U.S. Census Data: The Implications of Persistent Undercounting on Communities of Color

Gabrielle Walker, Seleana Jones, Alondre Taylor, and Alejandro Toro

Capstone Site Representatives:
Dr. Patrick C. Graham, Senior Policy Advisor, and Evette Roots, Social Enterprise Specialist of Richmond's Office of Community Wealth Building, Faculty Advisor: Mr. Wayne Thomas, Social Studies Teacher,
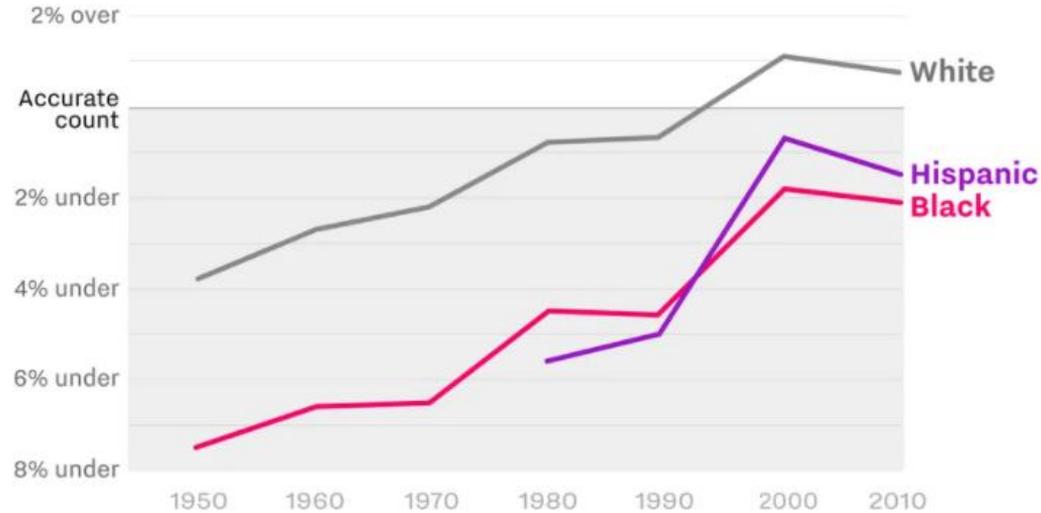George Wythe High School, Richmond Public Schools

Problem Statement

U.S Census Data (what is it and why it matters).

The persistent undercounting of communities of color have led to the lack of funding resources such as food, health care, and education that serves marginalized communities. Counting individuals and their communities influences what kind of public policy is produced, and the allocation of federal and local resources.

Graphs of undercounting and who is affected

How much racial groups have been under- or overcounted since 1950

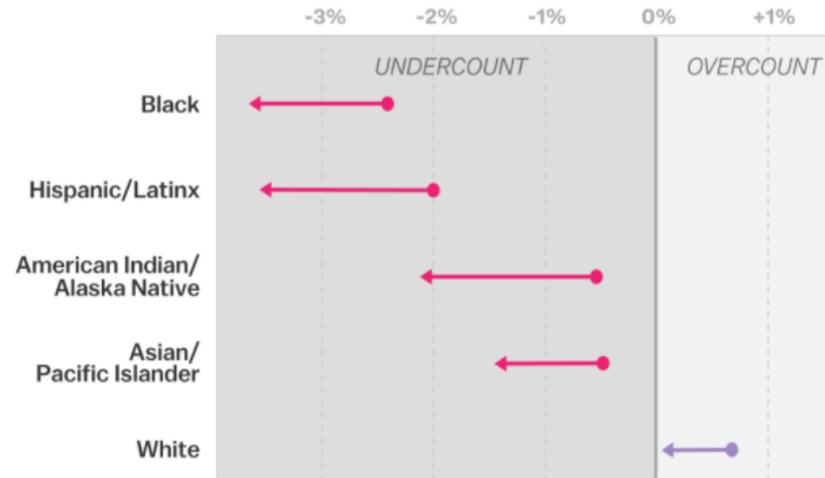Data from the US Census Bureau's Population Division and Mother Jones

