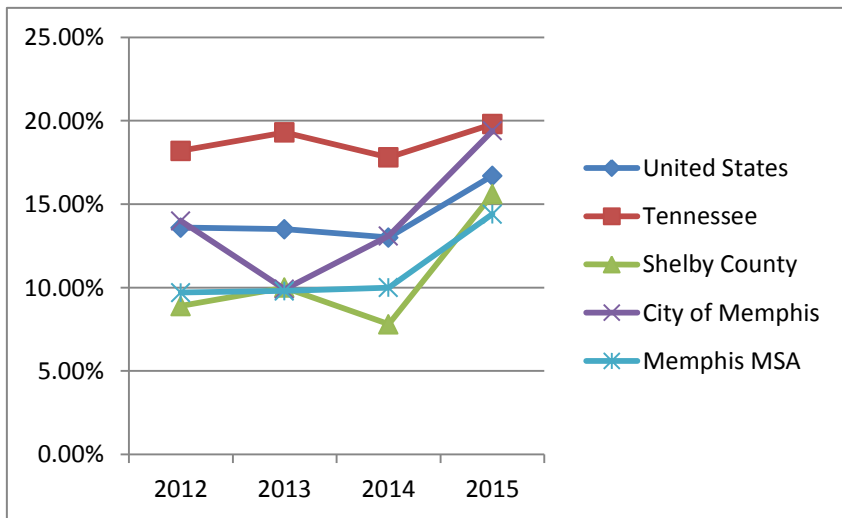
Child Poverty- All Races



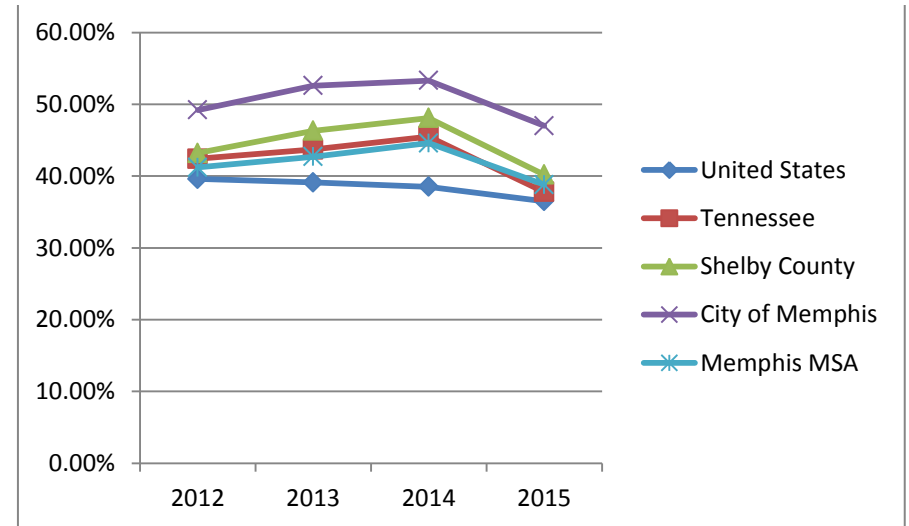
Child Poverty- Hispanic



Child Poverty- Non-Hispanic White

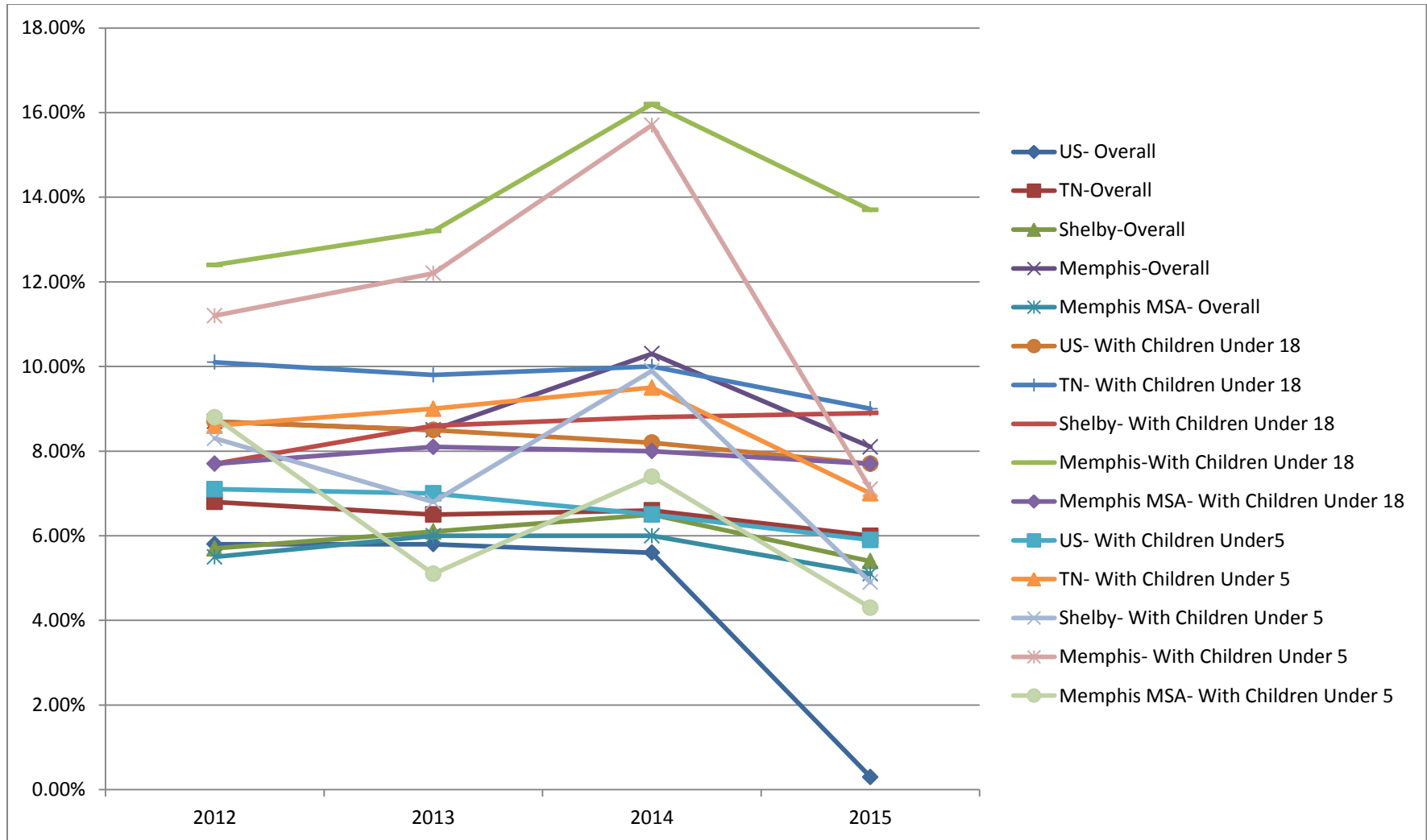


Child Poverty- African American



