**Knowledge and Attitude “Mindsets”: Understanding Participation in the U.S. Census**

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Abstract

In the research leading up to the 2010 U.S. Census, the team developing the paid advertising campaign used results from a 2008 pre-Census survey to construct different “mindsets”. Items use to construct the mindsets included knowledge of Census data uses, data privacy and confidentiality concerns, concern of data misuse, and self-reported intent to participate in the Census. Using discriminant analysis, five different mindsets were fashioned. These were labeled: The Insulated, the Unacquainted, the Head-Nodders, the Leading Edge, and the Cynical Fifth. These mindsets were subsequently used to develop advertising messages aimed to encourage Census participation (see Bates, et al. 2009). Mulry and Olson (2011) further analyzed these mindsets as a way to isolate the best grassroots communication outlets to target hard-to-reach subpopulations.

As part of the evaluation of the 2010 Census communications campaign, the Census Bureau sponsored a 3-wave survey conducted before, during, and immediately after the Census. Many of the same items asked in the 2008 survey were included in the 2010 survey. After the Census, addresses of households participating in the multi-wave survey were matched to Census records. This allowed researchers to add an important variable to the datafile -- whether the address had participated in the Census by mailback or personal visit.

In this paper, we attempt to recreate the 5-category mindset variable using the abbreviated set items from the evaluation survey data. We will examine how the mindsets are related to demographic and socioeconomic variables typically used to predict response. We will also examine how the mindsets correlated with actual mailback behavior, message receptivity to the paid advertising, and the geographic audience segmentation for the campaign (Bates and Mulry, 2010).

The following research questions will be addressed:

* Were the mindsets significant predictors of actual mailback behavior? Did actual behavior by mindset align with stated intent to respond?
* How did the mindsets intersect with the geographic audience segmentation?
* Did membership in the mindsets change over time (i.e. over the course of the communications campaign)?
* Was there evidence that the advertising was received as intended across the mindsets?