

RESEARCH REPORT SERIES
(Survey Methodology #2007-9)

**Cognitive Test of the NRFU Round 3:
Revised Questions**

Jennifer Hunter Childs
George R. Carter III
Dawn Norris
Kristin Hanaoka
Laurie Schwede

Statistical Research Division
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233

Report Issued: January 30, 2007

Disclaimer: This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Cognitive Test of the NRFU Round 3: Revised Questions

September 21, 2006

**Jennifer Hunter Childs,
George R. Carter III,
Dawn Norris,
Kristin Hanaoka,
and Laurie Schwede**

**Statistical Research Division
U.S. Census Bureau**

Cognitive Test of the NRFU Round 3: Revised Questions

Testing Agency: Census SRD

Test Date: May 2006

**Principal Investigator: Jenny Hunter
Childs**

Evaluation Type: Cognitive Test

**Pre-Testing Mode: Interviewer-Administered
Paper**

Sponsor: Census DMD

Survey Title: NRFU

Survey Year: 2008

Universe: Population

Field Mode: M-CAPI

**Documentation: Summaries, Audio-tapes,
Final report**

The Decennial Management Division (DMD) contracted the Statistical Research Division (SRD) to conduct pre-testing on the Non-response Follow-up (NRFU) instrument. SRD began by testing the 2006 Census Test version of the NRFU. These findings are reported in Hunter (2005) and Childs, Gerber, Carter, and Beck (2006). SRD then revised the NRFU questions based on the findings of these pretests and in consultation with Betsy Martin, our Senior Survey Methodologist, and the Population Division (POP). This report summarizes the findings and recommendations from the cognitive testing of the revised NRFU. The results and recommendations from Round 3 found in this report will inform the upcoming 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal and the 2010 Census.

Considerable revisions were made to the 2006 NRFU questions for this pretest. The revisions are described as question-by-question results are presented. We tested only the non-proxy in-person path for this cognitive test. Modifications would need to be made to the script to adapt this to a proxy or telephone interview.

Methods

Between May and July, 2006, 28 interviews were conducted by staff from SRD¹. In the 2006 Census Test, the NRFU instrument was field tested using a mobile-computer assisted personal interview instrument operated on a hand held computer (HHC). This will also be the case for the 2008 Dress Rehearsal and the 2010 Census. For this round of cognitive testing, the NRFU was tested as a paper instrument due to lack of ability to program a revised instrument with a short turn-around.

Participants

Twenty-eight people living in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, DC served as respondents in this cognitive test. Twenty-two respondents were female and six respondents were male. Respondents had a variety of living situations, including living with nonrelatives, living only with nuclear family members, living with nuclear family members and extended family members, and living with nuclear family members and nonrelatives. Households ranged in size from 1 to 11 persons. Households were recruited to have complex living situations including having college students, foster children, current active military personnel, and household members with more than one place to live, allowing us to test the coverage questions in the NRFU. Table 1 shows the racial composition of our respondents. The two respondents

¹ Interviews were conducted by the authors and Amanda Markey, a JPSM Census Summer Intern. Lorraine Randall was instrumental in recruiting and setting up the interviews.

who reported “no race” were of “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin” and the three respondents who reported “some other race” reported their race as “Hispanic” or “Latino.”

Table 1: Racial Composition of Interview Respondents:

Race	Count
White or Caucasian	7
Black, African American, or Negro	16
American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Asian	0
Some Other Race	3
No Race	2
Total	29*

*Note: Total adds to 29 because one respondent described herself as both Black and American Indian.

Table 2 shows the age distribution of respondents.

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age	Count
Under 20	1
20-29	9
30-39	1
40-49	11
50-59	5
No Answer	1
Total	28

Cognitive Techniques

The protocol for the cognitive interviews combined verbal reports with concurrent and retrospective probes. Respondents “thought aloud” while answering the questions, reporting any difficulty they might have had in answering or understanding any of the questions. Interviewers followed each question with a series of concurrent probes. The interviews concluded with an additional set of retrospective debriefing probes that explored the meaning of key terms, identified difficult and sensitive questions, and gauged plausibility of actual NRFU participation.

General Comments

House/Apartment/Mobile Home Fill

Though we have reported this in other rounds of pretesting on the NRFU instrument, we would like to stress the importance of having an automated fill for “house/apartment/mobile home.” If we allow the interviewer to pick a preferred fill early in the interview, then the interviewer will not have to make the judgment about which option to choose at each screen. Additionally,

having an automated fill will reduce screen clutter and, hopefully, make it more likely that the interviewer will learn to read questions exactly as they are worded on the screen.

Reference Date

Respondents tended to think about dates only for the questions with dates in them. While this tendency, in most cases, did not produce any problems, one way to ensure that future respondents do not have problems is to introduce the date early in the interview. This introduction could be in the form of a preamble meant to orient the respondent to the fact that all questions should be answered with April 1st in mind. For example, we could use an introduction like the one that appears before the POP count question on the paper form as an introduction to the entire interview. This introduction would orient the respondent to the date and might eliminate the need for repeating the date across questions.

**The census must count every person living in the United States on April 1, 2010.
This interview will be about the people living or staying here on April 1st.**

Topic-based administration

Since the NRFU questionnaire is administered in a topic-based format, we can take advantage of using shortened questions for later household members. We recommend this strategy whenever the question for the next person immediately follows the previous question. For example, the sex question easily applies this:

I: Are you male or female?

R: Male

I: How about Mindy?

R: Female

The relationship question is not a good candidate for abbreviated follow-ups because it is necessary to convey direction of the relationship in the question text. Additionally, the date of birth and age questions are not ideal candidates for shortened questions because of the way the instrument cycles through age and date of birth for each person.

An additional feature that is of interest to this study is the method by which we applied topic-based administration to the Hispanic Origin and Race questions². For the Hispanic Origin question, we asked the follow up (country of origin) immediately after receiving a “yes” response to the initial question. This would flow something like:

I: Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

R: Yes

I: *Show flashcard (see Appendix C)* Are you Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, or of another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

² A concurrent cognitive study was carried out on the American Community Survey using the alternate “vertical branching” approach to the “Hispanic origin” and “race” question. Results for that study can be found in Chan (2006).

I: How about Mary? Is she of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

R: No

I: How about Juana? Is she of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

R: Yes, she's Dominican.

The Race question was administered somewhat differently. A flashcard (see Appendix D) showing all race response options was shown to the respondents initially, then detailed race was captured immediately. This sounds like:

I: *Show flashcard (see Appendix D)* Using this list, please choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be. White or Caucasian, Black, African American, or Negro, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or Some other race?

R: I'm American Indian.

I: What is [your/his/her] enrolled or principal tribe?

R: Cherokee

I: *Show flashcard* And how about Jack?

R: Jack is White.

I: And how about Lydia?

R: She's Asian and Pacific Islander.

I: Which of the following Asian groups is she from? Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese or some other Asian group such as Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian and so on?

R: She's Thai.

I: Which of the following Pacific Islander groups is she from? Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, or some other Pacific Island group such as Fijian, Tongan and so on?

R: I think she's Fijian.

Findings from this application of the Hispanic origin and Race questions will be presented in the next section.

Question-by-Question Results

This section contains question by question presentation of the revisions that were made based on previous rounds of pretesting of the NRFU instrument, followed by the results from this round of pretesting and recommendations based on those results.

Determining the Path

The following questions are used to determine whether the respondent is a household member or can serve as a within household proxy respondent.

1. **Did you live at <Address> on April 1, 2006?**

Yes – Go to 3

No - Go to 2

2. Is there anyone living <here/ at Address> now who also lived here on April 1, 2006?

Yes

No – *Proxy interview*

Revision

This question was split into two questions. Rather than asking if you or someone in your household was living at the address on April 1st, we ask first if the respondent was, then if not, if someone else living there was also living there on April 1st. This allows us to know immediately whether the respondent was a member of the household on April 1st or not. This knowledge will be used when we get to the roster question. Additionally, it creates two simple questions out of a single complex question.

