

YOUNG FUTURES


SASKATCHEWAN MILLENNIAL STUDY USING AN ONLINE COMMUNITY
THEME : PROJECT OVERVIEW



YOUNG FUTURES- PROJECT OVERVIEW

CONTENTS

SECTION 1	OVERVIEW	1
SECTION 2	ACHIEVEMENTS	2
SECTION 3	VALUE	6
SECTION 4	SAMPLE RECRUITMENT	7
SECTION 5	RETENTION & REPLACEMENT	8
SECTION 6	PARTICIPANTS	9
SECTION 7	FEEDBACK	10
SECTION 8	LIMITATIONS	13
SECTION 9	IDEAS	14
SECTION 10	CONCLUSION	15
SECTION 11	CONTACT INFORMATION	16



THE BREAD & BUTTER

OVERVIEW

In November of 2017, Insightrix Research® launched the Young Futures study- an innovative and interactive study with millennials from the province of Saskatchewan. In the twelve months to follow, 20 participants were engaged each month on a variety of topics pertinent to them and their realities. These topics ranged from politics and sustainability, to relationships and emotions, all the way to ideas of life and death, and what it means to be a millennial.

The project was a roaring success- participation rates were high, insights gained were thoughtful and detailed, and general regard for the project was positive.

ACHIEVEMENTS

BEYOND PARTICIPATION MEDALS

The project also succeeded in realizing the four main purposes set out by Insightrix Research® for the study:

1. **TO SET THE BAR FOR RESEARCH WITH MILLENNIALS, AND LEARN ABOUT BEST PRACTICES FOR ENGAGING THIS “DIFFICULT TO ENGAGE” AGE GROUP.** Our participants were extremely keen to participate, communication was uncomplicated and effective, and activities each month were straightforward, productive and appealing. The request for participants to engage in three activities per month seemed to be an appropriate amount of commitment to ask for, and it garnered responses and participation that exceeded our expectations. Upon gathering feedback at the end of the project, many participants expressed that they would be interested in participating in projects like this in the future, with one participant stating that the only thing “wrong” with the Young Futures study was that it was not longer. Engagement levels, retention and interest were consistently high throughout the entire duration of the project, and the system in place for recruiting replacement members was effective and efficient.



ACHIEVEMENTS

2. TO LEARN ABOUT THE PERSPECTIVES, INTERESTS, HABITS AND BELIEFS OF MILLENNIALS IN SASKATCHEWAN.

The insights gained from the Young Futures millennials were invaluable. The different modes of research utilized proved effective in gathering detailed information about our participants' thoughts, ideas and histories. Use of three different research methods gathered quick, quantitative data in the surveys, engaged and conversational qualitative data in the bulletin board discussions, and thoughtful, at times personal, details in the diary mode discussions. A firm understanding of the differences between the two types of discussions left participants feeling comfortable and reassured that their input was shared in confidence, leading to a new depth of information gathered.



A background image showing a person's hand holding a smartphone over a laptop keyboard. A large blue rectangular text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

ACHIEVEMENTS

3. TO HAVE PRIMARY DATA UPON WHICH TO DO COST ANALYSIS BETWEEN THIS TYPE OF STUDY AND TRADITIONAL METHODS, SUCH AS FOCUS GROUPS. The Young Futures project was administered from the Inshatrix office, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The participants, however, were located across the province. The benefits of utilizing an online community for such a project were immediately realized. One moderator could post the surveys and discussions, as well as moderate, troubleshoot, and respond to participant inquiries, all from one location. Participants were able to engage in the project from their mobile phones or computers regardless of where they were, and whenever they had the time. Removing travel costs, need for more than one researcher/moderator, transcription time, while adding the factor of convenience and flexibility for our participants demonstrated that this mode of research is cost effective, resource efficient, and can accommodate the busy lives of participants.

