

**2010 Census Alternative Questionnaire Experiment:
Race and Hispanic Origin Treatments**

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The U.S. Census Bureau has a long history of researching a variety of approaches to measuring race and ethnicity in the decennial census. This reflects a commitment to improving race and ethnic decennial census results by pursuing a greater understanding of how people self-identify their race and Hispanic origin. The broad research objectives of the U.S. Census Bureau are to design and test questionnaire items that will increase reporting in the standard race and ethnic categories established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), elicit the reporting of detailed race and ethnic groups, lower item nonresponse, and increase accuracy and reliability.¹ The U.S. Census Bureau's next opportunity to engage in such research will be the 2010 Census Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (2010 AQE).

The 2010 AQE will be implemented primarily to test variations in the design of the census mail questionnaire in a decennial census environment. The 2010 AQE experimental forms will be mailed to a national sample of housing units, and replacement experimental questionnaires will be sent to initial-mailing nonrespondents. For housing units that do not respond to the replacement experimental forms, the nonresponse followup enumeration will be conducted as in the production 2010 Census. The 2010 Census mailout/mailback questionnaire will serve as the 2010 AQE control panel. The control panel provides a baseline to which the experimental treatments can be compared. New questions developed for the 2010 AQE treatments are being cognitively tested and reviewed by a panel of subject matter experts. Additionally, a reinterview will be conducted over the telephone with a sample of 2010 AQE mail respondents to assess the accuracy and the reliability of both the control and the alternative race and Hispanic origin treatments (Hill 2008).

The scope of the 2010 AQE race and Hispanic origin treatments is limited to three areas of research (see Table 1). The first research area, referred to as B1, includes several segments. One segment tests the use of modified examples in the race and Hispanic origin questions. Another segment tests the removal of the term "Negro" from the "Black, African Am., or Negro" checkbox response category. Lastly, the B1 treatments test the use of a modified Hispanic origin question instruction that permits multiple responses. The second research area, referred to as B2, focuses on multiple approaches to combining the race and Hispanic origin questions into one item. The third research area, referred to as B4, includes experimenting with ways to clarify that the Asian and the Pacific Islander checkbox response categories are part of two broader OMB race groups. This set of treatments also tests limiting the use of the term "race" in the race question. Additionally, two features included as part of B1 (the removal of the term "Negro" and modifying examples in the race question) are also being tested within the context of B4 treatments.

¹ U.S. federal government agencies must adhere to the 1997 Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, issued by the Office of Management and Budget. The standards are available at the following website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html>.

Appendix A provides a visual layout of the eleven experimental treatments and the control panel.² The remainder of this paper describes the purpose and design rationale for the 2010 AQE race and Hispanic origin treatments.

Table 1. Summary of 2010 AQE Race and Hispanic Origin Treatments	
B1 Treatment Panels	
B1b	modified examples in the race question
B1c	modified examples in the Hispanic origin question; removal of the term “Negro”
B1d	modified Hispanic origin question instruction to “mark one or more”; alphabetization of the “Other Asian” examples
B2 Treatment Panels	
B2a	“detailed” combined Hispanic origin and race question
B2b	“streamlined” combined Hispanic origin and race question
B2c	“very streamlined” combined Hispanic origin and race question
B2d	“alternative control” combined Hispanic origin and race question
B4 Treatment Panels	
B4a	clarification of the Asian and the Pacific Islander categories; alphabetization of the “Other Asian” examples
B4b	clarification of the Asian and the Pacific Islander categories
B4c	Limited use of the term “race”
B4d	clarification of the Asian and the Pacific Islander categories; alphabetization of the “Other Asian” examples; removal of the term “Negro;” and limited use of the term “race”

² The interaction panels, not included in Appendix A, represent combinations of the B1 race and Hispanic origin treatments to make a fully factorial design. It is not expected that the treatments will significantly interact, but they are being tested together to be certain.

Purpose of B1 Treatment Panels

The purpose of experimental panel B1b, and one purpose of panels B1c and B1d, is to test modified sets of examples in the race and Hispanic origin questions. This research objective was inspired by recommendations from multiple Census Advisory Committees. U.S. Census Bureau research has shown that the use of examples in the race and Hispanic origin questions aids respondents in reporting detailed Hispanic, Asian, and Pacific Islander groups (Cresce and Ramirez 2003; de la Puente and McKay 1995; Gerber et al. 2005; Martin et al. 2004; Martin 2006; McKenney et al. 1988). In order to build upon that research, American Indian and Alaska Native examples are being introduced, and the examples used with the “Other Hispanic,” “Other Asian,” and “Other Pacific Islander” checkbox response categories are being updated. In both cases, examples that reflect the 1997 OMB race and ethnic standards are being used to clarify the type of detailed information being sought.