Findings

No respondents experienced problems with this question. It should be noted that we only tested this question in non-proxy situations.

Recommendation

We recommend using this two-tiered approach. We believe it is much more straight-forward than asking a question involving “you or someone in your household.”

Based on Census Coverage Measurement Person Interview observations, we recommend adding the word “stay” to this question to avoid excluding respondents who do not consider themselves permanent residents of the household, but who stay there most of the time. Additionally, this aligns with our notion of “usual residence.” The revised questions would read as follows:

1. Did you live or stay at <Address> on April 1, 2006?

Yes – Go to 3

No - Go to 2

2. Is there anyone living or staying <here/ at Address> now who also stayed here on April 1, 2006?

Yes

No – *Proxy interview*

3. Is this (house/apartment/mobile home) a vacation or seasonal home or does someone usually live here?

Vacation, seasonal, held for occasional use

Someone usually lives here

Revision

We dropped “held for occasional use” from the question text because in previous cognitive testing it was not understood by most respondents. We left this as a response option, so the enumerator would know what to mark if a respondent offered it. We also combined “vacation home” and “seasonal residence” into one phrase “vacation or seasonal home” to shorten the question and ease the respondent and enumerator burden.

Findings

Most respondents utilized the phrase “usually lives here” to answer this question. Several respondents answered this question utilizing the term “time,” such as “we live there full time,” but these respondents seemingly understood what the question was asking. A majority of respondents understood the question as asking about “if it’s a summer home or if we use it all the time.” Respondents generally understood the terms “vacation home” and “seasonal home” and experienced no major problems.

Interesting cases

One respondent asked whether there was an “other” category, due to her personal situation in which she only goes home every other weekend. She was unsure how to answer this question (even though there is someone always living in her household). This respondent understood the question as asking if she, personally, usually lived there.

Another respondent had the same issue. He thought the question only pertained to him, rather than the household. His situation was that while at school, he lived at a college residence (a shared apartment, not a GQ), and during the summer when school was out, he moved back to his parents’ residence. Around the date of April 1, 2006, he was at the college residence, so he reported for that residence. He considered the college residence a seasonal home, even though his roommate occupied the college residence year round.

One respondent answered that her home was a senior citizen’s home. When probed further, it was revealed that the respondent misinterpreted the question to mean “what type of apartment I’m living in.” The probing revealed that the respondent’s home was a public housing apartment building.

Recommendations

Since some respondents were confused as to the meaning of the question, it might be beneficial to change the order in which the options are read. By doing so, most respondents will hear the category that is applicable to them first, rather than last. The question would read as follows:

Does someone usually live here or is this a vacation or seasonal home?

Someone usually lives here

Vacation, seasonal, held for occasional use

Coverage – Residence Rules and Coverage Questions

Revisions

The residence rules presentation and coverage questions were modified based on repeated findings that in an interviewer-administered questionnaire, the presentation of a flashcard is 1) difficult for the enumerators to administer, and 2) difficult for respondents to interact with (because they did not know whether they should be listening to the interviewer or reading the flashcard). Based on Mode Consistency Guidelines, we have developed a series of questions that convey the same information as the residence rules and coverage questions on the paper form while adapting the questions to be suited for an interviewer-administered format.

Results from these questions will be reported together, though the last question in this series appeared at the end of the NRFU interview. Please note that we recruited specifically for interesting coverage situations. This was successful. Out of 28 cases, all but four either had someone brought in on the undercoverage probes or had someone flagged for overcoverage. This report will describe these cases in detail and will enumerate when these flags were appropriate and in which cases they were not appropriate.

Gathering a Roster

We need to list people living or staying (here/ at this house/apartment/mobile home) on April 1st, 2006. We want to list people where they usually live and sleep. For example, college students and Armed Forces personnel should be listed where they sleep most of the time.

If yes to 1:

{ Let's start with you, what is your full name? Can I have the full names of the other people who were living and sleeping here most of the time? Anyone else? }

If no to 1:

Can I have the full names of the people who were living and sleeping here most of the time? Anyone else?

Findings

This revised roster worked well in most cases. The concept of “live and sleep” was salient to most respondents. The date was also salient in the first part of the question.

Mis-enumerations

The mis-enumerations identified in this cognitive test are fairly typical cases.

1 - We saw a commuter worker who still included herself even though the question asks about where she sleeps most of the time. We do not think there is anything we could have said to make her not include herself at the place where she feels she lives. This person was marked by the overcount question as having another place to live for work.

2 - One respondent listed her boyfriend on the roster who had been deployed to Atlanta for 2 years (expected back in August). Her residence was his “permanent home,” but he

was not living there on Census Day. He was flagged by the overcount question about the military. This respondent also listed a niece who “comes and goes,” but reportedly stays every weekend. The respondent did report the niece had another place to live in response to an overcount question, and she likely should be counted at the other address.

3 - Another respondent in a similar situation listed her son on the roster who only spends 3-4 weeks per year at home. Currently he is deployed in Kuwait. He also got flagged by the overcount probe about the military.

4 - Another respondent included her son and daughter who stay with their grandmother Monday through Friday, thus, most of the time. When probed, she said she included them because she thinks of them as members of her family and they are present on the weekends. These children were flagged with the overcount probe about staying with another relative.

5 - The only case that led to the identification of a problem that we think could be remedied was a respondent who listed people who were there now, but not on April 1st. The lack of a date in the follow-up probe had led her to think about who was there now.

Middle initials

Many respondents (13) did not give middle initials or names in response to this question. Five respondents gave middle names only for themselves and two other respondents gave middle names for some, but not all, household members. Although this series of questions asked for “full names” it seems as though we actually need to probe for middle initial if we expect to get middle initials consistently.

Several issues come into play when it comes to gathering middle initial. Since it is a “conversation” between the respondent and interviewer, respondents are less likely to give middle initial than if they were writing down the information. Several respondents mentioned this. Additionally, on a paper form, one can see the space for middle initial and know it is expected. There is no such prompt in an interviewer-administered survey. The second issue for middle initials is a privacy concern. This came up in a few of the cases. The respondent gave out his/her own middle initial but declined to mention other residents’ middle initials saying that the respondent is unsure whether the other person would want that information revealed.

Recommendations

We recommend revising the question text to probe for middle initial. In addition to soliciting that additional piece of data, separating the question into specific probes for first name, middle initial and last name will keep the respondent from listing names too quickly for the interviewer to input them into the computer. This was a problem noted by the cognitive interviewers in Round 2 of this test (see Childs et al., 2006).

Additionally, we advise scripting April 1st in the follow-up. The recommended question text would read as follows:

If yes to 1:

Let's start with you, what is your first name? Middle initial? Last name? What is the first name of the next person who was living and sleeping here on April 1st? Middle initial? Last name? Anyone else?

If no to 1:

- **What is the first name of a person who was living and sleeping here on April 1st? Middle initial? Last name? Anyone else?**

Undercount Sequence

5a. We do not want to miss any people who might have been staying here around April 1st. Were there any additional people that you didn't mention, for example:

Babies?

Foster children?

Any other relatives?

Roommates?

Yes – **What is that persons name? Anyone else?**

No - Continue

Findings

Out of the 28 interviews conducted, we had seven people added to the roster at this question. Below are descriptions of each of the people mentioned in response to this question:

1 – At “any other relatives?” a 24 year old woman who cycles between 2 households (her mother's and her grandmother's) was added. It is unclear exactly where this person should be counted, but this person would be at risk of being missed as a tenuously attached person.

2 – After hearing the “babies” probe one respondent mentioned another roommate who had been forgotten previously. This person should be counted at this address (though this person is not a baby).

