

Citizenship Question Effects on Household Survey Response

J. David Brown & Misty L. Heggeness

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Potential Effects When Adding Citizenship Question

- Decrease overall unit self-response rate – would increase fieldwork
- Increase household roster omissions – causes undercount
- Increase internet break-offs – increases item nonresponse
- Citizenship item nonresponse
- Heterogeneity in changes in responsiveness across groups
 - If decreases responsiveness of initially less responsive groups more, it would increase differential undercount

Research Questions

- How do characteristics of households participating in the 2019 Census Test differ from those opting out?
- How do citizenship question's effects on different types of response behavior vary by household race/ethnicity and immigration status
 - Unit self-response
 - Household roster omissions
 - Internet breakoffs at citizenship question and elsewhere
 - Citizenship item nonresponse

Data (1 of 2)

- 2019 Census Test RCT
 - Same questionnaire as in 2020 Census, except also included citizenship question at end of questionnaire for 240,000 of the 480,000 housing units
 - Self-response only, by internet, mail, and telephone
 - Data collection between June 13 and August 15, 2019, with reference date of July 1, 2019
 - Supreme Court decision leading to removal of citizenship question was announced June 27, 2019

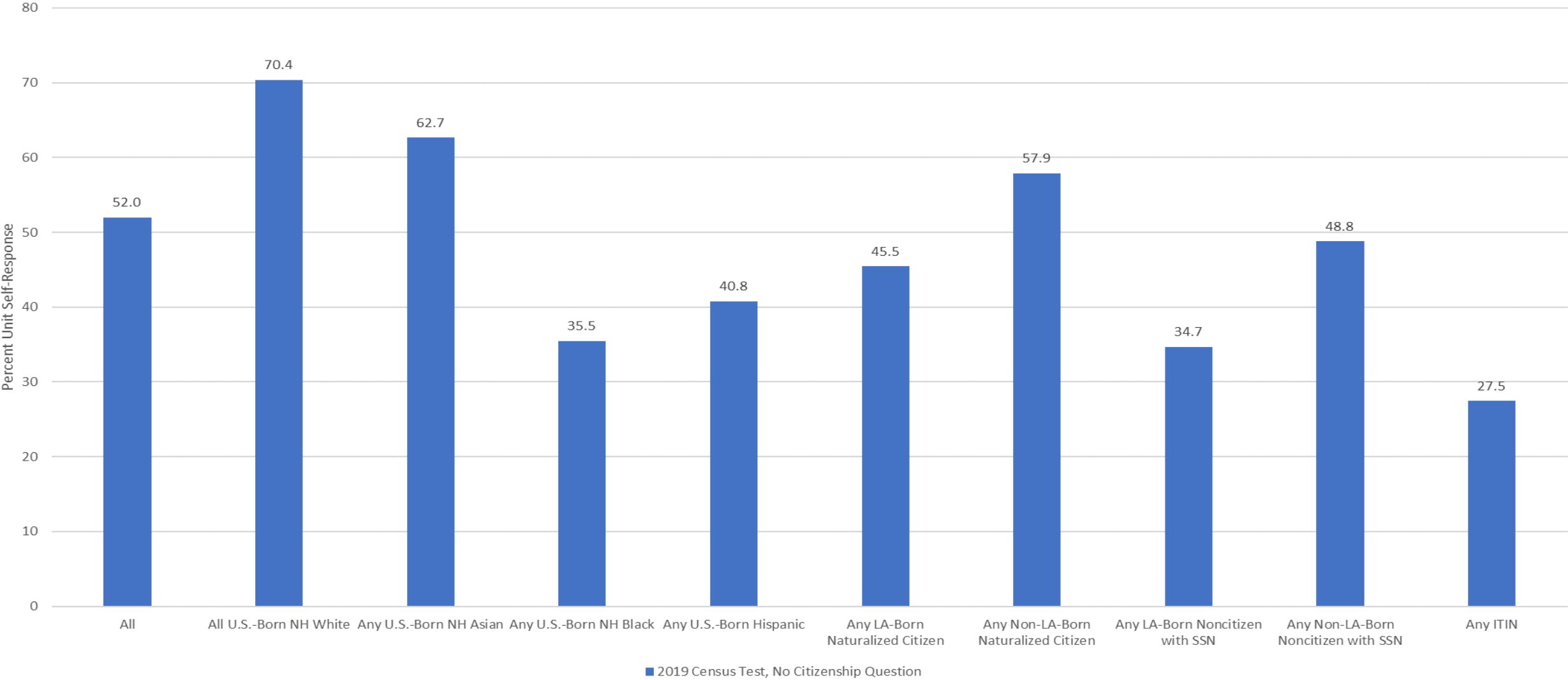
Data (2 of 2)

