CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES WHEN STUDYING HARD-TO-REACH POPULATIONS

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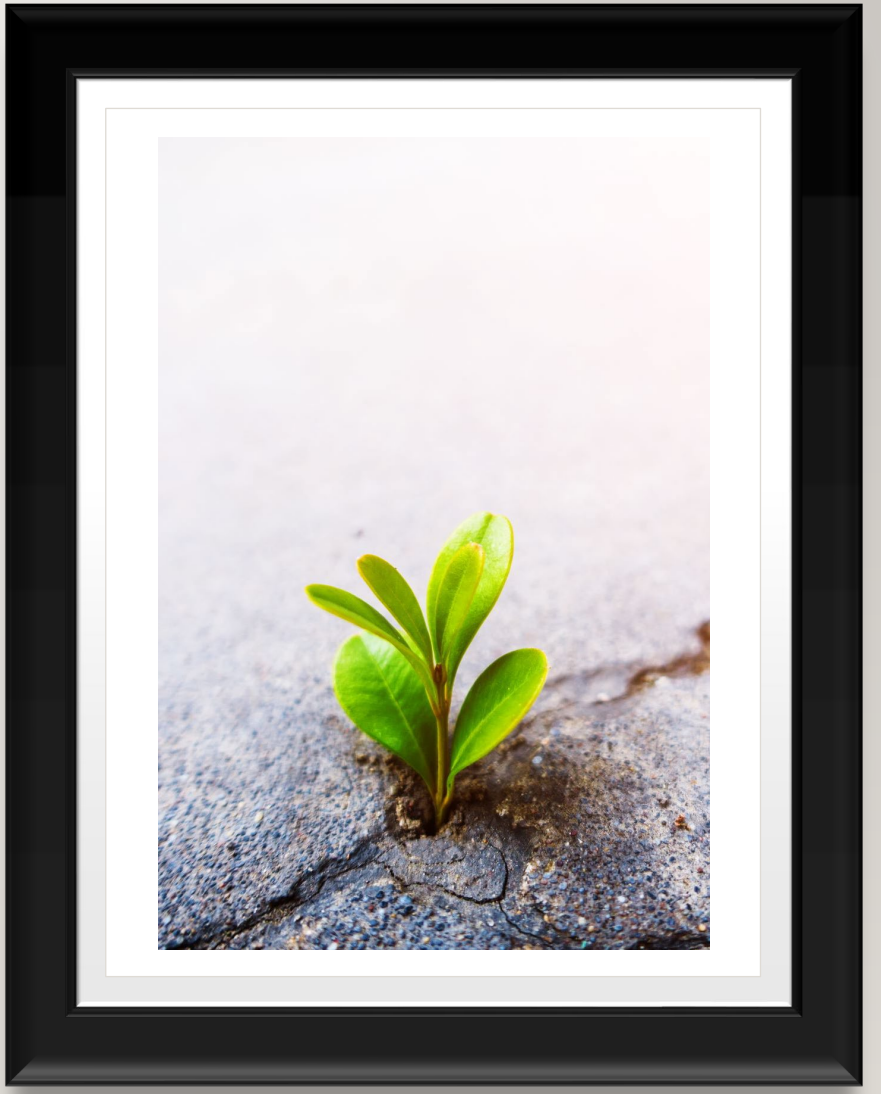


MAIN IDEA

- Know the facts about your population of interest.
- Partner with others to bring your idea to fruition.

OUTLINE

- Part 1: Using your research questions as your guide
- Part 2: Facing challenges
- Part 3: Seizing opportunities
- Part 4: Considering limitations

PART 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

- How do Latinos view President Joe Biden's immigration policy?
- What are some ways Asian Americans respond to the anti-Asian violence in the U.S.?
- How do first and second-generation Latinos/Asian Americans' opinions vary regarding U.S. race relations?
- How does Asian American partisanship differ between rural and metropolitan communities?

PART 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

- How much did the vaccine rollout influence Latino's trust in the American government?
- How did the rise of anti-Asian violence influence Asian American collective identity?
- How do racial stereotypes influence partisanship choice among Asian Americans?
- Which identity appeal is more influential on Asian American and Latino vote choice?
- How do emotional responses to racial unrest influence Asian American political participation?

PART 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What are your research questions?

