

The National Asset Scorecard for Communities of Color (NASCC) is a research initiative that includes the design and implementation of a pilot survey in targeted metropolitan areas to collect data about the asset and debt positions of racial and ethnic groups at a detailed ancestral origin level. In the past, other efforts have studied the net worth position of broadly defined ethnic groups, such as Latinos or Asians taken collectively. In contrast, the NASCC survey collects asset and debt information on key subgroups within the broader categories from such subgroups as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans or Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, Vietnamese, and Japanese. The NASCC data collection also includes information about native Americans, disaggregated by tribal affiliation, and about black Americans, disaggregated by ancestral origin, that is, whether from the Caribbean or recently from the African continent. To date, little had been known about the asset positions of these subgroups.

The survey was conducted in the Boston MSA and in four other metropolitan areas (Los Angeles, CA; Miami, FL; Tulsa, OK; and Washington, DC). These areas were chosen using a systematic approach to ascertain the geographic and demographic national representativeness of the ethnic groups defined at the ancestral origin level. Criteria for choosing metropolitan areas to be included in the sampling were primarily ethnic plurality and other variables such as geographical representation, area size, and access to certain ethnic groups that might be hard to identify in an urban context.

The survey instrument was designed primarily to gather information about a respondent's specific assets, liabilities, financial resources, and personal savings and investment activity at the household level. Additional areas of inquiry included remittance behavior, that is, sending assets or other resources abroad, and support for relatives in the United States. In addition, the survey collects information on home ownership, foreclosure experiences, and the equity status of homes. The survey also solicits additional information relevant to the financial experiences of lower wealth nonwhite individuals, such as the use of payday lenders. Core demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, educational attainment, household composition, nativity, income, and family background, are included in the survey.

The asset and debt module of the questionnaire replicates questions used in the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), the longest running national longitudinal household survey that collects data on employment, income, wealth, expenditures, health, marriage, education, and numerous other topics. For the non-asset and debt-based questions, the NASCC survey replicated many questions found on the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality (MCSUI) survey, which in the early 1990s was a cross-sectional four-city survey aimed at gathering socioeconomic data across ethnic and racial groups.

Various sampling techniques were used to locate and identify an ethnically plural sample consisting of the specifically defined ethnic groups. The techniques included the following: directory-listed landline samples targeted to census tracts where

specific ethnic groups were known to reside; cell phone random digit dialing samples drawn from rate centers that covered the targeted ethnic group ZIP codes; samples drawn from targeted ZIP codes on the basis of billing address; and the use of surname-based lists targeting specific national origin groups.

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