

The Effects of Incentives in Internet Panels: A Review

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Why Incentives ?



Does the extra money for incentives pay off in terms of more and/or better responses?

- response rate
- retention rate
- number of omitted questions
- length of answers to open-ended questions
- straightlining in grid questions
- ...

Types of Incentives



Prepaid		Promised/Postpaid	
p-c	lott	per-capita	lottery
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• payment• loyalty points• physical gift• voucher• donation• survey results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• payment• loyalty points• physical gift• voucher

Cash Lottery

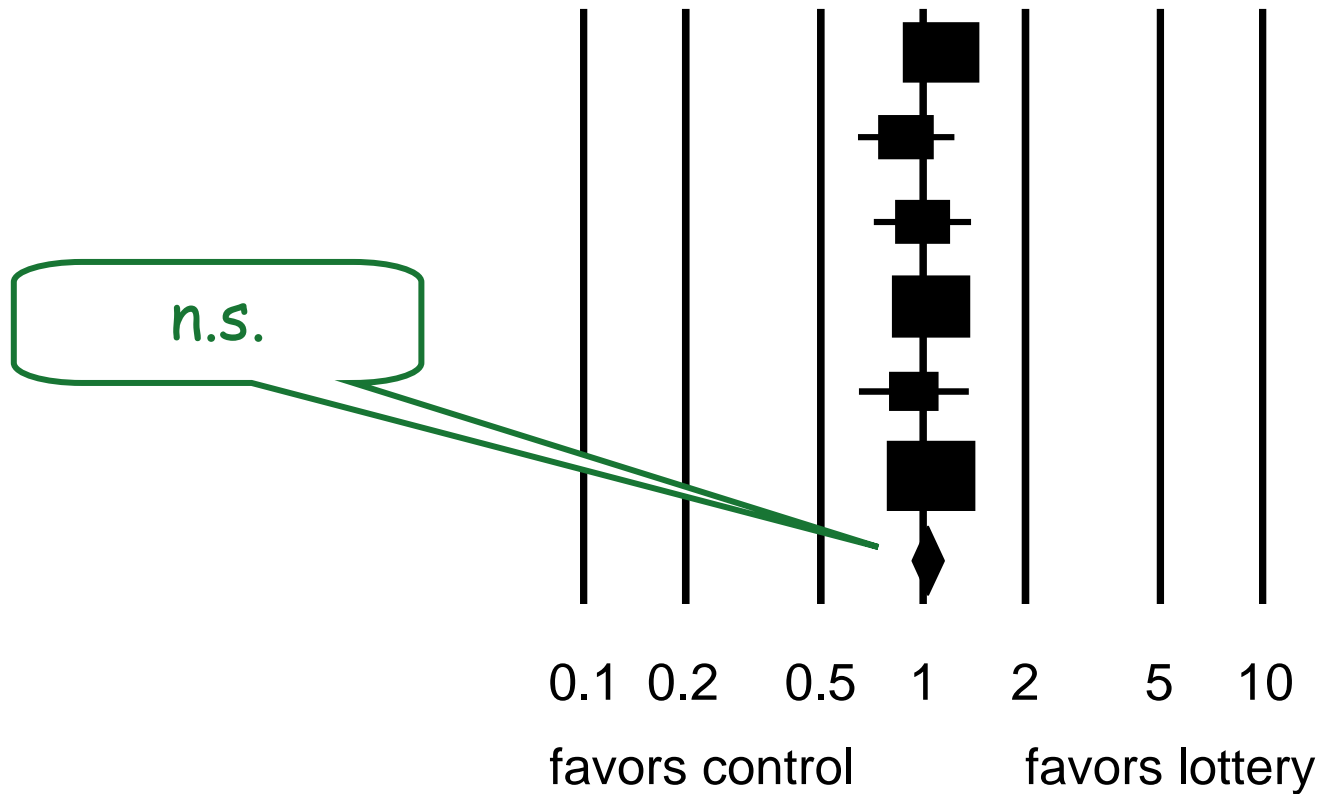
?? € ??

