2020 Census Communications Campaign Evaluations

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2010 Census Integrated Communications Program Evaluation

A look back:

(1) Independent evaluation of the 2010 Census Integrated Communications Program conducted by NORC.

(2) The principal data source was a set of three nationally representative household surveys conducted between October 2009 and August 2010 to capture knowledge, attitudes, and exposure to the campaign.

(3) Two Major Limitations: Without a control group, the evaluation was unable to provide an estimate of the total effect of the 2010 Census ICP; the evaluation was unable to disentangle the impact of each individual component.
2020 Census Evaluations

Cross-directorate teams to lead multiple evaluation efforts for different components of the program.

- Seven communications related research projects.
- All are currently in various states of planning or execution.
Research Questions:

(1) Does decennial census awareness increase over time? Among subgroups?

(2) How do measures related to intention to participate and actual participation change over time? Among subgroups?

(3) How do attitudes and knowledge about the census change over time? Among subgroups?
Goals

• Track U.S. public sentiment concerning matters that may bear upon 2020 Census participation.
  • Monitor changes in attitudes about the census over time.
  • Explore relevant topics such as data confidentiality.
  • Assess attitudes on emerging areas that may have an impact on census participation.

• Help evaluate public communication efforts, and suggest where they need improvement or redirection.

• Inform Campaign Optimization during the enumeration.
Probability-Based Survey Overview

The Census Bureau will buy data for a 2020 Census Tracking Survey. Team Y&R will plan, implement, and monitor the survey as well as analyze the survey data with support from the Census Bureau.

- CRI/ReconMR will conduct the data collection. This team has over 20 years of experience implementing phone surveys for state and federal governments.
- Random Digit Dial (RDD) telephone interviews with a probability sample of U.S. adult residents in all 50 states and DC.
- Began in September 2019 and extend through June 2020.
  - September through December 2019: 1400 completed cases monthly
  - January through June 2020: 1400 completed cases weekly
Non-Probability Supplement Overview

Y&R subcontracting to ThinkNow and Dynata to collect data to gather information on populations who may not be represented in high enough numbers in RDD survey, namely Asians and Spanish-speakers.

- Quota sample by groups:
  - Age and gender
  - Race and Hispanic origin
  - Census region
  - Education
  - Language

- Weighting and reporting based on 3-day rolling average using the above variables and nativity.

- 2100 completed cases per week (one week per month in 2019, and every week during 2020)

- Approximately 15% Hispanic, 12% Black or African American, 11% Asian, 62% White
Questionnaire

I. Substantive questions
   • Awareness
   • Intention and self-reported response
   • Likelihood to encourage others to respond
   • Mode preference
   • Message awareness
   • Attitudinal questions
     – Whether the census matters
     – Confidentiality (4 Qs)
     – Trust in federal statistics
   • Civic engagement

II. Federal statistics usage

III. Benchmarks (4 Qs)

IV. Demographics
   I. Age
   II. Sex
   III. Race
   IV. Hispanic origin
   V. Education
   VI. Marital status
   VII. Language (3 Qs)
   VIII. Nativity
Current Status

• The tracking survey is in its third month of data collection.

• High level findings for September 2019 in line with the 2020 Census CBAMS Survey and the 2010 Census Tracking Survey.
Pre- and post-2020 Census communications campaign panel survey: measuring change over time to Census Mindsets

Research Questions:

(1) Did the public’s mindsets towards the Census shift over the course of the 2020 Communications Campaign?

(2) If yes, how did each of the mindsets migrate over the course of the campaign?

(3) Did the mindsets at Wave 2 align with predicted self-response behavior in the 2020 Census?

(4) To what degree did Wave 2 panel respondents experience conditioning effects?
Eager Engagers
19% of U.S. Population
82% Intent to Respond

Fence Sitters
32% of U.S. Population
71% Intent to Respond

Confidentiality Minded
15% of U.S. Population
63% Intent to Respond

Head Nodders
9% of U.S. Population
60% Intent to Respond

Wary Skeptics
14% of U.S. Population
59% Intent to Respond

Disconnected Doubters
10% of U.S. Population
51% Intent to Respond

Note: U.S. population percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding error.
Current Status

• Ready to launch pre-campaign data collection via web survey.
Quantitative 2020 Census Creative Testing

Research Questions:

(1) Do creative originals (e.g., television, digital, print ads) increase participant’s positive feelings towards the Census Bureau in general?

(2) Do creative originals increase participant’s positive feelings towards the Decennial Census?

(3) Do creative originals increase participant’s willingness to participate in the Decennial Census?

(4) Can quantitative creative testing supplement findings from focus groups?

(5) What lessons from quantitative creative testing can be applied to future Census Bureau creative testing efforts?
Current Status

• Finalizing data collection instrument

• Awaiting receipt of final ads for testing – expected by the end of 2019
Evaluating the Effectiveness of Digital Advertising with Tracking URLs

Research Questions:

(1) Within each audience group, what are the conversion rates for each message, channel, and ad location?

(2) Targeted digital advertisement will be created and deployed to reach specific audiences. How effective were targeted digital ads at converting their intended audience?
Current Status

• Verifying post campaign data availability

• Finalizing analysis plan
Research Questions:

1. How did one’s CBAMS self-reported likelihood to respond to the census reflect their household’s actual 2020 Census response?

2. How did the CBAMS self-reported mode preference to respond to the census reflect actual household’s actual mode choice in the Census?

3. What were the demographic and household characteristics of CBAMS nonrespondents?
Current Status

- Obtaining final study plan approval
Comparing 2019 Census Test and 2020 Census Self-Response Rates to Estimate “Decennial Environment”

Research Questions:

(1) For the sample of households included in the treatment condition of the 2019 Census Test (i.e., those that did not receive citizenship question), how does the self-response of these households compare between 2019 and 2020? This will provide an indirect measure of how the 2020 advertising campaign increased self-response.

(2) Are there changes in proportion of online self-response between 2019 and 2020? The advertising campaign may motivate households to respond via the internet.

(3) Do self-response rates and proportion of internet self-response differ across audience segments?
Current Status

• Obtaining final study plan approval
Effect of Decennial Census on ACS Self-Response Rates

Research Questions:

(1) Are there differences in the expected and observed ACS self-response rates for months in which the 2020 advertising campaign is active? Is there variation across audience segment groups?

(2) ACS households can respond via mail or online. Does the presence of the advertising campaign influence the mode of response? Are these patterns different between audience segments?
Current Status

• Obtaining final study plan approval
2020 Census IPC Operational Assessments and Lessons Learned

Operational Assessments

• IPC operations
• ICC contract
• Research to Support ICC
• Mobile Response Program

Lessons Learned

• Each IPC team will provide input for lessons learned for the IPC