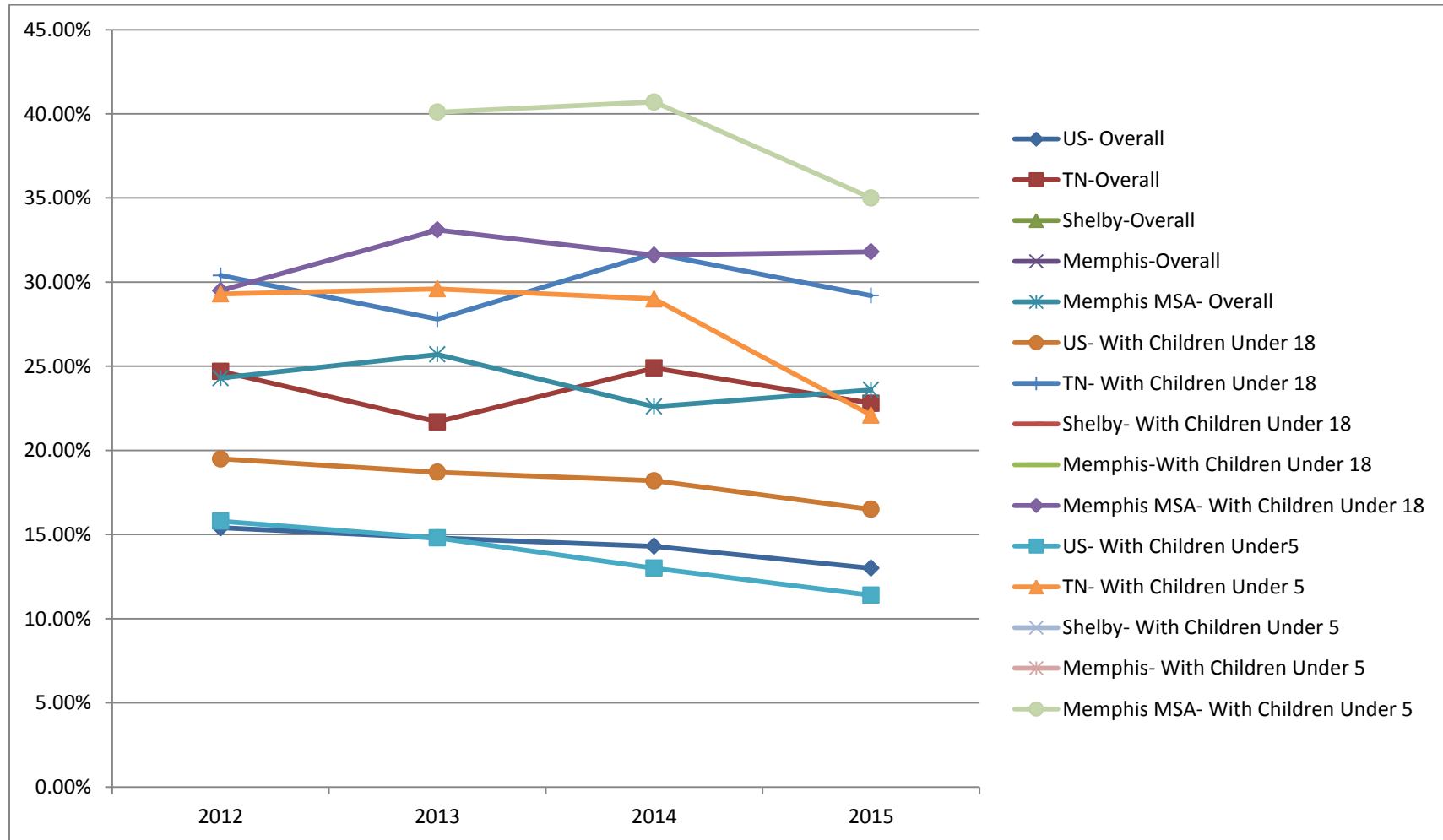
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Poverty- Married Couple Households- All Races



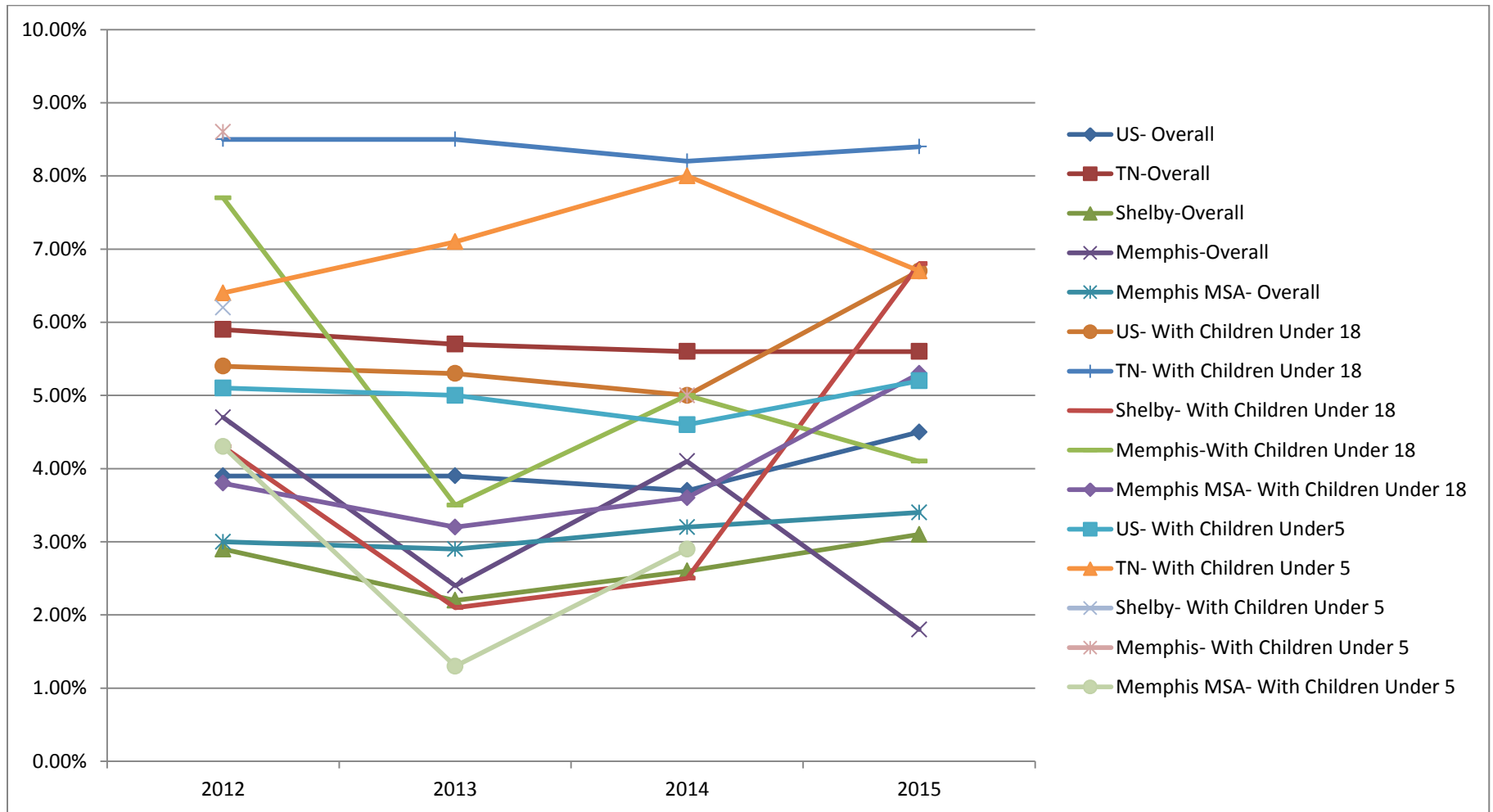
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Poverty- Married