	Lottery: one prize	Lottery: many prizes	Control group
Exp 1 (N = 1313)	45 €	3 x 15 €	---
Exp 2 (N = 671)	100 €	5 x 20 €	---
Exp 3 (N = 668)	100 €	5 x 20 €	---
Exp 4 (N = 1400)	100 €	4 x 25 €	---
Exp 5 (N = 529)	80 €	4 x 20 €	---
Exp 6 (N = 1761)	200 €	100+ 60+ 40 €	---

Görizt, A. S. (2006). Cash lotteries as incentives in online panels. *Social Science Computer Review*, 24(4), 445-459.

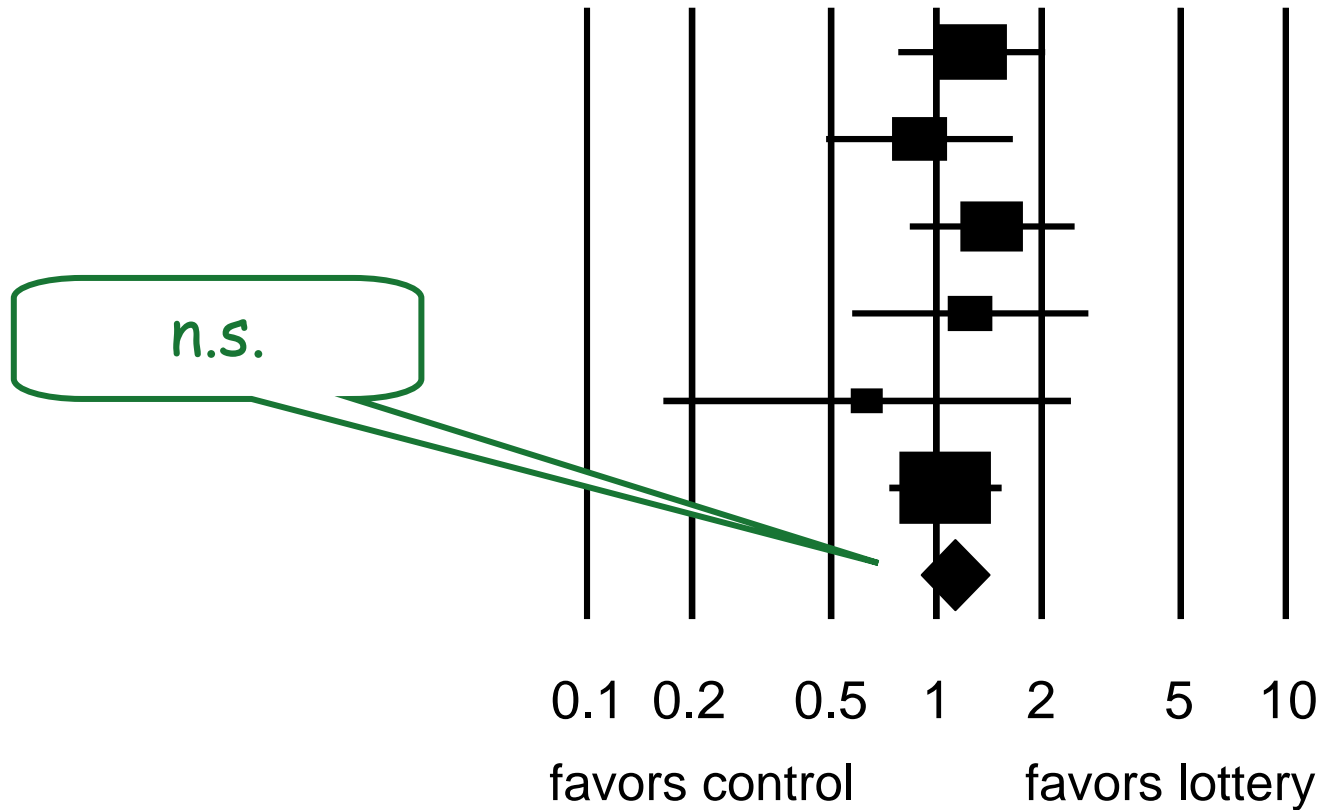
Cash Lottery (cont'd)