In other situations, where a respondent is not required to provide a detailed race or origin group, examples can aid in clarifying the population intended to report in a particular checkbox response category. For example, while the 1997 OMB race and ethnic standards define those with origins in the original peoples of Europe, Middle East, and North Africa as “White,” the inclusion of Middle Easterners and North Africans may not be obvious to most respondents, thereby increasing misreporting in the “Some other race” category.³

Clarifying meaning is particularly of interest for the “Black, African Am., or Negro” checkbox response category. Research has shown that Blacks with a long American heritage have a growing preference for the term “African American” over the term “Black” (Lavrakas et al. 1994; Sigelman et al. 2005). However, Blacks with more recent ties to the Caribbean or Africa do not usually identify with the term “African American” (Denton and Massey, 1989; Billingsly, 1993; Waters 2001). Furthermore, the 1997 OMB race and ethnic standards are clear that all those with origins in the “Black racial groups of Africa” are to be included in the “Black, African Am., or Negro” checkbox response category. Thus, the use of examples may help clarify and emphasize that this category does indeed include those of Afro-Caribbean or African heritage. The overall goal of testing examples in the race question is to clarify the meaning of checkbox response categories for respondents, thereby increasing the reporting in OMB groups and reducing misreporting in the “Some other race” category.⁴

An additional purpose of panel B1c is to test the removal of the term “Negro” from the “Black, African Am., or Negro” checkbox response category. The negative reaction of respondents to the presence of the term “Negro” in the race question has been well documented by cognitive testing, raised as an issue at Census Advisory Committee meetings, and heard as complaints by respondents who received 2008 American Community Survey questionnaires (Gerber et al. 2005; OMB 1997a; McKenney et al.

³ In response to the Census 2000 question on race, some respondents reported White ethnic groups such as Iranian and Egyptian in the “Some other race” write-in area.

⁴ In response to the Census 2000 question on race, some respondents reported Black ethnic groups such as Haitian or Kenyan in the “Some other race” write-in area.

1988).⁵ The term “Negro” is thought to be still relevant for the older Black population, particularly located in the southern region of the United States, however, it is hypothesized that the removal of the term will have no impact on the level of respondents reporting as Black and it is expected to avoid offending numerous respondents, both Black and non-Black alike.

The primary purpose of panel B1d is to test modifying the Hispanic origin instruction to permit the reporting of multiple responses. This issue first arose during the development of the 1997 OMB race and ethnic standards. However, at that time, attention was focused on developing a race question that permitted the reporting of multiple responses. This is the U.S. Census Bureau’s first opportunity to examine this subject, which the 1997 OMB race and ethnic standards highlighted as an issue for future research.

In the absence of clear instructions in the current Hispanic origin question, two primary patterns of multiple origin reporting have emerged from the review of recent census and survey data. First, some respondents provide “mixed” origins (e.g., “not Hispanic” and “Puerto Rican”). This is thought to represent those who want to report that one parent is of Hispanic origin and the other is not.⁶ Second, some respondents provide “multiple” origins (e.g., “Mexican American” and “Salvadoran”), indicating a diverse background (Ramirez 2005). Thus, panel B1d will primarily examine whether or not a significant proportion of the population report “multiple” or “mixed” origins in the presence of an instruction in the Hispanic origin question to “mark one or more boxes.”⁷

Panel B1d will also test alphabetizing the “Other Asian” examples. This approach enables the testing of whether the way in which examples are listed (e.g., alphabetically or by population size) has an impact on the reporting of detailed responses. The design of these experimental panels is discussed in detail in the following section.

⁵ For the American Community Survey data collection years of 2003 through 2007, the race question did not include the term “Negro.” The checkbox response category was labeled “Black or African American.” In 2008, the American Community Survey began to use a version of the race question that is identical to the format that will be used in the 2010 Census. Therefore, beginning with the 2008 American Community Survey, the race question checkbox response category was changed to “Black, African Am., or Negro.” Staff in the American Community Survey Office noted a number of complaints about the offensiveness of the term “Negro” made by recipients of the 2008 American Community Survey.

