

# **You've got mail: Estimating the Effects of Postcards and Monetary Incentives on Respondent Recruitment**

**Gray Jones, Economist**  
Division of Consumer Expenditure Surveys  
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# Outline

- Design of embedded postcard and monetary incentive experiment
- Findings of experiment
- Conclusions and recommendations for future research



# Literature on Pre-Notification and Prepaid Incentives

- Pre-notification has been shown to have some positive impact on participation
  - ▶ In epidemiological studies (Koitsalu, M., et al. 2018)
  - ▶ And web surveys (Dykema, J., et al. 2011)

# Literature on Pre-Notification and Prepaid Incentives

- Prepayment of monetary incentives generally increase participation rates (Singer, E. & C. Ye, 2013)
- Incentive via debt card was ineffective for increasing CE Diary Survey participation in past studies (McGrath, D., et al. 2007)

# Postcard and Incentive Experiment Overview

- All groups received an advance letter (AL) through USPS priority mail
- Advance material groups
  - ▶ Control (AL only)
  - ▶ Postcard Only
  - ▶ Both



# LSF Postcard and Incentive Experiment Results

1. Postcard Results
2. Incentives Results
3. Contact Attempts and Time Spent in Instrument



# LSF Postcard Experiment

| Postcard Assignment | N     | Percent |
|---------------------|-------|---------|
| Postcard Group      | 1,332 | 75.2%   |
| Control Group       | 439   | 24.8%   |
| Total Sample        | 1,771 | 100%    |

