

# Incentives in the CE Interview Survey: Present Findings and Future Research

Ian Elkin

Bureau of Labor Statistics

2017 CE Survey Methods Symposium

07/18/2017

*Any opinions expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not constitute policy of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.*



# Incentives or How I get my Child to do Things He Does Not want to do

**Ian Elkin**

Bureau of Labor Statistics

2017 CE Survey Methods Symposium

07/18/2017

*Any opinions expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not constitute policy of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.*



# Prior to Incentive Administration



# Post-incentive Administration



# Outline

- I. Background
- II. Study Design
- III. Analysis
- IV. Conclusions
- V. Next Steps



# I. Background



# Incentives Test - Background

- Study objectives included developing a plan for -
  - ▶ Operationalizing & implementing incentives
  - ▶ Researching & recommending incentive amounts
  - ▶ Proposing incentive distribution procedures, including procedures to capture respondents that generally do not respond to classic incentives
  - ▶ Analyze test data to make a recommendation regarding incentive implementation
- Past CE incentives research -
  - ▶ Gemini Incentive Structure Review: Summary of Incentive Experiences
  - ▶ CE incentives operational summaries
  - ▶ CE Interview Incentives Test Report
  - ▶ CE Diary Incentives Test Report



## II. Study Design





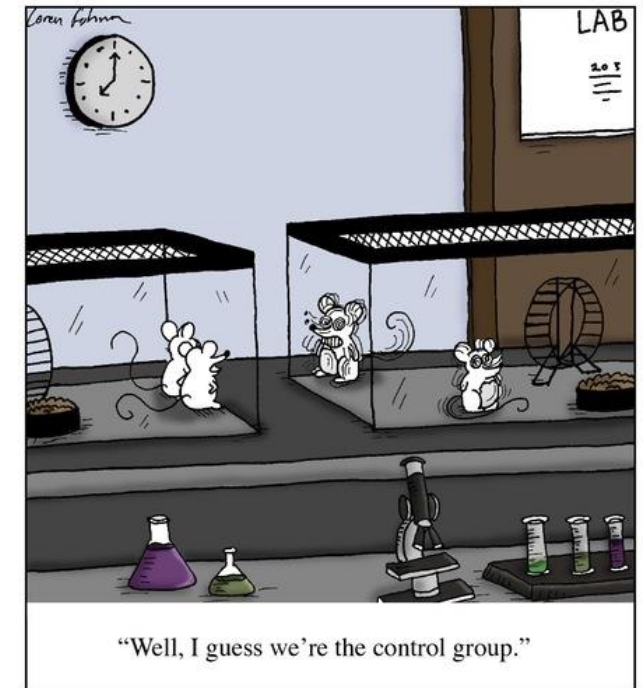
# Incentives Test - Overview

- Test Information and Conditions:
  - ▶ July 2016 – March 2017 Experiment
  - ▶ First Interviews
  - ▶ Test Sample Size: 1,350 per treatment group
  - ▶ Control Sample Size: 1,950
  - ▶ Conditional and unconditional incentives



# Incentives Test – Treatment & Control Groups

Treatment and Control Groups			
	\$5 Token Incentive (unconditional)	\$40 Survey Incentive (conditional)	\$20 Records Use Incentive (conditional)
All	\$5	\$40	\$20
No Token	None	\$40	\$20
No Record	\$5	\$40	None
Control (1 <sup>st</sup> Interviews)	None	None	None



# III. Analysis



# CE Data Quality Indicators

- Response rate
- Number of expenditures
- Number of contact attempts
- Mode – collection level
- Records usage
- Length of interview
- Doorstep concerns
- Converted refusal



# Incentives Test Analysis – Response Rate

Response Rates, First Interview	
	Difference (Treatment Minus Control)
All	4.6 % points
No Token	1.4 % points
No Record	5.0 % points

Response Rates, Second Interview	
	Difference (Treatment Minus Control)
All	5.0 % points
No Token	3.2 % points
No Record	5.1 % points



# Incentives Test Analysis – Number of First Interview Expenditures

## Number of Expenditures, First Interview

	Difference in Medians (Control group baseline)	Difference in Means (Control group baseline)
All	+1.0	+1.1
No Token	+1.0	+1.2
No Record	+1.0	+1.0



# Incentives Test Analysis – Number of Second Interview Expenditures

Number of Expenditures, Second Interview		
	Difference in Medians (Control group baseline)	Difference in Means (Control group baseline)
All	+1.0	+1.6
No Token	+1.5	+2.2
No Record	+1.5	+2.4



# Incentives Test Analysis – First Interview Contact Attempts

Number of Contact Attempts, First Interview		
	Difference in Medians (Control group baseline)	Difference in Means (Control group baseline)
All	0.0	-0.2
No Token	0.0	-0.4
No Record	0.0	-0.3





# Incentives Test Analysis – Second Interview Contact Attempts

## Number of Contact Attempts, Second Interview

	Difference in Medians (Control group baseline)	Difference in Means (Control group baseline)
All	0.0	+0.2
No Token	0.0	-0.3
No Record	0.0	-0.3

# Incentives Test Analysis – Mode of Collection

## Difference in Mode of Interview (Treatment Minus Control)

	Telephone	In-Person	Mix
All	-5.4 % points	4.5 % points	0.9 % points
No Token	-4.4 % points	4.2 % points	0.2 % points
No Record	-1.8 % points	1.7 % points	1.1 % points



# Incentives Test Analysis – Records Usage

Records Usage	
	Difference (Treatment Minus Control)
All	29.6 % points
No Token	29.3 % points
No Record	14.3 % points



# Incentives Test Analysis – Length of Interview

Total Survey Time		
	Difference in Medians (Control group baseline)	Difference in Means (Control group baseline)
All	2.6 minutes	2.9 minutes
No Token	5.5 minutes	3.0 minutes
No Record	0.9 minutes	3.2 minutes



# Incentives Test Analysis – Doorstep Concerns

<b>Doorstep Concerns</b> (Treatment Minus Control)				
	Not Interested/Hostile	Time	Privacy	Other
All	-2.1 % points	-5.9 % points	-5.5 % points	0.6 % points
No Token	1.8 % points	-5.2 % points	-0.1 % points	1.0 % points
No Record	-4.2 % points	-3.0 % points	-2.9 % points	-1.2 % points



# Incentives Test Analysis – Converted Refusal

Converted Refusals	
	Difference (Treatment Minus Control)
All	-3.3 % points
No Token	-0.9 % points
No Record	-3.4 % points



# IV. Conclusions



# Incentives Test - Conclusions

- Increase in response rates
- Increase in expenditures
- Decrease in contact attempts
- Increase in records use
- Decrease in converted refusals
- Increase in interview time

- What does this all mean?





# V. Next Steps



# Incentives Test – Next Steps

- Continue analysis of expenditure data focusing on imputed expenditures
- Analyze introduced bias and add demographic controls
- Determine impact on respondent burden
- Analyze cost effectiveness



# Incentives Test – Next Steps

- Are incentives right for CE?
- What amount is the right amount?
- Are token incentives cost effective?
- What is the most impactful way to distribute incentives?



# Contact Information

**Ian J. Elkin**

Senior Economist

Division of the Consumer Expenditure Surveys

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

202-691-6865

[Elkin.Ian@bls.gov](mailto:Elkin.Ian@bls.gov)