⁶ Another interpretation of the marking of a Hispanic origin checkbox (e.g., “Cuban”) and marking the “No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin” checkbox is that the respondent is rejecting the term “Hispanic.” Thus, these types of responses could reflect those who identify as a particular Hispanic group or national origin, but are opposed to the use of the term “Hispanic.” Acceptance and rejection of various identifiers of the Hispanic population can vary by geographic region of the United States, with terms such as “Latino” being favored in the west and southwest region of the United States.

⁷ It is expected that the tabulation of data from a Hispanic origin question that permits multiple responses would be similar to the tabulation of data from the current race question. Thus, general categories such as “Not Hispanic or Latino origin,” “Hispanic or Latino origin,” and “Mixed Origins” could be used. Similarly, reporting patterns within the broader “Hispanic or Latino origin” category could be examined by tabulating the reporting of multiple Hispanic groups, creating categories such as “Puerto Rican alone” and “Puerto Rican alone or in combination.”

Rationale for the Design of B1 Treatment Panels

The design of panel B1b reflects the use of new and revised lists of examples in the race question. Examples have been revised for the “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander” checkbox response categories, and new examples have been introduced for the “White,” “Black, African Am., or Negro,” and “American Indian or Alaska Native” checkbox response categories. In order to apply a consistent approach to the selection and display of examples, it was decided to select the largest population groups in the United States that represent the geographic regions referenced in the 1997 OMB standards’ definitions of each race group.⁸ The selected examples were listed in order of population size on the questionnaire. Additionally, U.S. Census Bureau staff with expertise in the cognitive testing of race and Hispanic origin questions, advised that the number of examples should be minimal, otherwise the set of examples would appear to be an exhaustive list from which respondents should select a response. With additional space constraints for the race question, and the desire to be as equitable as possible across groups, three examples were chosen for most race groups.

Examples were selected for the “Black, African Am., or Negro” checkbox response category to represent North America, the Caribbean, and Africa. The 1997 OMB definition of “Black or African American” includes people having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. However, as the 1997 OMB definition also specifically mentions the term “Haitian,” it should be included as an example. It can also be argued that the unique experience of American Blacks warrants the use of another example to represent North America. The majority of Blacks in the United States are descendents of those who were taken from mainly West African countries, experiencing forced migration and the institution of slavery. This experience makes it more difficult for some respondents to identify specific countries in which they originated, relative to other groups who have come to the United States voluntarily (Jones and Rastogi 2008). Further, including an example that represents North America is expected to avoid confusing U.S.-born Blacks who might mistakenly assume that the “Black, African Am., or Negro” category is now meant for foreign-born Blacks, upon seeing only Caribbean and African examples. Therefore, the examples chosen for testing were “African American,” “Haitian,” and “Nigerian.” “African American” is the largest Black ancestry group in the United States representing North America; “Nigerian” is the largest Black ancestry group representing Africa; and “Haitian” is the group referenced by OMB in its definition of Black representing the Caribbean.

The examples selected for the “White” checkbox response category represent Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. The 1997 OMB standards clearly identify those with origins in the original peoples of these three regions of the world as “White.” Due to concerns similar to the “Black, African Am., or Negro” category examples, four

⁸ To determine the population size of groups, two data sources were used. Data from the 2007 American Community Survey question on ancestry were used as the most recent, and appropriate, source for detailed data on White and Black ethnic groups, as the question on race was not designed to collect this information. However, the question on race was designed to collect and tabulate data on detailed American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, Asian groups, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander groups, thus, data from the Census 2000 question on race, collected on a 100 percent basis, serve as the source (Jones and Rastogi 2008).

examples were selected instead of three to clarify the meaning of the category. With the inclusion of Middle Eastern and North African examples, which may be largely unfamiliar groups to many respondents, there was a concern that this category could be perceived as being for foreign-born individuals. Therefore, an additional example of European national origin, expected to be more familiar to respondents with European ancestry, was chosen. Thus, the examples selected for testing were “German,” “Irish,” “Lebanese,” and “Egyptian,” as they are the largest White ancestry groups in the United States representing Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa.

The American Indian and Alaska Native examples selected represent North and Central/South America. Again, the 1997 OMB standards define those with origins in the original peoples of these regions, and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment, as “American Indian or Alaska Native.” In order to ensure equal representation, examples were chosen to reflect the American Indian, Alaska Native, and Central/South American Indian populations. Therefore, “Navajo” and “Tlingit,” were selected as examples, as they are the largest American Indian tribe and the largest Alaska Native tribe in the United States. “Mayan,” which is considered to be a relatively recognizable and familiar group, was selected as an example to represent Central/South American Indians. Using “Mayan” as an example is expected to serve as a cue for those who are Central/South American Indian to report their tribe(s).

