Lessons Learned From Using Technology to Increase Study Participation Among Child Welfare Service Recipients

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Introduction

• Context
  – Satisfaction survey of child welfare service recipients

• Objective
  – Increase study participation rate

• Barriers
  – Hard to reach population
  – Incentives not permitted

• Assumptions
  – Young demographic
  – Access to & use of technology (text, cell, email)
  – Literature on trends related to technology
Overview of Study

Caseworker asks for contact information

Yes, shares information

Mailing address
Home telephone
Cellular telephone
Email address
Text functionality

Study recruitment process

Yes, will participate
No, will not participate
Could not reach

No, not willing to share information
Two Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender (%)</th>
<th>Shared Contact Info. N=1845</th>
<th>Completed Survey N=630</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>93.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race (%)</th>
<th>Shared Contact Info. N=1845</th>
<th>Completed Survey N=630</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>64.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (%)</th>
<th>Shared Contact Info. N=1845</th>
<th>Completed Survey N=630</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \leq 27 )</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 through 33</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 through 41</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \geq 42 )</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other includes not reported, Asian, and Native American*
Which types of contact information did we receive?

- Mailing address: 94% (Shared Contact Info.), 98% (Completed Survey)
- Home phone: 43% (Shared Contact Info.), 53% (Completed Survey)
- Cell phone: 33% (Shared Contact Info.), 37% (Completed Survey)
- Email address: 5% (Shared Contact Info.), 7% (Completed Survey)
- Text: 3% (Shared Contact Info.), 3% (Completed Survey)
Why didn’t we get more email addresses?

- Caseworker
  - Gets email address
    - Incorrect email address
    - Correct email
    - Didn't have email
    - Didn't want to give email
    - Caseworker didn't ask
  - Does not get email address
### Types of Contact Information Provided and Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bivariate Relationships</th>
<th>Multivariate Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email &amp; higher income</td>
<td>Controlling for gender, white, and age all relationships remain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email &amp; being white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailing address &amp; being older</td>
<td>No longer significant:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home phone &amp; being white</td>
<td>Mailing address &amp; being older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home phone &amp; being older</td>
<td>Home phone &amp; being white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home phone &amp; higher income</td>
<td>Now significant:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text capability &amp; being younger</td>
<td>Cell phone &amp; being younger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Controlling for income (N=630):
- Mailing address & being older
- Home phone & being white
- Now significant:
  - Cell phone & being younger

Controlling for gender, white, and age all relationships remain

No longer significant:
- Mailing address & being older
- Home phone & being white

Now significant:
- Cell phone & being younger
Response Rate (N=630)

- **Mail**: 75%
- **All Phone Types**: 22%
  - **Home Phone**: 14%
  - **Cell Phone**: 7%
  - **Unknown Phone**: 1%
- **Online**: 3%
Response by Type of Contact Information Given

- Mail (N=1753): 27%
- Online/Email (N=85): 23%
- All Phone Types (N=1284): 11%
Lessons Learned

- Marginalized population
  - Trends in primary & secondary digital divide
- Caseworker issues
  - Collection of contact information
- Privacy concerns with technology
  - Participants’ reluctance
- Slightly older cohort than expected
- No benefits to using text; lots of drawbacks
What would we do differently

• Assess likelihood of having an email address
  – Small random sample of potential participants

• Caseworker training
  – Focus on collecting contact information, particularly email

• Would not gather text capability, nor set up means for text communication
Future Research

• Role of place in access to & use of technology
  – Analysis of zip codes & high concentrations of poverty

• Explore recruitment process
  – Relationship between #/type of contacts & participation

• Qualitative data on attitude, comfort & concerns
  – Review of notes for reference to technology
  – Interview ‘hard to reach’ population