Couple Households- Hispanic



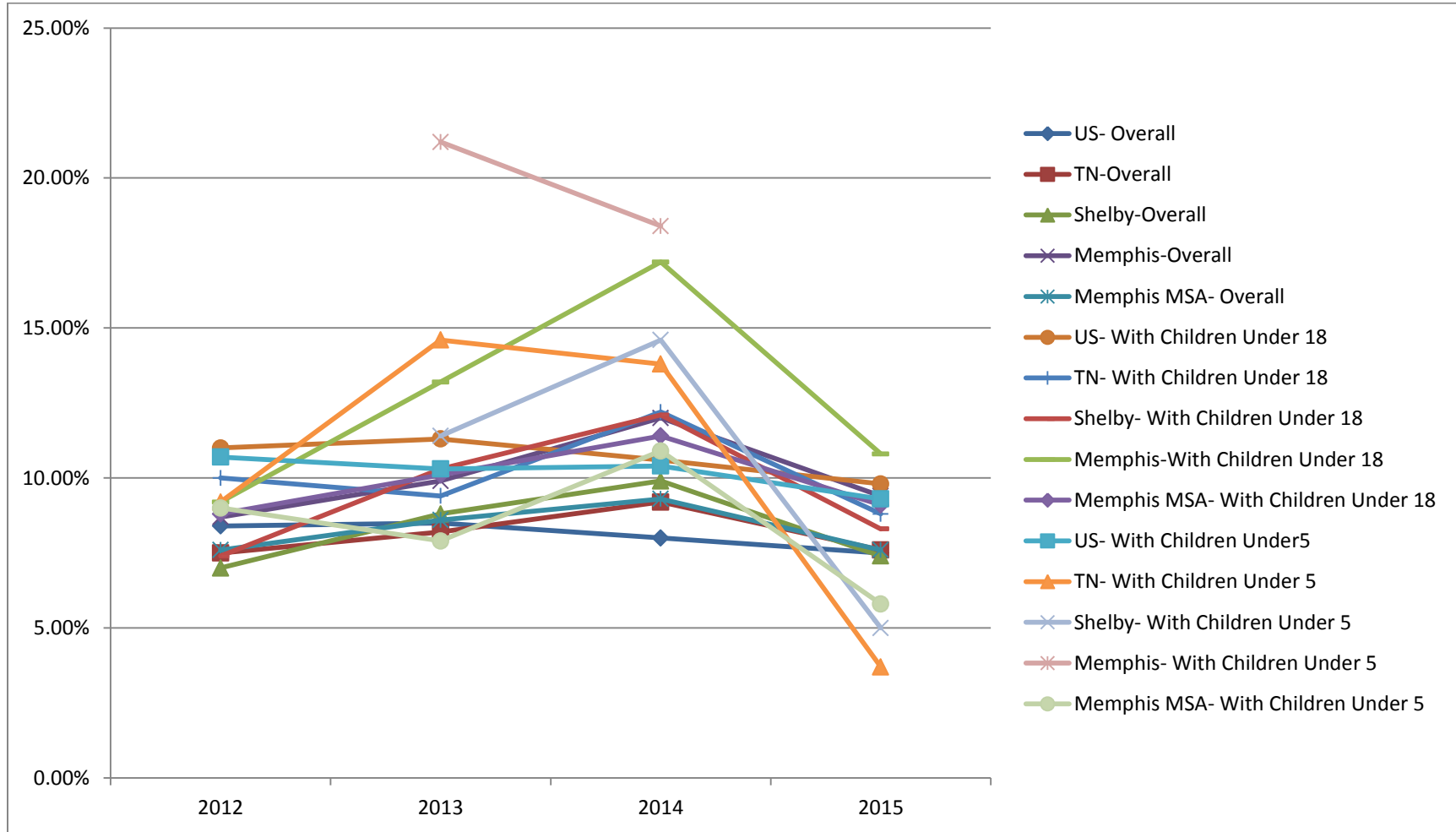
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Poverty- Married Couple Household- Non-Hispanic White



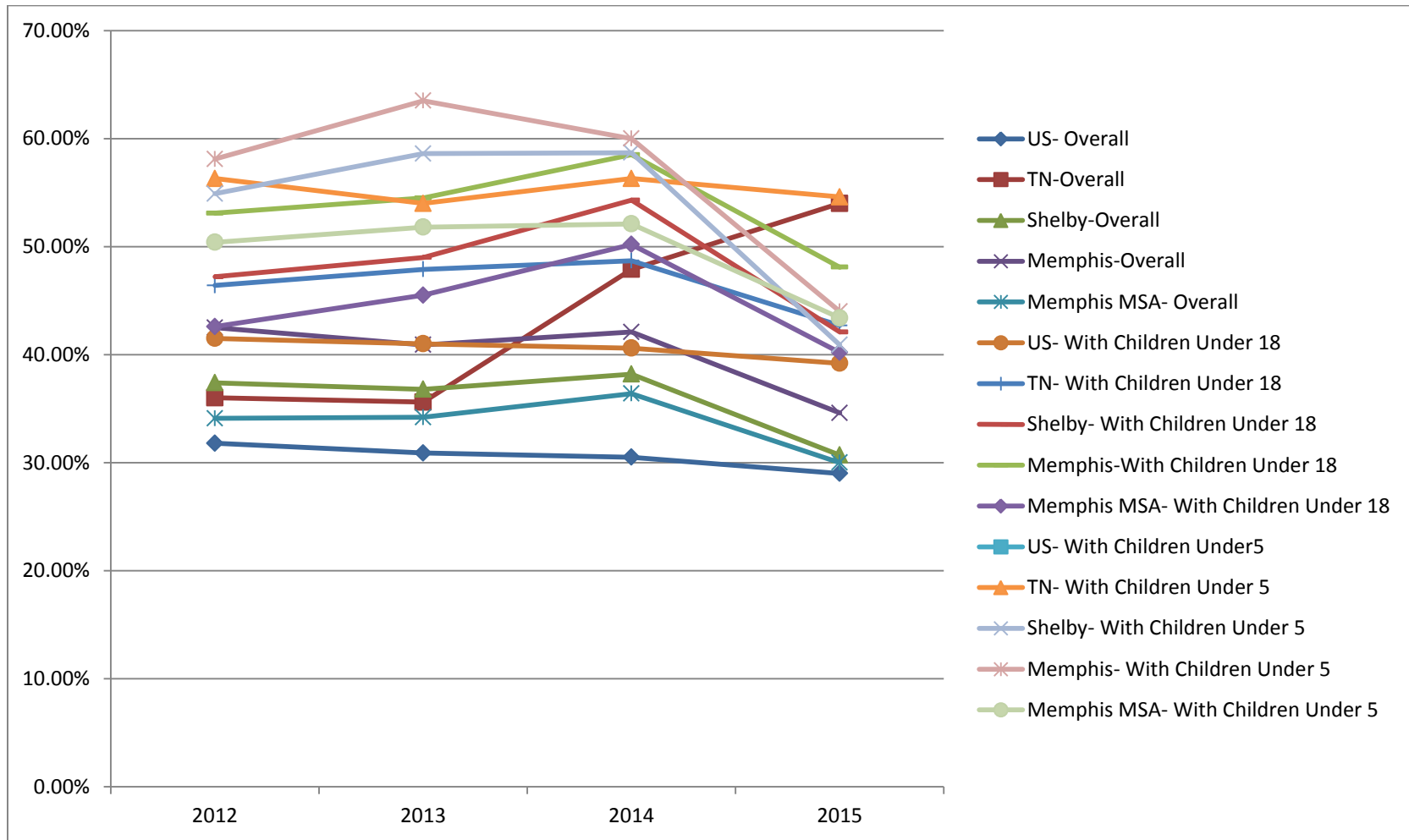
