INTRODUCTION

The 2010 Census age cohort with the highest estimated net undercount rate of 4.6% was young children aged 0-4. Prior research shows that household structure is related to census undercount. We use an alternative approach to analyze household structure and this undercount. First, we classify 2010 Census households based on five different types of relationships in the household, using a new complex household typology with a wider variety of household types with young children. Then we use 2000 and 2010 Census data to map notable growth of complex households with young children, showing wide variation by race and Hispanic origin. We analyze households that responded positively to a census child undercount probe and document household types in which children were then added to the census to identify three major complex household types at higher risk of young child undercount. We suggest targeting these complex household types for outreach, follow up and evaluation in the 2020 Census to improve coverage.

DATA AND THE COMPLEX HOUSEHOLD TYPOLOGY

We use the complex household typology and data from the 1) 2000 Census, 2) 2010 Census, and 3) 2010 Census Coverage Followup (CFU) on undercount probe responses and young child census adds. Definition of complex household: Households with persons in relationships other than: 1) one married couple with or without their own biological or adopted child, 2) one parent with own biological or adopted child, and 3) one person households.

COMPLEX HOUSEHOLDS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN INCREASED

As shown in Figure 1, the proportion of all households with young children that were complex increased from 3% in 2000 to 16% in 2010, with substantial variations by race and Hispanic origin. Figure 2 shows growth to nearly 40% in 2010 of children aged 0 to 4 who were living in a complex household—a higher percentage than any other age group. Increases over 2000 are seen across race and Hispanic origin groups and vary widely. The Figure 1 and 4 maps display notable increases in county-level rates between 2000 to 2010.

Figure 1: Percentage of Total Households with a Young Child that are Complex by Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder, 2000 and 2010

Figure 2: Percentage of Young Children Living in Complex Households by Race and Hispanic Origin 2000 and 2010

CENSUS COVERAGE FOLLOWUP (CFU)

The 2010 Census included a Coverage Followup (CFU) telephone operation (CFU) to improve accuracy of persons on the census roster. Households were eligible for CFU for several reasons, such as checking one or more undercount probes, or having a respondent: provided count and number of listed persons, or the head of household was at least half young child adds given each of the race and Hispanic groups.

Figure 5: Number of CFU Positive Responses to the Child Undercount Probe by Householder Type, Race, and Hispanic Origin

Overall, just three types of complex household accounts for more than half of CFU young child adds to the 2010 Census: households with nonrelatives, multigenerational family households and other relatives (15%). These three complex household types accounted for at least half young child adds given each of the race and Hispanic groups.

CONCLUSIONS

We find that applying the complex household typology to the child undercount is enlightening, showing notable intercensal increases in both the numbers of complex households with young children and in the numbers of young children in such households, overall and within race and Hispanic groups. With CFU data, we show that complex households across race and Hispanic groups were more likely to have responded to a child undercount probe and to have young children added to the 2010 Census. We note wide variations by race and Hispanic origin.

Three types of complex households—those with at least one nonrelative, one ‘other relative’ and one ‘householder’ young child adds accounted for the 2010 CFU young child adds overall and for at least half within the race and Hispanic groups. We believe that targeting these specific complex household types in the 2020 Census may improve outreach and evaluation could be efficient and cost effective in reducing the young child undercount.

This poster is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion. Any views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.