1. *A brief (1-3 page) lay-person summary of the proposed project, including page references (when necessary) for the location of where more information can be found in the protocol. (Note: This summary will also be required for future related submissions such as progress reports and modification requests.)*

As part of a class assignment for a graduate level computer science course, CSCI2300: Human-Computer Interaction, 21 students ran a personal informatics experiment on themselves for a month. A personal informatics study is a tool for people to collect data about themselves for the purposes of self-monitoring or self-reflection. This data can lead to insights about their own behavior and habits. It is related to terms such as quantified self and self-tracking.

All students were computer science undergraduates or graduate students, and learned about experimental design, statistical testing, and personal informatics through readings and discussion. They were asked to specify an experimental design (e.g. ABA/randomization), select at least one independent variable and 2 dependent variables, and were encouraged to use technology to aid in the tracking (some students were loaned devices, and others used smartphones and had their own wearable devices, and others did manual tracking). The students submitted detailed reports comprising their procedure, a day-by-day journal (in text and/or numbers), visualizations, and analyses.

Now we want to work the existing data, as secondary data, and we want to answer the question of what happens when people are in fact able to run experiments and perform analyses by being offered a structured lesson in experimental design and who have the background for developing their own analyses and visualizations.

*B. Application/proposal for funding/support (if an application/proposal of any kind was/will be submitted to an external sponsor in order to obtain funding/support of the project, attach a copy of the full application/proposal, including all budget pages.)*

This project had no funding and will require no funding.

*C. Describe the specific aims of this project and the methodology including a description of the project, purpose, procedures, participant population (criteria for inclusion/exclusion including the attempts made to include women and members of minority groups), recruitment procedures, and how confidentiality of data will be maintained.*

Description of the project

There has been a growing movement of personal informatics, where communities of people are engaging in self-tracking primarily with the aid of technology. Recent papers have identified how people do self-tracking, what they track, and why they do it. The findings from those interviews have emphasized that people generally do descriptive analyses; they believe that self-experimentation is highly important, yet many self-trackers do not have the capability to perform analyses or conduct rigorous experiments. The question we seek to answer is “what happens when people are in fact able to run experiments and perform analyses by being offered a structured lesson in experimental design and who have the background for developing their own analyses and visualizations"?

Purpose

We want to analyze the anonymized data from all of the reports and analyze the overall findings. We will look at what kind of analysis students performed, which variables they tracked and the reasons behind choosing those variables, what kind of experiments they designed to track their variables, and what they used to track their variables.

Procedure

One of the assignments in the CSCI2300 class asked each student enrolled in the class to track two variables of their choice about themselves for a month. Then, they analyzed the data themselves, drew conclusions and created visualizations based on their findings. Each of the students wrote a report about their personal informatics experiment.

Next, after the grades for the course are submitted, we will ask each of the students in the class to sign an informed consent form (Appendix A) via email. We are asking them to send us email back with their full name if they agree to participate. With that form we will ask for their permission to use their data and reports for further analysis (anonymously). After that, we will go through all the reports that participants signed informed consent forms for (anonymously) and present our findings based on the questions posed in the Purpose section above.

Participant population

The participants were 21 students from Brown (both graduate and undergraduate students). They were all enrolled in CSCI2300 and collected the data for this study voluntarily as a class assignment.

Recruitment procedure

The participants in this study were the 21 students in the CSCI2300 class. There was not special recruitment involved. We will not be working with them at all, only with the already existing data they collected.

Confidentiality

Each student submitted one report with all of his or her information for the class assignment. We will anonymize the reports for the purposes of this project by deleting their names from the report before analysis and only report our findings anonymously.

*D. Describe the possible risks to participants (including how the project is designed to minimize those risks) and describe anticipated benefits (if any) to participants or to the body of science.*

There are no possible risks to participants. We are only using their data as secondary data. All the data will be anonymized before analysis. The findings from this research project will be published in a research paper and will benefit future researchers in the personal informatics field.

*E. Describe the methods to be used in securing the informed consent (or, when involving minors, assent) of the participants. If an informed consent (or assent) form is to be used, attach it. If consent (assent) is conducted verbally, attach a written copy of the script. (See the next page for the basic elements of informed consent.)*

Students performed their personal informatics assignment on themselves without a consent form. However, when they submitted their assignment online, they agreed to this statement:

“As usual for assignments, your deliverables will be viewable by other students in the class, especially the students working on a group paper based on this assignment.”

For the purposes of this study, we will use an informed consent form to acquire their consent to use their data anonymously for the purposes of the further data analysis. See attached consent form (Appendix A).

*F. Complete and attach the ‘Protocol Checklist and Submission Procedures’ page.*

See attached.

*G. Attach the following, if applicable, to your research project: all interview/survey questions, focus group topics, survey instruments, anticipated letters/emails to participants, recruitment materials, letters of support from groups/organizations, copies of other IRB approvals, a completed ‘Checklist Form for Research Involving the Use of Prisoners as Study Participants’, and a completed ‘Checklist Form for Research Involving Children as Study Participants’.*

See attached assignment guidelines given to students before the start of the class project.