3 – At “any other relatives?” a “cousin's friend” who was staying there and who had no other place to stay was listed. This is likely another tenuously attached person who could have been missed.

4- This question added a college student who lives in a dorm but comes home almost every weekend. This person should have been counted at the dorm.

5 – The respondent recalled a boarder who was staying on April 1st, but had moved out the week of the interview. This person should have been counted at this address.

6 – The respondent mentioned above also added a boyfriend, saying “we live there together, that’s both our apartment, but I just thought it was just uh, me and the kids. I thought the survey was in reference to me and the children. . .” The boyfriend also should be counted at this address.

7 – The respondent listed her niece here who “comes and goes” and only stays every weekend or every other weekend. This person should be counted at her other address.

8 - One respondent mentioned a grandchild whom she had not listed on the roster in the probing to this question. The grandchild stays with her during the day and “maybe” two nights a week, but she did not think this was enough to count her in the household and she ultimately decided not to include her.

A few respondents mentioned people already on the roster, but in these interviews it was clear that the interviewer did not need to add someone else.

Recommendations

If we used this question the same way as the current undercount question – flagging these people for follow-up, this would be a successful strategy. Out of seven “yes” responses, three people should definitely be added, two are tenuously attached and at risk of being missed altogether and the other two likely should have been counted elsewhere.

5b. How about anyone staying here on April 1st who had no other permanent place to live?

Yes – **What is that person’s name? Anyone else?**

No - Continue

Findings

Only one person mentioned additional people at this probe – she mentioned a three person homeless family (friends of a friend) who stayed with her around April 1st because they had no other place to go. This is exactly the type of situation this probe is intended to capture.

Several people mentioned in response to question 5a were mentioned again here. As with the previous question, it was clear that they were not new people to add to the roster, but the respondents mentioned that this question fit their circumstances as well.

Another respondent mentioned here that she currently (but not on April 1st) has a farm manager and her husband who live in their housing unit. If they had been there on April 1st she said she would have reported them here.

This question was understood by respondents to mean both homeless people and people who were between places to live or who were “down on their luck.” Respondents seemed to understand it as intended.

Recommendation

One of two things can be done with this question. It can either be used to represent the residence rule associated with it and can add people directly to the roster, or it can be treated as a part of the undercoverage probe and it can serve as a flag for the Coverage Follow-Up interview. These options will be discussed with the Coverage teams.

5c. Anyone who you don't think of as part of your household, but stays here most of the time?

Yes – **What is that person's name? Anyone else?**

No - Continue

Findings

This question did not bring in any additional people in this cognitive test. However, this question was often interpreted as either meaning the same thing as question 5b or as meaning something like “people visit a lot.” Respondents sometimes thought this could include guests or visitors. We think this question did not work as intended and is likely to lead to more people being included in error.

Recommendation

Drop this question from the sequence.

Overcount Sequence

This sequence immediately followed the undercount sequence. Only one respondent made the mistake of thinking we were still looking for new people to roster, but this is a potential place for misunderstanding. We could remedy this by placing these questions at the end, with the other overcount question, or by having a short orienting sentence if there is more than one person in the household that could read something like this:

Now, thinking of all the people you just mentioned. . .

6a. {Were you/ any of the people you mentioned} living away at college?

Yes – if more than one person in household - **Who?**

No

Findings

In most cases, respondents easily understood this question as meaning living away from parents' home to attend college, either in a dorm or in another living arrangement. It correctly identified several college students living away from their parents' address. The one potential problem is that two respondents who were being interviewed about a house they lived at with roommates while in college responded affirmatively to this question. In these cases, they were living away from their parents' house at college, but were not living away from the interview address. Additionally, in these cases the respondents did not live in college housing, but rather in houses rented in the college town.

Another respondent in a similar situation reported that all her roommates had attended a local university (in the past) and had lived away from their parents' homes while attending college, and she was confused as to how to answer the question. Ultimately, she answered correctly, but this could be prevented by adding a reference period.

The other interesting case here is a respondent who said "no" to this question. She had a dorm room, but did not stay there during the last few months of school. This is a tricky case for our operations because it is likely that person will be listed in the dorm (a GQ), but also listed at a housing unit (which is technically where that person lives and sleeps most of the time).

Respondents correctly said "no" to this question when the interview was conducted at the parents' home and the college students were living there.

Recommendation

Revise the question to focus on college housing (a similar recommendation has been made for the paper form). Additionally, we should consider adding a reference period.

In April, <were you or was anyone> living in college housing?

b. On April 1st, {were you/ was anyone} living away for the military?

Yes – if more than one person in household - **Who?**

No

Revision

For the first 4 interviews, this question did not contain a reference period. This caused variation in answering that was evident in the first two respondents – one answered considering the previous year and upcoming expectations and the other answered based on a narrow interpretation of the word "living." (R's son is often gone for 30-90 days at a time, but she does not ever consider him "living away.") After these interviews, the questionnaire was revised to ask about being away on April 1st, more closely adhering to our residence rule that a person could be counted in a military GQ if he or she was there on April 1st.

Findings

After the revision was made to include the reference date, this question was understood rather clearly. It identified several people who were away for the military on April 1st.

1 – A respondent's husband was deployed to Kuwait from January to April, and then left again mid-June. During the April through June time frame, he actually stayed most of the time on base and should not have been listed in this household at all. He was listed to the original roster – but the respondent noted that she was only including him because that was his "legal" address.

2 – Another respondent’s fiancé was deployed to Atlanta. This person had been gone for a 2-year stint, which would end later this summer. He should have been counted at the base in Atlanta.

3 -One respondent answered “no” to this question because her son was stationed near her home address, just sent away temporarily for 2-week to 3-month intervals. We do not think this is a problem.

Recommendation

Use the question as scripted with the reference period.

c. On April 1st, {were you/ was anyone} in a place like a nursing home, mental hospital or correctional facility like a jail or prison?

Yes – **Who?**

No

Findings

No one answered this question affirmatively. The general feeling towards this question was negative. Respondents often said things like “it’s looking for the black sheep in my family.” The concept of jail was the most salient thing in the question. When asked if other facilities came to mind, general hospitals and rehabilitation facilities were most often brought up. Hospices and half-way houses were mentioned by a few respondents as well.

Recommendation

Change the question to reduce the weight given to correctional facilities. Moving jail to the middle of the question might also make it a little less sensitive.

On April 1st, {were you/ was anyone} in a place like a nursing home, jail, or mental hospital?

16. **(Just to make sure everyone is counted in the right place,
OR
(You have already told me FILL NAMES sometimes stay(s) somewhere else.)**

Ask only for people who answered No to 6a, b, and c:

During the past year, <did NAME> sometimes live or stay somewhere else to be closer to work, to stay at a seasonal or second residence, to stay with another relative or for any other reason?

For next person:

How about NAME? (Did NAME sometimes live or stay somewhere else for any of those reasons?

If yes, For which reason - to be closer to work, to stay at a seasonal or second residence, to stay with another relative or for any other reason?

This question appeared at the end of the interview and was scripted to be administered as follows: If no one in the household had been flagged by the college probe, the military probe, or the GQ probe, then the introduction would be read as “Just to make sure everyone is counted in the right place.” If at least one person had been flagged in those questions, the introduction was to read “You have already told me NAME(S) sometimes stay(s) somewhere else” filling in the names of people flagged earlier. Then, the question would be administered for each person not already flagged for coverage follow-up. It is our understanding that a person need not be flagged multiple times for overcoverage, and that a single flag will indicate the need for a follow-up interview.

Findings

Out of our 28 cases, 15 respondents reported “yes” to at least one of these categories. Remember we recruited for households with mobility, so this high rate is not a surprise. It gives us interesting insight into how these categories performed.

There was a tendency for young adults to think of their parents’ homes as “second residences.” However, if that had not been an option, they might have chosen “to stay with a relative.”

