

NAC Discussion of 2015 National Content Test Research Findings for Improving Data on Race/Ethnicity

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Overall Assessment of Report

- ❖ Detailed and Exhaustive
- ❖ Transparent, Comprehensive and Responsive to Stakeholders
 1. High commitment to the task
 2. Engaged the community at every level of the process
 3. Open to feedback
 4. Sensitive to the complexity of the make-up of the community, and its needs
- ❖ Effective analysis and scientific work
 1. Used large sample of 1.2 million
 2. Use of scientific experts
 3. Evaluation and comparison
 4. Community focus groups
 5. Relatively high response rate of 51.9 %

A word of thanks to Nicholas A. Jones, Roberto Ramirez and Michael Bentley and their team on a very good job.

What Was Covered

- ❖ Examination of several key dimensions for improving the data on race and ethnicity:
 - Separate questions Vs. 2 combined question formats
 - Inclusion of MENA Category
 - Instruction wording plus race and ethnicity terminology
 - Web based designs to improve question understanding and optimize reporting

Observations of Some Key Findings

Question Format

A. The results of NCT indicate that the optimal question format is the **combined question with detailed checkboxes**.

- ❖ Increases reporting within current OMB categories
- ❖ Decreases nonresponse
- ❖ Improves accuracy and reliability
- ❖ Same or higher level of detailed reporting (especially on internet forms)

B. Combined questions with detailed checkboxes and internet platforms are the **most effective means** for allowing individuals to **self identify themselves and increase response rates**.

Observations of Some Key Findings

MENA

A. Results show when the MENA category is available, groups who identify with MENA most frequently report in the category.

- ❖ Decrease in reporting of detailed MENA responses in each of the other major categories (White, Black, SOR, and another category)
- ❖ Similar to the combined question approaches for Hispanics, MENA category allows respondents to report their MENA identity

B. Recommend that MENA category should be treated the same as the Hispanic category.

- ❖ Persons with origins in the MENA can identify with different racial backgrounds
- ❖ Ethnicity is the appropriate approach to this new category

C. Recommend Census treat MENA as one region instead of two with sub-boxes assigned to largest groups by population in the U.S. (Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Iraqi, and Israeli) while using examples to include trans-national groups, Gulf and other African populations.

Questions for NAC

- ❖ What are your thoughts on optimal design question for format (combined question with detailed checkboxes approach)?
- ❖ Do you have any suggestions for outreach and engagement about 2015 NCT research with specific organizations or stakeholders?
- ❖ Given current political dynamics, how does the Census Bureau plan on addressing concerns that all laws protecting confidentiality and privacy will be strictly enforced?
- ❖ Question about next steps with OMB and US Congress?