ACHIEVEMENTS



4. TO TEST THE CAPABILITIES OF OUR SASKWATCH RESEARCH PANEL, AND USE IT FOR PROJECTS THAT THOUGHT OUTSIDE OF THE BOX. Our participants had no trouble utilizing the online community software through SaskWatch for this project. Already being members meant that their participation was instantaneous- no new usernames or profiles needed to be created. Since SaskWatch is primarily used for quantitative studies, the Young Futures project served as an opportunity to flex the other capabilities of the software, which were well received. Participants were able to see, “like”, and respond to others’ contributions, as well as contribute their own input in the bulletin board discussions. The diary mode discussions allowed for more in-depth interaction with the moderator, and provided a safe space for engaging in topics and questions that were better suited to private conversation. The creativity that the Young Futures project brought to SaskWatch undoubtedly highlighted the capabilities of the software which extend beyond the more common quantitative methods of the panel.



VALUE

SUM OF THE PARTS

Utilizing an online community to facilitate such a large, ongoing study not only eliminated travelling for a representative sample, but also efficiently utilized the moderator's time by allowing interaction with participants in real-time, simultaneously, and from one place. Facilitation of the project each month therefore occurred in just a few hours. The value of this type of research extends beyond the cost savings, into three other important elements:

SPEED

Saving time equals saving money (and frustration). The project was able to easily get off the ground, facilitation was streamlined and efficient, and participation was convenient and as fast as participants' internet connection would allow. Much of the work involved in compilation and dissemination of results was absorbed by the software- eliminating the need for manual transcription or data entry, and allowing researchers to gain access to the data as soon as the first response was collected.


ACCESSABILITY

Not only were facilitators able to interact with 20 participants from the comfort of their office, the convenience of the project was also extended to our participants. Young Futures millennials were able to access the project from their mobile phones, or computer- wherever and whenever! Accessibility proved to be a key element of success, especially when dealing with ever-busy millennials.

EASE

The process involved in administering a project like Young Futures was straightforward and simple. Utilizing the three main functions of the software also proved to be an easy task for participants. Communication with participants each day notifying that an activity was available prompted participation, steered participants in the right direction, and the easy navigation of the software did the rest!

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT ROLL CALL



Twenty millennials were chosen to participate in the Young Futures study. Our sample was selected from our provincial research panel, SaskWatch Research®. We strived to make our sample representative in terms of age and location. Our sample was created with equal numbers of participants from the North, South, Saskatoon, and Regina, as well as equal numbers from an early millennials (18-24), and late millennials (25-34) group. Participants were also chosen based on their indication of being “very comfortable” using technology, and “very comfortable” sharing their opinions online.

Thirty people were short-listed, and we utilized the call center on location at Inshtrix Research® to recruit from this narrowed list. We informed people on the call that they had been selected to participate in a provincial-wide study of millennials that would cover a number of interesting topics. We described that this would involve participation in three research activities a month (surveys, bulletin board discussions, and diary mode discussions). We also informed people on the call that the study had intentions of carrying on for a full year, and invited them to participate in the study in upcoming months. We were able to find 20 people to participate in our study, and all of them agreed to continue to participate in upcoming months for the duration of the study.

As part of the offer, we also provided incentives for participation. Young Futures participants were required to participate in each of the three activities per month. Doing so resulted in an incentive of \$50, and a qualifying entry to the monthly draw for \$100.

Participants who failed to successfully complete all three activities did not receive the incentive, nor were they entered into the monthly draw. If a participant failed to complete all three activities, they were also removed from the sample, and replaced by someone new for the upcoming month.

RETENTION & REPLACEMENT

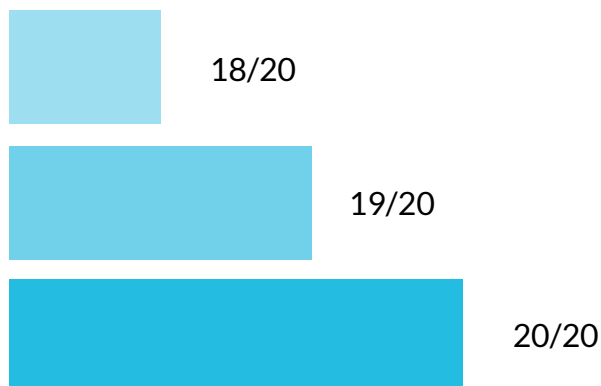
MAINTENANCE

Our high retention rate was another measure of success for our project. Retention over the whole year saw nearly three quarters of the original group making it until the end of the project. This meant that they maintained the participation requirements of engaging in all three activities each month for the whole year.