Most respondents in this round were able to exclude short stays away, including vacations and “visits” to stay with friends or relatives.

The reference period was fairly salient to most respondents. Since we introduced the reference period of “the past year,” this question elicited positive responses from people who had left another place and moved into the interview address during the past year, as well as those who had other places where they could have been counted. Right now we will not make any recommendations to remove the reference period, however, because we know from previous cognitive testing that without a reference period some people include events that happened very long ago.

Interesting Cases

1 – The respondent had been splitting her time between her fiancé’s and her father’s households in DC. She correctly reported herself as having another place to live. Her father was also reported as staying with a relative (her sister) because he stayed a weekend to a week per month there. The third person in her household was a tenuously attached man who she reported staying other places and gave the example of a shelter. She did not mention this at the GQ probe. (It should be noted that this respondent was not very cooperative and gave the interviewer a very hard time.) This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

2 – This respondent said that her father “might have a home somewhere else.” She said he stays every weekend (2-3 days per week) at another place. She estimated that he is at the other place about a third of the time. He should still be counted at the interview address, though there might be some risk of duplication depending on the situation at his other residence.

3 – Three children of a respondent were reported to stay with their grandmother during the summer for about four months out of the year. They would be counted at the interview address still, but could be at risk for duplication (if they were at the grandmothers' house during NRFU, for example).

4 – The respondent reported that she stayed with her sister and her female friend sometimes. She reports staying off and on, but a total of about 8 months out of the year at her sisters' house. Her sister is sick right now and her fiancé is deployed, so she still maintains her apartment, but is not staying there most of the time currently (or in the past year). She should have been counted at her sister's address. The respondent reported that her niece also stays with a relative, but in reality that situation is that the niece stays with the respondent on weekends sometimes and with her mother most of the time (so the niece's "other" address is her primary address). This respondent also reported that the homeless family who stayed with her in early April also stayed with a relative occasionally. This is definitely a situation where the 3-person homeless family could have been double counted or missed. On Census Day, the respondent reports that they had no place to go, except for a homeless shelter, so they came to stay with her. However, this family occasionally stays with a relative, so they could have been counted there also. This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

5 – Another respondent reported that her two children live Monday through Friday with their grandmother. They should have been counted at the other address. This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

6 – Another respondent reported that he, his fiancé and his son go back and forth between his apartment and hers. He reports that they stay about half the time at each place. He also said that they would probably all be listed at the other place as well. It is unclear which place these three should be counted, but it is clear that they are at risk for duplication. This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

7 – Another respondent lives with a roommate, but reports staying with a female friend who lives closer to her work two to three days a week. When probed about where she spends most of her time, she said it is about half and half. It is not entirely clear where this person should have been counted, but again, she is at risk for duplication. This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

8 – This respondent lived in a roommate household near the college on April 1st. She reported "yes" for herself and for each of her roommates. She chose "for another reason" to indicate stays with parents (though these were mostly holidays) and stays with boyfriends for herself and her roommates. For the respondent and one of her roommates, the stays were brief and they should definitely have been counted at the interview address. Her other roommate reportedly stayed somewhere else a total of 6-7 months out of the 2 years they lived at the address. It sounds like she should have been counted at the interview address as well, though there is more of a chance that she might have been duplicated at another place.

9 – In the commuter worker household, the respondent who lives most of the time in Virginia, but reported her “residence” in Georgia, said “yes, to be closer to work” to this question for herself and her husband. She should clearly be counted at the other place (despite the fact that she adamantly wanted to be counted in Georgia). Her husband has a second home as well, but he only goes there once a month or so. This respondent did bring up an interesting point about second home versus primary home. When her stepchildren were younger, they lived most of the time at their mother’s home, but came to live with her and her husband on the weekends. She said this question would have been confusing to her because the “other” place was their permanent address (not a second home). This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

10 – The respondent’s son stays “every other day or once a week” with his girlfriend, but the respondent reports that he is at the interview address most of the time. The respondent’s other son also stays somewhere else, “for privacy reasons,” but reportedly also stays at the interviewed address most of the time. Two other people were staying there temporarily because they have no place of their own and have also stayed with a sister and a father and will likely go to stay with a friend and/or grandmother soon. This situation warrants a follow-up interview.

11 – At another household of roommates, the respondent reported both staying with a relative and seasonal residence for himself because he stays with his family and friends in another state sometimes, but only for a total of about 3 weeks per year. For one roommate, the respondent reported staying away for work, for family and for seasonal residence. He listed three states that this roommate travels to and says, all in all, he is probably gone as much as he is home. However, he says the interview address is his “home base” and he spends more time there than at any of the other places. The third person in the household also goes to visit her family in another state about every other weekend. It sounds like all three should be counted at the interview address.

Moves

1 – One of the household members had moved in almost a year earlier, this was reported here. This person should have been counted at the interview address.

2 – Another respondent reported a move here. His fiancé moved in with him in March. She should be counted at the interview address as well.

3 – The respondent who had said “no” to the college question reported “yes” to this question because she lived in the dorm early in the year. This person probably should have been counted at the dorm. This situation warrants a follow-up interview (if only to make sure this person gets removed from this housing unit and counted only in the dorm).

4 – This respondent reported that he was living somewhere else prior to February. He should have been counted at the interview address. Also, here he reported that the last person on the roster was not living here on April 1st, but only recently moved here. This was an error noted previously with the roster.

Interesting Negative Responses

1 – A grandchild of the householder was brought in on the first undercoverage probe. At that point the respondent said she “moves back and forth between her mother’s house and her grandparents’ house depending on how her and her mother are getting along.” She was NOT reported to have another home to this overcount question despite the fact that probing revealed she should have been counted elsewhere. This situation warrants a follow-up interview, but would be flagged for one for undercoverage, even though it was not flagged for overcoverage.

2 – Another respondent in a roommate household reported “no” for everyone for this question despite the fact that one had a girlfriend he stayed with 1-2 nights per week, because he thought that was not enough to count. He should be counted at the interview address, and probably would not be duplicated at the girlfriend’s house.

3 – A respondent in a similar situation said “no” despite reporting staying at his girlfriend’s house 3-4 days a week “because his bed is uncomfortable.” This person is closer to having an even split between two places, and might be at risk for duplication. This situation warrants a follow-up interview, but was not flagged for one.

Recommendations

There is some indication that respondents need to indicate that the “other” address is, in reality, the person’s primary address. This idea has come up in other testing and an alternative is being tested on the paper form that says “at his/her primary residence” in place of “at a seasonal or second home.” We recommend this for the NRFU as well, pending results of cognitive testing with the paper form.

Additionally, we recommend moving away from the focus on “sometimes” staying at any other place and putting more focus on particular places that someone might be likely to stay.

<Just to make sure everyone is counted in the right place, OR You have already told me FILL NAMES sometimes stay(s) somewhere else.>

During the past year, <did NAME> sometimes live or stay someplace else, such as a seasonal or second residence, a primary residence, a relative’s residence, a place you/he/she moved from or any other place?

For next person:

How about NAME? (Did NAME sometimes live or stay someplace else?)

If yes, At what type of place - seasonal or second residence, a primary residence, a relative’s residence, a place you/he/she moved from or any other place?

Tenure

7. Is this <house/apartment/mobile home> owned by you or someone in the household?

Yes – Is it owned with a mortgage or owned free and clear?

No – Is it rented?

Findings

Several participants focused on the “who” interpretation of this question (e.g., “do you own this home, or does someone else own it?”) instead of the “ownership” interpretation (e.g., “is this home owned or not owned?”). As evidence for this misinterpretation, names of members of the household, as well as the mortgage company and landlords were mentioned several times in response to this question. The mortgage company and landlords were also mentioned during probes asking what respondents were thinking when they were answering this question. Additionally, three respondents replied with who rented the home here, mistaking this question for a question asking about head of household.