- 2019 Demographic Frame Extract
 - Includes people with SSNs or ITINs who have PIKs
 - Select MAFID with highest person-place probability using random forest model
 - Use MAFIDs in 2019 Census Test
 - Race/ethnicity from Census Best Race File
 - Citizenship and place of birth from Numident for people with SSNs
 - Latin American-born group from Central America, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Venezuela

Methods

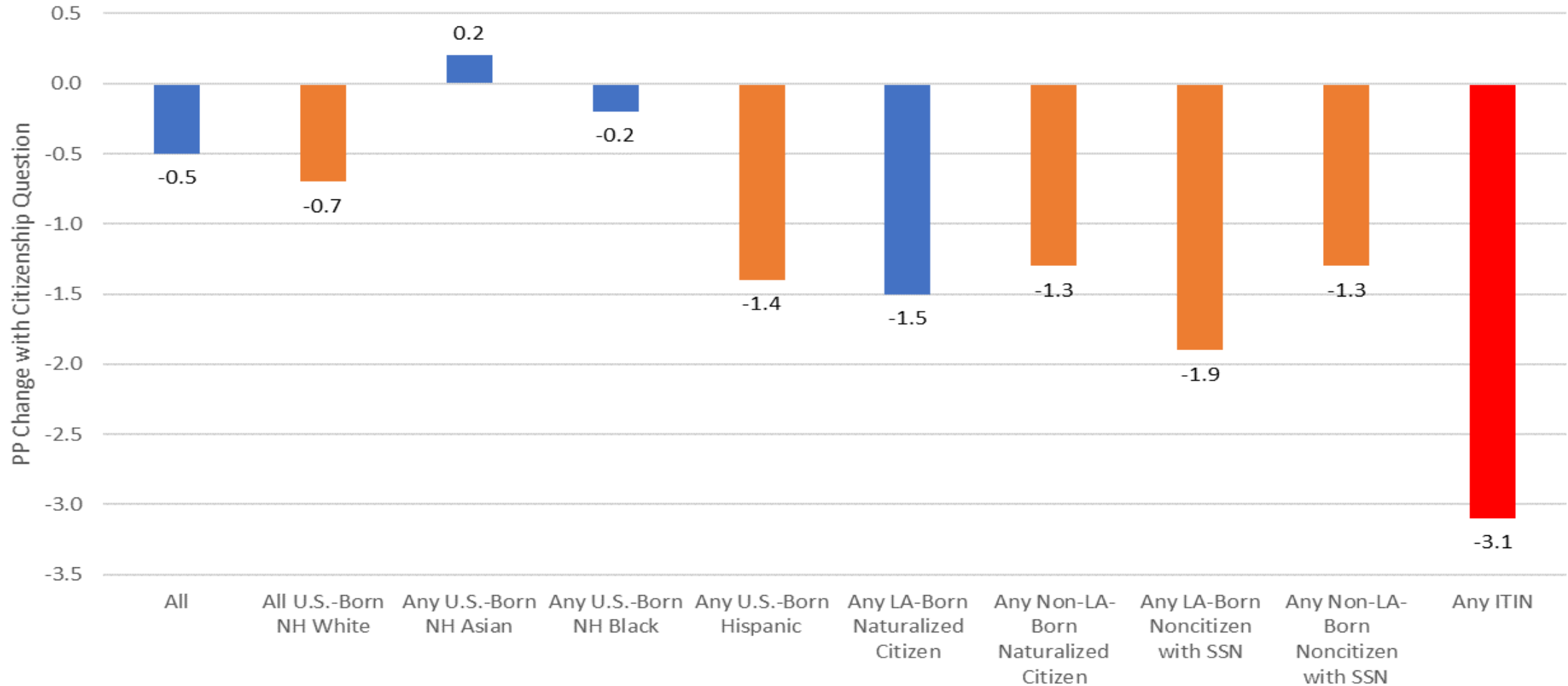
- Logistic, multinomial logistic and OLS regressions with
 - Single race/ethnicity/immigration status category
 - All race/ethnicity/immigration status categories (all U.S.-born non-Hispanic White is base category)
 - With other controls, including Undeliverable As Addressed, household income, IRS 1040 filing type, household size, housing structure type, Internet First/Choice and English/Bilingual materials, mean number of addresses per person, and presence of people in different age groups
- Interact characteristics with citizenship question panel indicator