PART 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Let your research questions guide the sample you need.
  - Costly!
  - Time consuming
  - Overwhelming

PART 2: FACING CHALLENGES

- Identifying your sample:
  - Language variation
  - National origin variation
  - Geographical variation
  - Nativity and language preference variation
  - Generational variation
- Targeting the sample:
  - Mode of contact (e.g., door-to-door, telephone, intercept through local communities, **online surveys**).

PART 3: SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

KNOW YOUR POPULATION – NATIVITY STATUS

- Matching your sample to the population.

- Asian Americans:
  - "Around six-in-ten Asian Americans (57%), including 71% of Asian American adults, were born in another country." (Budiman and Ruiz, 2021).

- Latinos/Hispanics:
  - About 33% of the population are foreign-born, while 67% are U.S. borns (Noe-Bustamante and Flores, 2019).

PART 3: SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

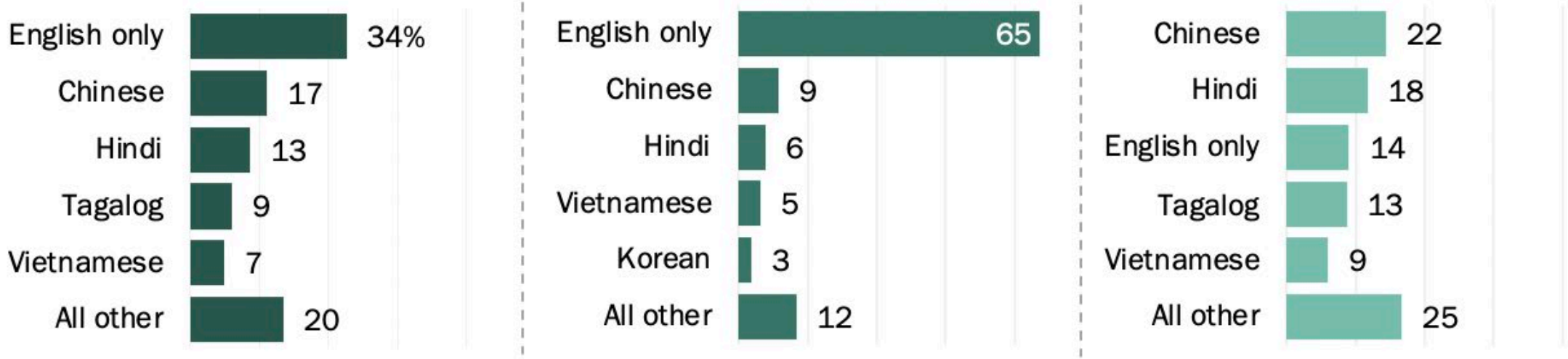
KNOW YOUR POPULATION - LANGUAGE VARIATION

- Are there language variations? How many?
  - What happens if you just focus only English speakers?
- What is the benefit and the cost of including all languages (translations) in your study?

In 2019, nearly three-quarters of the U.S. Asian population speaks English proficiently; among the U.S. born, nearly two-thirds speak only English at home

