Qualitative Research on Questions of Race, Tribe Identification, and Tribal Enrollment for Multicultural American Indians

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Disclaimer: Any views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.
Overview

- **Background**
  - Measuring American Indian race in the U.S.

- **Method**
  - Three qualitative pretesting studies on new ways to collect:
    - American Indian race and tribe data
    - American Indian tribal enrollment data

- **Results**
  - Reactions to race category and tribe write-in line instruction formats
  - Opinions on tribal enrollment topics

- **Discussion**
American Indian Race Measurement

- American Indian race measurement is complex.
  - It has additional measurement of tribal affiliation or community attachment (Office of Management and Budget, 1997)
  - Several factors affect measurement, including:
    - a great diversity of U.S. tribes
    - tribal enrollment, which can confound with AIAN tribe identification
American Indian Race and Tribe Measurement

- Tribal affiliation is currently measured using an open-ended instruction:

  - Current wording is unclear.
  - Respondents may be unsure of how to report if their relationship to one or more tribes is complex.

- Wording is critical for self-administered, open-ended questions (Dillman, 2007)
  - Such questions have higher risks of missing data and less complete answers than closed questions. (Groves, et al., 2004)
Purpose

- Discuss Census Bureau efforts to explore new ways to collect race and tribe information from American Indians
- Findings from three questionnaire pretests (Schwede, Terry, & Fernandez, 2015; Terry, Schwede, Fernandez, & Fobia 2016; Terry, Schwede, & Fobia, 2015)
  - New AIAN race reporting checkboxes and write-in instructions
    - Designed to improve race and tribe reporting for the 2020 Census
  - New, separate, and specific tribal enrollment question
    - Designed to better express tribal enrollment status
## Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Groups/Interviews</th>
<th>2015 Cognitive Test</th>
<th>2014 Focus Groups</th>
<th>2016 Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 cognitive interviews</td>
<td>2 groups in 2 sites</td>
<td>9 focus groups in 9 sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Focus</td>
<td>AIAN category detailed checkboxes</td>
<td>AIAN category write-in instructions</td>
<td>Tribal enrollment question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Focus</td>
<td>Tribe diversity</td>
<td>Breadth of tribe representation at a National Conference</td>
<td>Tribe diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tribe recognition status</td>
<td>Urban Indians</td>
<td>Tribe recognition status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geographic diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2015 Cognitive Interviews: AIAN detailed checkboxes
Forms Tested: 2015 Cognitive Interviews

- “Which categories describe Person 1 question” wording
- Checkboxes for main OMB categories + MENA and SOR
- Checkboxes for nationalities and ethnic groups of each main category
- Write-in space with examples for each main category
Forms Tested: 2015 Cognitive Interviews

W1

- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE
  - American Indian
  - Alaska Native
  - Central or South American Indian
  - Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

W2

- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE
  - American Indian
  - Alaska Native
  - Central or South American Indian
  - Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

W3

- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE
  - Navajo Nation
  - Blackfeet Tribe
  - Mayan
  - Native Village of Barrow Inupiat
  - Nome Eskimo Community
  - Print, for example, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Taino, Orutsaramuit Native Village, etc.

Three broad AIAN detailed categories vs. Six specific AIAN detailed categories
Findings:
2015 Cognitive Interviews

- All were able to understand the question and give an answer with little to no difficulty

- Race/ethnicity detailed checkboxes and examples
  - Having only Blackfeet and Navajo tribes as the checkbox tribes seemed unfair to other tribes.
Findings:
2015 Cognitive Interviews

- AIAN category design preference
  - All preferred three broad deraled category design
    - Respondents appreciated fairness shown to all AIANs.
    - Starting broad and then getting specific with the write-in space fit how respondents thought about their race/ethnic identity.
2014 Focus Groups: AIAN write-in line instructions
# Forms Tested: 2014 Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Form 1</th>
<th>Forms 2 - 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question Stem</strong></td>
<td>Which Categories Describe You?</td>
<td>What is your race or origin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AIAN Category Write-In Instruction</strong></td>
<td>1. Print, for example,...</td>
<td>2. Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Print name(s) or enrolled or affiliated tribe(s)</td>
<td>4. Print name(s) of affiliated tribe(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Print name(s) of affiliated tribe(s)</td>
<td>5. Print name(s) of tribe(s) or village(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Print name(s) of tribe(s) or village(s)</td>
<td>6. Print specific origin(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Write-in Examples</strong></td>
<td>Navajo Nation, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Mayan, Doyon, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results: 2014 Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overarching Themes</td>
<td>Complex relationships to tribes may complicate tribe reporting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respondents unclear about what information is wanted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-in Instructions</td>
<td>Respondents interpreted each format differently but felt they could give a valid answer to each format.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results: 2014 Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write-in Examples</td>
<td>Objections were about personal tribes not listed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction Preferences</td>
<td>1. Enrolled or affiliated tribe(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Enrolled or principal tribe(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Recommendations</td>
<td>Educate public on specific information wanted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider a separate enrollment question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2016 Focus Groups: Tribal Enrollment Question
## Results: 2016 Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meaning of Enrollment</strong></td>
<td>Enrollment criteria and privileges vary greatly by tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrollment status can change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Should the Census Bureau Collect Enrollment Question Data?</strong></td>
<td>Views were highly mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Advantage:</strong> Perceived to better identify the enrolled AIAN population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages:</strong> Would exclude American Indians who are not enrolled; How data would be used is unclear; Based solely on self-identification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results: 2016 Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Format 1</th>
<th>Format 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preferred Sample Enrollment Question Formats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>On April 1st, was Person 1 enrolled in a tribe?</strong></td>
<td><strong>On April 1st, was Person 1 enrolled in a tribe?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ No, not enrolled</td>
<td>☐ No, not enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Yes, enrolled – Print enrolled tribe(s) below.</td>
<td>☐ Yes, enrolled – Print enrolled tribe below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the tribe above federally recognized, state-recognized, or non-recognized?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Yes, federally-recognized</td>
<td>☐ Yes, federally-recognized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Yes, state-recognized</td>
<td>☐ Yes, state-recognized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Yes, non-recognized</td>
<td>☐ Yes, non-recognized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

- American Indian race and tribe data collection
  - Focus on clarity and fairness
  - A shared understanding of wording is essential
  - Disentangle issues of enrollment
- American Indian enrollment data collection
  - Aim for simplicity
  - Understand the pros and cons of enrollment data collection
Discussion

- Implications for multicultural and multiregional research
  - Social, political, and historical context are important factors
  - Experiences can differ geographically

- Next steps
  - AIAN detailed checkboxes and write-in instructions
    - Analyze national, split-ballot test results
  - Enrollment question
    - Cognitive test
    - Split-ballot national test
Thank you!

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