



Do Economic Incentives Given Prior to a Survey Affect Participation in the Survey?

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Economic Incentives: Conditional Cash Transfers

- \$600 if a high school student in the household passes a key standardized exam
- \$100 for each family member that gets annual preventative dental care
- \$200 for every month employed more than 30 hours

Do cash transfers influence the decision to respond to a survey?

Hypothetical example:

In month ten after RA, a program group member receives a \$500 cash transfer for completing a condition of the program.

Does this influence her decision to participate in the survey when contacted in month 12?

Can survey incentives inform the influence of cash transfers?

- Survey incentives increase cooperation rates
- Cash survey incentives are more effective
- Survey incentives paid prior to the interview request are more effective
- The effect of a survey incentive may persist

Survey Data

- Four surveys from randomized controlled trials
- Employment programs for low-wage workers
- Cash transfers incentivize activities and behaviors associated with advancement
- High response rates (70-80%)
- All had modest survey incentives
- Extensive administrative data on the entire sampling frame (including nonrespondents)

Logistic Regression Models of Response Propensity in Program Group

- Contact (1/0) = Demographic Characteristics & *Cash Receipt*
- Response, Conditional on Contact (1/0) = Demographic Characteristics & *Cash Receipt*

Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA)

- Corpus Christi, Texas
- \$200/month cash if working 30 hours per month or working part-time and in school
- 12-month survey
- 82% survey response rate

ERA 12-month Survey

| Corpus Christi site | Respondent | Non-Respondent |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Received cash transfer year 1 (%) | 22.7 | 7.7 |
| Average amount received in year 1 (\$) <i>N=180</i> | 209 | 87 |

- If there were no bias in the respondent sample, we would expect that respondents and non-respondents would receive cash transfers at similar rates and amounts.

UK Employment Retention and Advancement (UK ERA)

- Program: Working Tax Credit
- Cash transfers up to £3,700 for staying in work, educational attainment, and emergencies
- 24-month and 60-month surveys
- 79% / 69% survey response rates



UK ERA 24-month Survey

| WTC Site | Respondent | Non-Respondent |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Received any cash transfer (%) | 71.6 | 45.1 |
| Total amount received (£) <i>N=1,342</i> | 1,284 | 745 |

UK ERA 24-month Survey

| | Predicting Contact | | Predicting Response† | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
| | Sig | Odds ratio | Sig | Odds ratio |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | |
| Single | *** | 0.64 | | |
| Cash Transfers | | | | |
| Any cash transfer | *** | 2.62 | | |

Statistical significance levels: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent

†conditional on contact

UK ERA 60-month Survey

| WTC Site | Respondent | Non-Respondent |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Received any cash transfer (%) | 70.9 | 56.1 |
| Total amount received (£) <i>N=1,342</i> | 1,268 | 964 |

UK ERA 60-month Survey

| | Predicting Contact | | Predicting Response† | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
| | Sig | Odds ratio | Sig | Odds ratio |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | |
| Female | * | 2.22 | | |
| Single | *** | 0.63 | | |
| A-level education | | | * | 1.62 |
| Worked in year prior to RA | * | 2.89 | | |
| # months on benefits yr prior to RA | * | 0.97 | | |
| Cash Transfers | | | | |
| Any cash transfer | * | 1.51 | * | 1.59 |

Statistical significance levels: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent

†conditional on contact

Opportunity New York City (ONYC)

- Program: Family Rewards
- 36-month survey
- Generous cash transfers that almost all program group members received
- 79% survey response rate

ONYC 36-month Survey

| Family Rewards | Respondent | Non-Respondent |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Received any cash transfer (%) | 98.3 | 86.7 |
| Total amount received (\$) <i>N=1,865</i> | 9,087 | 6,465 |

| ONYC, Family Rewards 36-month Survey | Predicting Contact | | Predicting Response† | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
| | Sig | Odds ratio | Sig | Odds ratio |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | |
| Child proficient on ELA test | | | * | 0.61 |
| Bronx, district 5 | | | ** | 2.79 |
| Number of children <19 | *** | 0.86 | ** | 0.82 |
| English is primary language | | | ** | 2.49 |
| Working at RA | | | ** | 0.55 |
| African-American | | | ** | 4.51 |
| Age | *** | 1.03 | | |
| In public housing | *** | 1.68 | | |
| Cash Transfers | | | | |
| Any cash transfer | *** | 3.22 | *** | 6.12 |
| Amount of bonus payment/100 | *** | 1.01 | *** | 1.01 |

Statistical significance levels: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent

†conditional on contact

Summary

- Cash transfers are sometimes associated with contact and/or cooperation

Next Steps

- Can data on cash transfers be used to...
 - structure differential survey incentives?
 - make alternative nonresponse adjustments?

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