The unit of analysis may be unclear if a renter believes they are being asked only about their own room in a house. This happened in two of our cases and resulted in confusion answering this question. For example, a respondent may mention themselves as the renter when in fact the house is the unit of analysis and it has a resident owner as well. The goal in these situations is to get the unit status, not the status of the respondent. This proves difficult when the statuses differ.

Terminology

In general, respondents had no trouble distinguishing between owning a home with a mortgage versus free and clear. One respondent declined to answer this portion of the question. Another said the home was owned free and clear, but mentioned that there was actually \$3000 left on the mortgage. She insisted that with this little left she considered it free and clear.

Upon probing, most respondents indicated they would count a home equity loan as a mortgage, while a few said they would not. Understanding the definition of a home equity loan was problematic for several respondents, several of whom flatly stated that they did not know what it is. Others seemed unsure when answering the probe about home equity loans and gave very brief answers without explanation. This may indicate uncertainty about the term. If this term is to be added to the questionnaire, caution should be used that it does not confuse respondents more than it assists them.

Recommendations

Do you or does someone in this household own this <house/apartment/mobile home> or do you rent it?

Own - Is it owned with a mortgage or owned free and clear?

Rent

Neither - Occupied without payment of rent

This will help ensure that the focus remains on someone living in the household.

- Consider adding this sentence as optional text (to be read if the respondent has questions or demonstrates confusion): **“(For the purposes of this Census, home equity loans are considered mortgages.)”**

Reference Person

8. What is the name of the person or one of the persons who <owns/rents> <this/that> <house/apartment/mobile home>?

Revision

This question is aimed at gathering the name of the reference person (known as Person 1 on the paper form). The words “owns” or “rents” in the question text would be filled based on the answer to the previous question.

Informal “rules” for determining the reference person in cases where two or more people could be considered the owner or renter were provided by the Population Division, and respondents’ answers were compared to these rules. These rules have been applied informally in the field, but never automated in the census environment. The rules were: 1) use the respondent as the reference person if s/he lists her/himself as one of the owners (or renters); and 2) if respondent does not list her/himself as an owner (or renter), use the first person listed by the respondent.

Findings

Several respondents answered this question with the name of the mortgage company, indicating that “they hold the deed.” At times, interviewers had to redirect the respondents by asking “whose name is on the deed?”

Two scenarios complicated the answering of this question: 1) households with husband and wife; and 2) households composed of roommates.

- In three cases, a wife at first mentioned two owners (herself and her husband) but when forced to select only one, gave her husband’s name. Reasons given for this selection included the husband’s status as “breadwinner,” that he had the higher income, or that he was listed first on the mortgage. One respondent wondered aloud if the mortgage company had listed the husband first on the mortgage because of “the man thing.” One respondent decided who the owner was by determining who was “head of the household.” This term was offered prior to the interviewer bringing it up. Another respondent stated that the owner was the person “who the mail comes to.” Using the “rules” to determine the reference person would have resulted in the wife as the reference person.
- Several problems related specifically to renters, especially those who considered their relationships to other household members as “roommate or housemate.” Some renters, especially those in cases where each household member has an individual lease, expressed reluctance to pick only one person. One respondent resolved this by picking the person who had lived in the residence the longest. This case would have resulted in a different reference person (the respondent) if we had used the rules. Another refused to

answer and stated that the question did not make sense in his living situation. The question was confusing for one renter who switched from uncertainly naming herself, then changing to another resident since she is not on the lease. When pressed to give one name only, she mentioned a third person who paid the deposit and handles the insurance. Using the rules would have resulted in using the respondent instead of this roommate as the reference person.

Supplemental Findings from Debriefing Questions

Respondents were probed on who they believe to be the “householder” and “head of household,” as well as what they believe these terms mean. They were also asked about whether they believed either a man or a woman could be a “householder” or “head of household,” and whether they believed either of these terms could be seen as sexist.

All respondents believed that either a man or woman could be head of household, although in practice most women defaulted to the male if one was present in the household, particularly if they were married or engaged. Most respondents did not believe “head of household” and “householder” are sexist terms. A few respondents did mention that some people might see them as sexist, but that this view would arise from the interpretation that “head of household” implies inequality, rather than inherent sexism in the term itself. Another respondent believed “householder” was sexist, based on her experience working for an insurance company whose male employees always assumed the householder was the man.

While all respondents were familiar with the term “head of household,” the term “householder” was unfamiliar to many respondents. Most respondents eventually decided (usually with much uncertainty) that householder meant who “owns the house” or has their “name on the lease,” “pays the bills,” or “who’s in charge.”

Most respondents indicated that “head of household” and “householder” generally mean the same thing, but several distinctions were occasionally made:

- Multiple people in one household could be called householders, as householder implied an equal relationship, while head of household was assumed to apply to only one person.
- One respondent said that a householder meant “anyone in the house” while “head of household” meant the person in charge of maintenance and bills.
- One respondent noted that “head of household” implied that the person actually lived in the house and implied a family was present, while householder referred to someone who did not necessarily live in the residence, such as a landlord, and that it also implied that those who did live in the residence were equal, for example roommates.

Interesting Case

- One respondent, who had moved between April 1 and the interview date, and who split her time between three places around April 1, added a new name to the roster (her daughter) when asked this question. Probing revealed a problem with answering for the April 1 date. She was indeed answering for the correct residence (the one she lived in on April 1), but was referring to ownership as of the interview date instead of April 1. Ownership of the home had been transferred from her father to her daughter in May.

This question seeks to determine who “owns” or “rents” the housing unit. When this is limited to one person only in a household with a husband and wife, the questionnaire could accept either spouse as the owner. Using the informal rules listed above almost always would have resulted in a different reference person than if the determination of who to list was left to the respondent. Results from the Census 2000 Special Report: Married-Couple and Unmarried-Partner Households: 2000 (Simmons and O’Connell, 2003) show that married-couple households are more often classified as male-headed than female-headed (87% v. 13%). This round of cognitive testing shows that the wording of the current question, combined with the instruction to choose only one person as the owner, almost always produces a male head of household in husband/wife households. Using the informal “rules” presented to interviewers will bias reporting in the direction of the female as the head of household in husband/wife households. Additionally, the paper version of the questions forces the person completing it to decide which single person to list as the householder.

Based on respondents’ definitions of “head of household,” rewording the question to include the term “head of household” would likely result in capturing the main breadwinner or person who owns the home or is on the lease. In these interviews, this was typically the male. Use of the term “householder” in the question would likely produce confusion, so the term should not be used.

Recommendations

- If the housing unit is owned:
Of the people who live here, who owns this <house, apartment, mobile home>?
- If the housing unit is rented:
Of the people who live here, who rents this <house, apartment, mobile home>?
- If the goal is to maintain trends of more male than female householders, we could implement a forced choice rule by adding the optional text: **(I can only record one name.)**
- If it is determined that it is acceptable to use the respondent as a reference person when that person is a joint owner or renter, then allow multiple responses to this question and allow the computer to choose the respondent (or the person with the lowest line number) as the reference person.
- For households who occupy without payment of rent, the respondent should automatically be used as the reference person.
- Avoid the term “householder.”

Relationship

9. SHOW FLASHCARD

Next I need to record relationships of everyone to **FILL REFERENCE PERSON**. Using the categories on the card, please help me fill in the blanks.

NAME is (REFERENCE PERSON)’s _____.

Husband or wife
Biological son or daughter
Adopted son or daughter
Stepson or stepdaughter
Brother or sister
Father or mother
Grandchild
Parent-in-law
Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
Other relative

Roomer or boarder
Housemate or roommate
Unmarried partner
Other nonrelative

Revisions

Dramatic problems have been documented with inverting relationships, especially for automated interviewer-administered forms (Love and Byrne, 2005). In these cases, an 80-year-old woman may be marked as the reference person's daughter as opposed to mother. Conversely, a 6-year-old child may be marked as the reference person's parent. The problem for both interviewers and respondents is determining which direction the relationship question should be answered. In order to correct this mistake, we revised the question to a "fill-in-the-blank" format where the direction of the relationship is more evident.