Projected undercount in the 2020 Census

Projected undercount in the 2020 census in "high-risk" scenario vs. 2010 levels

2020 "high-risk" projection ← ● If it does as well as 2010

	-3%	-2%	-1%	0%	+1%
	UNDERCOUNT			OVERCOUNT	

Black
Hispanic/Latinx
American Indian/ Alaska Native
Asian/ Pacific Islander
White

Data from the Urban Institute's report "Assessing Miscounts in the 2020 Census"

Policy Context

The U.S. Census Bureau has identified several barriers that prevent people from completing the census:

1. People were unfamiliar with the census
2. Misconceptions about the census and its use
3. Uneven knowledge about the census across demographic characteristics
4. No time
5. Concerns about privacy and confidentiality
6. Fear that answers will result in repercussions
7. Distrust of government
8. A lack of efficacy (a feeling that responses will not matter), and belief that completing the census will yield no personal benefit.

Policy Formation

The long-term aim of reducing overall poverty in the City of Richmond is 40% by 2030. OCWB achieves this goal by

- Advocating for an increase in the living-wage earned by Richmond residents;
- Supporting the development and social mobility of youth and families from early childhood to young adulthood;
- Improving the quality-of-life in low income communities through housing policy

Policy Implications

- The amount of money granted to the OCWB to expand workforce services provided to City residents $3.95 million.
- 17,861 people served
- 873 received job placement services.
- 4,818 attended training programs and workshops.
- 600 place in employment retention services.

Policy Implications

Where is the money coming from? Taxes that are collected by IRS, and that money is split through block grants from the federal government , then the state government allocates that money

Who is working on this? (OCWB, National League of Cities, City of Richmond, Virginia State Government)

How is it happening? Local state agencies and Individual organizations, such as the Office of Community Wealth building are allocating these resources and are placing tax dollars back into the communities.

What would it take for them to apply these policies?
-Monetary funding
-Job training classes
-Understanding why students aren't obtaining degrees
-Creating programs that will supplement gaps in their education
The Census becoming more accurate would benefit the community with the added resources.

Policy Analysis

Data on how the inequality has affected people of color: jobwise, education wise and healthcare

✖ ***How does the OCWB collect the data and what do they do with it?*** They get it from US Census, American Community Survey and Economic Census.

✖ What is OCWB doing with this info, how does it affect their policy and what kind of policies have they created?

Living Wage Certification Program, *Economic Development's Office of Minority Business Development*, and *RVA Financial*.
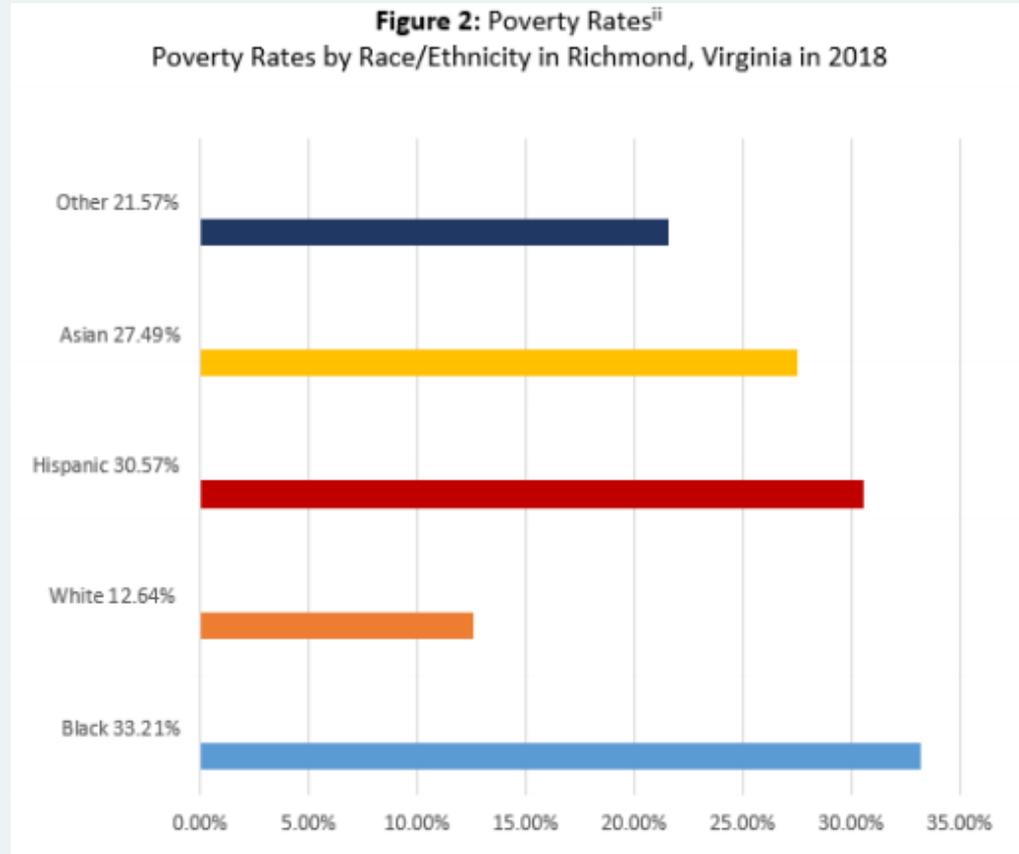
Policy Analysis