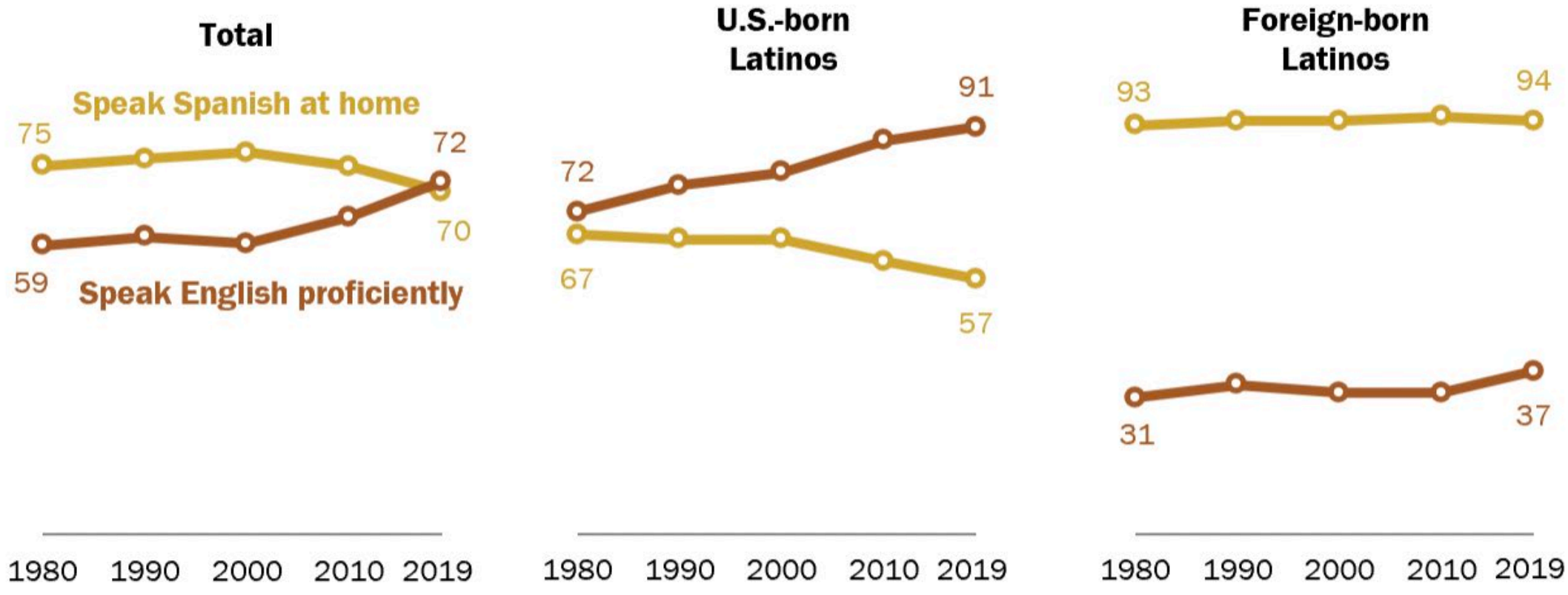
% of Asian Americans ages 5 and older who are ___ in speaking English

% of Asian Americans ages 5 and older who speak ___ at home



For Latinos, English proficiency has increased and Spanish use at home has decreased, especially among those born in the U.S.

% of Latinos ages 5 and older who …



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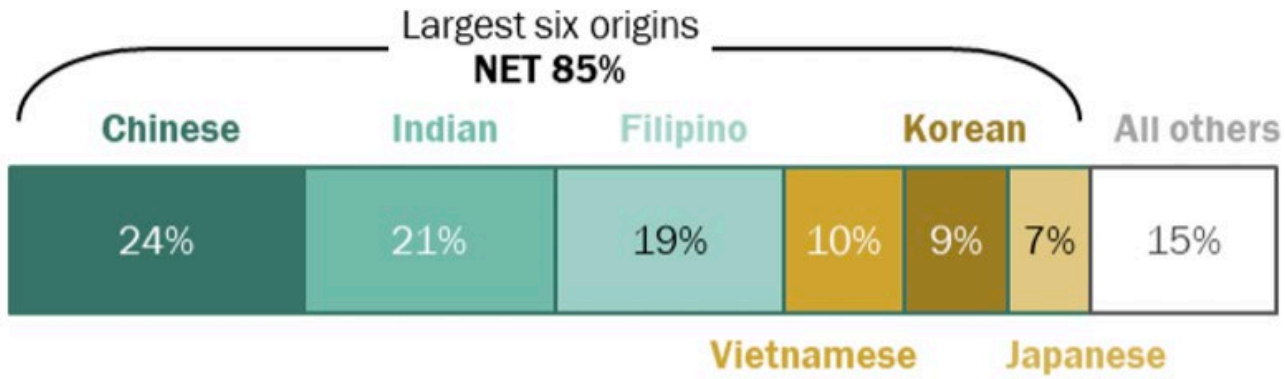
PART 3: SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

KNOW YOUR POPULATION - NATIONAL ORIGIN VARIATION

- Asian Americans and Latinos/Hispanics are ***not*** monoliths!
- All or subgroups?
  - Do you need all subgroups to be represented in your sample?
  - Top 5-6 groups?
- Are there geographical distribution to consider? (ethnic enclaves, metropolitan regions)
  - Oversample from those states or counties?

Six origin groups make up 85% of all Asian Americans

% of the U.S. Asian population that is…



Note: "All others" includes the 3% of U.S. Asians in the category "Other Asian, not specified." "Chinese" includes those identifying as Taiwanese. For more about measuring the Taiwanese population in the U.S., read "How many Taiwanese live in the U.S.? It's not an easy question to answer." Figures do not add to 100% because individuals identifying with more than one Asian group are included in all groups. Figure for all origin groups includes mixed-race and mixed-group populations, regardless of Hispanic origin.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (Census data).