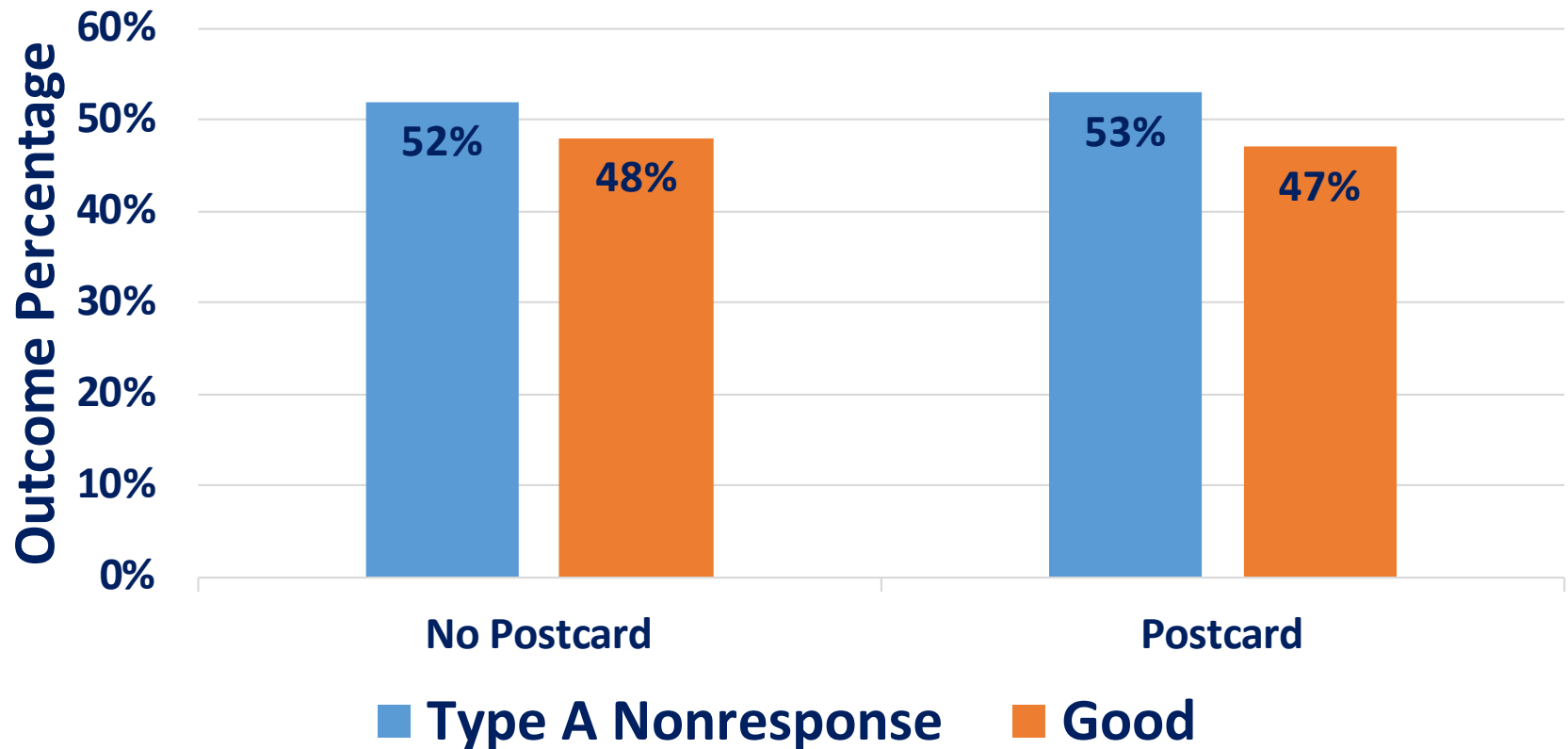
# LSF Postcard Experiment

| <b>Postcard Receipt Status</b>   | <b>N</b>     | <b>Percent</b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Question Not Asked</b>        | <b>466</b>   | <b>35%</b>     |
| <b>Question Asked</b>            | <b>866</b>   | <b>65%</b>     |
| <b>    Reported Received</b>     | <b>506</b>   | <b>58%</b>     |
| <b>    Not Reported Received</b> | <b>360</b>   | <b>42%</b>     |
| <b>Total Postcard Group</b>      | <b>1,332</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

