

Robyn Bradley

From: Alicia Lynch, Lynch Research Associates <alicia@lynchresearchassociates.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2023 2:23 PM
To: Robyn Bradley
Subject: What soggy towels can teach us about contextualizing data



Adventures in Research: Issue No. 3

We're not sure what happened to summer—or how it got to be late September already—but here we are, firmly entrenched in pumpkin spice latte season.

It's a busy time of year (is it ever not anymore?) with kids back in school, sports in full swing, and the holidays lurking. We hope your Q3 ends on a high note and that Q4 starts (and ends) strong.

Now, let's get to the good stuff...

Boom! Exciting announcement...

Our team is actively pursuing certifications that make it easier (and smarter) for us to work with you.

Here's what we have going on:

- We're now officially [a federally certified Women-Owned Small Business \(WOSB\)](#).

- We've applied for Women-Owned certification from the [Women's Business Enterprise National Council](#) (WBENC) and are awaiting approval.
- We are officially state-approved vendors for research and analysis for the Massachusetts Departments of Early Education and Care and Public Health. [Check us out on COMMBUYS](#).

Do you want to talk about your research and evaluation needs? Extol the virtues of qualitative data and overthink use-of-propensity scores versus covariate adjustment in evaluation? So do we!

Get In Touch

What we're geeking out about...

"Quantitative data tries to claim objectivity. [But] quantitative data absolutely has priorities and values embedded in it."

~ Heather Krause, Founder of [We All Count](#) ~

Some critics say quantitative data cannot be equitable data. And to some extent, we agree: Quantitative data that lack insights and feedback from the voices you're trying to elevate are likely to be incredibly flawed. This is partly why we always encourage mixed-method designs. It's also why we're actively working to develop creative solutions that promote data equity at every step of the research process. (HOT TIP: Set a 20-minute timer as you're working to prompt you to pause and check in on the assumptions you're making that might impact data equity.)

Alicia recently attended **We All Count's** [Data Equity webinar](#), where founder Heather Krause challenges you to think deeply about the assumptions and priorities you're baking into surveys, data collection procedures, and analyses. It's incredibly eye-opening (and humbling).

Check out the We All Count website to learn more.

What we've been pondering: Soggy towels and contextualizing data.

When you're deeply embedded in quantitative data, it's so easy to sometimes forget that those numbers in front of you come from incredibly deep, rich, and varied life paths. My 11-year-old son recently reminded me of the importance of contextualizing data in research design and analysis.

Here's what happened:

My kiddo constantly leaves wet towels right outside the bathroom door (bear with me, I promise there's a point). It drives me NUTS. I find myself thinking, "This is so lazy! Why can't he take five extra steps and hang up that towel? Does he think I'm his servant?"

*Finally, I asked him, "Why can't you just go in the bathroom and hang up the *%#@\$ towel?" (I promise I only said the expletives in my head.)*

His response was, "Mom, it's so dark in there. I hate going in there alone."

Once I had that context, I no longer considered his actions lazy. I realized he was doing the best he could within his limits. So today, I'm going to say, "Hey, your towel is on the floor. Let's go put it away together."

THE TAKEAWAY: Every data point has a story behind it. As you're writing your reports, sharing your findings, or standing proudly next to your PowerPoint, ask yourself this: Do you truly understand the full story behind your data?

And if you don't, [we can help with that](#). :)

Client Spotlight: LXD Research is the Most Approved Firm on Evidence for ESSA Reading

Schools are in desperate need of high-quality, research-based reading curriculum. It has been incredibly fulfilling (both personally and professionally) for us to be part of the process that gets effective reading instruction in front of emerging readers.

A huge thank you to [Dr. Rachel Schechter](#) and [LXD Research](#) for allowing us to be part of this journey.



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What's next for us...

We've been in business for eight years now, and there's a clear pattern to our work: The research world wakes up big time in September! We're

excited to be starting collaborations with new partners and re-engaging with some of our favorite clients from the past.

So as you switch from iced to hot coffee and consider whether that stain on your good old fall fleece is really all that noticeable, let's dust off that research project you put away over the summer and get down to making an impact.

Email us or just put a time on our calendar to talk more:

- Alicia
 - Email: alicia@lynchresearchassociates.com
 - Book time with Alicia: calendly.com/aliciadlynch
- Kristina
 - Email: kristina@lynchresearchassociates.com
 - Book time with Kristina: <https://calendly.com/kristinacallina>

Have a great start to fall, and we'll see you in Q4!

Best,

The Team at Lynch Research Associates

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