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Hispanic origin groups in the U.S., 2019

Origin	U.S. population	% among all U.S. Hispanics	% change, 2010-19
Mexican	37,185,000	61.5	13
Puerto Rican	5,845,000	9.7	25
Cuban	2,380,000	3.9	26
Salvadoran	2,345,000	3.9	28
Dominican	2,085,000	3.4	38
Guatemalan	1,655,000	2.7	49
Colombian	1,240,000	2	27
Honduran	1,075,000	1.8	47
Spaniard	845,000	1.4	20
Ecuadorian	710,000	1.2	6
Peruvian	650,000	1.1	7
Venezuelan	540,000	0.9	126
Nicaraguan	435,000	0.7	15
Argentinean	310,000	0.5	29
Panamanian	195,000	0.3	11
Costa Rican	170,000	0.3	33
Chilean	160,000	0.3	14
Bolivian	135,000	0.2	21
Uruguayan	75,000	0.1	15
Paraguayan	30,000	0.05	41
Other Central American	60,000	0.1	90
Other South American	25,000	0.04	-9
All other Latinos	2,345,000	3.9	50
Total	**60,485,000**	**100%**	**19%**

Notes: Hispanic origin group populations rounded to nearest 5,000; listed in descending order of population size. Hispanic origin is based on self-described ancestry, lineage, heritage, nationality group or country of birth. Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys (IPUMS).

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PART 3: SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

KNOW YOUR POPULATION - NATIONAL ORIGIN VARIATION

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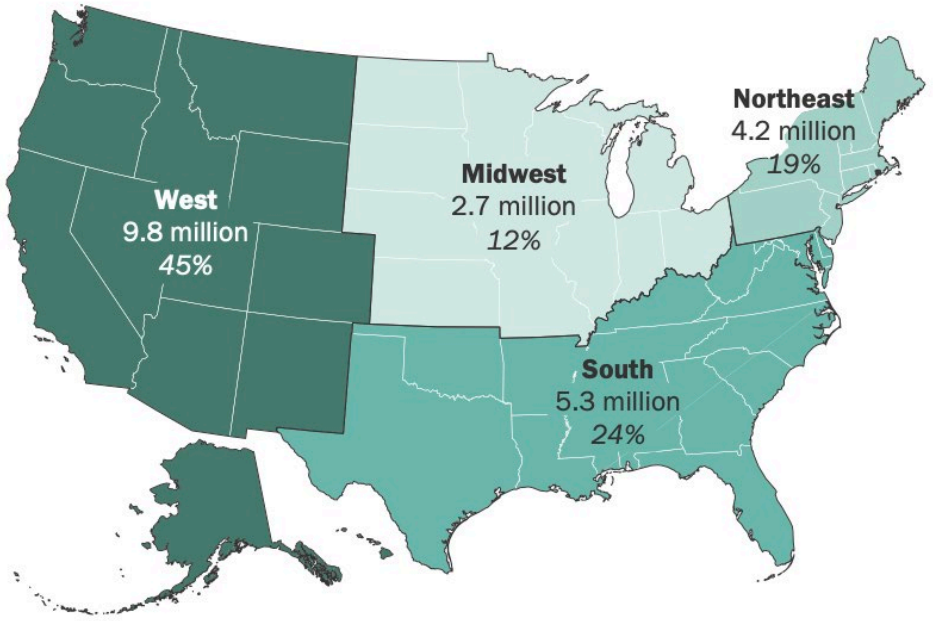
Nearly half of all Asian Americans live in the West