Percent Unit Self-Response in 2019 Census Test, No Citizenship Question Panel



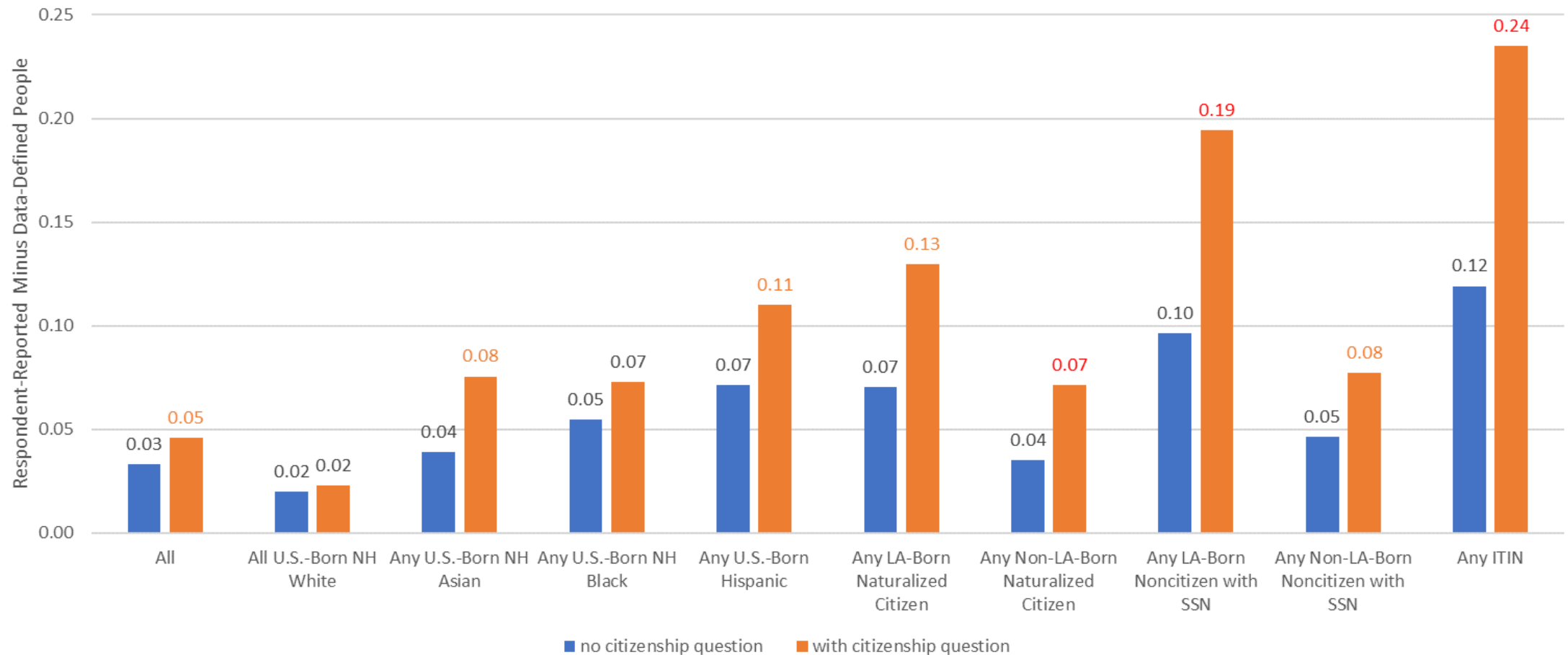
The data presented in this figure are approved for dissemination by the DRB (CBDRB-FY24-CES019-008).