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Poverty- Married Couple Household- African American



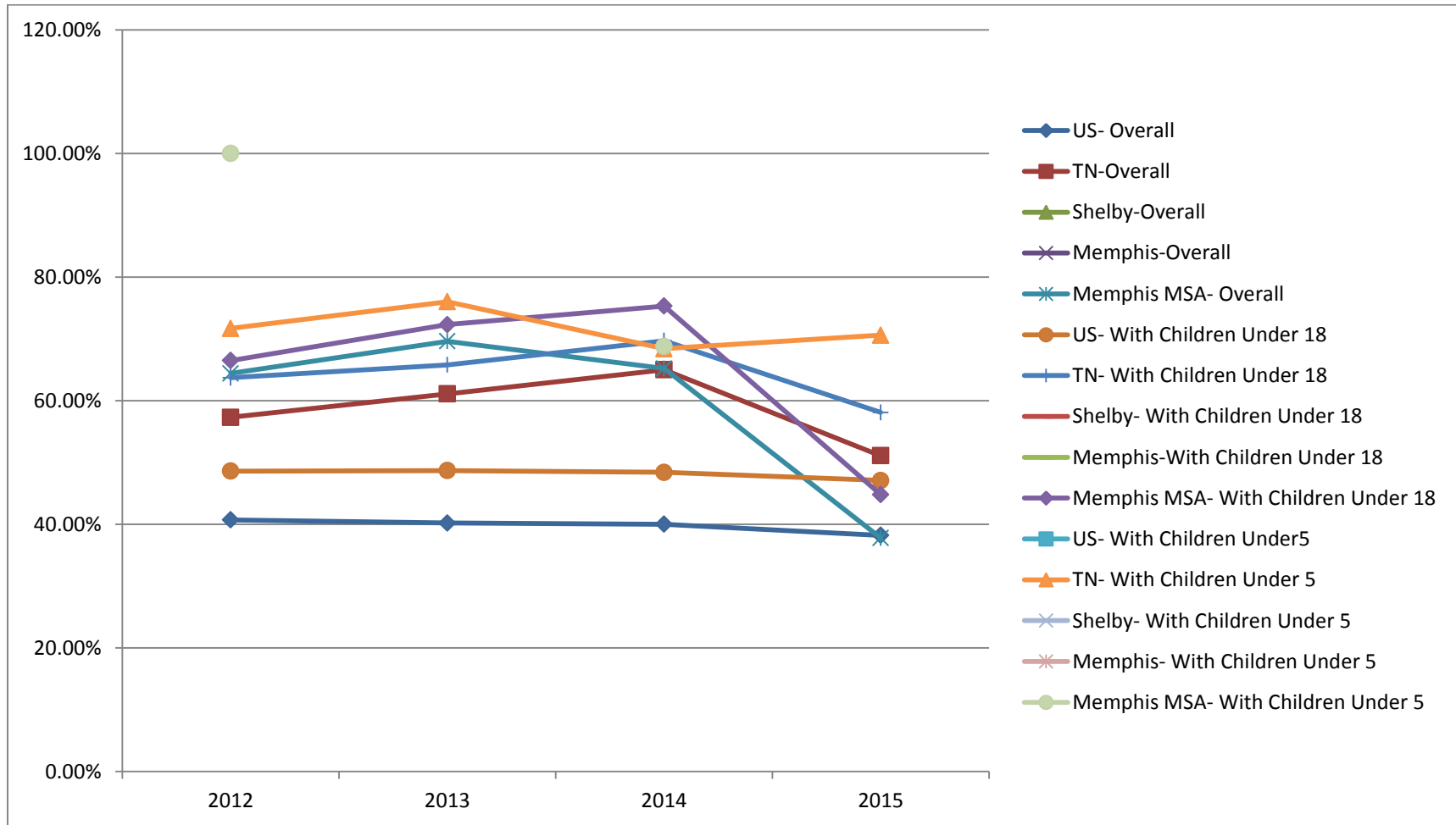
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Poverty- Female- Head Households- All Races



