2015 National Content Test
Preliminary Results on Race and Ethnicity

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Presentation for National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations

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2015 National Content Test (NCT)

- Census Day of September 1, 2015
- Used large, nationally representative sample of 1.2 million addresses, including Puerto Rico
- Evaluate and compare different census content
- Refine estimates of national self-response and Internet response rates and continue testing different contact strategies for optimizing self-response
- Content reinterview with subsample of NCT respondents, to measure accuracy
- Overall response rate was 51.9%
Goals for 2015 NCT Race/Ethnicity Research

Key Dimensions to Explore

• Separate questions vs. combined question

• “Middle Eastern or North African” (MENA) category

• Instruction wording and terminology

• Web-based designs to improve question understanding and optimize reporting of detailed racial and ethnic groups
### Question Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Separate</th>
<th>Combined w/ Write-Ins</th>
<th>Combined w/ Checkboxes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8. Is Person 1 Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish?  
Mark all boxes that apply AND print ethnicity in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

- [ ] No, not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
- [ ] Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- [ ] Yes, Puerto Rican
- [ ] Yes, Cuban
- [ ] Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish ethnicity - Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Columbian, Guatemalan, Spanish, Ecuadorian, etc.

9. What is Person 1’s race?  
Mark all boxes that apply AND print ethnicities in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

- [ ] White - Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.
- [ ] Black or African American - Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.
- [ ] Asian - Print, for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.
- [ ] American Indian or Alaska Native - Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Hospital Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.
- [ ] Middle Eastern or North African - Print, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - Print, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.
- [ ] Some other race or origin - Print race or origin, etc.
- [ ] Some other ethnic group - Print ethnicity, etc.

B. Which categories describe Person 1?  
Mark all boxes that apply AND print details in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

- [ ] WHITE - Provide details below.
- [ ] HISPANIC, LATINO, OR SPANISH - Provide details below.
- [ ] BLACK OR AFRICAN AM. - Provide details below.
- [ ] ASIAN - Provide details below.
- [ ] AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE - Provide details below.
- [ ] MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN - Provide details below.
- [ ] NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER - Provide details below.
- [ ] SOME OTHER RACE, ETHNICITY, OR ORIGIN - Print below.
Web-Based Designs

Separate Question for Hispanic Origin

Separate Question for Race
Web-Based Designs

Combined Question for Race and Ethnicity with Write-in Areas
Web-Based Designs

Combined Question for Race and Ethnicity with Detailed Checkboxes and Write-in Areas
8. Which categories describe Person 1?
Mark all boxes that apply AND print details in the spaces below.
Note, you may report more than one group.

- **White** – Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.
- **Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish** – Print, for example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc.
- **Black or African Am.** – Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.
- **Asian** – Print, for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.
- **American Indian or Alaska Native** – Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.
- **Middle Eastern or North African** – Print, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – Print, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.
- **Some other race, ethnicity, or origin** – Print details.
Instructions and Terminology

Instruction Wording:

• *Mark [X] one or more boxes.*
• *Mark all boxes that apply…*
  
  *Note, you may report more than one group.*

Alternatives for Terminology:

• “Race,” “Ethnicity,” “Origin”
  
  *What is Person 1’s race or origin?*
  *What is Person 1’s race or ethnicity?*

• No terms – “categories”
  
  *Which categories describe Person 1?*
Map of 2015 NCT Race/Ethnicity Strata
Reinterview

• About one-in-eight respondents from the initial survey were selected to participate in the reinterview by phone
• Assessed the relative accuracy of the different question designs
• Probed more extensively into the racial/ethnic background of respondents
• Ascertained respondents’ “true” racial/ethnic identity for comparison to their initial responses
Analysis Methodology

• Responses with no ID were excluded since such respondents all received the same content

• Weights
  – Adjusted for non-equal sampling probabilities and nonresponse based on the sampling strata
  – Replicate weights were created and used for variance estimation

• Editing and coding of the race/ethnicity responses

• Analysis of reinterview responses based on people who were able to be matched between reinterview roster and self-response roster
Current OMB standards advise that “race” and “ethnicity” are two distinct concepts; therefore, *Hispanics may be of any race*.