Percentage Point Change in Unit Self-Response with Citizenship Question



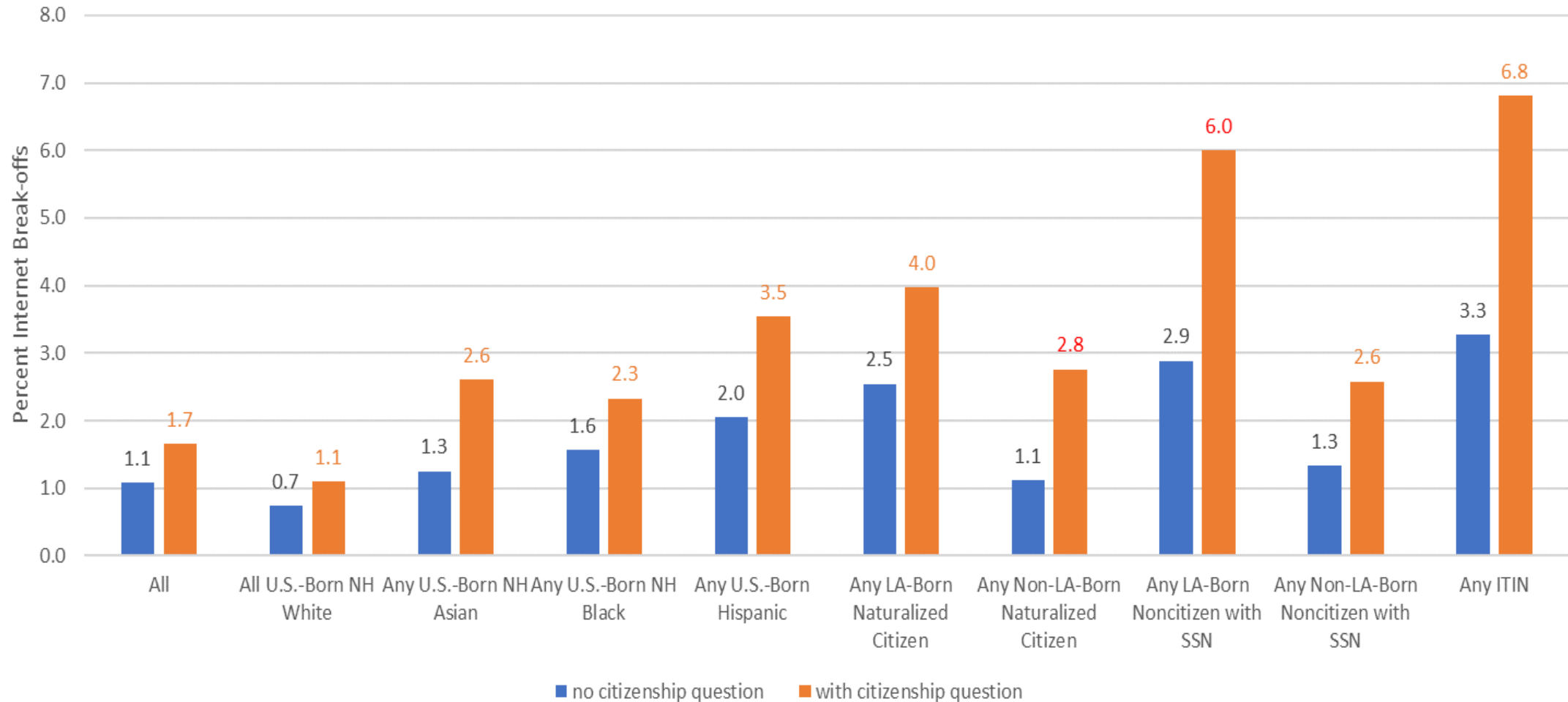
Blue bars are statistically insignificant at the 5% level in all regressions. Orange bars are statistically significant in univariate regressions only. Red bars are statistically significant in the univariate regression, the regression including all race/ethnicity and immigration status categories, and the regression including controls.

