

“WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?”

Utilizing School-Based Agricultural Education Curriculum as an Incentive for Teacher Respondents Engaging in Research Studies

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INTRO & NEED

- Response rates have been a longstanding challenge in SBAE (Chaudhary & Assan, 2024).
- In many studies, each respondent is not able to receive equal acknowledgement for their engagement (Lavrakas, 2008).
- Homans’ (1958) social exchange theory posits that in recruitment, we must communicate low cost, low effort, and the possibility of high reward for respondents.
- Teachers struggle with curriculum (Ball et al., 2007; Boone & Boone, 2009; Joerger, 2002; Smith & Smalley, 2018; Traini et al., 2021).
- Our idea consisted of providing study respondents with a folder of curriculum in order to increase response rates as a “win-win.”



HOW IT WORKS

- We conducted a series of research studies and allowed respondents to select a course Google folder:
 - Animal Science
 - Horticulture
 - Introduction to Ag
- Recruitment followed Dillman’s (2014) strategies; messages emphasized the incentive.
- Each week, new study respondents within that week were emailed a link to their free curriculum and a corresponding syllabus.



RESULTS TO DATE

- Response rates were over double what is typical in “cold call” studies (i.e., 5% to 10%; Wu et al., 2022).
- Response rates ranged from 17% to 33%, with the average being 22%.
- More powerful statistical analysis was a possibility because of the larger number of respondents.
- Respondents expressed gratitude for the free curriculum.



PLANS & ADVICE

- We will continue with this incentive.
- We will offer folders in new content areas such as agribusiness, natural resources, and AFNR mechanics.
- We advise conducting needs assessments to identify curriculum needs of teachers within the population of interest and offer curricula which meet those needs.



COST & RESOURCES

- Only requires a set of developed and organized curriculum folders.
- No direct financial cost to implement this idea.
- Investment of about 10 minutes each week to distribute the curriculum folders.

“This is way better than being entered into a drawing; this was a guaranteed outcome. I would’ve spent hours making or finding this curriculum. Let me know if I can help with any projects in the future.”

“Wow! This curriculum is GREAT! Let me know if you’ve got another survey and I’ll do it.”

“Holy cow, this is a complete game changer! Thanks for the great resources and for sending them to us so quickly! Looking forward to using this in class this year!”



REFERENCES



Scan the QR code to access the full abstract and the references.