Response



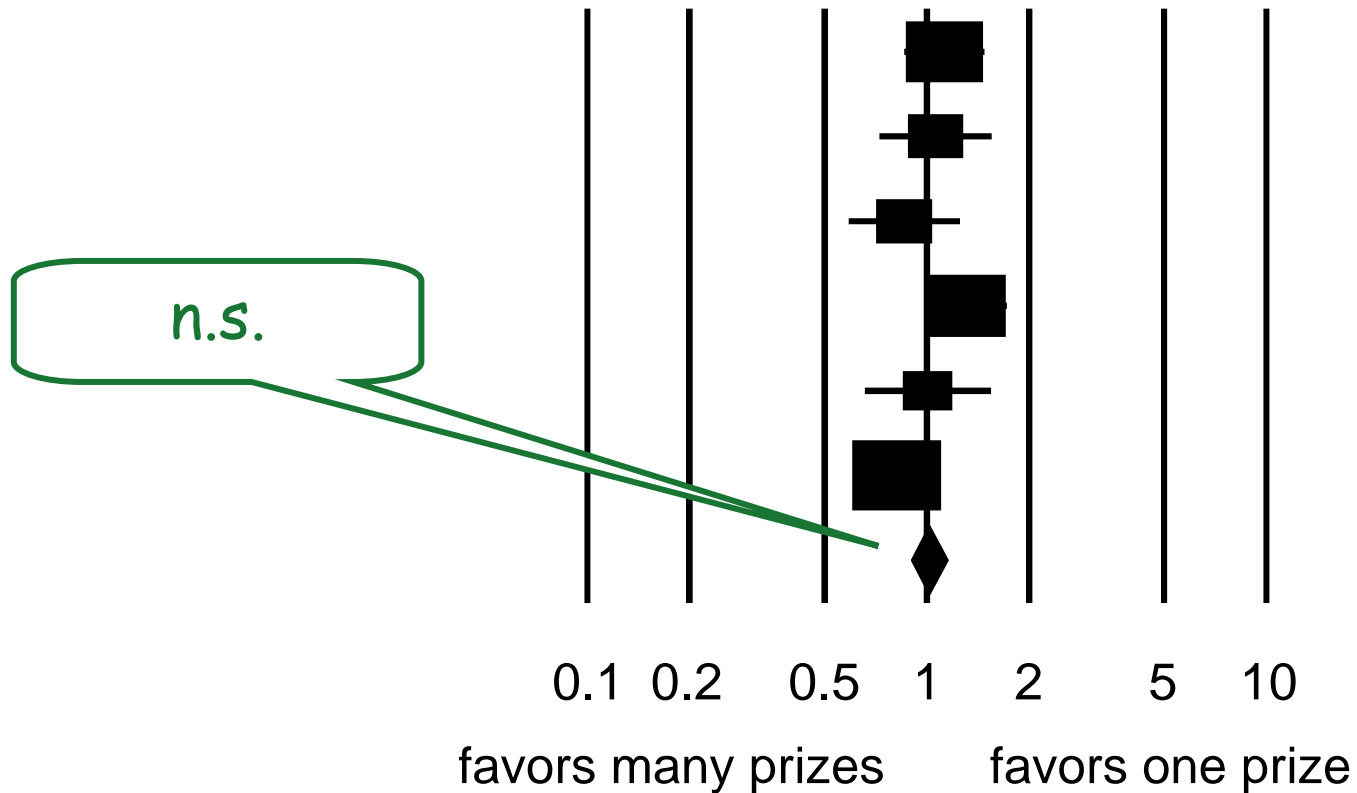
Cash Lottery (cont'd)