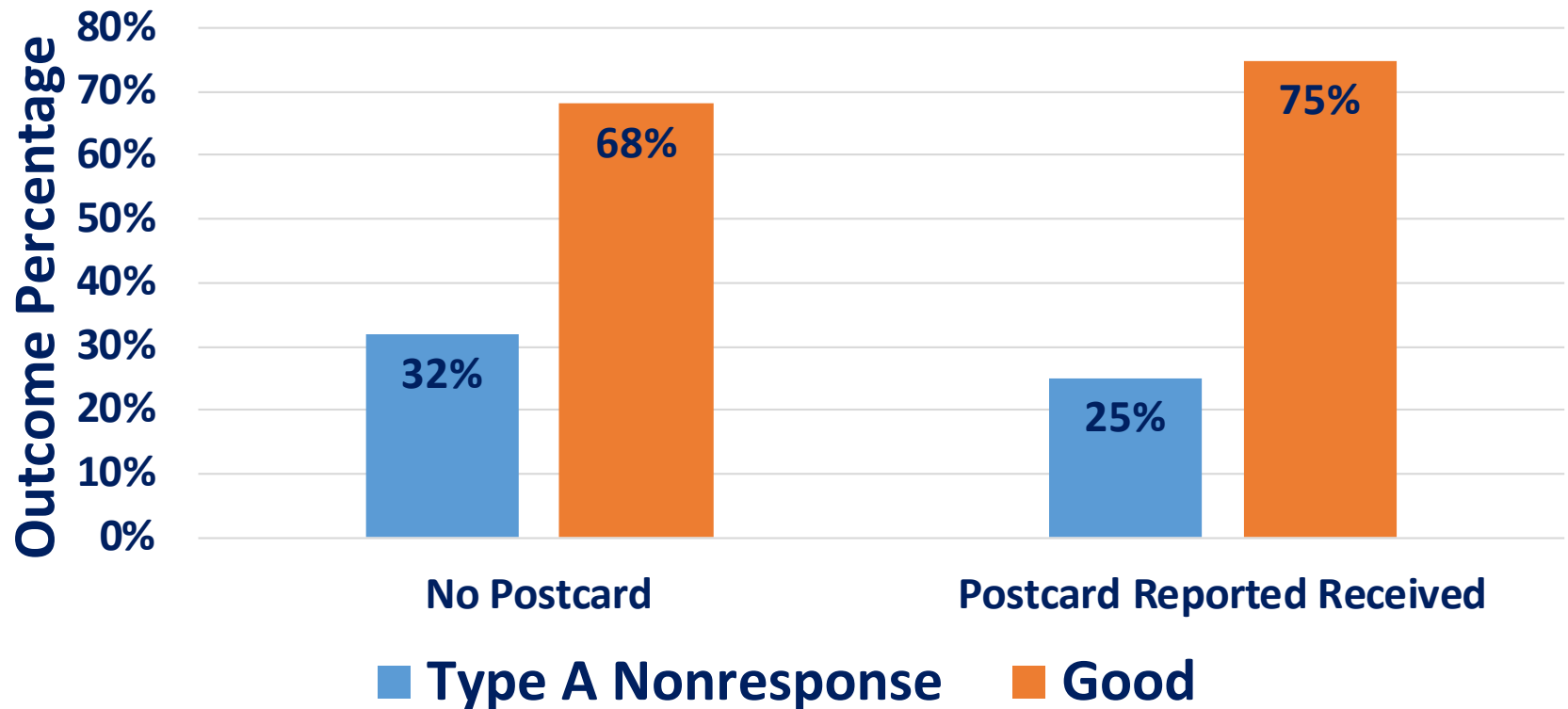




# Participation by Postcard Group Assignment (n=1771)



# Participation by Postcard Reported Received (n=866)



# Advance Letter and Incentives Overview



- Subsequent to the postcard
- A random half contained a \$5 incentive

# Response Rate by Incentive Group

| Incentive Status | Good | Type A Nonresponse | All   | Response Rates |
|------------------|------|--------------------|-------|----------------|
| Incentive group  | 412  | 467                | 879   | 46.9%          |
| Control group    | 423  | 466                | 889   | 47.6%          |
| Total            | 835  | 933                | 1,768 | 47.2%          |

# Advance Letter and Incentives

| <b>Advanced Letter Receipt Status</b> | <b>N</b>     | <b>Percent</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Question Not Asked</b>             | <b>561</b>   | <b>31.7%</b>   |
| <b>Question Asked</b>                 | <b>1,210</b> | <b>68.3%</b>   |
| <b>    Reported Received</b>          | <b>1,017</b> | <b>84%</b>     |
| <b>    Not Reported Received</b>      | <b>193</b>   | <b>16%</b>     |
| <b>Total Letter Sample</b>            | <b>1,771</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