Far East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent are represented in the selected “Other Asian” examples. People with origins in the original peoples of these three regions are classified as “Asian” in the 1997 OMB standards. The largest populations in the United States that represent Far East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, other than the checkbox response categories already present in the race question, were chosen as examples. Thus, “Cambodian,” “Pakistani,” and “Mongolian” were selected as “Other Asian” examples.

The three Pacific Islander cultural groups are represented in the selected “Other Pacific Islander” examples. Those with origins in the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands are defined as “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” in the 1997 OMB standards. The largest populations in the United States that represent Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia, other than the checkbox response categories already present in the race question, were chosen as examples. Thus, “Tongan,” “Fijian,” and “Marshallese” were selected as examples.

The design of panel B1c includes the use of a revised list of examples in the Hispanic origin question and the removal of the term “Negro” from the race question. Examples for “Other Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin” have been revised and displayed using the same approach as was used for the race examples.⁹ The 1997 OMB standards indicate that Hispanic or Latino refers to people of Spanish culture or origin with roots in Central America, South America, the Caribbean, or Spain, regardless of race. Thus, “Dominican,” “Salvadoran,” “Colombian,” and “Spaniard” were selected as examples because they are the largest populations in the United States representing regions of the

⁹ Data from the Census 2000 question on Hispanic origin, collected on a 100 percent basis, were used to determine the population size of Hispanic origin groups.

world that OMB associates with Hispanic or Latino cultures. Additionally, the response category “Black or African Am.” will be used in the race question, reflecting the removal of the term “Negro.”

Modifying the instruction for the Hispanic origin question and alphabetizing the “Other Asian” examples are features being tested in the design of panel B1d. In order to keep the modified Hispanic origin question instruction comparable to the race question instruction, identical language was used. Therefore, the instruction was revised to read “Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? *Mark one or more boxes.*” Additionally, the instruction to “*Print one or more origins*” was added to the “Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin” write-in area.

While other panels that involve the testing of revised examples list them in order of population size, testing a different ordering approach is also of interest. The only set of examples that was not originally in alphabetical order on the control panel is the “Other Asian” examples. Thus, on this panel, all Hispanic origin and race examples are in alphabetical order. Listing examples in the order of population size presents groups that may be more familiar and recognizable to a larger portion of the population, thereby more successfully increasing respondent understanding of the category. The listing of examples in alphabetical order may appear to be a more logical and neutral way of presenting example groups to respondents, however, there is the risk of displaying less familiar and less recognizable groups first, which could potentially confuse respondents.

Purpose of B2 Treatment Panels

The purpose of experimental panels B2a, B2b, B2c, and B2d is to test alternative approaches to combining the Hispanic origin and race questions into one item. Although the OMB race classification system works well for many respondents, there are others, particularly those of Hispanic origin, who do not identify with OMB race categories. A number of studies show that some respondents, particularly Hispanics, view Hispanic origin as a race rather than an ethnic group (Alberti 2006; Gerber et al. 2005; National Research Council 2004; OMB 1995; Rodriguez 2000; U.S. Census Bureau 1997). The U.S. Census Bureau requested that the Committee on National Statistics of the National Academies convene the Panel on the Design of the 2010 Census Program of Evaluations and Experiments (NAS Panel). The NAS Panel reported that race and ethnicity are not really separate notions for many respondents, and the confusion resulting from the use of separate questions might be substantially reduced through the use of a single combined race/ethnicity question. The NAS Panel strongly urged the U.S. Census Bureau to include the B2 treatments in the 2010 AQE (National Research Council 2007).

Due to an increasing number of respondents not identifying with OMB race groups, the classification of responses as “Some other race” has grown considerably over time. For the 1980 Census and the 1990 Census, a significant proportion of the Hispanic population was classified as “Some other race” (OMB 1997a). Census 2000 data show that about 42 percent of Hispanic respondents provided a response to the race question that was

classified as “Some other race alone.”¹⁰ For Census 2000, of all those who were classified as “Some other race alone,” 97 percent reported being Hispanic in the Hispanic origin question (Guzman 2001). The “Some other race alone” population was the third largest race group, behind the “White alone” and the “Black alone” populations in 2000. Thus, when one of the U.S. Census Bureau’s goals is to increase reporting in the OMB race groups, it is problematic that such a significant proportion of the U.S. population is classified in what was intended to be a small, residual category. With the projected steady growth of the Hispanic population, the “Some other race alone” population is expected to continue increasing. Since there is clear evidence that a growing, significant proportion of the U.S. population does not identify with any of the OMB race categories, the U.S. Census Bureau is compelled to explore alternative approaches to collecting race and ethnic data.