Respondent-Reported Population Count Minus Data-Defined People



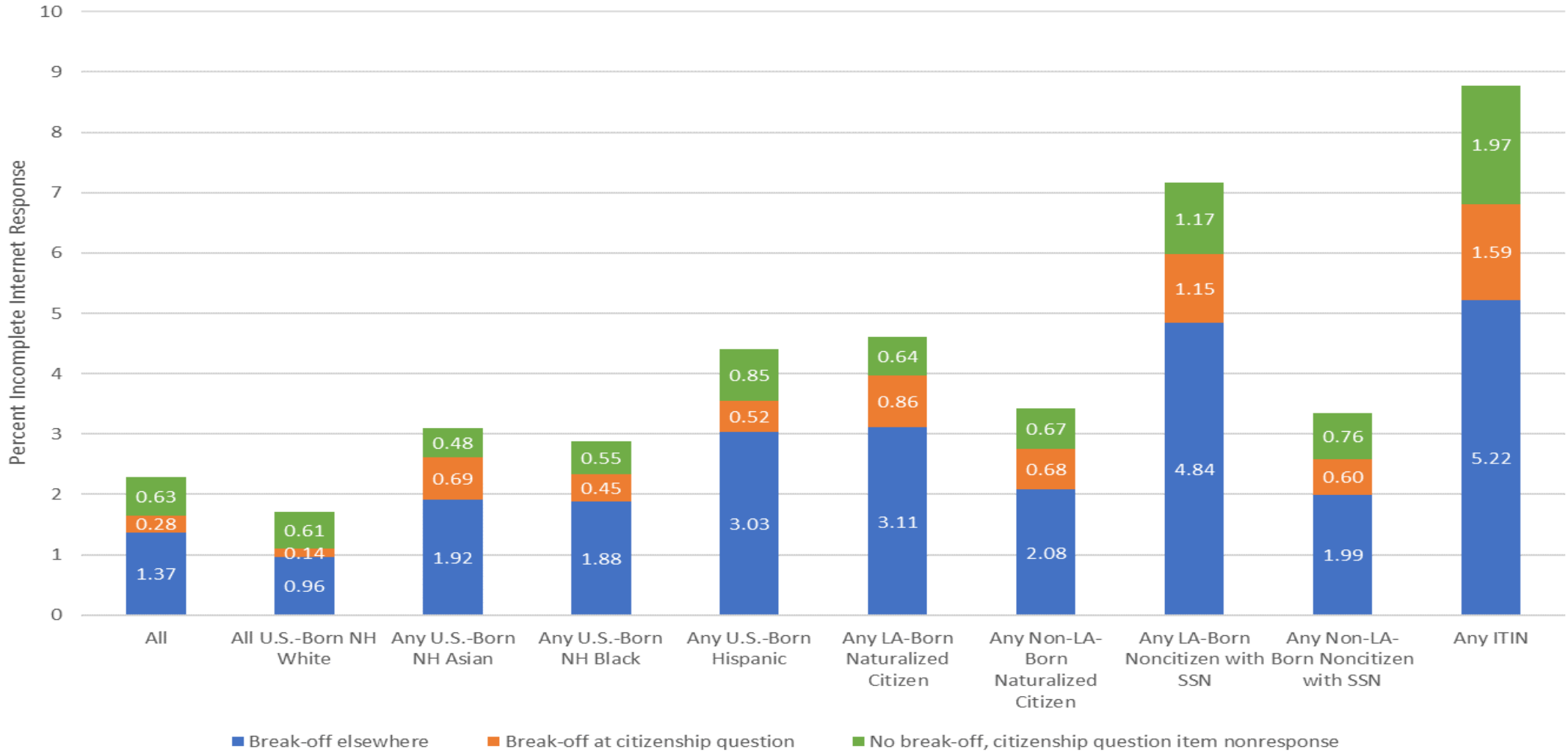
Black numbers with citizenship question are for categories with statistically insignificant (5% level) citizenship question effects in all regressions. Orange numbers are for categories with statistically significant (5% level) citizenship effects in univariate regressions only. Red numbers are for categories with statistically significant citizenship question effects in all three regressions.