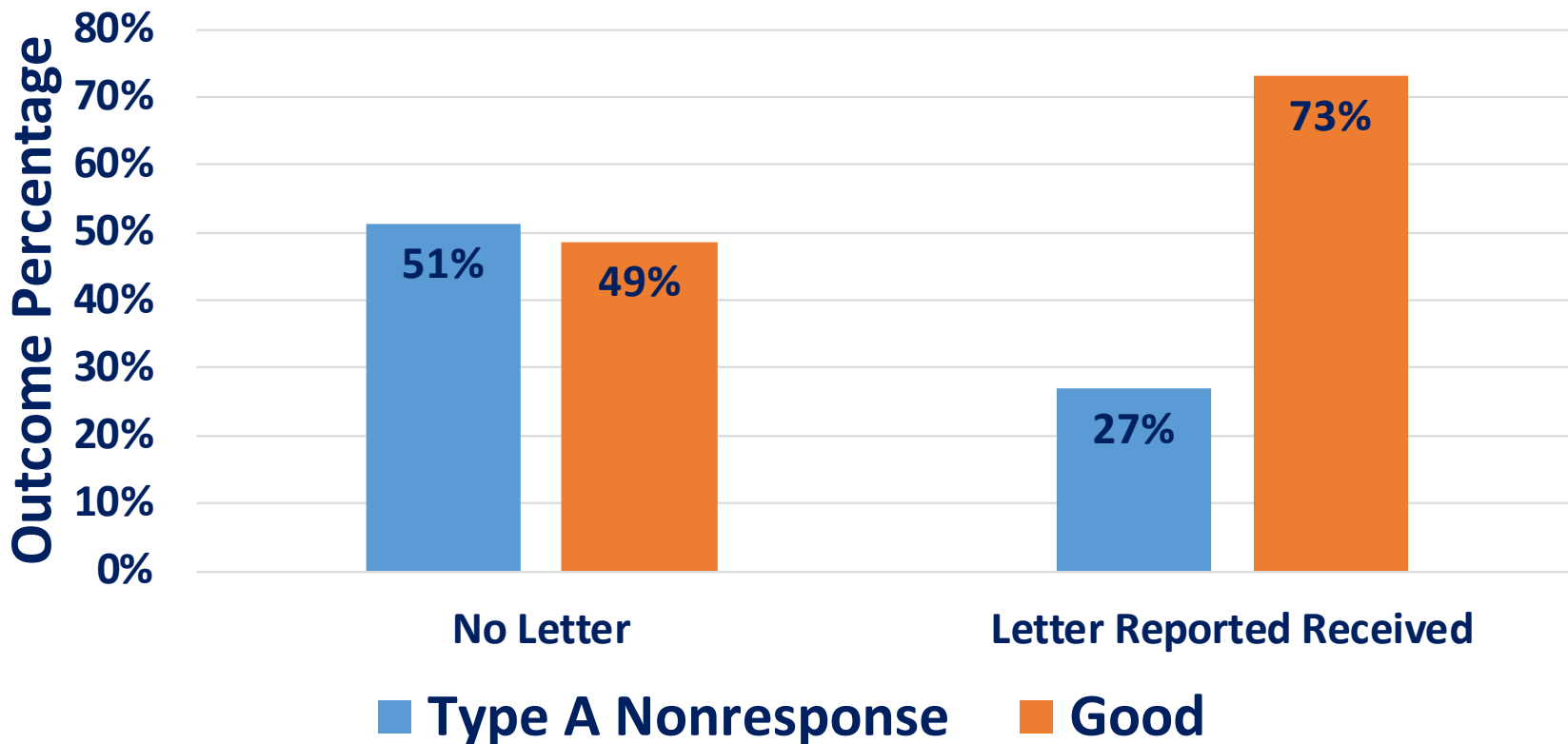
# Advance Letter and Incentives

| Incentive Assignment | N     | Percent |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| Incentive Group      | 879   | 49.7%   |
| Control Group        | 889   | 50.3%   |
| Total Sample         | 1,768 | 100%    |

# Advance Letter and Incentives

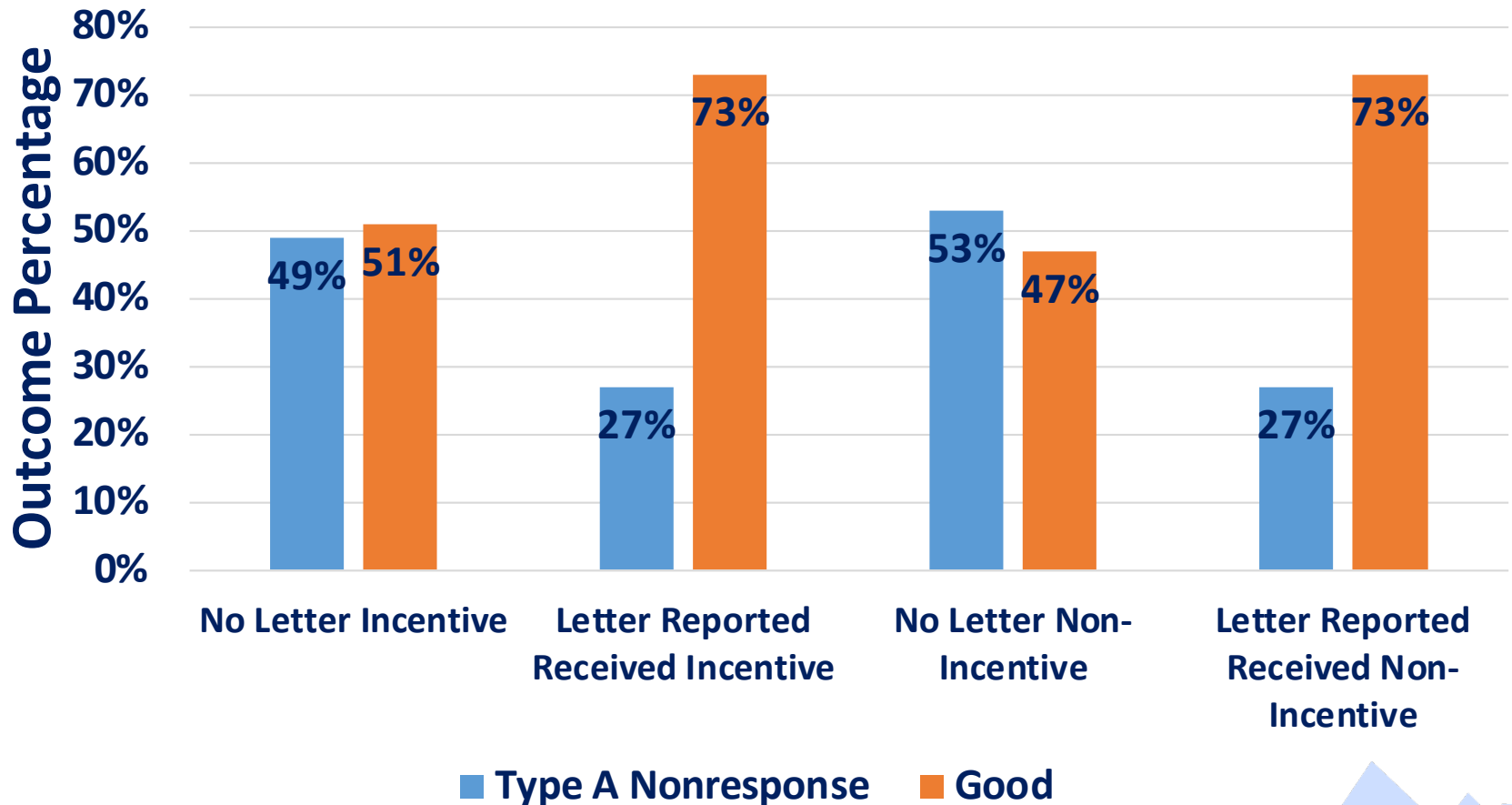
| <b>Advanced Letter Receipt Status for Incentive Group</b> | <b>N</b>   | <b>Percent</b> |
|---|------------|----------------|
| <b>Question Not Asked</b>                                 | <b>285</b> | <b>32.4%</b>   |
| <b>Question Asked</b>                                     | <b>594</b> | <b>67.6%</b>   |
| <b>    Reported Received</b>                              | <b>501</b> | <b>84.3%</b>   |
| <b>    Not Reported Received</b>                          | <b>93</b>  | <b>15.7%</b>   |
| <b>Total Incentive Group</b>                              | <b>879</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