% of the Asian population in the U.S., 2019



Note: Figures for all Asians include mixed-race and mixed-group populations, regardless of Hispanic origin.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2017-2019 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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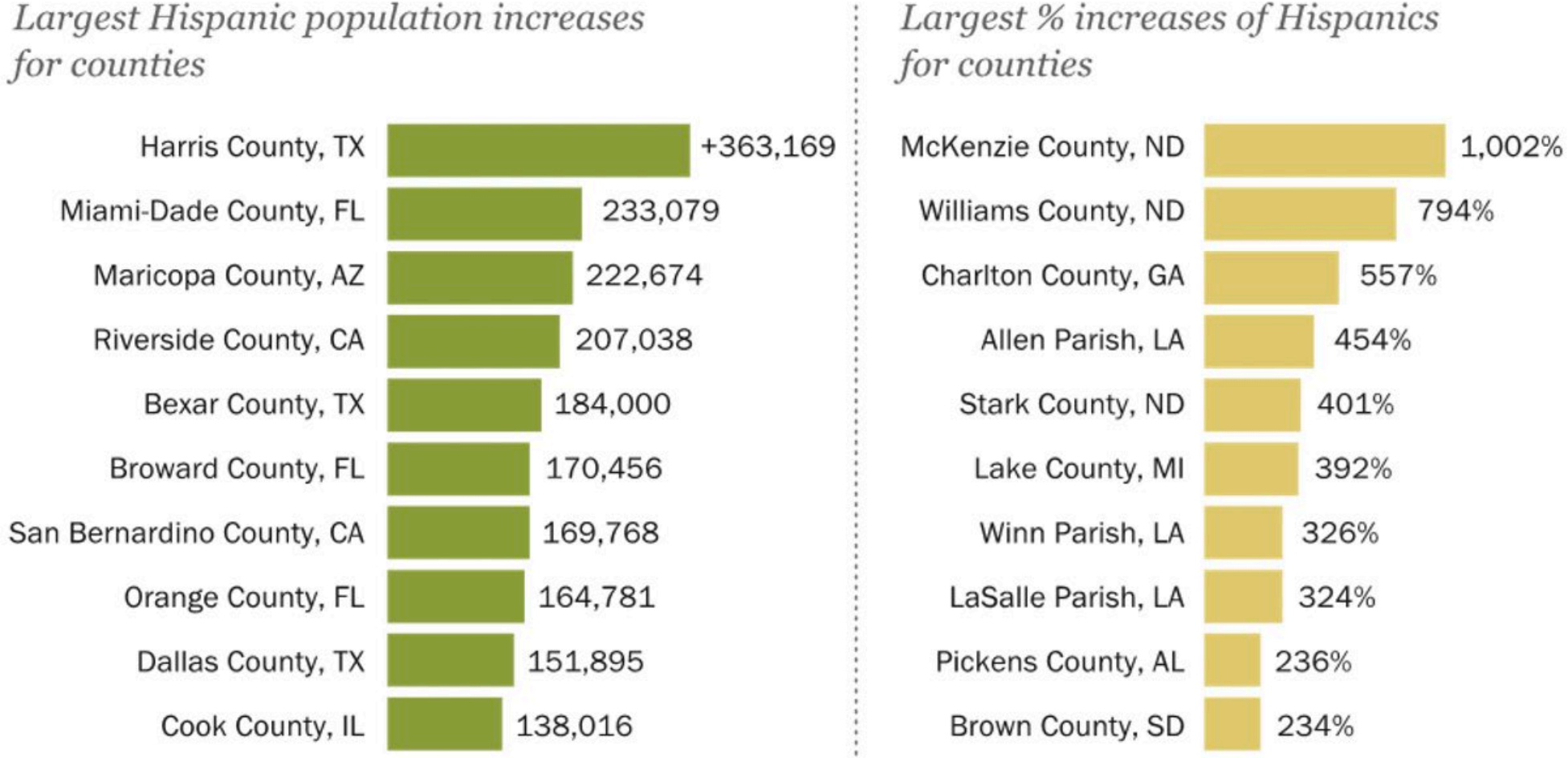
Hispanic population grew most in counties with large Hispanic populations and grew at fastest rate in counties with small Hispanic populations, 2010-20



Note: Analysis is based on counties with at least 1,000 Hispanics in the 2020 census. Counties with the largest Hispanic population increases are among the top 18 for Hispanic population size in 2020.
Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of decennial census counts, P.L. 94-171.

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PART 3: SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHERS

- **Partner** with an academic/marketing firms: NORC (University of Chicago), Bovitz, Lucid, Qualtrics, Dynata (formerly SSI), ISA, Ipsos, Kaiser Family Foundation, Knowledge Networks, YouGov, etc.
- Capability and feasibility: how many ASN/LAT participants do you have in your panel?
- ESOMAR 36
  - **Recruitment**: How do you recruit your panel participants?
  - **Sampling and project management**: What incentives do you provide to make sure you have quality respondents in your panels?
  - **Maintenance**: How do you maintain you panel participants?
- Heuristics & Reputation: which partners are the colleagues in your field working and publishing with?