Thus, “**Hispanic**” responses in the census race question are coded as “**Some Other Race**,” rather than classifying them within a particular “race” group (e.g., Asian; Black).

Current OMB standards also advise that when using a **Combined Question format**, both “**race**” (including multiple responses) and “**ethnicity**” may be collected through the combined question, but the selection of **only one category** (either race or ethnicity) in the combined format is acceptable.
Previous Research Findings

**2010 AQE; Race Reporting Among Hispanics in 2010 Census**

- Vast majority of Hispanics **answer** the separate question on “Hispanic origin”...
- ...but most Hispanics **struggle to answer** the separate question on “race”
- Many Hispanics **skip** the separate question on race altogether (13% of Hispanics in 2010 Census)
- Or **repeat what they reported** for the Hispanic origin question (30% of Hispanics in 2010 Census)
- Some Hispanics also report another category (e.g., White; Black; etc.), but it often **does not accurately reflect** how they self-identify (2010 AQE)
Hispanics are able to more easily \textit{answer} the combined question on race/ethnicity.

Vast majority self-identify as \textit{Hispanic} (only).

Combined questions \textit{more accurately reflects self-identity} for Hispanics who also report another category (e.g., White; Black; etc.)

Previous Research Findings

\textbf{2010 AQE}

Combined Race and Hispanic Origin Question
Preliminary Results by Question Format

Separate Questions

vs.

Combined Question with Write-In Response Areas

vs.

Combined Question with Detailed Checkboxes
Race/Ethnicity Distributions by Question Format
(Percent Alone or in Combination)

White lower in Combined Question formats
SOR lower in Combined Question formats

Source: 2015 NCT, Internet responses
Percent Distribution of Hispanic Responses and Non-Hispanic Responses by Question Format

Combined Question approaches more easily allow Hispanics to report their Hispanic identity.

Other categories have similar levels of reporting regardless of question format, consistent with 2010 AQE findings.

Source: 2015 NCT, Internet responses
Percent Distribution of Race for Hispanic Respondents by Question Format

Most Hispanics reported only a Hispanic response in the Combined Questions.

SOR alone and Two or More are higher in Separate Questions.

No differences for Hispanics who identify as Black.

Source: 2015 NCT, Internet responses
Percent of Item Nonresponse by Question Format

Source: 2015 NCT, Internet and paper responses
Detailed Reporting for Major Race/Ethnicity Groups by Question Format (Percent Alone or in Combination)

Detailed reporting was the same or higher across all major categories for the Combined Question with Detailed Checkboxes format.

Source: 2015 NCT, Internet responses
Consistency of Reinterview and Self-Response by Race/Ethnicity Group by Question Format
(Percent Alone or in Combination)

Differences in consistency for Hispanics between Separate & Combined w/ Checkboxes

Source: 2015 NCT
The combined question format appears to elicit higher quality data on race and ethnicity; this is in keeping with the results of the 2010 AQE

- No changes to distribution for major groups
- Decreased Some Other Race reporting
- Lower item nonresponse for the combined race/ethnicity question than for the separate race question
- Same or higher level of detailed reporting
- Higher overall consistency for Hispanics
Preliminary Recommendation for Census Bureau Director

Use the Combined Question with Detailed Checkboxes Design for 2018 End-to-End Census Test
Preliminary Results by Inclusion of MENA Category

No Distinct MENA Category vs.
Including a Distinct MENA Category
MENA Classification

• Researched MENA classifications from 15 government, academic, and non-governmental organizations

• Nationalities in more than half of classifications researched are included in the Census Working Classification

• Census Working Classification of MENA includes:
  • 19 nationalities (e.g., Egyptian, Lebanese, Israeli, etc.)
  • 11 ethnicities and pan-ethnic terms (e.g., Kurdish, Arab, “Middle Eastern,” etc.)
Coding of MENA Responses

8. What is Person 1's race or origin? Mark one or more boxes AND print origins.

- White – Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.
- Black or African Am. – Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.
- Middle Eastern or North African – Print, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.