Combining the Hispanic origin and race questions into one item has been discussed in the past. With the growth of the “Some other race” population in the 1990 Census, testing a combined question was raised during the review of the 1977 OMB race and ethnicity standards during the 1990s. As a result, testing a combined question did occur in the 1996 Race and Ethnic Targeted Test. This test was a national mail survey that was designed, in part, to evaluate the effect of asking race and Hispanic origin together in one question with an added “multiracial or biracial” category, as well as asking a combined question with instructions to “mark one or more boxes.” The combined question was asked as a two-part item, which included a request for detailed ancestry or ethnic write-in responses. The combined question performed well in terms of lower item nonresponse and percent reporting being of Hispanic origin, but it did not provide the comparable levels of detail on type of Hispanic origin compared to the separate questions (U.S. Census Bureau 1997).¹¹ Thus, in light of the growing “Some other race” population in consecutive decennial censuses, new approaches to combining the race and Hispanic origin questions into one item are being tested in the 2010 AQE. The overall objectives are for the combined question to achieve lower item nonresponse, maintain or improve reporting of Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asians, and Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders, maintain or improve reporting of detailed race and Hispanic origin information, and significantly reduce responses that are classified as “Some other race.”¹² The design of these experimental panels is discussed in detail in the following section.

¹⁰ Many decennial census respondents of Hispanic origin, who do not identify with the OMB race groups, marked the “Some other race” checkbox and/or provided a national origin write-in response (e.g., “Mexican,” “Dominican,” etc.) to the race question. Since Hispanics may be of any race, and cannot be directly assigned to one of the OMB race groups, these types of write-in responses are classified as “Some other race.”

¹¹ A combined Hispanic origin and race question was also tested in the May 1995 Current Population Survey (CPS) Supplement. The basic finding was that significantly more people identified as Hispanic when they were asked a separate question on Hispanic origin than when Hispanic origin was combined with the race question (de la Puente et al. 1995). However, this particular test of a combined race and Hispanic origin question did not permit multiple responses, which is theorized to have led to the lower reporting of Hispanic. Additionally, the May 1995 CPS used two modes of data collection: Computer Assisted Telephone Interview and Computer Assisted Personal Interview – data were not collected via mail, and this may have had an impact on the self-identification of respondents.

¹² In all of the combined question experimental panels, respondents will be allowed to mark all that apply. Tabulations of Hispanic origin and tabulations of race will be produced separately, as well as jointly. Thus,

Rationale for the Design of B2 Treatment Panels

The design of panel B2a represents a “detailed” approach to the combined question. This panel combines the two questions, has write-in areas for each OMB group and “other,” and retains all of the checkbox response categories on the 2010 Census control panel. This version provides an opportunity for all OMB race and ethnic groups to report detailed ethnic information in their own write-in areas – for which many groups have recently lobbied the U.S. Census Bureau and Congress.

The new examples for the “White,” “Black,” and “American Indian and Alaska Native” checkbox response categories used in panel B1b are included in this panel as well. A simple instruction is used that directs respondents to mark one or more boxes and to write in a specific race or origin. The use of both terms “race” and “origin” was included to represent both of the existing OMB concepts. Additionally, the category “Some other race” has been modified to read “Some other race or origin,” which is appropriate for this combined approach. The “Other Hispanic” response category is used to be consistent with the categories “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander.”

For the most part, major checkbox response categories are presented in order of population size and in the traditional order found on the 2010 Census control panel. However, Hispanic checkbox responses are introduced as the third major grouping. Although it is expected that Hispanics will be the largest minority group in 2010, U.S. Census Bureau staff with expertise in cognitively testing race and Hispanic origin questions recommended that the “White” and “Black” response categories appear together first – as these are traditionally well understood categories and will provide a strong cue to respondents as to what information is being collected. The proximity of the Hispanic origin items to White and Black will also enable Hispanic respondents to recognize a place for them to report in this combined question, whereas before no category was present and many respondents went to the bottom of the question and selected “Some other race.”

