2020 Census: The potential impact of asking citizenship status for racial and ethnic minorities

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2020 Census: Citizenship, Science, Politics and Privacy
October 31, 2018
## History of the Citizenship Data & Question

This inquiry is authorized by Act of Congress (49 Stat. 21: 13 U. S. C. 594-548) which requires that a report be made. The information furnished is accorded confidential treatment. The Census report cannot be used for purposes of taxation, investigation, or regulation.

### 1950 Census of Population and Housing

| Form P1 | U. S. Department of Commerce | Bureau of the Census |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What State (or foreign country) was he born in?</strong></th>
<th><strong>If foreign born—</strong></th>
<th><strong>What was this person doing most of last week—working, keeping house, or something else?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If born outside Continental United States, enter name of Territory, possession, or foreign country</td>
<td><strong>If Yes or No or A P for born abroad of American parents:</strong></td>
<td>(Yes, No, or work for unpaid family work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinguish Canada-British from Canada-other</strong></td>
<td><strong>If III or Ot in item 15—Did this person do any work at all last week, not counting work around the house? (Include work for pay, in own business, profession, on farm, or unpaid family work)</strong></td>
<td>(Yes or No)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If No in item 16—Was this person looking for work? (See Special Cases below)</strong></td>
<td><strong>If No in item 17—Even though he didn’t work last week, does he have a job or business?</strong></td>
<td>(Yes or No)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If Wk in item 15 or Yes in item 16—How many hours did he work last week? (Include unpaid work on family farm or business)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(Number of hours)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table

<table>
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<tr>
<th>How old was he on his last birthday?</th>
<th>Is he now married, widowed, divorced, separated, or never married?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(If under one year of age, enter month of birth as April, May, Dec., etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| LEAVE BLANK | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
The practice of asking citizenship censuses has varied over time.

- 1820 and 1830 Censuses asked for count of total number of non-naturalized foreigners in household.

- 1870 Census asked citizenship status of all male persons aged 21 and older.

- 1890-1950 citizenship status was asked as part of census.

- 1960-2000 citizenship status was asked in the long-form version (1 in 6 households).

- After 2000 citizenship data collection was moved to ACS.
Evidence that Census officials cooperated with government officials to target Japanese Americans which were interned during WWII (Seltzer and Anderson, 2000). Block-level information where those of Japanese ancestry lived in AZ, CA, WY, CO, UT, ID, AK. Micro-level data of those living in DC. In 2004, Census gave information to DHS about neighborhoods with large numbers of Arab Americans. Zip-code level breakdowns of Arab-American populations organized by country of origin. Census tabulation and assistance is legal but serious concerns of how it was going to be used.
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Why is it a concern for (under)counting Racial and Ethnic Minorities?

Immigrant and minority communities are already living in fear. Experiences of daily discrimination and threat of separation, detention. Immigrant communities have already been targeted:

- Immigration arrests have increased in 2017 (30% increase) (Pew Research Center)
- Travel ban of individuals from Muslim-majority nations
- DOJ attempts to rescind DACA program in 2017

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“I would never answer, because I don’t have papers…Obviously, I am afraid. I have a son.”
— Carmen Queveda, 46 years old. Guatemala.

“I know that no parent in my neighborhood is going to be opening the door for anyone doing a survey.”
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1 out of 7 Asian Americans is undocumented (AAPI data).

As of 2011, it was estimated that there were 9 million people who live in mixed-status families that included one unauthorized adult and one U.S.-born child (Pew Research Center).

On average 60% of Latinos report knowing someone who is an undocumented person, either family or friend (Latino Decisions).

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Pre-testing by U.S. Census, National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations, has revealed concerns of confidentiality among R&E minorities (Meyers, 2017).

Feb - Sept 2017, focus groups and interviews in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic

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– Respondent from Arabic focus group

“The immigrant is not going to trust the Census employee when they are continuously hearing a contradicting message from the media everyday threatening to deport immigrants.”

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Field staff conducting focus groups and testing of questions in respondents’ homes reported unusual behavior. Respondents walked out, appeared visibly nervous when they were asked immigration items, immigrant respondents worried about giving legitimate names. “The less information they give out the better. The safer they are.”

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How important do you think it is for the Census Bureau to implement a complete and accurate count of the entire Latino population and that nobody is left out?

- Not at all
- Not that
- Somewhat
- Very

Percentage (%)

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How important do you think it is for the Census Bureau to implement a complete and accurate count of the entire Latino population and that nobody is left out?
Do you trust the Trump administration to keep confidential the personal information they collect, including citizenship status of immigrants, or do you think that they will share this information with other federal agencies?
How concerned are you that the census answers about people’s citizenship could be shared with agencies such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement?

- Very: 54%
- Somewhat: 25%
- Not that: 12%
- Not at all: 9%
Evidence of low response rates in non-citizen households

- Recent research by the US Census Center of Economic Studies. CES 18-38 paper (Brown et al. 2018)

- In 2010 the Census randomly selected a sample of households to receive the ACS. These households also received the US Census. ACS included citizenship question, US Census did not.

- To forecast the potential effect of adding the citizenship question they compared response rates for 2010 Census and 2010 ACS for the same housing units
### Evidence of Low Response Rates in Non-Citizen Households

Comparison of 2010 ACS to 2010 Census Response Rates (weighted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Self-response Rate (%)</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010 ACS</td>
<td>2010 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with at least one AR non-citizen</td>
<td>42.4 (0.32)</td>
<td>62.1 (0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR all-citizen households</td>
<td>62.0 (0.34)</td>
<td>72.8 (0.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff-in-Diff</td>
<td></td>
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Implications of undercounting racial and ethnic minorities

Census data is used for reapportionment. If response rates are low among R&E and immigrant communities this will have an effect on representation in Congress.

Census population data also is used for determining federal funding disbursed to states for various programs. Data is used for allocation of 80% of all federal funding to states. Medicaid, SNAP, Medicare Part B, among others (GW Institute of Public Policy).

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Thank you

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In 2020, the Census is asking people to go online and fill out their household information, including names, ages, citizenship status of all household members through a secure website. How comfortable are you in sending this information to the Federal Government through the Internet?
Do you think Mr. Ross should turn over all memos and emails related to the citizenship question, and testify as ordered by the court, or do you think he should be able to keep that information private and not testify?

Not testify

Testify

Percentage (%)
Geographic distribution of undocumented immigrants

20 metropolitan areas with the largest number of unauthorized immigrants

2014 estimates

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented 2014 American Community Survey (IPUMS).
PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Evidence of low response rates in non-citizen households

Comparison of 2010 ACS to 2010 Census Response Rates (unweighted)

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<td>Self-response Rate (%)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Households with at least one AR non-citizen</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>-18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.21)</td>
<td>(0.19)</td>
<td>(0.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR all-citizen households</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>-13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff-in-Diff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-5.1</td>
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