Percent of Internet Responses Ending in Break-off

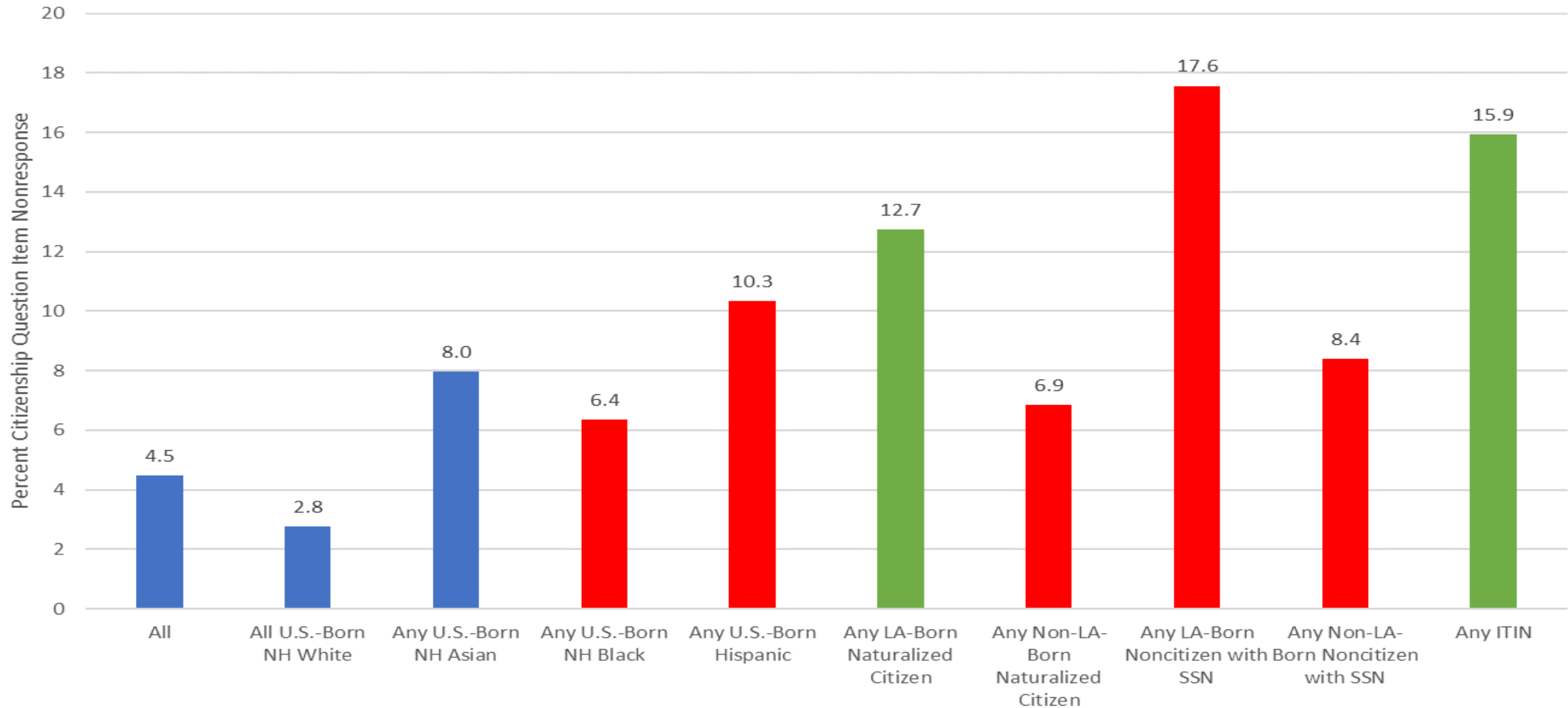


Orange numbers are for categories with statistically significant (5% level) citizenship effects in univariate regressions only. Red numbers are for categories with statistically significant citizenship question effects in all three regressions.

Percent Incomplete Internet Response with Citizenship Question



Percent Citizenship Question Item Nonresponse in Mail Responses



Blue bars are statistically insignificant at the 5% level in both regressions. Green bars are statistically significant in the regression with all race/ethnicity and immigration status categories, but not in the regression with controls. Red bars are statistically significant in both regressions.

Conclusion

- The citizenship question is associated with further response avoidance by noncitizens who are already hard-to-count, worsening differential undercounts
- Survey noncitizen household roster omissions can help explain coverage differences between survey- and AR-based noncitizen population estimates
- Administrative data can provide insights about survey tests
- Household roster omission proxies can be constructed without doing fieldwork followup

- The paper can be downloaded from <https://www2.census.gov/library/working-papers/2024/adrm/ces/CES-WP-24-31.pdf>