The design of panel B2b represents a “streamlined” approach to the combined question. This version also provides an opportunity for all OMB race and ethnic groups to report detailed ethnic information in their own specified write-in areas. This approach removes all national origin and ethnic checkboxes, which simplifies and streamlines the presentation of the combined question. All groups that are national origin or ethnic checkboxes on the 2010 Census control panel have been added as examples to their respective checkbox response categories. The national origin and ethnic groups are listed as examples and placed in the same order that they appear on the 2010 Census control

when producing separate tabulations of Hispanic origin, all respondents who marked a Hispanic response category or provided a Hispanic write-in entry will be tabulated as “Hispanic or Latino,” regardless of whether or not race groups were marked. Those who do not mark a Hispanic response category and do not write-in a Hispanic response will be tabulated as “not Hispanic or Latino.” When producing separate tabulations of race, those who marked a race category or provided a race write-in response will be tabulated in the appropriate race group(s), regardless of whether or not Hispanic origin was indicated. Joint tabulations will also be produced to show the race distribution of Hispanics and non-Hispanics. Additional experimental tabulations will be produced that are similar to the current approach to tabulating race data. Thus, tabulations of the proportion of the population who reported being “Hispanic alone” and “Hispanic alone or in combination with races,” for example, will be produced.

panel. This permits the removal of the individual checkboxes, yet still allows the groups to be listed on the questionnaire in the form of additional examples. The other features of this panel, such as the question instruction and the use of the term “race” and “origin” are the same as in panel B2a.

The design of panel B2c represents a “very streamlined” approach to the combined question. This approach also removes all national origin and ethnic checkboxes, which simplifies and streamlines the question. Additionally, a two-part approach is used to further streamline the combined question. Question 8 is used to capture the OMB group(s) which the individual identifies with, as well as an additional category for “other.” Question 9 is used to capture the individual’s detailed race or ethnic group. Therefore, this panel also brings equity to all OMB race and ethnic groups by providing one shared write-in area for reporting all detailed race and ethnic responses.

In Question 8, examples are not used next to the OMB race and ethnic group categories. In this panel, the approach of not associating race and ethnic categories with specific national origins is being tested. International migration is diversifying many countries in the world. There are people who would say that their origin is in Europe – but who are not “White” (e.g., people of African descent living in England or Germany). Additionally, there are people who would say that their origin is in the Pacific Islands – but who are not Pacific Islander (e.g., Chinese living in Marshall Islands). As a result, listing examples that make assumptions about a person’s race or ethnicity based on national origin may be presumptuous and/or problematic. Instead, one set of examples has been added to Question 9, representing a sample of groups from each of the OMB categories.

In terms of population size, the largest and the smallest race and ethnic groups (checkbox groups or examples), which represent each OMB race or ethnic category, were chosen from among those groups already used in other experimental panels to be in the Question 9 set of examples. The examples are listed alphabetically, which is one approach to logically and neutrally present the groups. Thus, the set of examples selected were “African Am.,” “Argentinean,” “Chinese,” “Egyptian,” “German,” “Marshallese,” “Mexican,” “Mexican Am.,” “Mongolian,” “Native Hawaiian,” “Navajo,” “Nigerian,” and “Tlingit.”¹³ Although U.S. Census Bureau experts advise using a minimal list of examples, it was imperative to include additional groups in order to provide a minimum of two examples for each OMB race and ethnic category. This approach is also similar to the one used for listing examples for the question on ancestry (on the American Community Survey), which elicits the types of detailed responses expected to be received here.

¹³ “Mexican Am.” is included as an example along with “Mexican” in order to combat a long known reporting problem that exists for a segment of those of Mexican origin in the United States. U.S. Census Bureau research has shown that those of Mexican origin often view “Mexican” as representing only foreign-born Mexicans. Thus, it is critical to also include “Mexican Am.” because many people of Mexican origin born in the United States identify only with this term (McKenney et al. 1988). For both “Mexican Am.” and “African Am.” the term “American” is abbreviated. This is done to avoid a long known reporting problem where respondents, who are not of African or Mexican descent, may report in either category simply because the term “American” is present. It is the term “American” that a number of respondents identify with and, therefore, end up marking a category inappropriately (McKenney et al. 1988).