Retention



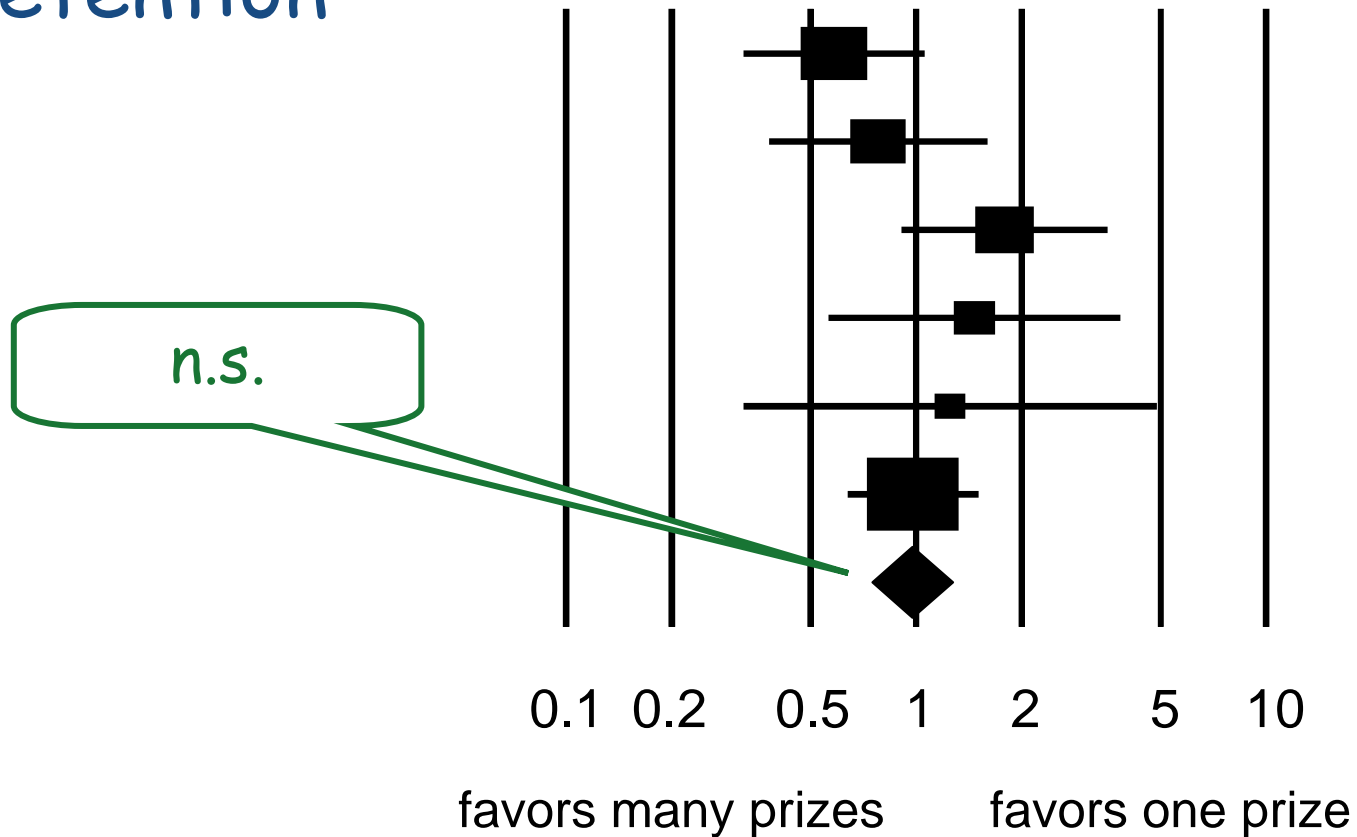
Cash Lottery (cont'd)

Response



Cash Lottery (cont'd)

