

Abstract PAA 2005

Amy Symens Smith

Measurement of Race and Ethnic Origin: Results from the Census Quality Survey

The Office of Management (OMB) issued revised standards in 1997 for collecting, tabulating and presenting data on race and Hispanic origin.¹ Switching from a “mark one race” question to a mark one or more race” question in Census 2000 left many data users unable to make comparisons between Census 2000 data and previous censuses, current surveys and administrative records data.

The OMB issued “Provisional Guidance on the Implementation of the 1997 Standards for Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity” outlining several options for “bridging” between the old and new race categories.² A variety of bridging techniques have been used by academicians³ and by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)⁴ and by the Census Bureau.⁵

NCHS, using National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) data, estimated bridging factors for each multiple race group to their single race component groups. That is, for instance, for persons of White and Black multiple race factors were estimated to determine how many would likely indicate a single race of White and how many would likely indicate a single race of Black. Estimation was done by state, county, age, sex and Hispanic origin.

To update this research a joint project is now underway with NCHS to evaluate the bridging factors. The primary evaluation tool is the Census Quality Survey (CQS),⁶ a stratified random sample of approximately 55,000 households, conducted in the spring of 2001. The CQS used both the “mark one race” and “mark one or more race” instruction. There are several advantages when using the CQS including a much larger sample size and; therefore, the ability to design separate models for each of the 2, 3, 4 and 5 race groups. Additionally, the CQS introduces the option of studying time and mode as covariates.

¹ The Office of Management and Budget. 1997. *Revision to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*. OMB Revised Statistical Policy Directive No. 15.

² The Office of Management and Budget. 2001. Federal Register Notice: Provisional Guidance on the Implementation of the 1997 Standards for Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity. Federal Register Vol. 66, No. 10.

³ James P. Allen and Eugene Turner. *Estimating Primary Single-race Identities for Reported Biracial Populations in the 2000 Census*.

Joshua Goldstein and Ann Morning. 2000. *The Multiple-Race Population of the United States: Issues and Estimates*. Proceeding of the National Academy of Sciences 97(11)623-6235.

⁴ D.D. Ingram, et al. *United States Census 2000 population with bridged race categories*. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 2(135).

⁵ Methodology used to produce county population estimates by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin.

⁶ Census Quality Survey Public-Use Data File: 2001. Technical Documentation. Issued October 2003. David Hubble, et al. Study of Responses to the Census 2000 Race Question Instruction: “Mark One or More Races” and Bridging to Single Race Distributions. U. S. Census Bureau.

An additional advantage of the CQS is the option to study respondents who refused to simplify their race response to a single race. Previous research has provided information on those who did bridge, however, the population who declined to bridge has largely been ignored. CQS interviewers used a probe question when all other attempts failed to attain a single race response, this question will be examined. The focus of this research is to examine the impact of not bridging on the estimation of the bridging factors and to compare these groups on basic demographic characteristics and geographic variability.