Re-recruiting once participants needed replacing also proved easy. New participants were selected from our original short list of qualified and interested people. These individuals were familiar with the project, had expressed interest in participating, and were able to substitute in quickly and easily. Recruiting replacement participants usually took only one or two business days before confirmation was received, and new participants were added into the sample in the software.

Replacement of members did not happen often, but when it did, only involved a few people. In general, those involved in the project were very eager to participate and enjoyed being part of the study. Participants who were contacted to fill in positions for people who did not complete all three activities also expressed eagerness when agreeing to participate in the project.

PARTICIPATION RATES EACH MONTH



Six of the twelve months saw 20/20 participants completing all three activities for the month. Four months had 19/20 complete all three activities, and two months had 18/20 complete all three activities.

YOU THE REAL MVP

PARTICIPANTS

The success of the Young Futures project could not have been achieved without our amazing group of participants. The Young Futures millennials were eager, keen to participate, and engaged. Our participants were from a wide variety of backgrounds, locations, and life histories. Despite all being from Saskatchewan, we were able to select a group who varied drastically in their life situations- which made for a great mix of opinions and insights for the responses.

THANK YOU TO OUR
PARTICIPANTS!





At the end of our study, we invited participants to provide their feedback on the project.

We asked about best things, suggestions for improvement, as well as any additional comments. Overall, the feedback was extremely positive. Many people expressed enjoying the project, there were suggestions for more/longer studies, and people stated that they enjoyed the topics and the participation style.

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART OF THE PROJECT?

Participants commonly expressed that they enjoyed reading others' responses and taking part in discussions with them:

"Reading all the responses on the bulletin boards."

"The thoughtful questions, and reading the discussion forums once they filled up with comments."

"I enjoyed being able to weigh in on varied subject matter. I enjoyed reading other opinions."

"The back and forth discussions on the bulletins and diaries."

"I loved the discussion panel. I loved being able to read others' point of view and try and understand things from their perspective."

"Being able to talk about stuff with others."

Others enjoyed the topics each month and questions involved in the study:

"The variety of topics presented."

"The variety of topics, going deep on the thoughts and feelings and aspirations to get a good picture. Being involved in a long-term study is interesting."

"Getting to think on the topics of how we are viewed."

"The quizzes were well thought out and interesting."

Some participants expressed that they thought the methods used in the study were a good way to express thoughts and opinions, and give input into questions that mattered to them.

"Questions required you to think and give a thoughtful response."

"Being able to speak freely."

"It was nice to be taken seriously by someone and our input valued."

FEEDBACK

WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU HAVE ON HOW TO MAKE A PROJECT LIKE THIS BETTER?

Most common was the sentiment that participants desired more interaction between participants and with moderator:

“Have moderators call out participants with more pointed and challenging follow-up questions [...] More engagement with each other and with the moderators.”

“I don't know how you would achieve it, but it would have been nice to get more interaction going in the bulletin boards rather than just sort of being a place where you can see everyone's response.”

“Maybe encourage more discussion with others participating.”



FEEDBACK

ANY FINAL COMMENTS ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS PROJECT?

In general, the project was highly regarded by participants, and many expressed feelings of enjoyment for having participated in the study:

“It was extremely well run, it was great to be a part of and I hope to be involved in more in the future!”

“This was an awesome project and I would support having more to get more people involved.”

“I liked this format, it was enjoyable.”

“Thank you for letting me participate! While the [incentives] were a nice bonus, it was also neat to see how others my age were replying to the [discussions]! I can't wait to see the final reports!”

“I had a great time participating in this project. I couldn't wait for the next month's question to come up. I hope you start another panel I could participate in, this was an awesome way to see what others were thinking as well as making me really analyze my responses.”

“I was extremely grateful to be included and quite enjoyed being involved with this.”

“Thank you for choosing me and allowing me to take part of this experience.”

“I enjoyed it throughout the year.”

YELLOW LIGHT

LIMITATIONS

Sure, our study was great and so were our participants. But even the best of things have room for improvement.

