Effect of Logo Visibility on Respondents’ Confidence in Government Surveys

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U.S. Census Bureau

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Background
Research Questions

1. Does the placement of the logo affect participants’ ability to identify the organization conducting the survey?
2. Does placing the logo on every page make it more likely for participants to see it?
3. What does the logo of the organization conducting the survey mean to participants?
4. Which placement of logo do participants prefer?
Study Design

A between-subjects design with one factor of three conditions:

1. Logo on every screen
2. Logo on first screen only
3. No logo
Condition 1: Logo on Every Screen
Condition 2: Logo on First Screen Only
Condition 3: No Logo

Work and Leisure Survey

Condition 3: No Logo

Work and Leisure Survey

Condition 3: No Logo

Work and Leisure Survey

Condition 3: No Logo

Work and Leisure Survey
Outcome Measures Addressing Research Questions

1. **Identification of organization**: Whether or not a participant correctly identified the U.S. Census Bureau as the organization conducting the survey. (Q1)

2. **Visibility of logo**: Whether or not a participant reported seeing the logo on the survey. (Q2)

3. **Meaning of logo**: Participant’s self-reported interpretation of logo. (Q3)

4. **Preference**: Participant’s preferred logo placement. (Q4)

5. **Reason for preference**: Participant’s self-reported reason for selecting his/her preferred logo placement (Q4)
Debriefing Questions Collecting Outcome Measure Data

1. **Awareness of the survey organization:** Based on what you saw on the survey, what organization is conducting this survey? How do you know that?

2. **Perception of the Census Bureau logo:** Did you see a logo of the U.S. Census Bureau? If so, where?

3. **Interpretation of the Census Bureau logo:** What does the logo mean to you?
Data Collection: Participants

A convenience sample of 82 participants from the Washington metropolitan area in the United States with the following characteristics:

- Gender distribution: 20 males, 62 females
- Mean Age (SD): 68.63 (5.46) years
- Race distribution: White – 56%, Black – 23%, Other – 21%
- Education: Some high school and above
- Smartphone use duration: > 2 years – 83%, 1-2 years – 12%, 0.5-1 years – 5%
- Vision: Sufficient for reading newspaper

Participants were randomly assigned to the three study conditions:

1. Logo on every screen: 28 participants
2. Logo on first screen only: 27 participants
3. No logo: 27 participants
Data Collection: Procedure

*Step 1:* The participant read the survey invitation letter (with a logo letterhead) on paper.

*Step 2:* The participant completed a 6-question survey on a smartphone.

*Step 3:* The participant was probed with the debriefing questions.

*Step 4:* The participant was shown the three different logo placement designs and asked to choose one most preferred and explain the reasoning.
Data Analysis

1. Responses to the debriefing questions were independently coded by three different researchers.

2. Differences in response categorization were reconciled through discussion among the coders.

3. Logistic regressions were conducted to assess the effect of logo visibility on participants’ performance and opinions.
Result 1: Awareness of Survey Organization

Responses to the question: Based on what you saw on the survey, what organization is conducting this survey?

Major finding:
1. No participants explicitly referred to the logo.
2. No Statistically significant differences in responses among the three designs ($p > 0.05$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Census Bureau</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logo on every screen</td>
<td>14 (50%)</td>
<td>14 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo on first screen</td>
<td>12 (44%)</td>
<td>15 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>10 (37%)</td>
<td>17 (63%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources for “Census Bureau” responses:
- Invitation letter - 53%
- Survey question – 3%
- Smartphone owned by the Census Bureau and used by P during the study – 3%
- Other non-logo sources – 39%
- Non-response – 3%
Result 2: Perception of the Census Bureau Logo

Responses to the question: *Did you see a logo of the U.S. Census Bureau?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logo Location</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logo on every screen</td>
<td>8 (29%)</td>
<td>20 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo on first screen</td>
<td>8 (30%)</td>
<td>19 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>7 (26%)</td>
<td>20 (74%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to the question: *If so, where (did you see the logo)?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logo Location</th>
<th>Mobile survey</th>
<th>Invitation letter or other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logo on every screen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo on first screen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major finding:

1. No Statistically significant differences in response to both questions among the three designs ($p > 0.05$).
2. 7% of participants reported seeing the logo on the survey.
Result 3: Interpretation of the Census Bureau Logo

Responses to the question: *What does the logo mean to you?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branding design</th>
<th>Not a scam</th>
<th>Government survey</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logo on every screen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo on first screen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Major finding:**
Among the 16 participants who reported seeing a logo in the conditions where a logo was displayed. About *50%* of the participants interpreted the logo as *a symbol of government survey* or being *not a scam.*
Result 4: Preference of Branding Design

Responses to the question: *Which design do you prefer?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logo on every screen</th>
<th>Logo on first screen</th>
<th>No logo</th>
<th>No preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54 (66%)</td>
<td>22 (27%)</td>
<td>3 (3.5%)</td>
<td>3 (3.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to the question: *Why did you choose this one?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legitimacy</th>
<th>Sponsor identity</th>
<th>Visual effects</th>
<th>No preference/Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 (10%)</td>
<td>27 (33%)</td>
<td>33 (40%)</td>
<td>17 (3.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major finding:

1. A majority of participants prefer a logo on every screen.
2. Survey sponsor’s *identity/legitimacy* and *visual effects* are two major factors contributing to the choice of a logo display.
Summary

1. A logo on survey instruments is not seen by most participants.
2. About 50% of participants who see the logo interpret the logo as a symbol of legitimacy.
3. A majority of participants prefer a logo on every screen of a survey.
Acknowledgement

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