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Introduction

- Rural adults are 30% more likely to smoke cigarettes and have higher mortality rates compared to urban adults in the U.S.^{1,2}
- Some researchers make attempts to involve rural adults in research studies, but participation in many research studies remains suboptimal.³⁻⁵
- This lack of participation may diminish the validity and generalizability of these studies.⁶
- Prior studies have examined rural adults' barriers to research participation; however, much less is known about participants' motivations to participate and how they view recruitment messages delivered from researchers versus citizen scientists.⁷⁻⁹
- Citizen scientists — members of the public who engage with the scientific process — have the potential to connect community members with scientists. However, much remains unknown about citizen scientists' utility in increasing rural tobacco users' engagement in research.¹⁰⁻¹²

Aim

The purpose of this translational study is to examine rural tobacco users' attitudes towards stakeholders in research and their motivation to participate in research.

Research Objectives

- RQ1:** What motivations to participate in research do rural tobacco users report?
- RQ2:** How do rural tobacco users perceive citizen scientists?
- RQ3:** How do rural tobacco users perceive researchers?

Study Overview

- Phase I:** Conducted in-depth interviews with tobacco users in rural Florida
- Phase II:** Conduct a message design experiment to examine the influence of message deliverer and tailored content on rural tobacco users' willingness to participate in research

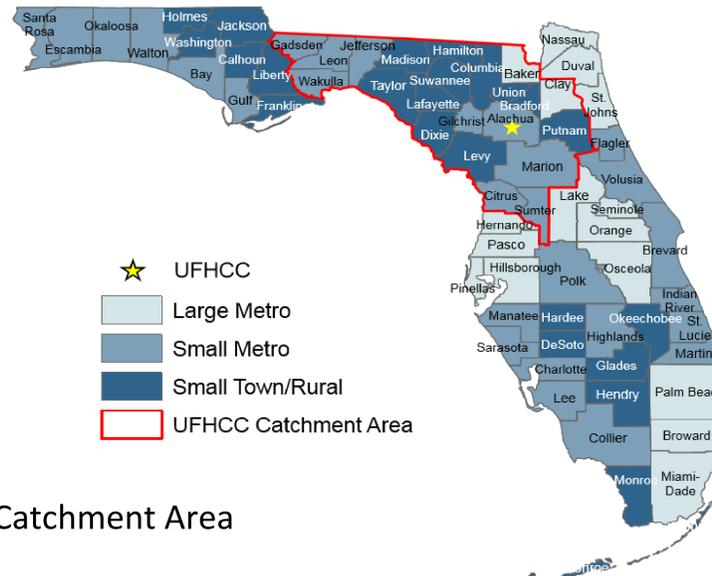


Figure 1: UF Catchment Area

Methodology: Phase I

- Recruitment:** Via in-person attendance at community events, Facebook advertising with the UF CTSI Recruitment Center, and Consent2Share database.
- Participants:** 16 rural tobacco users in Florida
- Conducted In-depth interviews
- Followed a semi-structured interview guide, questions included:
 - Attitudes toward participation in research, quitting tobacco use, doctors and citizen scientists, message delivery preferences
- Data analysis:** Analyzed transcripts following Braun & Clarke's thematic analysis steps¹³
- Two coders developed initial codes through line-by-line analysis with approximately one-third of the transcripts.
- Codes were collapsed and refined to develop themes in an iterative process until all differences in the codebook were resolved via discussion.
- Remaining interviews were coded individually.

Preliminary Findings

RQ1: Three main areas of motivations:

Theme	Exemplar Quote
1) Motivation to Participate to Help Others	“Hopefully, it will help somebody down the line.”
2) Motivated to Participate to Help Oneself	“The main motivation for my research is myself is my health.”
3) Motivated to Participate for Financial Reward	“It gives me some place to go. And the \$25 I can buy some extra groceries”

RQ2: Citizen scientists were perceived as relatable interpreters of scientific information. Some participants were hesitant about trusting a non-expert in research.

“They could relate because they're not in that world of the doctors and things. They're out in this world. And so they know about more daily life, they're regular people and not doctors or scientists.”

RQ3: Researchers were perceived as socially distant and working towards positive change.

“They are trying to do something that's going to help, like cancer research, and you know they're trying to make the future better.”

Discussion

- Findings indicate rural tobacco users are driven to participate in research by a spectrum of individualistic to collectivist motivations.
- Results show that both researchers and citizens scientists may be effective in delivering recruitment messages.
- The results of this qualitative research provide important insight to understanding rural individuals' motivations for participating in research and perceptions of stakeholders.
- Phase II builds upon these initial findings to examine the influence of the type of individual delivering the message and message motivation on tobacco users' intentions to participate in research.

Questions?

For references, and if you have questions or comments, please contact Rachel Damiani at rdamiani@ufl.edu or Neo Gebru at ngebru@ufl.edu