The Right Time to Change Student Travel
An Experimental Study
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AIMS
Conduct an experimental evaluation of a travel behavior change intervention at UCLA...because experiments are the gold standard for evaluation and they are not used often.
...because the effectiveness of interventions likely varies by location (compare to Rodriguez 2014 and others)
Evaluate heterogeneous treatment effects
...because people who move may be more likely to change their behaviors than non-movers.
...because the treatment may affect drivers differently than non-drivers.
Use a low-cost, scalable treatment
...because it can reach many people affordably and increases the likelihood of cost-effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

Targeted population: Admitted graduate students at UCLA
Treatment: Map of transit options serving campus
Dependent variables: Travel mode to school (Use transit -and- Always uses transit)
Descriptive Analysis: Compare travel patterns between experimental & control groups
Heterogeneous treatment effects: Compare travel patterns of different groups, all of whom received the treatment, while controlling for differences in experimental and control groups.

RESULTS

1. Students who received the treatment were more likely to take transit.
2. The treatment was only effective among students who moved within the past six months.
3. The treatment was only effective among students who have automobile resources.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control group (N=348)</th>
<th>Experimental group (N=296)</th>
<th>Unknown group (N=166)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous residential location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not move</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous travel mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously drove</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously used transit</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though the treatment was randomly assigned, there were still differences between the experimental and control groups. We control statistically for those differences.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Low-cost interventions can encourage transit use among auto users.
- Policies that seek to change travel patterns should focus efforts on people undergoing life changes.
- Evaluators should control for differences in the experimental and control groups.

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