Findings

In general, respondents had very little trouble with this question. The fill-in-the-blank format worked well. Almost all respondents easily grasped the concept and mentioned that what they were supposed to do was clear. One problem arose when the whole question was not read for people after Person 1. The question was mistakenly phrased "How about Person 3?" This caused confusion for the respondent who hesitated and had trouble determining in which direction the relationship should be calculated. This went against protocol and was a mistake, but provided a valuable lesson learned; i.e., the relationship question should not be shortened to a "how about. . ." question.

Most respondents at least glanced at the flashcard, and some reviewed it carefully. Almost all respondents thought the flashcard was easy to use, although a few had trouble finding the desired category when it was in the second column. Many respondents mentioned that the flashcard was helpful, but was often unnecessary.

The flashcard certainly helped people in households with nonrelatives find a category. It also helped respondents elaborate on whether their children were biological, adopted, or stepchildren. Respondents often began by stating "son" or "daughter," then after reviewing the flashcard specified biological, adopted, or step. In some cases, however, this specification was still omitted. Respondents who settled on "housemate/roommate" often initially classified their relationship as "friend" until they reviewed the flashcard.

Some respondents had trouble finding a category. Typically, these respondents settled on "other nonrelative" or "housemate/roommate," and occasionally chose "roomer/boarder" or "unmarried partner" as their final categories. One respondent had trouble classifying a husband and wife who

were still legally married and still lived together, but were no longer a couple. In the end, they were classified as spouses.

One respondent considered the present time instead of April 1st as the relevant date. As of April 1st, the relationship had been “roomer” but was now “other nonrelative” (because the person had since moved out). We should be aware of the possibility that other relationships may differ based on the date. Relationships such as spouse, unmarried partner, other nonrelative, and roommate may change depending on a marriage or divorce or a couple’s status. Introducing a reference date at the beginning of the interview may alleviate this problem.

Terminology

“Unmarried partner” was confusing for a few respondents. One did not know to what it referred. Another respondent believed it only applied to gay or lesbian partners and a third respondent initially believed the same, but upon consideration decided it could also refer to opposite-sex partners. Respondents who initially characterized a relationship category as “fiancé” or “boyfriend” often finally settled on “unmarried partner.”

“Other nonrelative” encompassed a variety of categories including: a fiancé, a friend, a live-in male to whom the responding female was very close and lived with long-term (the respondent was reluctant to label him as an unmarried partner and claimed he was not a boyfriend), a tenuously attached person, and the children and boyfriend of a tenant (because the landlord of the house was considered the reference person).

“Roomer/boarder” and “housemate/roommate” were often seen as similar, and “other nonrelative” was often mentioned as indistinguishable from these two categories as well. “Housemate/roommate” was seen as indicating a closer relationship than “other nonrelative.” Typically after some initial confusion and uncertainty, respondents mentioned that “roomer/boarder” suggests payment to some type of landlord, and one respondent suggested that the term “tenant” be used to replace the outdated term “boarder.” One respondent stated that “roomer/boarder” reminded him of a home for foster kids.

Interesting Cases

- A Salvadorean respondent said that it is common for couples from that country to call themselves husband and wife if they live together, regardless of whether they are legally married.
- In one case, a family rented a house from a landlord who also lived in the house. Since the landlord was the reference person, all occupants were classified in their relationship to him, thereby masking the relationships of the entire family to one another.
- In a similar case, the respondent rented a room from the owners who also lived in the house. If the relationships had been reckoned from the respondent, the 9 other people would have been nonrelatives.

Recommendations

- Keep the fill-in-the-blank format, and ensure that the fill-in-the-blank sentence is read in full for each person in the household.

- Consider using headings for the two columns on the relationship flashcard to help respondents find the applicable category more quickly.
- Consider testing a new form of the question by replacing “roomer/boarder” with “tenant.”
- Consider testing an alternative to “unmarried partner” such as “boyfriend or girlfriend.”
- Continue to explore the impact of Salvadoran and other cultural norms on how relationships are determined and named.

Sex

ARE YOU/IS NAME male or female? (Ask or verify)

Revisions

We allowed verification in this round of the NRFU testing to reduce interviewer discomfort.

Findings

In this round of testing, the interviewer had the option to verify sex, or to ask the sex question as it had been done in previous rounds. Whether the sex question was asked or verified, there was no impact on the respondent’s ability to answer the question. There was no difficulty for respondents in answering this question. One respondent laughed when their sex was verified, and another respondent laughed when they were asked the sex question. This shows that whether the question is asked or verified, it can still produce the same results. Further, this question tends to be uncomfortable for interviewers to ask and the verification aspect makes it less uncomfortable for the interviewer.

Recommendation

Allow verification.

Date of Birth and Age

11. **What is YOUR/NAME’S date of birth?**

DK- What was YOUR/NAME’S age on April 1, 2006? If you don’t know the exact age, please estimate.

12. **(For the Census, we need to record age as of April 1, 2006.) So, what WAS YOUR/NAME’s age on April 1?**

Since we were testing a paper script, we had to ask, rather than verify, age. We continue to recommend allowing the computer to calculate age and then verify it.

Since recruiting for this cognitive test focused on households with mobility or tenuously attached people, there were many unrelated households. This impacts the knowledge of the respondent for demographic information of other household members.

Findings

For most respondents in this study, the date of birth and age questions caused difficulty with recall and calculation. Less than half of the respondents were able to answer date of birth and age questions for all household members without any major problems. Of the remaining respondents, several respondents knew the days and months of their household members, but had to utilize the age in order to figure out the year of birth, or vice versa. This caused calculation errors for some respondents. In particular, one respondent who lives in a five-person household could not remember year of birth, so she calculated it from age, miscalculating by as much as two years in some cases. This occurred several times, but may not be a dire concern due to the calculating ability of the NRFU instrument.

Just under half of the respondents had to estimate age for at least one household member. Further, two respondents did not know the date of birth or age of a particular household member. These respondents declined to estimate, so no information was collected about those two household members.

Two factors seemed to affect the ability of the respondent to answer both date and age for all household members: household size and relatedness of household members' birthdates. Household size, in this particular analysis, was separated by households with 5 or more persons (large household), and households with 4 or less persons (small household). There were 10 respondents who did not know date of birth and/or age of at least one person, in large households, compared with 7 respondents who did not know date of birth and/or age of at least one person in small households. Seemingly, larger households are more likely to have at least one unrelated person on their roster.

Respondents living in an unrelated household, which includes at least one or more unrelated persons, had more difficulty in being able to answer both the date of birth and age questions for household members. One respondent living with 3 other unrelated persons, when asked the date of birth question, only knew his own date of birth, and estimated for others. He reported his own age, but then had to estimate ages for rest of the household members.

Overall, respondents seemed more likely to estimate ages than dates of birth. This was shown in several cases, but most explicitly when a respondent who lives in a 6-person household made no attempt to estimate dates of birth for 3 household members, but estimated ages of all three when asked.

Recommendations

No change.

Hispanic Origin

13a. {Are you/ Is NAME} of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

Yes - go to 13b

No – **And what about NAME?** Then, go to 14

Findings

For most respondents, the Hispanic origin question posed no problems with understanding, despite the fact that the examples present in the response options of the paper form were not present until the follow-up question in the interviewer-administered format³. Some respondents did answer the question as if we were asking them to choose between two or three categories, providing answers such as “none of the above,” “Latino,” or “Hispanic Latino.” Three African-American respondents answered “Black” or “African-American,” perceiving the question to be asking about both race and ethnicity. Asking the race question after this question was repetitious for these respondents because they had already provided their race and the race of other household members in their answer to the Hispanic origin question.