Retention

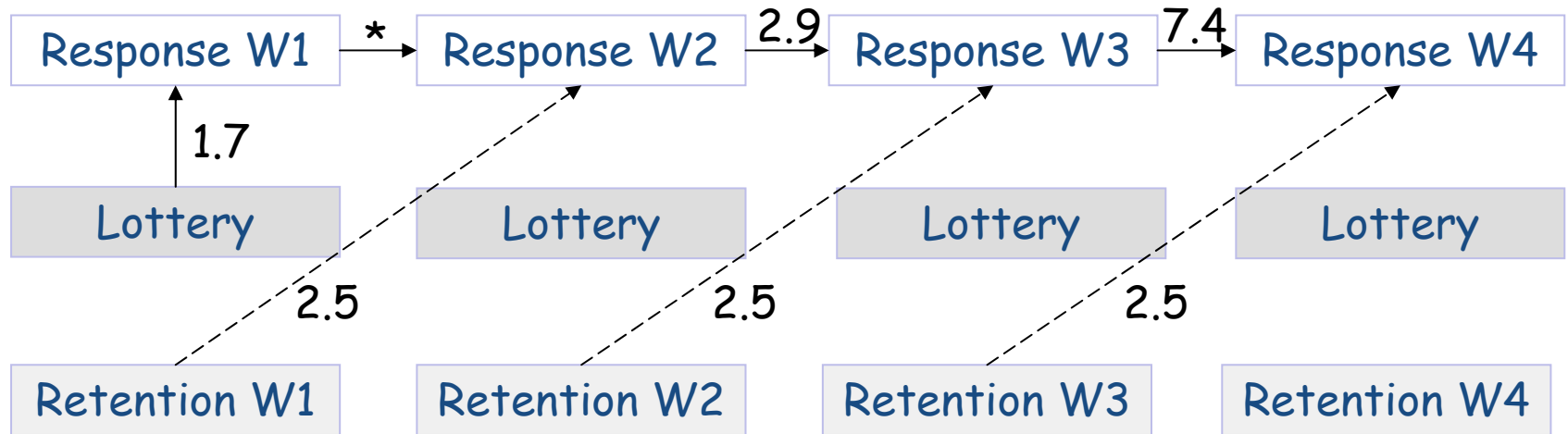


Lottery of Vouchers ?? ??

	n = 192	n = 189
W1	Lottery of vouchers	---
W2	Lottery of vouchers	---
W3	Lottery of vouchers	---
W4	Lottery of vouchers	---

Görizt, A. S. & Wolff, H.-G. (2007). Lotteries as Incentives in Longitudinal Web studies. *Social Science Computer Review*, 25(1), 99-110.

Lottery of Vouchers (cont'd)



- lottery boosts response in W1 (68% vs. 55%)
- lottery does not affect retention
- Markov process
- retention as an early indicator

