

Generic Information Collection Request

Request: The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for the collection of routine customer feedback (OMB number 0690-0030). We seek approval for an online cognitive test of the Food and Nutrition Service application for free and reduced price school meals. The Census Bureau is currently conducting traditional, in-person cognitive testing of this form, previously approved under OMB number 0607-0978. As part of the current submission, we are seeking approval for a remote, asynchronous data collection by Census Bureau staff, from which we will then compare the results to the traditional in-person testing.

Purpose: Online cognitive testing, or web probing, is typically conducted with the general population, but testing some surveys and forms requires recruiting respondents who meet specific criteria such as children receiving free school meals. When these more specific populations are needed, researchers currently screen within the online instrument or recruit elsewhere (e.g., Craigslist) then direct respondents to the Web. These methods are not always feasible. Alternatively, using an online panel as a recruitment source allows researchers to preemptively restrict online cognitive interview respondents based on demographic characteristics. While panels do not allow us to stipulate families with children receiving free and reduced price lunches as a recruitment criterion, we know the demographic characteristics of this population. Conducting online cognitive interviewing with members of a similar population may provide an inexpensive method of cognitive testing that complements more traditional methods.

Findings from this OMB submission will be compared with results from the traditional in-person cognitive interviews with adults who applied for free or reduced price meals for household children. We will compare responses to similar probes between the two groups, and administer additional probes online that could not be included in person due to time restrictions. This research will determine the usefulness of testing materials online with a population that demographically approximates a specific population of interest.

Population of Interest: The planned research will focus on improving the application form for parents of school-age children.

Timeline: Testing will be conducted in March/April 2017. The study will be open until 100 responses are received, which will take approximately 1 or 2 weeks.

Language: Testing will be conducted in English only.

Sample: Testing will be conducted using the SurveyMonkey Audience panel. 100 respondents from this voluntary panel who have a household income below \$50,000 and are parents of school-age children will be selected by SurveyMonkey to complete the study.

Recruitment: Participants will be selected and recruited by SurveyMonkey.

Method: Participants will be invited to participate in the study by SurveyMonkey. They will use their own smartphones, tablets, or desktop/laptop devices to complete the study. The study will be open until 100 responses are received, which will take approximately 1 or 2 weeks.

The cognitive test will be hosted on SurveyMonkey and will collect no personally identifiable data. The questions and tasks asked and messages shown to respondents are shown in Enclosure 1.

Protocol: Respondents will be shown sections of the application form and asked cognitive probes. They will also be presented with vignettes and asked to answer questions based on those vignettes. Respondents will then be asked a few summary and demographic questions (see Enclosure 1).

Consent: Participants have previously consented to being a part of the SurveyMonkey panel. Participants can respond to this voluntary research study at a time convenient for them. They can also decline to participate.

Use of Incentive: SurveyMonkey provides respondents with non-cash incentives, such as entries into sweepstakes and donations to charities. This incentive is selected by SurveyMonkey. Incentives are included in the fee for use of the panel; the Census Bureau does not pay these incentives directly.

Below is a list of materials to be used in the current study:

1. Screenshots of survey (Enclosure 1)

Length of interview: We estimate 10 minutes per respondent, overall.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

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