The topic-based administration of the question worked smoothly. Two of the Hispanic respondents provided more specific information about Hispanic origin, jumping ahead to the follow-up for the Hispanic origin question. Another Hispanic respondent indicated mixed race/ethnicity in household members by referring to people who were half Spanish and half white. In none of these cases did the respondent indicate difficulty with the question structure.

Respondents interpreted the question consistently, with a few variations. Most respondents interpreted the question to be asking about ethnicity or about having a nationality in a Spanish-speaking country. Spanish-speaking countries included countries in Mexico, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Spain. Three Latino respondents preferred the “Latino” over “Hispanic,” as they reported it was more politically correct. The term “Hispanic” brought up connotations for these respondents of Spanish colonization of Latin America in ways that “Latino” does not. Three female Latina respondents referred to themselves as “Latina,” because the term “Latino” does not recognize their gender. One respondent stated that more feminists of Hispanic origin use the term “Latina.” “Latino” was considered by Hispanic respondents to be a broader term covering people in all of Latin America, whereas “Hispanic” covered either only Mexico or only Spanish speaking countries in Latin America.

13b. SHOW FLASHCARD

Are you Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, or of another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

Findings

When asked the Hispanic origin follow-up question, respondents had little difficulty answering. One respondent was not sure whether she could provide answers such as Dominican American and Salvadoran American, because Mexican American was provided as the only “–American” option on the flashcard. Providing only country of origin was interpreted by most respondents to mean that the person was born in the other country and was not yet a United States citizen, although one respondent from California identified as “Mexican” even though she was born in the United States. One respondent indicated that “Chicanos” are of Mexican descent, but are born in the United States and another respondent indicated that she identified herself more with

³ A recent Pew Hispanic Center study found that only between 20 and 24 percent of Hispanic respondents self-identify as Hispanic or Latino (Suro, 2006). A majority of first generation immigrants identify with their country of origin while a majority of third generation and higher identify as American.

this term at political rallies, but referred to herself as Mexican in other situations. “Mexican American” was interpreted to mean that one had immigrated to the US and had become a US citizen, or that one had been born in the US to Mexican parents. The question was interpreted to be asking for more specific information about Hispanic ethnicity or background.

All but one respondent who was asked thought that people could give multiple countries when answering this question. Two respondents thought that the number of countries given should range from 2-4, whereas another respondent thought that people could give upwards of 6 countries in their answer. One respondent thought that the examples on the flashcard did not help and did not like the fact that the question forced people to categorize themselves. Most respondents thought that the examples helped, but they knew their answer before seeing the examples.

The only difficulty noted with this question dealt with the topic-based format. The method tested in this study involved going back and forth between questions 13a and 13b. Each time a “yes” response was recorded to 13a, 13b was immediately asked. Since 13b has a flashcard, this presented some technical difficulties for the interviewer needing to direct attention to and away from the flashcard between asking about different household members.

Recommendations

Based on testing and after consultation with other SRD staff who conducted an alternative method of topic-based administration for this question, we came up with the following recommendation (which is different from the method we used for testing):

- In both CATI and CAPI interviews, we propose branching Hispanic origin using a subsequent follow-up question. That is, a yes/no question would first be asked for all household members. Then, the detailed Hispanic origin question would be asked for all household members who indicated “yes.” In CAPI interviews, a flashcard would be used along with the administration of the detailed Hispanic follow-up. This approach was found to work naturally during cognitive testing and avoided unnecessary repetition.

This will allow the flashcard to be administered once and to be immediately followed by gathering detailed country of origin for all reported Hispanics.

- Enumerators should be instructed to allow time for the respondent to read over the flashcard before asking the second part of the origin question, as respondents had difficulty reading the flashcard at the same time they were listening to the enumerator.
- Consider more “-American” categories, so that respondents realize that is an appropriate choice for categories other than “Mexican-American.”

Race

14a. SHOW FLASHCARD

Using this list, please choose one or more races that [you/Person 1] consider(s) [yourself /himself/herself] to be. White or Caucasian, Black, African American, or Negro, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or Some other race?

[Note to interviewer: Continue reading list even if respondent breaks in with an answer.]

White/ Caucasian
Black/African American/Negro
American Indian or Alaska Native B Ask 14b
Asian B Ask 14c
Pacific Islander B Ask 14e
Some other race B Ask 14g

[Check all Races mentioned by R] Follow-up for person then ask

And what about NAME?

Findings

Most respondents were able to choose their race or races certainly and quickly without experiencing any problems with the topic-based administration of the question. Some respondents answered that all of the household members were the same race after they realized that we were asking the same question for all household members. Three respondents refused to provide race. One of these respondents thought that all people should be considered “American” and was belligerent throughout the interview, whereas the other two respondents considered their race to be Hispanic or Latino and did not find this option on the card. They did not consider themselves to be “some other race” with one saying, “I’m not an alien.”

When asked if any questions on the questionnaire were difficult or sensitive, several respondents identified the race and ethnicity questions as being such questions. Three African-American respondents found the term “negro” outdated and/or offensive and suggested it be removed from the questionnaire. It was also noted by two respondents that the term “Caucasian” was read aloud in the question, but was (inadvertently) not on the flashcard.

Race was interpreted in many ways. It was understood as a way to classify household members, and as color, nationality, ethnicity, origins, and heritage. One respondent wanted more detail on European descent, as the flashcard provides much detail for different Asian races. Three respondents thought the question was trying to figure out if any household members were biracial or multiracial. All but two respondents thought that people could give more than one race. Six respondents thought that people could give 2-3 races if their mother and father were from different countries. Other respondents thought that people could give an unlimited number of races in the question.

For most respondents, the race flashcard was helpful in defining the desired categories; although many knew what category they fell into without seeing the flashcard. Three respondents thought

that the flashcard was not helpful because they already knew what their race was. One respondent thought that the card would provide more information on countries and thought it was asking at first about ancestry. Another respondent thought that the American Indian description should be widened to cover Indians from South America.

While the flashcard was helpful for many respondents, as with the Hispanic origin flashcard, some respondents said it was difficult to read along on the flashcard while the enumerator was reading the question. More time was needed for them to look at the flashcard before the question was asked. Four Latino respondents asked why Hispanic or Latino was not on the flashcard, as they considered it to be a race or thought that race and ethnicity should be considered together.

Because all acceptable response options were listed on the flashcard, we believe the immediate follow-up questions are necessary. The respondents expect to be able to give a detailed race immediately since it is presented on the flashcard, and it is beneficial for the interviewer to be able to input that answer into the computer before it can be forgotten and unnecessarily repeated.

Recommendations

After consultation with other SRD staff who conducted an alternative method of topic-based administration for this question, we came up with the following recommendation (which is consistent with the method tested in this report):

- For both CATI and CAPI interviews, we propose branching race using an immediate follow-up approach. That is, interviewers would first read the six main race categories to the respondent. If the response(s) to the main question require follow-up (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Some other Race), the interviewer would administer the follow-up(s) for that person immediately. Example statements will be read in the appropriate follow-ups. In CAPI interviews we recommend using a flashcard that lists all of the detailed race categories and examples. Thus, the respondent may provide either a high-level or detailed response at the time the initial race question is presented. By structuring the interview such that we perform an immediate follow-up for the appropriate categories, the interviewer can easily record either a high-level or detailed response. This question structure and use of the flashcard worked effectively during cognitive testing.
- Enumerators should be instructed to allow time for the respondent to read over the flashcard, as respondents had difficulty reading the flashcard at the same time they were listening to the enumerator.

The race questions were considered by some to be difficult and sensitive questions. In particular, some African-American respondents found the term “negro” to be outdated and/or offensive. We propose the following changes for further testing:

- Remove the term “negro” and change the category to “Black or African-American.”
- Clarify whether South and Central American Native Americans should be categorized in the “American Indian” category.