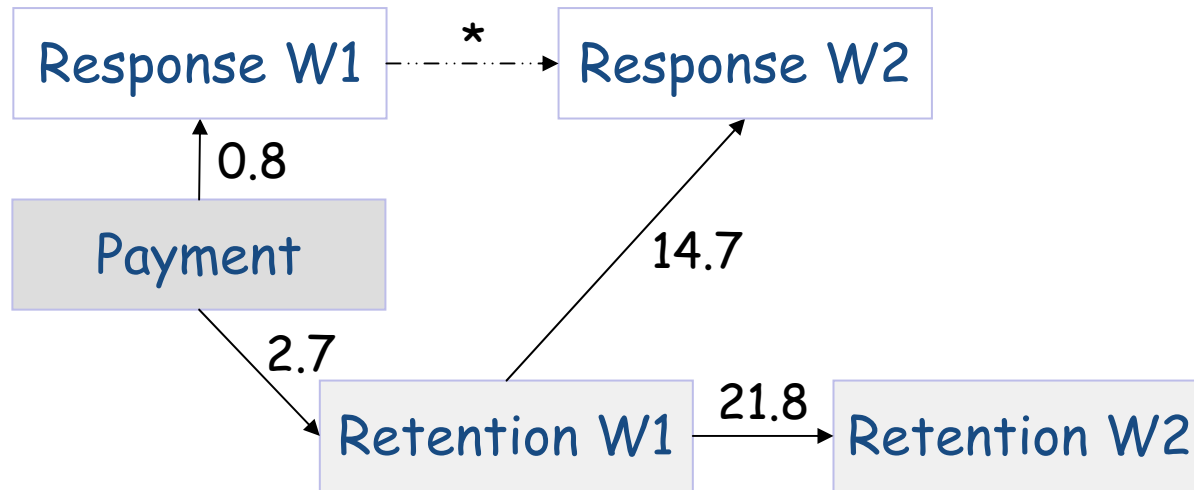
PayPal Payment 1



	n = 770	n = 1090
W1	2 € via PayPal after completion of <i>both</i> waves	---
W2	Reminder: 2 € via PayPal after completion	---

Görizt, A. S., Wolff, H.-G., & Goldstein, D. G. (submitted). Payments via Paypal as an incentive in longitudinal web-based studies.

PayPal Payment 1 (cont'd)



- payment reduces response in W1 (39% vs. 45%)
- payment increases retention in W1 (98% vs. 96%)
- Markov process
- retention as an early indicator

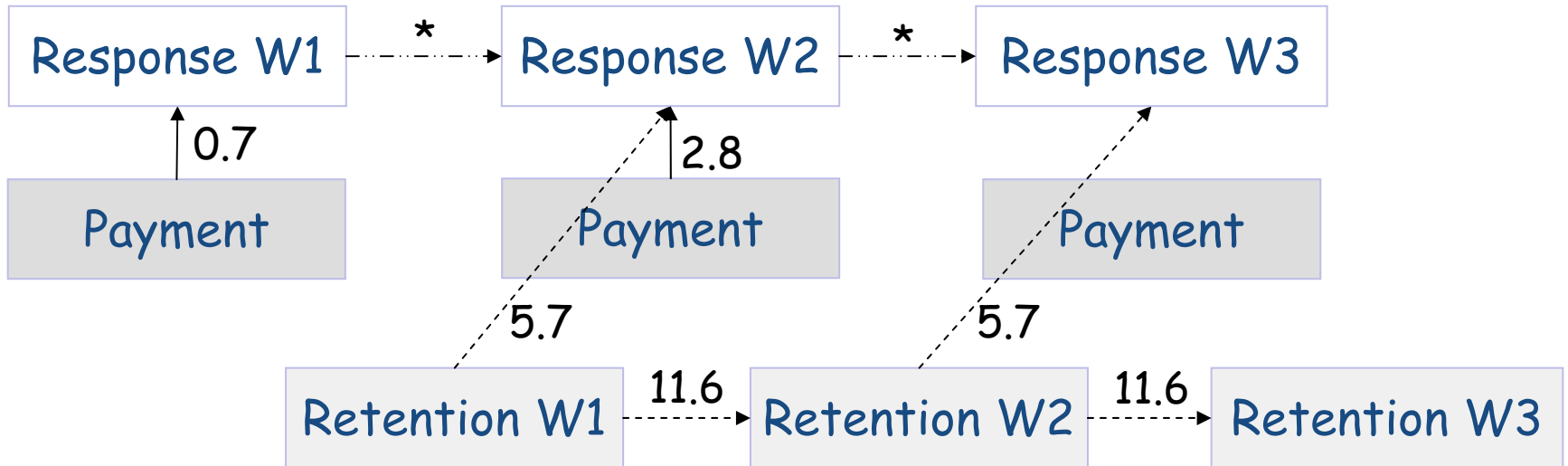
PayPal Payment 2



	n = 250	n = 246
W1	1.50 € via PayPal	---
W2	1.50 € via PayPal	---
W3	1.50 € via PayPal	---

Görizt, A. S., Wolff, H.-G., & Goldstein, D. G. (in press). Individual payments as a longer-term incentive in online panels. *Behavior Research Methods*.