PART 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ***Example*** from the audience.
- What are the sample characteristics?
  - Race?
  - Gender?
  - Ethnicity?
  - Education?
  - Language (dialect) variation?
  - Immigration background?
  - Geography variation?

NUTS AND BOLTS OF CARRYING IT OUT:

QUESTION ORDERING FOR "BALANCED" SAMPLE

(BARRETO ET AL., 2018)

- Ask a generic introduction statement to avoid making identity salient.
- Embed an option to take the survey in their preferred language.
- Identify your sample characteristics and ask the partnering firm to target those criteria.
  - Try to target them to your best.
- Weigh your final data to best match your population of interest.
  - Be aware of potentially getting large standard errors.
  - May not need to if your study involves experiments.

DEMOGRAPHICS_RACE

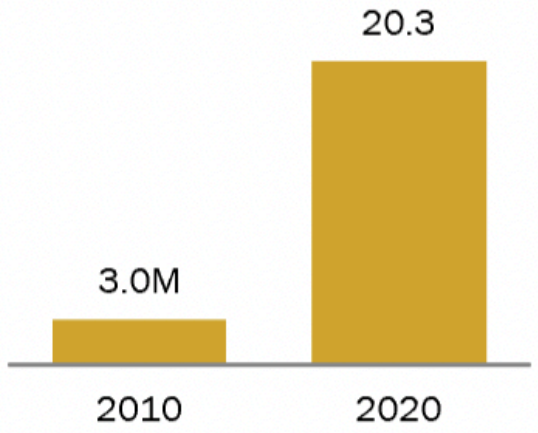
Let’s start with some information about yourself. Which group do you consider yourself to be in? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Asian or Asian American
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Middle Eastern and North African
- ☐ Native American or American Indian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Multiracial or Mixed

U.S. Hispanic multiracial population has increased sharply since 2010

Number of U.S. Hispanics who identify with more than one race

In millions



Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of PL94-171 census data for 2010 and 2020.

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Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States have ancestry ties to many countries and national origins. Which of the following ethnicities do you trace most of your Asian or Pacific Islander heritage? Please mark one or more as it applies to you.

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Vietnamese

Of the ethnic identities you marked, which do you identify with the most?
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- » Chinese
- » Filipino
- » Indian
- » Japanese
- » Korean
- » Vietnamese

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NUTS AND BOLTS OF CARRYING IT OUT:

HIGHER LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS

- Survey platforms for programming (e.g., Qualtrics).
- Timeline: hard to reach populations take s awhile to collect.
  - Expect delays (always!)
  - Programming, translations, test-runs, pilot studies
- Administrative aspects: finalizing your questionnaire, IRB, pre-registration (experimental research).
- Collaboration: establish cordial, respectful communication with your collaborators. You want to build your team of allies to help you achieve your goal.

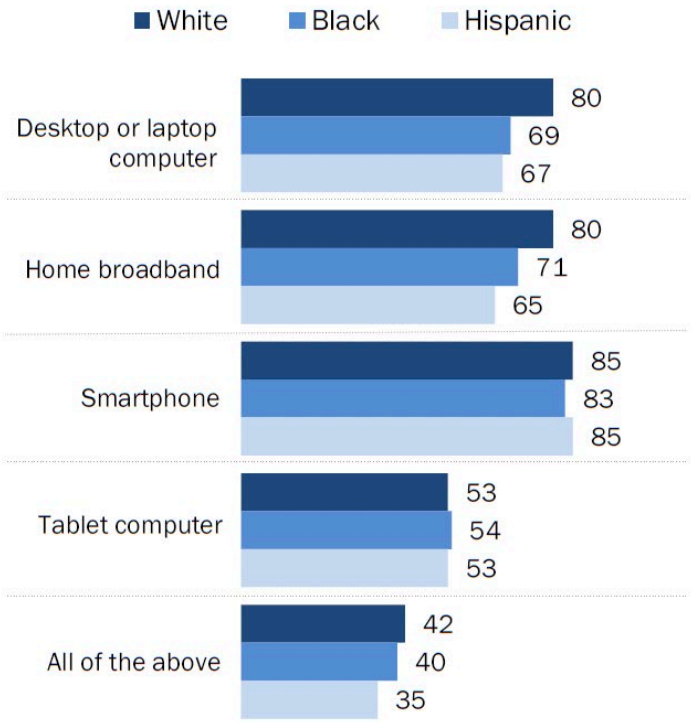
PART 4: LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

