Poster #8

Predicting Panelist Retention and Performance using Metrics from Industrial/Organizational Psychology

[1]Lola Kelly Smalls, [1]Alison T. Burngasser, [1]Kelly Van Haren, [2]Andrew Biga

[1]P&G Sensory, [2]P&G I/O Psychology

INTRODUCTION

Panelist motivation has been a hot topic at past Society of Sensory Professionals (SSP) & Pangborn conferences. The panelist motivation topics discussed at those conferences focused on motivational factors for existing/long-term sensory panels. Very little has focused on motivational factors for new sensory panelists and longitudinal understanding. We have reapplied tools from Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology using valid scales to predict descriptive panelist motivation, attitudes, retention, and performance. The outcome of this research has helped us to refine our sensory recruiting and training programs, which will ultimately lead to cost savings and improved panelist retention.

OBJECTIVE

1. **Compare and contrast results from two I/O Psychology Surveys to examine panelist motivation.**
2. **Dimension reasons for panelist retention & satisfactory performance via longitudinal motivation survey data.**

METHODS

Nine (n=9) Descriptive Analysis Panels anonymously completed two surveys: 1) the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) to assess panelists' subjective experience about their work [1]; and 2) the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) an 18-item measure of work motivation[2]. Panelists presented with a range of experience levels from 6 months - 22 years. The IMI Survey was administered to a subset of the panels in this study in 2007, thus enabling a longitudinal study comparing 2007 vs. 2010 to assess changes implemented in panel leadership, feedback methods, and sense of community.

The data were analyzed using the recommendations from the authors and assessed for significant differences using mixed model techniques.

RESULTS

Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI)

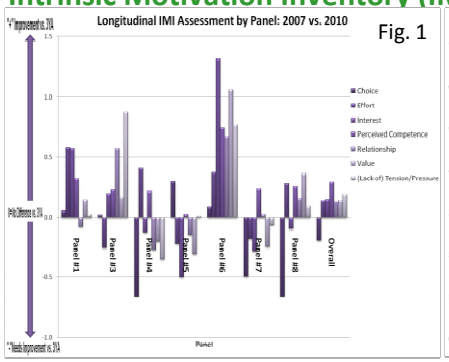

Fig. 1

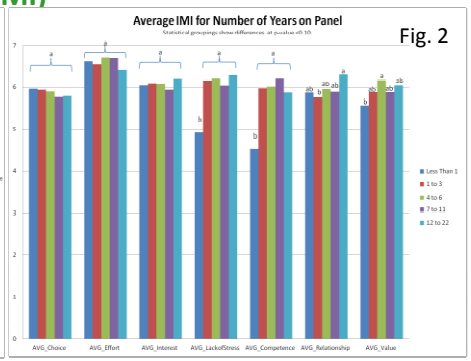

Fig. 2

• Longitudinal IMI data (2007 vs. 2010), Fig. 1) revealed that panels were generally doing the same or better vs. 3YA. Note: Values >± 0.5 were considered "significant" changes, requiring further action.

•Panelists with <1 year of experience rated Lack of Stress and Competence significantly lower than the other experience levels which was attributed to their tenure (Fig. 2).

Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (WEIMS)

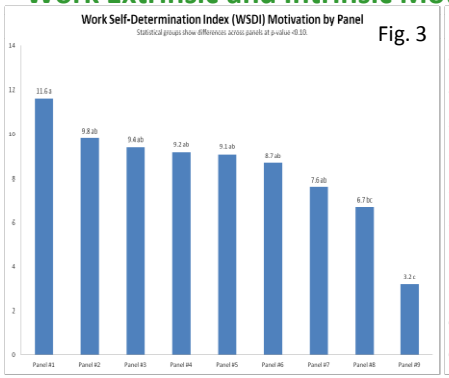

Fig. 3

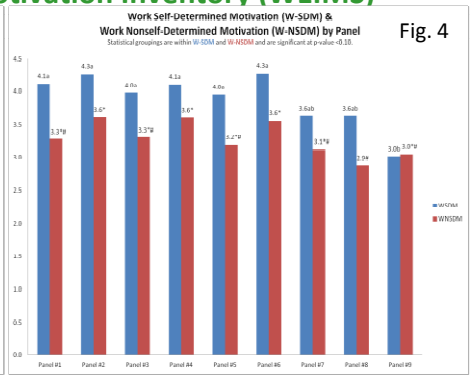

Fig. 4

• Overall WSDI data (higher is better, Fig. 3) revealed that Panel #9 was significantly lower than all panels, except Panel #8.

•Panel # 9's low overall WSDI data are due to **W-SDM** (positive motivation, Fig. 4), specifically because of low scores for the Integrated Regulation (value of activities) and Intrinsic Motivation (finding activities inherently interesting/satisfying) questions.

•Qualitative discussions with Panel #9 indicated that there was a low sense of pride in working for a contracting company, no clear career path, and questions regarding how their work impacts the business.

CONCLUSIONS

•Panel IMI data from 2007 enabled the implementation of changes based on panelist feedback. Longitudinal IMI data (2007 vs. 2010) reflects generally equal to or better motivation scores, thus enabling quantitative benchmarking.

• The IMI finding that new panels feel less competent is consistent with Lund, *et al*.[1] and normalizes after 1-3 years of experience.

•Low WSDI and Positive Longitudinal & Panel Specific IMI data were investigated qualitatively and revealed that stable panel leadership, consistent feedback (references/business outcomes), and training/calibration are key to retention and satisfactory performance.

REFERENCES

1. Lund, C.M., Jones, V.S., & Spanitz, S. (2009). Effects and Influences of motivation on trained panelists. *Food Quality and Preference, 20*, 295-303.
2. Tremblay, M.A., Blanchard, C.M., Taylor, S., Pelletier, L.G., Villeneuve, M. (2009). Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale: Is Value for Organizational Psychology Research. Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, *41* (4), 213-226.