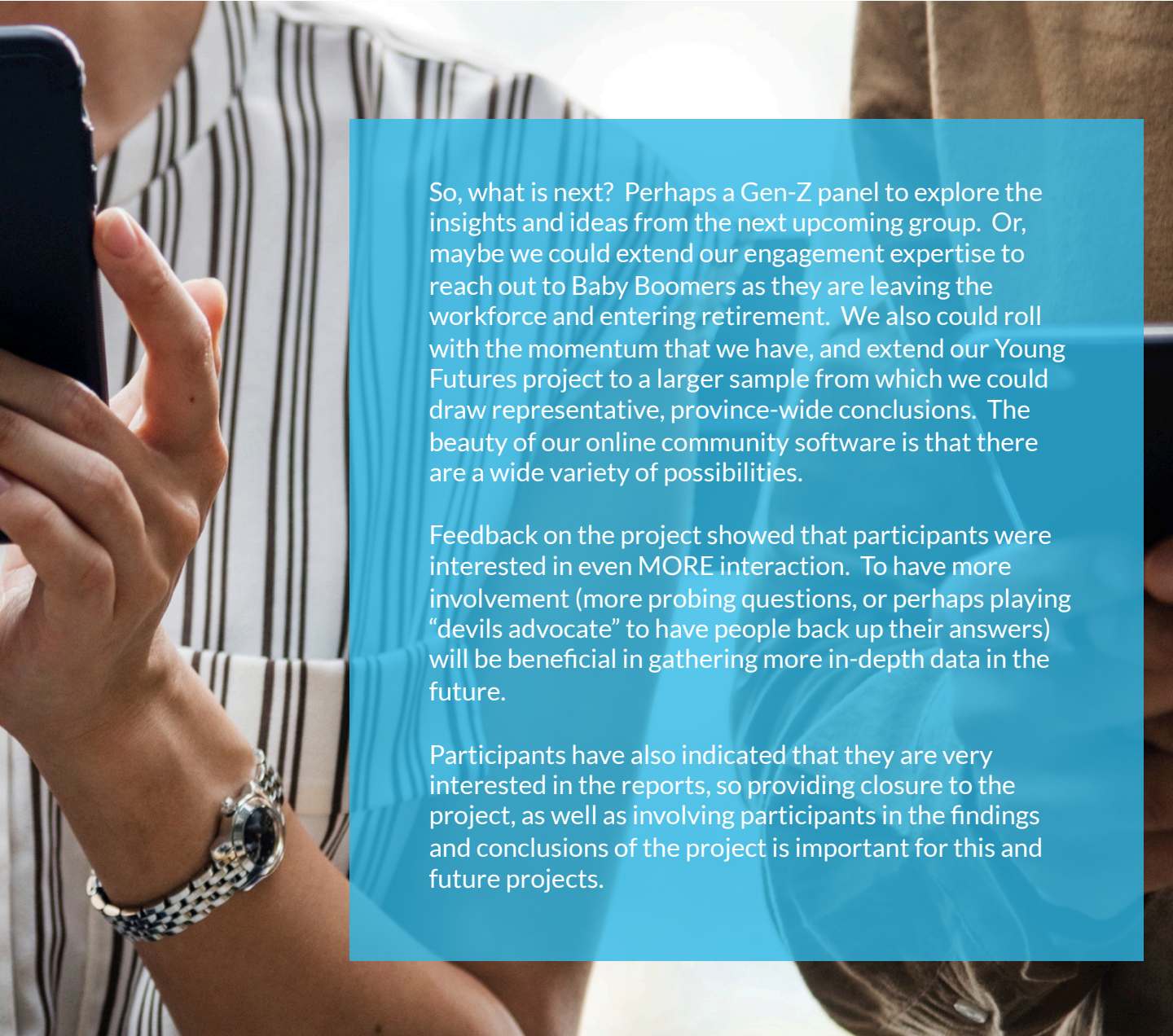
Although we took measures to have a sample representative in terms of age and location, we are aware of the fact that a sample size of twenty is quite small.

However, was it too small? Although there should be no hard hitting conclusions drawn from such a small study, we believe that the quality of data we were able to gather from our group was partly due to the relationship gained from having a smaller sample size. As well, once we reflected on the project, the methods used, the resources required, and the capacity of our software, we are confident that we would be able to extend a project like ours to a larger scale. Utilizing the ability of our software to enforce quotas and other sample monitoring could create a dataset that is reflective of any specs we (or, our clients) might like.