KNOWING THE TRADEOFFS

- Convenient sample:
  - Internet samples do not accurately capture hard-to-reach populations (i.e., language access, mode of contact, subset of the population of interest, translations, etc.)
  - Consider drop-out rates (i.e., incentives, length of surveys, etc.)
- Compliment it with other data:
  - Qualitative data, historical data, federal data, anecdotes and stories, news coverage, in-depth interviews, participant observations.
- State your limitations but be clear about your goals and how your sample reflects your research goals.

Black and Hispanic adults in U.S. are less likely than White adults to have a traditional computer, home broadband

% of U.S. adults who say they have the following



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.

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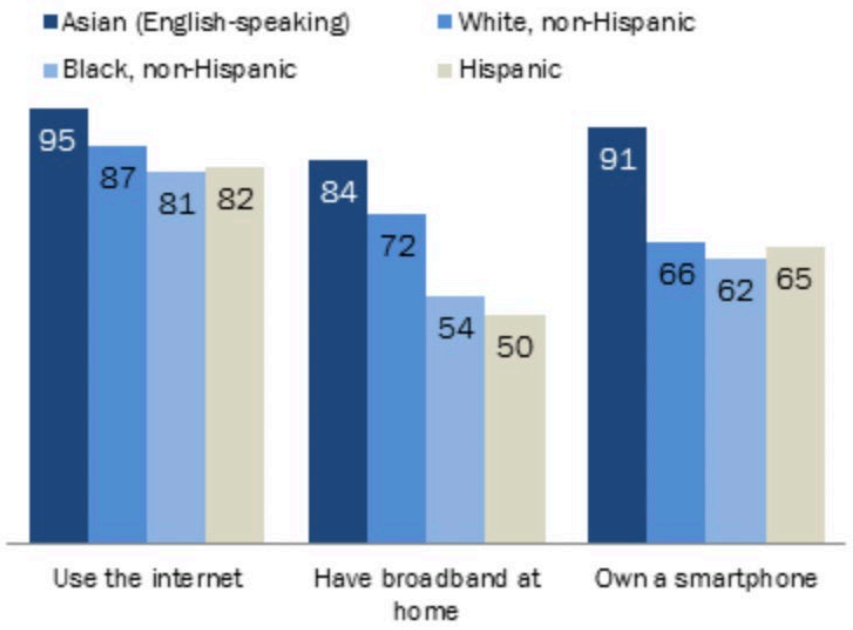
English-speaking Asian Americans lead other racial, ethnic groups in use of several common technologies

% of U.S. adults in each group who...



Source: Surveys conducted March 17-April 12, 2015, May 28-31, 2015, June 10-July 12, 2015, and Oct. 13-Nov. 15, 2015.

Note: The results reported here on Asian Americans are limited to English speakers only; results for Hispanics are based on surveys conducted in both English and Spanish.

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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Know the platform for programming your survey.
- Program and conduct multiple test-runs through your social networks.
- Do your research before you commit working with partnering survey firm.
  - Ask them hard and difficult questions.
  - Weigh cost, quality, and constraints of your discipline.
- Execution of your studies:
  - Pilot studies (Mturk , Lucid, etc.)
  - Apply for grants
  - Consider looking at other national surveys (GSS, ANES, CMPS, Mexican Migration Project, NAAS, LNS, other national surveys) to understand general patterns (power analysis).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

- What issues are you facing?
- Remaining questions or topics to discuss further.

THANK YOU!

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RESOURCES

- **Sampling**
  - ESOMAR 36 (https://esomar.org/about)
  - American Association for Public Opinion Research (https://www.aapor.org)
  - Matt A. Barreto, Lorrie Frasure-Yokley, Edward D. Vargas & Janelle Wong (2018) Best practices in collecting online data with Asian, Black, Latino, and White respondents: evidence from the 2016 Collaborative Multiracial Post-election Survey, Politics, Groups, and Identities, 6:1, 171-180, DOI: 10.1080/21565503.2017.1419433
- **Population specifics**
  - https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/29/key-facts-about-asian-americans
  - https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/fact-sheet/latinos-in-the-u-s-fact-sheet/