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1. Using Incentives in Establishment Surveys

Historically, establishment survey have provided response rates as much as 10%-20% lower than those of household surveys. As a result, the use of incentives to improve response rates has been an important aspect of this type of research. Despite this, little empirical evidence exists to support the use of incentives to encourage participation in establishment-level surveys. The few studies that have investigated incentives for establishment surveys have typically used small or low-cost incentives, such as gift cards or monetary incentives, and have not found a significant impact on response rates.

2. Methods

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010), an establishment is an economic entity that engages in manufacturing, mining, or otherwise producing goods or services. Establishments can be either single-unit or multi-unit businesses that are separately managed units of a single business. The use of incentives in establishment surveys is an area that requires further research.

3. Should Monetary or Non-Money Incentives be Used?

Many researchers have explored the use of monetary versus non-monetary incentives in survey research. Several studies have compared the effectiveness of monetary and non-monetary incentives, finding that monetary incentives were more effective in increasing response rates. However, the use of non-monetary incentives, such as personalization, advance notice, and prenotification, has been shown to be effective in increasing response rates as well.

4. Should the Incentive be Prepaid or Promised?

When providing incentives to study participants, the incentive can either be prepaid or promised. Prepaid incentives are paid out in advance, while promised incentives are paid out after the participant has completed the survey. Studies have shown that prepaid incentives are more effective in increasing response rates, as they provide a stronger incentive for completion.

5. Should the Incentive be Aimed Toward the Individual Respondent or the Establishment?

When attempting to gain survey cooperation from an establishment, researchers often question whether the incentive should be aimed at the individual respondent or the entire organization. Providing incentives to individual employees within establishments, were included; thus, half of the studies reviewed were deemed not relevant. Ultimately, this project reviewed the methods used in four years of establishment survey literature and found six studies that discussed the use of monetary incentives. Studies that did use incentives reported a 12.2% increase in response rates, in comparison to control groups. Overall, Roth (2008) and BeVier were not able to draw conclusions about the use of monetary incentives. However, these studies were focused on the use of indirect monetary incentives, such as gift cards or personalization, rather than direct monetary incentives, such as cash.

6. What is the Impact of Incentives on Survey Costs?

Research studies have shown that the use of incentives can affect survey costs. Studies have found that the use of monetary incentives can increase overall survey costs, while non-monetary incentives can decrease overall survey costs. Additionally, the use of incentives can influence the cost per survey, as well as the cost per completed survey.

6.1 What is the Cost of Incentives

Incentives always have a cost, and the cost of incentives can vary depending on the type and amount of incentives used. For example, monetary incentives, such as cash or gift cards, can be expensive, while non-monetary incentives, such as personalization or advance notice, can be more cost-effective.

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7. Discussion

The use of incentives in survey research is an important area of study, as incentives can be used to improve response rates and reduce non-response errors. However, the use of incentives must be carefully considered, as they can also increase costs and may have unintended consequences. As a result, researchers should be aware of the potential benefits and drawbacks of using incentives in survey research and should carefully evaluate the use of incentives in their own research.