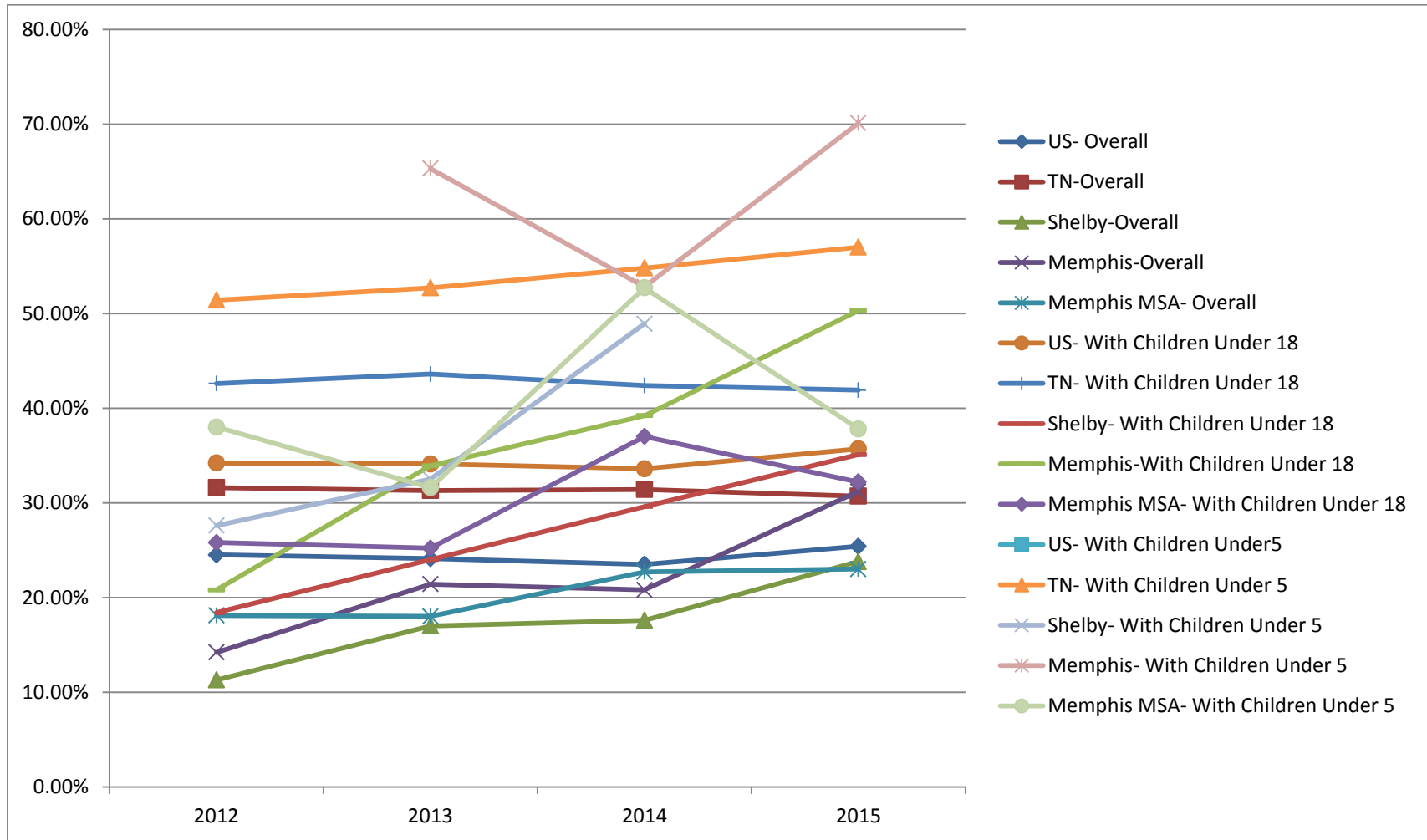
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Poverty- Female- Head Household- Hispanic



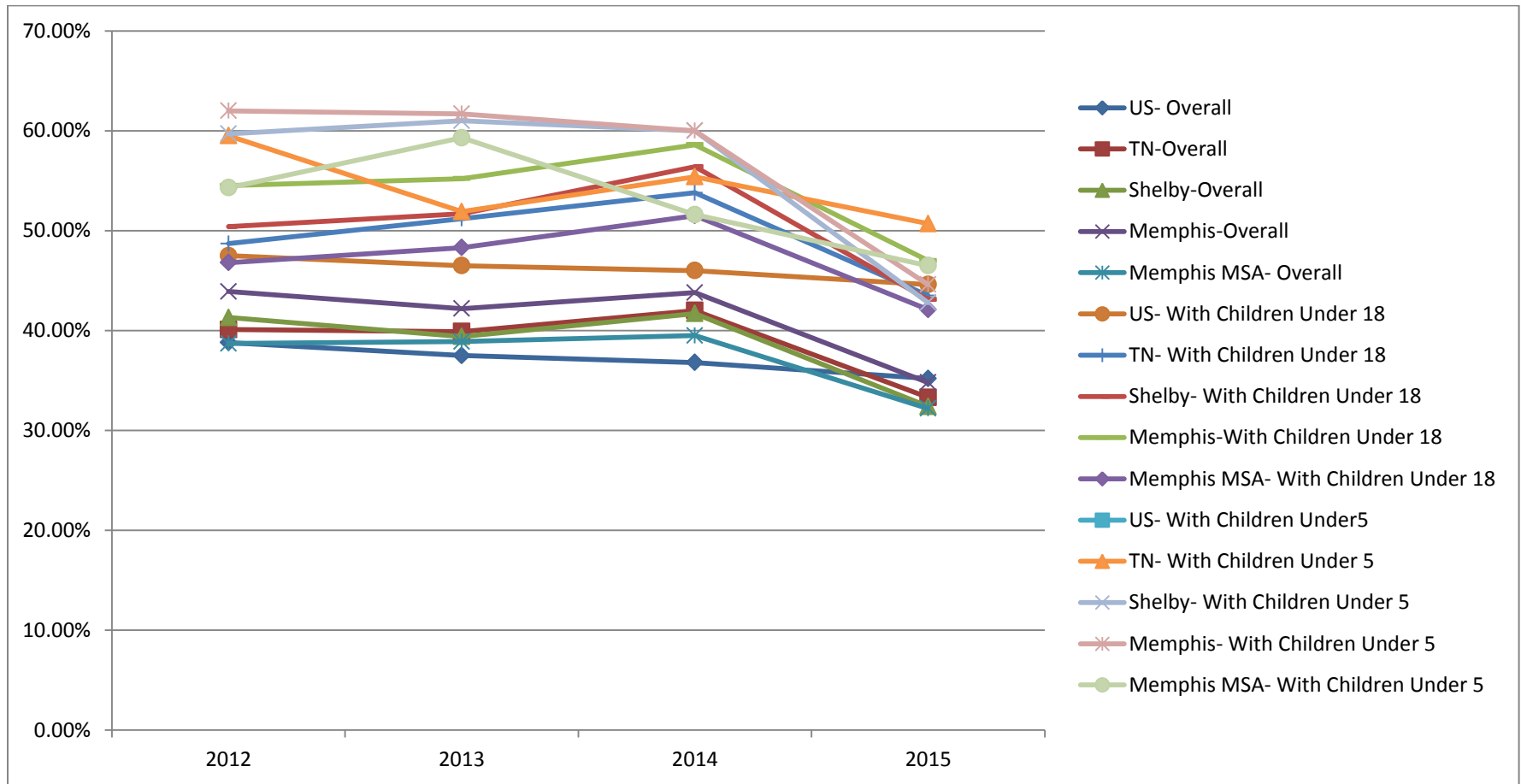
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Poverty- Female- Head