PayPal Payment 2 (cont'd)



- payment reduces response in W1 (36% vs. 45%)
- payment increases response in W2 (80% vs. 60%)
- payment does not significantly affect retention
- Markov process
- retention as an early indicator

Prepaid Incentive



Sign-up	Prepaid-Incentive (n = 198)		Control (n = 257)	
W1	Loyalty points	Cash lottery	Loyalty points	Cash lottery
W2	Loyalty points	Cash lottery	Loyalty points	Cash lottery
W3	Loyalty points	Cash lottery	Loyalty points	Cash lottery
W4	Loyalty points	Cash lottery	Loyalty points	Cash lottery
W5	Loyalty points	Loyalty points	Loyalty points	Loyalty points

Görizt, A. S. (2008). The long-term effect of material incentives on participation in online panels. *Field Methods*, 20, 211-225.

Prepaid Incentive (cont'd)

- initially prepaid gift increases participation (85% vs. 79%)
- even more if combined with lottery
- effect dwindles across waves

- no difference between loyalty points and lottery in W1
- over time loyalty points more attractive

Donations to Charity

In 6 experiments, which we currently write up, donations significantly reduced response while they did not influence retention

Conditional Incentives



Make reception of incentives contingent upon completion of all items in questionnaire ?

5 experiments < 4 cash lottery
1 per-capita incentive

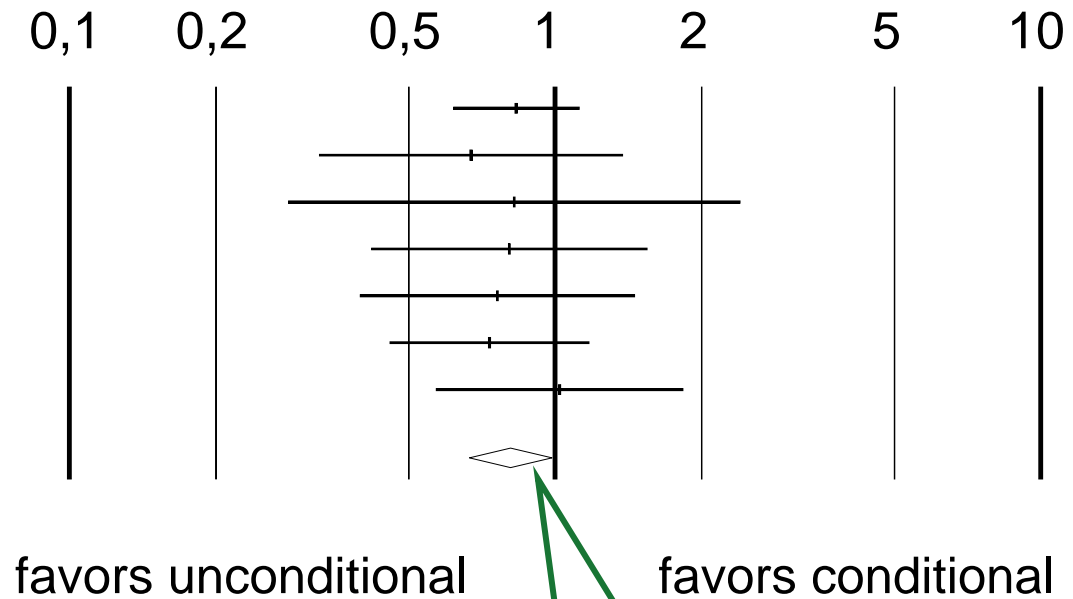
Dependent Variables

- response
- retention
- number of omitted closed-ended questions
- length of answers to open-ended questions
- stereotypical answering in grid questions

Göriz, A. S. (2005). Contingent versus unconditional incentives in WWW-studies. *Metodološki zvezki - Advances in Methodology and Statistics*, 2(1), 1-14.