14b. (If American Indian) What is [your/his/her] enrolled or principal tribe?

Findings

Two respondents reported American Indian as their race. One of the respondents was able to identify the tribe, but the other was not. The one who was able to identify the tribe identified a principal tribe as a tribe one is born into and an enrolled tribe as one that one marries into.

Recommendations

No changes.

14c. (If Asian) Which of the following Asian groups [are you/is he/she] from? Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese or some other Asian group such as Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian and so on?

Asian Indian
Chinese
Filipino
Japanese
Korean
Vietnamese
Or some other Asian group? Ask 14d

No Findings

14d. (If some other Asian group) What is that group?

No Findings

14e. (If Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) Which of the following Pacific Islander groups [are you/is he/she] from? Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, or some other Pacific Island group such as Fijian, Tongan and so on?

Native Hawaiian
Samoan
Guamanian or Chamorro
Some other Pacific Islander group? Ask 14f

No Findings

14f. (If some other Pacific Island group) What group is that?

No Findings

14g. (If Some Other Race) What other race group?

Findings

All of the respondents who answered some other race were of Latino origin⁴. One indicated that he was “native from Mexico.” They were not sure why Latino or Latina was not on the flashcard.

Recommendation

No changes.

⁴ In Chan (2006), those in the “some other race” category were also of Hispanic origin.

References

Chan, A. (2006). Report on Topic-Based Mode Consistency CATI/CAPI Cognitive Pretesting in the American Community Survey (ACS). Internal draft report, August 14, 2006.

Childs, J. H., Gerber, E., Carter, G., and Beck, J. (2006). Cognitive Test of the 2006 NRFU: Round 2. U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Research Division Report SSM2006/05. <http://www.census.gov/srd/papers/pdf/ssm2006-05.pdf>

Hunter, J. (2005). Cognitive Test of the 2006 NRFU: Round 1. U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Research Division Report SSM2005/07. <http://www.census.gov/srd/papers/pdf/ssm2005-07.pdf>

Simmons, T., and O'Connell, M. (2003). Census 2000 Special Report: Married-Couple and Unmarried-Partner Households: 2000. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/censr-5.pdf>

Suro, R. (2006). "Understanding Hispanic Respondents." Presentation to DC-AAPOR, August 17, 2006.

Appendix A: Pretested Questions

1. **Did you live at <Address> on April 1, 2006?**

Yes – Go to 3

No - Go to 2

2. **Is there anyone living <here/ at Address> now who also lived here on April 1, 2006?**

Yes

No – *Proxy interview*

3. **Is this (house/apartment/mobile home) a vacation or seasonal home or does someone usually live here?**

Vacation, seasonal, held for occasional use

Someone usually lives here

4. **We need to list people living or staying (here/ at this house/apartment/mobile home) on April 1st, 2006. We want to list people where they usually live and sleep. For example, college students and armed forces personnel should be listed where they sleep most of the time.**

If yes to 1:

{ Let's start with you, what is your full name? Can I have the full names of the other people who were living and sleeping here most of the time? Anyone else }

If no to 1:

Can I have the full names of the people who were living and sleeping here most of the time? Anyone else?

{ Get names }

5a. We do not want to miss any people who might have been staying here around April 1st. Were there any additional people that you didn't mention, for example:

Babies?

Foster children?

Any other relatives?

Roommates?

Yes – **What is that persons name? Anyone else?**

No - Continue

5b. How about anyone staying here on April 1st who had no other permanent place to live?

Yes – **What is that persons name? Anyone else?**

No - Continue

5c. Anyone who you don't think of as part of your household, but stays here most of the time?

Yes – **What is that persons name? Anyone else?**

No - Continue

6a. {Were you/ any of the people you mentioned} living away at college?

Yes – if more than one person in household - **Who?** Mark the college column for these people.

No -

b. On April 1st, {were you/ was anyone} living away for the military?

Yes – if more than one person in household - **Who?** Mark the military column for these people.

No

c. On April 1st, {were you/ was anyone} in a place like a nursing home, mental hospital or correctional facility like a jail or prison?

Yes – **Who?** Mark the GQ column for these people.

No

7. Is this house owned by you or someone in the household?

Yes – **Is it owned with a mortgage or owned free and clear?**

No – **Is it rented?**

8. What is the name of the person or one of the persons who <owns/rents> <this/that> <house/apartment/mobile home>?

PERSON LEVEL QUESTIONS

FOR THE NEXT QUESTION SERIES, ASK FOR EACH PERSON IN THE HOUSEHOLD BEFORE MOVING ON TO NEXT TOPIC

9. SHOW FLASHCARD

Next I need to record relationships of everyone to FILL REFERENCE PERSON. Using the categories on the card, please help me fill in the blanks.

NAME is (REFERENCE PERSON)'s _____?

10. Ask or verify ARE YOU/IS NAME male or female?

ASK DOB/AGE FOR EACH PERSON, THEN ASK FOR THE NEXT, ETC. BEFORE MOVING ON TO 13

11. What is YOUR/NAME'S date of birth?

DK- What was YOUR/NAME'S age on April 1, 2006? If you don't know the exact age, please estimate.

13. (For the Census, we need to record age as of April 1, 2006.) So, what WAS YOUR/ NAME's age on April 1?

13a. {Are you/ Is NAME} of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

Yes - go to 13b

No – **And what about NAME?** Then, go to 14

13b. SHOW FLASHCARD

Are you Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, or of another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

14a. SHOW FLASHCARD

Using this list, please choose one or more races that [you/Person 1] consider(s) [yourself /himself/herself] to be. 1. White or Caucasian, 2. Black, African American, or Negro, 3. American Indian or Alaska Native, 4. Asian, 5. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or 6. Some other race?

[Note to interviewer: Continue reading list even if respondent breaks in with an answer.]

White/ Caucasian

Black/African American/Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native B Ask 14b

Asian B Ask 14c

Pacific Islander B Ask 14e

Some other race B Ask 14g

[Check all Races mentioned by R] Follow-up for person then ask
And what about NAME?

14b. (If American Indian) What is [your/his/her] enrolled or principal tribe?

14c. (If Asian) Which of the following Asian groups [are you/is he/she] from? Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese or some other Asian group such as Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian and so on?

Asian Indian

Chinese

Filipino

Japanese

Korean

Vietnamese

Or some other Asian group? Ask 14d

14d. (If some other Asian group) What is that group?

14e. (If Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) Which of the following Pacific Islander groups [are you/is he/she] from? Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, or some other Pacific Island group such as Fijian, Tongan and so on?

Native Hawaiian

Samoan

Guamanian or Chamorro

Some other Pacific Islander group? *Ask 14f*

14f. (If some other Pacific Island group) What group is that?

14g. (If Some Other Race) What other race group?

Appendix B: Relationship Flashcard

Relationship

Husband or wife

Biological son or daughter

Adopted son or daughter

Stepson or stepdaughter

Brother or sister

Father or mother

Grandchild

Parent-in-law

Son-in-law or daughter-in-law

Other relative

Roomer or boarder

Housemate or roommate

Unmarried partner

Other nonrelative

Appendix C: Hispanic Origin Follow-Up flashcard

Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin

Mexican, Mexican American or Chicano

Puerto Rican

Cuban

Another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin, *for example*

Argentinean,

Colombian,

Dominican,

Nicaraguan,

Salvadoran,

Spaniard

and so on

Appendix D: Race Flashcard

Race

(Choose one or more races)

White

Black, African American, or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native - *Enrolled or principal tribe?*

Asian – includes

Asian Indian

Chinese

Filipino

Japanese

Korean

Vietnamese

Other Asian – for example:

Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – includes

Native Hawaiian

Guamanian or Chamorro

Samoa

Other Pacific Islander – for example:

Fijian, Tongan, and so on

Some other race – *Which race?*