Community Wealth Building Ambassador Program

The Ambassador Program continues to connect OCWB directly to the neighborhoods served by its programs. Ambassadors are a group of selected individuals that participated in our workforce programs.

They agree to serve as representatives to their respective communities. For example, the Ambassadors from Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority properties connect our city's most vulnerable populations to resources that lead to economic and social mobility.
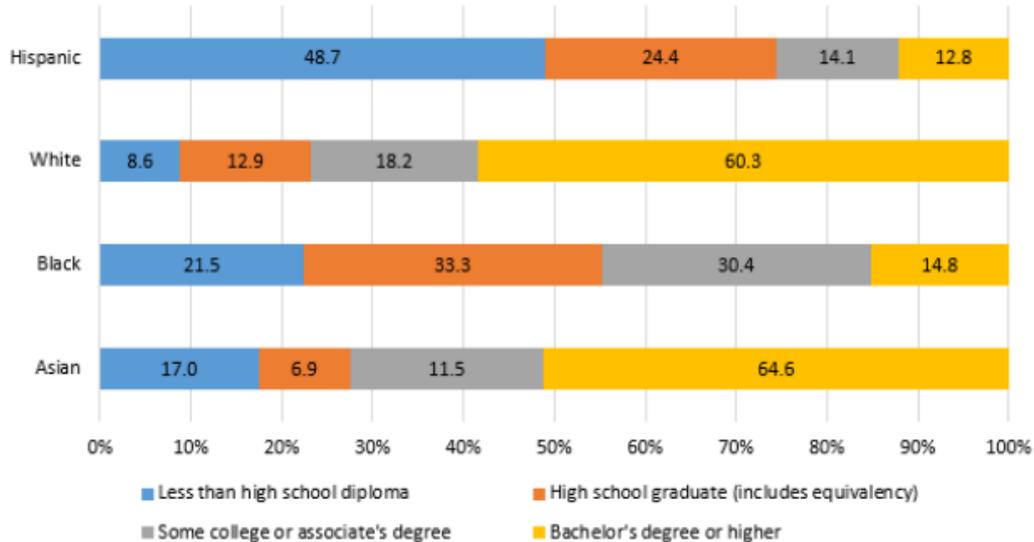
Policy Analysis graph 1

