Exploring Visual Enhancements on a Mail Survey of Physicians

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1. Use of Stamps on Response Rates — Background

Studies have shown that the use of stamps on envelopes increases the response rate (Blieden, 1992; Wilcox & Delamater, 1980). However, the type of stamp used and the content of the stamp may influence the response rate. For example, stamps with images may be more appealing to some respondents than those with text-only stamps.

2. Use of Pictures on Survey Response Rates — Background

Previous research has shown that the use of pictures on a survey form can increase response rates (Couper & Tourangeau, 2004). However, the effect of pictures on response rates may vary depending on the content of the survey and the population being surveyed.

3. Methods

The study was conducted in a randomized controlled trial design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions: (1) standard flag stamp, (2) Best Hospitals stamp, or (3) control group (no stamp). The survey was sent to a large sample of physicians in the United States.

4. Results

Figure 1 shows the response rates by treatment group for the overall sample, Figure 2 shows the response rates by experimental condition. The results indicate that the use of a picture on the survey form can increase response rates. However, the effect of the picture may vary depending on the context and the population being surveyed.

References


4. Discussion

The use of stamps and pictures on a survey may have different effects on response rates depending on the population being surveyed. Further research is needed to determine the optimal use of visual enhancements on a mail survey.

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Project: Exploring Visual Enhancements on a Mail Survey of Physicians
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