**Introduction**

This study analyzed attendance patterns at the annual summer youth program of a public defense firm in the south, which is designed to prevent juvenile justice involvement and promote community engagement. Participants are not necessarily clients of the firm. The program consists of educational and recreational activities, such as reading workshops and physical activities. The program is facilitated by a program coordinator who is on staff at the firm and volunteers from the community.

**Data Breakdown**

Attendance records of 167 participants were analyzed. Attendance records analyzed covered five summers: 2012-2016. Total of 39 possible days of attendance across five summers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENT OF STUDENTS WHO HAD SIBLINGS WHO PARTICIPATED</th>
<th>AVG. DISTANCE TRAVELED TO THE PROGRAM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>4.7 mi Std. Dev. 4.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is a student’s gender, sibling participation, or distance traveled related to their attendance pattern at the youth program & which students are more or less likely to attend?

**Research Question, Hypotheses & Methods**

Hypothesis One: Female participants are more likely to attend the firm's youth program.

Hypothesis Two: Participants who come with siblings are more likely to attend the youth program.

Hypothesis Three: Participants who travel less distance are more likely to attend the youth program.

This was a secondary data analysis of attendance records collected and maintained by the public defense firm. A linear regression was used to analyze the data. Because the dependent variable was a count variable, bootstrapped confidence intervals were used; to increase statistical power 90% confidence intervals were used.

**Results & Conclusions**

Using the total number of days attended as the dependent variable, and controlling for gender, sibling participation, distance traveled to the program (measured in miles), and total number of days a youth could have participated, the regression model in the figure below was found to be statistically significant at the .001 level. Numbers by arrows indicate ends of 90% bootstrapped confidence intervals.

- **Gender**: Someone who has a sibling participating, as opposed to someone who does not, controlling for all other variables, will attend between .001 and 2.4 more days.
- **Total possible days**: R² = .19
- **Total number days attended**: R² (effect size): This analysis explains 19% of the variation in attendance.
- **Total driving distance**: As an agency, this public defense firm can focus on reducing barriers to attendance, such as traveling far distances and not having fellow students, such as siblings, to attend with by encouraging carpooling or providing transportation for students.

**Implications & Limitations**

This study found that children who travel a shorter distance to the youth program, and attend with a sibling, are more likely to attend the program in the long run. It did not find that gender had a statistically significant effect on participant attendance.

As an agency, this public defense firm can focus on reducing barriers to attendance, such as traveling far distances and not having fellow students, such as siblings, to attend with by encouraging carpooling or providing transportation for students.

On a broader level, community engagement programs like this one should consider their location & ease of access as factors.

The limitations of this study lie in the omitted variables problem. There are many factors that could influence a student’s attendance that this study did not examine, such as their age, criminal justice involvement, or family & support systems structure.