Figure 2: Poverty Rates[ii]
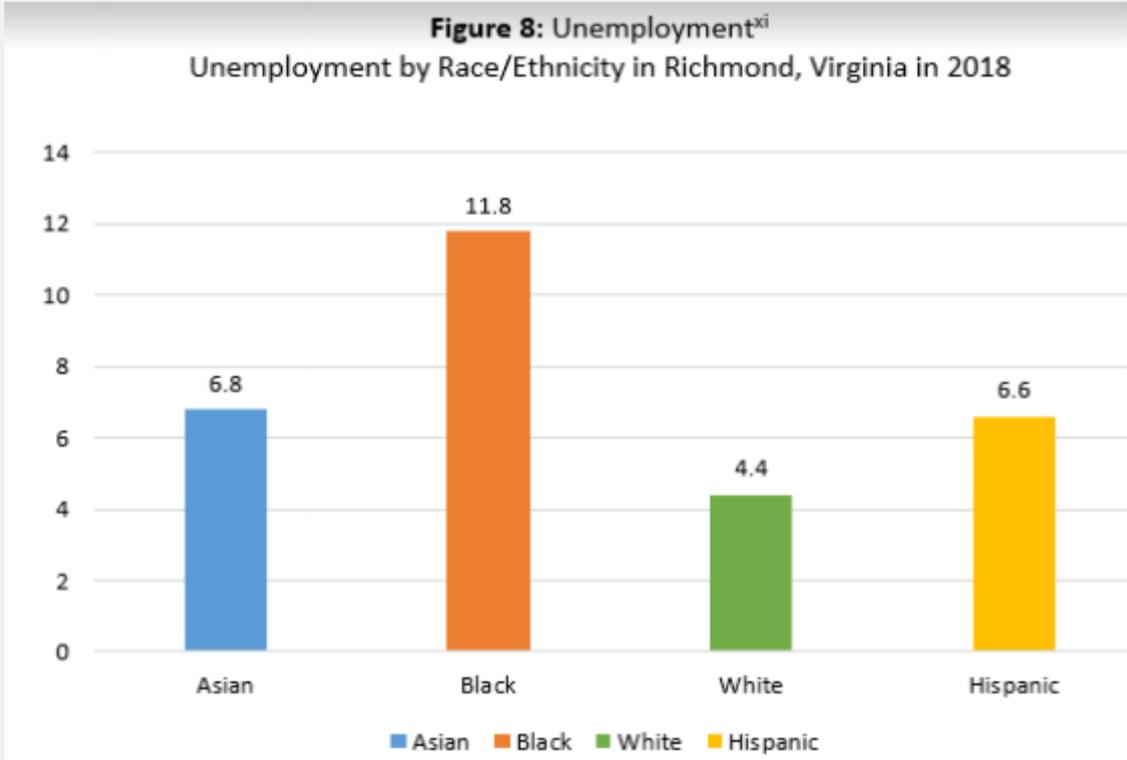Poverty Rates by Race/Ethnicity in Richmond, Virginia in 2018

Policy Analysis graph 2

Figure 6: Educational Attainment[ix]

Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity in Richmond, Virginia of Ages 25 and Above in 2018

Race/Ethnicity	Less than high school diploma	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college or associate's degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
Hispanic	48.7	24.4	14.1	12.8
White	8.6	12.9	18.2	60.3
Black	21.5	33.3	30.4	14.8
Asian	17.0	6.9	11.5	64.6

■ Less than high school diploma
■ High school graduate (includes equivalency)
■ Some college or associate's degree
■ Bachelor's degree or higher

Policy Analysis graph 3

Figure 8: Unemployment[xi]

Unemployment by Race/Ethnicity in Richmond, Virginia in 2018

Asian: 6.8
Black: 11.8
White: 4.4
Hispanic: 6.6

Recommendations

1. Civic society engagement
2. Increase employment. ...
3. Raise America's pay. ...
4. Sustain not cut the social safety net. ...
5. Paid family and sick leave. ...
6. End mass incarceration. ...
7. Invest in high quality childcare and early ed. ...
8. Tackle segregation and concentrated poverty. ...
9. Immigration reform.

References

OCWB Annual Report- https://www.rva.gov/community-wealth-building/about-us

The US Census Report-https://www.census.gov/

Economic Security Program - https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/economic-security-programs-help-low-income-children-succeed-over DANILO TRISI AND MATT SAENZ