# Participation by Advance Letter Received Status (n=1,210)





# Incentives and Advance Letter Received Status (n = 1,208)



# Incentives and Mode Choice

| Incentive Group | N   | Online Diary | Paper Diary |
|-----------------|-----|--------------|-------------|
| Incentives      | 412 | 43.7%        | 56.3%       |
| Control group   | 423 | 44.2%        | 55.8%       |
| Total           | 835 | 43.9%        | 56.1%       |

# Respondent Debriefing on Incentives (n = 332)

| Question  | Response Options | % of CUs |
|---|------------------|----------|
| In the first letter we sent you, explaining the survey and asking for you to participate, we included a five-dollar bill. Did your CU receive this money? | Yes              | 65.1%    |
|   | No               | 11.1%    |
|   | Don't know       | 21.4%    |
|   | Refused          | 2.4%     |

# Respondent Debriefing on Incentives (n = 216)

| Question   | Response Options                                      | % of CUs |
|--|---|----------|
| How did the money your CU received affect your decision to complete the diary? | It made me more willing to complete the diary         | 31.9%    |
|  | It made me less willing to complete the diary         | 1.4%     |
|  | It had no effect on my decision to complete the diary | 65.3%    |
|  | Don't know  | 1.4%     |

# Comparing Contact Attempts Between Incentive Groups

| Average number of contact attempts | Complete       | Type A         | Total          |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| LSF cases receiving incentive      | 5.8<br>(n=412) | 4.7<br>(n=467) | 5.2<br>(n=879) |
| LSF cases not receiving incentive  | 5.9<br>(n=423) | 4.8<br>(n=466) | 5.3<br>(n=889) |

| Average Number of contact attempts to placement outcome of the diary | Complete       | Type A         | Total          |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| LSF cases receiving incentive  | 3.0<br>(n=412) | 4.2<br>(n=467) | 3.6<br>(n=879) |
| LSF cases not receiving incentive                                    | 2.9<br>(n=423) | 4.2<br>(n=466) | 3.6<br>(n=889) |

# Comparison of Total Time Spent in the Diary by Incentive Groups

| Total Time Spent in Diary         | Complete                |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| LSF cases receiving incentive     | 48.6 minutes<br>(n=412) |
| LSF cases not receiving incentive | 47.7 minutes<br>(n=423) |

# Conclusions from Experiment

- Pre-notification postcards had no measureable effect on participation
- Prepaid cash incentives made no discernable impact on the behavior of the LSF sample units.



# Future Research

- Incentive effect by income
- Advance material receipt results





# Contact Information

**Gray Jones**

**Economist, BRPD**

**Division of Consumer Expenditure Surveys**

**[www.bls.gov/cex](http://www.bls.gov/cex)**

**202-691-6869**

**[jones.graham@bls.gov](mailto:jones.graham@bls.gov)**