Household- Non-Hispanic White



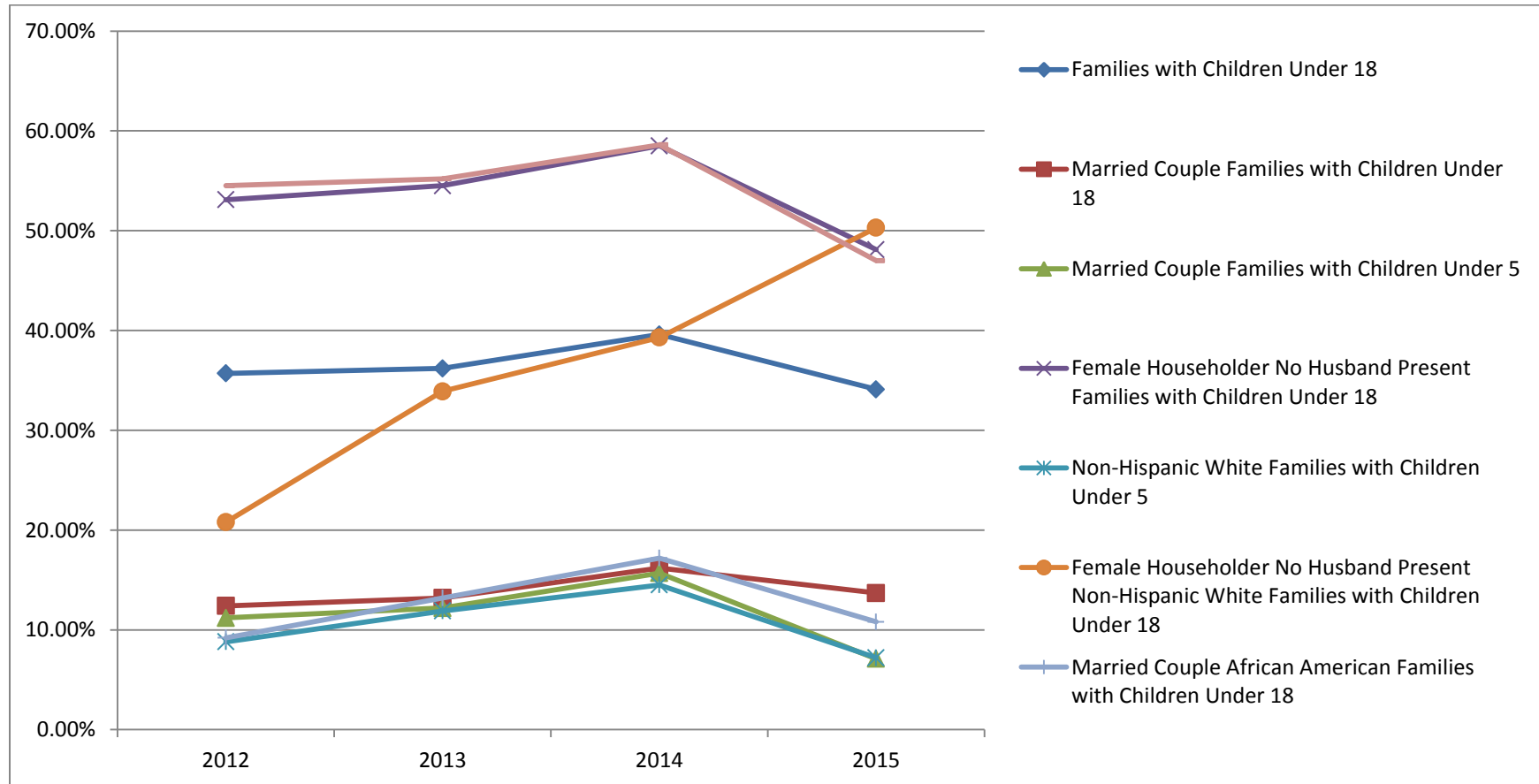
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Poverty- Female- Head Households- African American



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Memphis Poverty: Groups Experiencing Consistent Increases



Department of Social Work in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Memphis is dedicated to understanding poverty and its causes through research and engaged scholarship. Our purpose is to identify the most effective ways to eliminate poverty and promote social and economic development for our region. If you would like more information on Memphis poverty, please contact Dr. Elena Delavega at mdlavega@memphis.edu