

Learning Activity #5

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Race identification is an important feature of the United States Census. Knowing the races currently residing in the U.S. and where these races reside assist government agencies in creating laws, programs, and housing assistance. Tracking how different race and ethnic groups grow in population is also vital to understand the language services different areas may needs. The U.S. Census in 2010 utilized a five-category system with another menu to narrow down one's race into a more specific category and a write in option. This two tier method of race and ethnic designation allows individuals to not only narrow down their race but also choose two or more races to identify as. By allowing individuals to choose more than one race, the Census is creating a more detailed data pool thus improving the overall snapshot of race designation in America. According to Lowenthal (2014) "...there is strong agreement that detailed data on race and ethnicity (that is, data on subgroups or national origins) are necessary to advance effectively the civil rights of all race and ethnic populations in the United States" (para. 5, pg. 44).

The 2020 Census will continue the race designation utilized on the 2010 Census. There has been a suggestion to add two more categories for race, one for Middle Eastern and another for North African. This addition of these two race categories has yet to be approved by President Trump but if approved, will give a better idea of these other races in America. It is vital that the Census collect the most accurate and detailed record of race and ethnic designation possible so by adding additional categories while also allowing individuals to choose two or more races may achieve this goal. Since the Census added the ability to identify as two or more races, the results have shown that more and more individuals identify

as multiple races therefore giving government officials the chance to see how important racial designation is to Americans.

Reference

Lowenthal, T. A. (2014). Race and Ethnicity in the 2020 Census: Improving Data to Capture a Multiethnic America. *Journal of Intergroup Relations*, 35(2), 20–57. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=eue&AN=100985934&site=eds-live>