The intent of Panel B2c is for respondents to connect marking a box or boxes in Question 8 with providing detailed race and ethnic group(s) in Question 9. There are some pan-ethnic terms (e.g., “Asian” and “Hispanic or Latino”) that have traditionally been clarified by presenting national origin checkbox response categories (e.g., “Chinese,” “Mexican,” etc.). Therefore, a special note is added above the combined question instruction, which directs respondents to complete both Questions 8 and 9. We expect that this visual cue will aid in connecting the marking of race and ethnic checkbox response categories with the request for critical detailed information. This panel also instructs respondents to mark one or more boxes for Question 8. Question 9 asks respondents to write in a specific race or origin or tribe. As in panels B2a and B2b, the category “Some other race” has been modified to read “Some other race or origin.” While this approach may be reminiscent of the three-question approach tested in the 2005 National Census Test, there are important differences.¹⁴ It is expected that the panel B2c design will not confuse respondents by seemingly asking for the same information three times (i.e., a person wanting to report “Mexican American” for the Hispanic origin question, “Mexican American” for the race question, and “Mexican American” for the ancestry question). Further, this approach does not use the term “ancestry” to capture detailed race and ethnic groups, which can be confusing to differentiate from race and Hispanic origin questions.

The design of panel B2d represents the “alternative control” approach to the combined question. Panels B2a, B2b, and B2c reflect significant departures from the 2010 Census control panel. Therefore, one of the combined question experimental panels needs to serve as a type of “bridge” between the control and the combined question approach. The expectation is that this “alternative control” will be useful in reducing confounding effects when analyzing 2010 AQE results. The design of panel B2d basically removes the separation between the Hispanic origin and race questions, and combines the two concepts into one item – leaving most features exactly the same as the 2010 Census control panel. The race category “Some other race” has been modified to read “Some other race or origin,” which is appropriate for a combined approach. Additionally, “Other Hispanic” is used to be consistent with the race categories “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander.”

Purpose of B4 Treatment Panels

The purposes of panels B4a, B4b, B4c, and B4d is to experiment with different ways to clarify that the Asian and the Pacific Islander checkbox response categories are part of two broader OMB race groups, test limiting the use of the term “race” in the race question, and incorporate several features tested in B1 treatments within the context of B4 treatments. The presence of the Asian and the Pacific Islander national origin and ethnic checkbox response categories in the race question often confuses respondents. For example, some respondents, upon seeing the national origin groups, misinterpret the race question and proceed to report White or Black ethnic groups in the “Some other race”

¹⁴ The three-question format used in the 2005 National Census Test included a Hispanic origin question that only had “Yes” and “No” checkbox response categories, a race question that only had checkbox response categories for the OMB race groups and “other,” and an ancestry question to collect detailed race and ethnic groups (Alberti 2006).

write-in area (McKenney et al. 1988; OMB 1997a). This, of course, is not the intent of the current race question.

Further, there is some concern that the U.S. Census Bureau is treating national origin groups as if they were races. For example, due to the current design of the race question, categories such as “Chinese” and “Samoan” are being presented as if they were separate and distinct race groups. The challenge with this design of the race question is clarifying that the U.S. Census Bureau recognizes that checkbox response categories such as “Chinese” and “Samoan” are indeed national origins and not separate races.

Additionally, the term “race” is thought to be a highly politicized word that can evoke strong, and varied, reactions from many people (Kertzer and Arel 2002; Nobles 2000; Omi and Winant 1994; Skerry 2000). Limiting the use of the term “race” on the questionnaire is hypothesized to reduce some of this reaction during data collection, at a minimum, and at a maximum, improve the response rate. Removal of the term “Negro” and alphabetizing the “Other Asian” examples are also included in order to test their interaction with other features of B4 treatments. The design of these experimental panels is discussed in detail in the following section.

Rationale for the Design of B4 Treatment Panels

The design of panels B4a, B4b, B4c, and B4d are similar in their approach. Panel B4a includes two spanners over the Asian and the Pacific Islander checkbox response categories, in order to clarify that the national origins are part of two larger OMB race groups. Additionally, the term “race” is deleted from the instructions to print “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander” groups, as these groups are truly national origins and ethnic groups, not races. Also, the “Other Asian” examples are alphabetized, providing another opportunity to test this approach to presenting examples. Panel B4b solely tests introducing the two spanners over the Asian and the Pacific Islander checkbox response categories. Panel B4c removes the term “race” from the instructions to print “Other Asian,” “Other Pacific Islander,” and “Some other race” groups, as well as from the note preceding the Hispanic origin question and from the race question stem. Therefore, the race question simply asks respondents “Is this person... *Mark one or more boxes.*”¹⁵ Panel B4d includes all of the features found in Panel B4a, and also removes the term “Negro” from the “Black, African Am., or Negro” checkbox response category, as well as limits the use of the term “race.”