Conditional Incentives (cont'd)

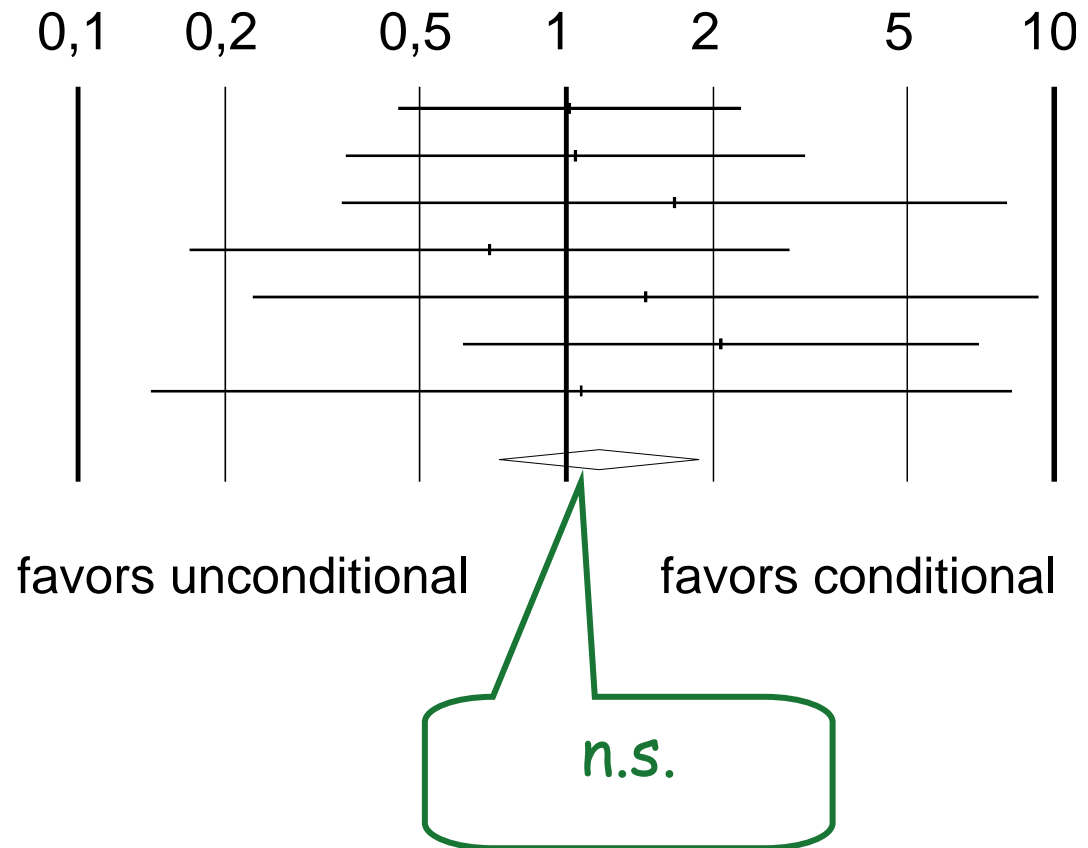
Response



OR = 0.81

Conditional Incentives (cont'd)

Retention



Conditional Incentives (cont'd)

no effect on

- number of omitted closed-ended questions
- length of answers to open-ended questions
- straightlining in grid questions

Summary Incentives



- 👎 lottery only briefly or not at all effective
 - if possible combine with prepaid incentive
 - one big prize as bad as several small prizes
- 👎 in long run loyalty points better than lottery
- 👎 payment via PayPal problematic at first use
- 👎 conditional incentives reduce response
- 👎 donations to charity reduce response

Further Research

- different panels (recruitment, type of panelists, purpose, ...)
- dose of incentive
- loyalty points against control group
- lottery: communicate odds of winning
- more facets of data quality