IRAQI

EGYPTIAN

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PRE-DECISIONAL DOCUMENT
Where MENA Responses are Reported by Presence of MENA Category (Percent Alone or in Combination)

- MENA respondents use MENA category when it is available.
- MENA respondents use White category when no MENA category is available.

Source: 2015 NCT
Self-Response Reporting Patterns of MENA Reinterview Population by Presence of MENA Category

Many people have difficulty identifying as only MENA when there is no MENA category.

Some MENA respondents did not identify as MENA in the self-response.

Source: 2015 NCT
The use of a distinct Middle Eastern or North African category appears to elicit higher quality data for people who would identify with MENA

• People who identify as MENA use the MENA category when it is available

• People who are MENA have trouble identifying as only MENA when no category is available
Preliminary Recommendation for Census Bureau Director

Include a dedicated response category “Middle Eastern or North African” (MENA) for 2018 End-to-End Census Test

* Note: This is one of the designs tested in the 2015 NCT. Future qualitative explorations and research with the 2017 Census Test will examine alternative options for MENA checkboxes and examples, including the use of an “Israeli” checkbox to emphasize the diversity of the Middle Eastern and North African population.
Test alternative examples and detailed checkboxes to represent the broad diversity of the Middle Eastern and North African population.

* Note: This design is proposed for testing in future qualitative explorations and the 2017 Census Test, to emphasize the diversity of the Middle Eastern and North African population.
Instructions and Terminology

• Continue evaluating results regarding instructions
  “Mark [X] one or more boxes” vs. “Mark all boxes that apply”

• Continue evaluating results regarding terminology
  “race/origin” vs. “race/ethnicity” vs. no terms – “categories”
Detailed Reporting Among American Indians and Alaska Natives

Combined Question with Write-In Response Areas

vs.

Combined Question with Detailed Checkboxes
Detailed Reporting Among American Indians and Alaska Natives by Mode and Question Format

Percent of People who are AIAN

- Separate Questions
- Combined Question with Write-In Response Areas
- Combined Question with Detailed Checkboxes

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PRE-DECISIONAL DOCUMENT
2015 NCT Paper Designs for American Indians and Alaska Natives

Combined with Write-In Response Area

- **American Indian or Alaska Native** – Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc. 70.1%

Combined with Detailed Checkboxes

- **AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE** – Provide details below.
  - American Indian
  - Alaska Native
  - Central or South American Indian

  Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat, Nome Eskimo Community, etc. 54.1%

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2015 NCT Internet Designs for American Indians and Alaska Natives

Combined with Write-In Response Area

What are NAME’s American Indian or Alaska Native ethnicities? — Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc. Note, you may report more than one group. (Help)

Combined with Detailed Checkboxes

What are NAME’s American Indian or Alaska Native ethnicities? — (Help)

American Indian
Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, etc.

Alaska Native
Enter, for example, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, Orutsararmuit Native Village, etc.

Central or South American Indian
Enter, for example, Mayan, Aztec, Taino, etc.

67.5%

73.0%
2017 Census Test Design for American Indian and Alaska Native

* AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE – Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Tlingit, etc.

* Note: This design is proposed for testing in future qualitative explorations and with the paper designs for the 2017 Census Test.
Summary of Preliminary Recommendations for 2018 End-to-End Census Test

- Use combined question with detailed checkboxes design
- Include dedicated MENA response category
- Instructions and Terminology – analyzing further
Question for the Advisory Committee

Do you have feedback on any specific preliminary findings or recommendations?
QUESTIONS

DISCUSSION