¹⁵ Although several B4 treatments test limiting the use of the term “race” in the race question, “race” cannot be deleted from the “Some other race” category label. The U.S. Census Bureau is mandated to retain the category “Some other race,” due to the addition of language annually to the Department of Commerce’s Appropriations bill. The language, authored by Congressman Jose Serrano, specifically states that “none of the funds provided in this or any other Act for any fiscal year may be used for the collection of Census data on race identification that does not include “some other race” as a category (Science, State, Justice, and Commerce Appropriations bill, H.R. 2862, FY2006).

Summary

This paper provides an overview of the purpose, design, and rationale of the 2010 AQE race and Hispanic origin treatment panels. The scope of the 2010 AQE race and Hispanic origin treatment panels is limited to three research areas, in order to focus the experimental panels on selected issues that are expected to impact data quality and clarify the race and Hispanic origin questions for respondents. While the scope is limited, the research agenda is full with testing the use of examples, removing the term “Negro,” permitting the reporting of multiple origins, combining the race and Hispanic origin questions into one item, clarifying the Asian and the Pacific Islander checkbox response categories, and limiting the use of the term “race” in the race question.

The 2010 AQE represents the beginning of the 2020 Census lifecycle content testing. The 2010 AQE was designed to assess *strategies* for improving race and Hispanic origin reporting (e.g., combined question, multiple Hispanic response option, and modified example strategies, etc.), rather than assessing which specific panels should move forward into the 2020 Census lifecycle content testing (Hill 2008). Early in the 2020 testing cycle, in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget and other stakeholders, the U.S. Census Bureau hopes to determine promising strategies from the 2010 AQE and further refine actual race and Hispanic origin questions. The analysis and results of the 2010 AQE will be eagerly awaited, as this research launches the race and ethnic research program that will begin informing the 2020 Census.

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Appendix A

2010 Census Alternative Questionnaire Experiment: Race and Hispanic Origin Panels

2010 Census Questionnaire – Control Panel



This is the official form for all the people at this address.
It is quick and easy, and your answers are protected by law.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Use a blue or black pen.

Start here

The Census must count every person living in the United States on April 1, 2010.

Before you answer Question 1, count the people living in this house, apartment, or mobile home using our guidelines.

- Count all people, including babies, who live and sleep here most of the time.

The Census Bureau also conducts counts in institutions and other places, so:

- Do not count anyone living away either at college or in the Armed Forces.
- Do not count anyone in a nursing home, jail, prison, detention facility, etc., on April 1, 2010.
- Leave these people off your form, even if they will return to live here after they leave college, the nursing home, the military, jail, etc. Otherwise, they may be counted twice.

The Census must also include people without a permanent place to stay, so:

- If someone who has no permanent place to stay is staying here on April 1, 2010, count that person. Otherwise, he or she may be missed in the census.

1. How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2010?

Number of people =

2. Were there any additional people staying here April 1, 2010 that you did not include in Question 1? Mark all that apply.

Children, such as newborn babies or foster children

Relatives, such as adult children, cousins, or in-laws

Nonrelatives, such as roommates or live-in baby sitters

People staying here temporarily

No additional people

3. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home — Mark ONE box.

Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan? *Include home equity loans.*

Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage or loan)?

Rented?

Occupied without payment of rent?

4. What is your telephone number? *We may call if we don't understand an answer.*

Area Code + Number

- -

OMB No. 0607-0919-C: Approval Expires 12/31/2011.

Form D-1 (12-5-2008)

5. Please provide information for each person living here. Start with a person living here who owns or rents this house, apartment, or mobile home. If the owner or renter lives somewhere else, start with any adult living here. This will be Person 1.

What is Person 1's name? *Print name below.*

Last Name

First Name MI

6. What is Person 1's sex? Mark ONE box.

Male Female

7. What is Person 1's age and what is Person 1's date of birth? *Please report babies as age 0 when the child is less than 1 year old. Print numbers in boxes.*

Age on April 1, 2010 Month Day Year of birth

→ **NOTE:** Please answer BOTH Question 8 about Hispanic origin and Question 9 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano

Yes, Puerto Rican

Yes, Cuban

Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — *Print origin, for example, Argentinian, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.* ↴

9. What is Person 1's race? Mark one or more boxes.

White

Black, African Am., or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.* ↴

Asian Indian Japanese Native Hawaiian

Chinese Korean Guamanian or Chamorro

Filipino Vietnamese Samoan

Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.* ↴

Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.* ↴

Some other race — *Print race.* ↴

10. Does Person 1 sometimes live or stay somewhere else?

No Yes — Mark all that apply.

In college housing For child custody

In the military In jail or prison

At a seasonal or second residence In a nursing home

For another reason

→ If more people were counted in Question 1, continue with Person 2.