LIGHT BULBS

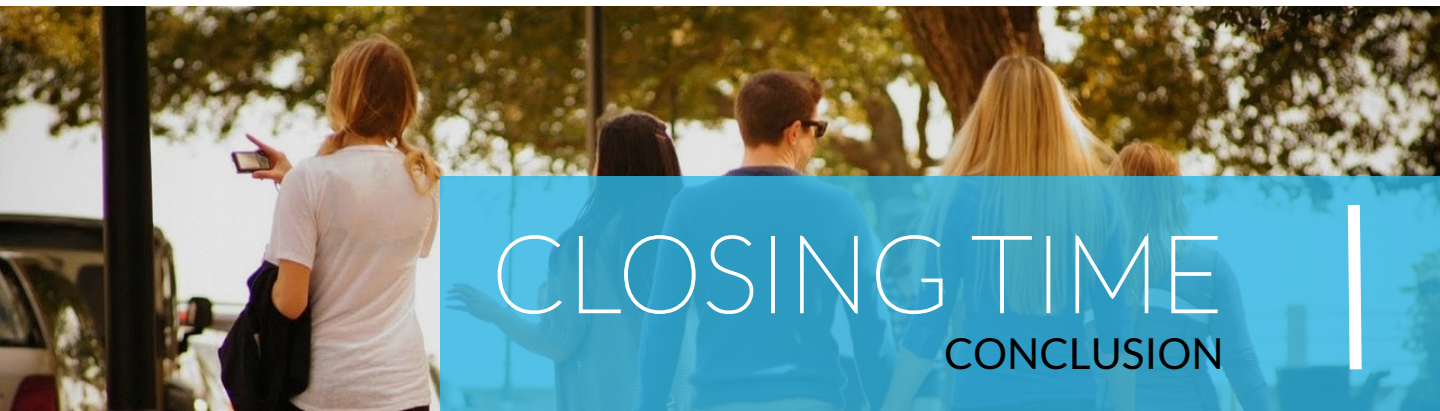
IDEAS



So, what is next? Perhaps a Gen-Z panel to explore the insights and ideas from the next upcoming group. Or, maybe we could extend our engagement expertise to reach out to Baby Boomers as they are leaving the workforce and entering retirement. We also could roll with the momentum that we have, and extend our Young Futures project to a larger sample from which we could draw representative, province-wide conclusions. The beauty of our online community software is that there are a wide variety of possibilities.

Feedback on the project showed that participants were interested in even MORE interaction. To have more involvement (more probing questions, or perhaps playing “devils advocate” to have people back up their answers) will be beneficial in gathering more in-depth data in the future.

Participants have also indicated that they are very interested in the reports, so providing closure to the project, as well as involving participants in the findings and conclusions of the project is important for this and future projects.



Our software has proven its capacity- it allowed for simultaneous facilitation of 20 people, collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, proved to be a platform that was easy to understand by participants, and provided easy export of data once the project was complete.

Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods each month allowed us to set the stage for the topic, ask quick, quantitative questions, and engage our participants in in-depth discussions.

Utilizing the bulletin board feature helped to set the expectation for participation among participants since they were able to see others' responses. It seemed that once a long answer was submitted, others submitted long and detailed answers as well. Being able to engage with participants and the moderator in both public and private discussions had added benefits as well. Some participants were extremely transparent and open in the diary mode studies, where anonymity and discretion undoubtedly played a role. Others preferred to engage with the group- the mix seemed to be suited to the variety of preferences in the group, and the different types of questions that were asked.

Conclusion of this project is bittersweet- high quality data was gathered, Insightrix met their objectives, learnings were gained throughout the process, and participants, overall, enjoyed participating. The worst part about it is that it is over. However, the Young Futures project has inspired us to continue to engage in innovative and imaginative studies. We are eager to go back to the drawing board with the wisdom and expertise gained from embarking on this project, and begin to create the vision for the next project.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

CONTACT INFORMATION

TALK TO US



1 (306) 657- 1897
1 (833) 227-0200 (toll free)

TYPE TO US



communitysales@insightrix.com

CHECK US OUT



insightrixcommunities.com



insightrixcommunities.com/blog



[@insightrixonlinecommunitysoftware](https://www.facebook.com/insightrixonlinecommunitysoftware)



[@inscommunities](https://twitter.com/inscommunities)



[Insightrix Communities](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Insightrix%20Communities)