

Discussant Comments: 2020 Census Update

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Big Picture

- 2020 is around the corner!
- What are remaining uncertainties that might determine success or failure?
- What are specific metrics of success?
 - Cost, accuracy (undercount and overcount), and public opinion about Census Bureau
 - Are decisions being made in consideration of all success metrics?
- Where can CSAC be most helpful?
 - plans made vs. plans to be made

Data Collection and Processing

- For most Americans, online interface is THE way they will interact with 2020 Census
- CSAC had raised concerns about user experience –we would like to be more involved and informed
 - We now understand CSAC demonstration did not capture existing census knowledge/effort, but still raises concerns (perhaps about subcontractor management?)
 - Can we get reports/recommendations from RTI and CSM?
 - What are results from 2017 Census Test instrument testing?
 - How are these internal and external recommendations being integrated with commercial vendor work going forward?

Partnerships and Outreach

- Current information/media environment makes far more difficult than previous decennials
 - Fragmentation makes it harder to reach with message
 - Polarization makes it more likely that it will be politicized
 - 2020 is presidential election
 - Any experiences from NC test in 2016?
 - Microtargeting can backfire
 - Majority of Americans do not like tailored advertising; backlash risk for mismatched message
- Outreach and Online self-response likely to increase overcount
 - How will this be tested in 2017/2018 tests?
- What are Y&R decisions still to be made? What is timeline for identifying targeted messages? CSAC would like an opportunity for meeting with Y&R before decisions made.

Use of Admin Records

- Final list of records and third-party data to be finalized in 2018. How can CSAC help with that decision making?
 - What tests are still being planned? What are range of possible plans for 2020?
 - Does public opinion vary by type of record used?
 - How does record quality vary (by source? By date of record? Age of person?)
 - Given this variation, could use of records exacerbate differential undercount?

2020 Staff/HR

- Census research showed training testing correlated with performance, will it be utilized in 2020?
- Given implications of 2020 innovations for fieldwork, how will training change?
 - How have IT/customer service staffing needs changed for online self-response?

A few final thoughts

- Can researchers work with 2016/2017 test data? Last word was that CB is exploring.
- Public opinion testing took place in 2012-14. If possible, seems worth doing again.