



Understanding Society

THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

# Looking ahead – some reflections on improving response and consent

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Workshop on Improving Consent and Response  
in Longitudinal Studies of Aging  
(28/09/2021)



University of Essex



Economic  
and Social  
Research Council

An initiative by the Economic and Social Research Council, with scientific leadership by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, and survey delivery by NatCen Social Research and Kantar Public





How to improve consent and response in longitudinal studies?

OR

How do we reconcile the increasing demands for more data with what respondents are willing and able to provide?

**We need to understand what respondents needs and preferences are and find ways to meet those**

Think we need to understand...

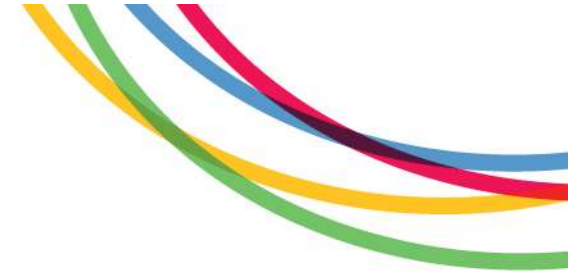


What do respondents think they've signed up for when they participate in a survey?

### Hypotheses:

- **H1:** Perception of what they've signed up for influences what they view as an acceptable additional request, i.e. whether or not they participate in an additional task
  - **H2:** Perceptions are in part influenced by survey design
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If these hypotheses are true...



Then we need to think about

- How do we design the request for the additional task?  
(consent request, invitation to use wearable, etc)
- But also, how we design the survey in which the additional request is made

**Goal: Survey design to increase acceptability of additional requests in longitudinal studies**

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# Today



- Evidence from survey methods experiments that point to these hypotheses

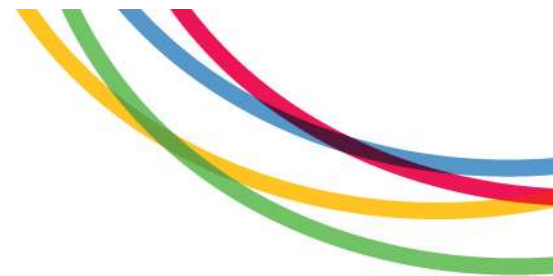
(Not research designed to test these hypotheses)

- Effects of survey features on participation in additional tasks:

Survey mode

Prior requests

Survey incentives



# Data

## Understanding Society:

## The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS)

- **Innovation Panel (IP)**

Probability sample of 1,500 households in Great Britain

All household members aged 16+ interviewed annually

Used for methods testing and experimentation

- **COVID-19 Study**

Main UKHLS sample: probability sample of households in UK

Monthly web survey from April 2020, then every 2 months from  
July 2020 until September 2021

+ CATI in some months

March 2021 data (12,509 respondents)

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# Effect of survey mode on participation in additional tasks

- **Mobile app study**

Spending Study 2 (2018)

Report purchases daily for 1 month

Experiment: annual interview

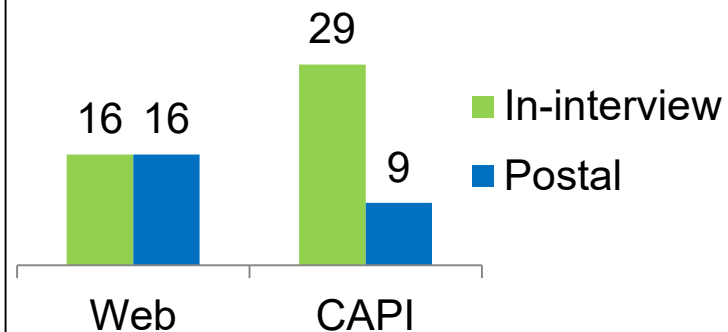
- CAPI-first
- Web-first

Experiment: Invitation to app study

- Within annual interview
- By letter after annual interview

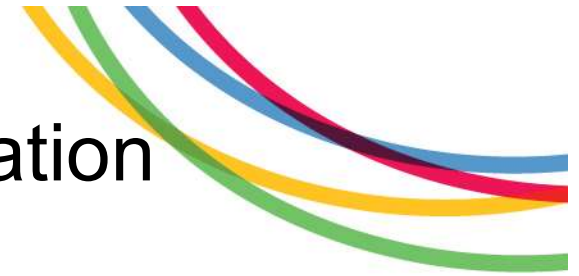
- **Predicted probability of using app**

Controlling for selection into mode of interview



**Additional task  
consistent w/ survey?**

# Effects of prior requests on participation in additional tasks



- Wellbeing app study

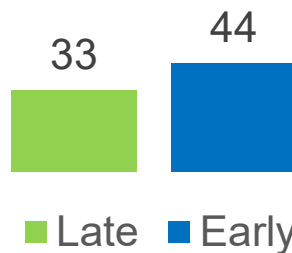
Daily Qs for 14 days

Invitation in annual IP interview

Experiment: invitation

- Early in survey
- At end of survey

- % downloaded app:



- Consent to health data linkage

Experiment: position of consent Q

- Early in survey
- At end of survey

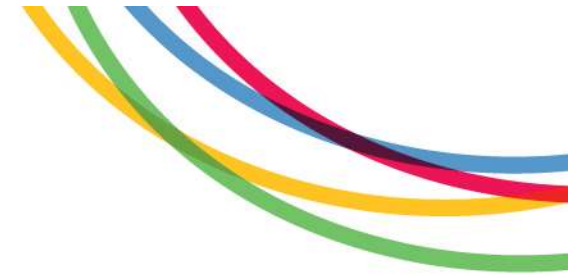
Follow up questions: why non-consent

	Late	Early
Consent rate (% respondents)	68	76
“Too personal, shared enough” (% non-consenters)	54	50

**How much already done for survey?**



# Effect of survey incentives on participation in additional tasks



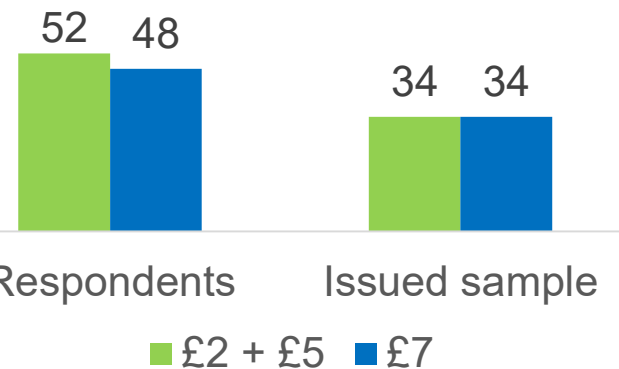
- COVID-19 Study (March 2021)

Consent to send serology testing kit to respondent

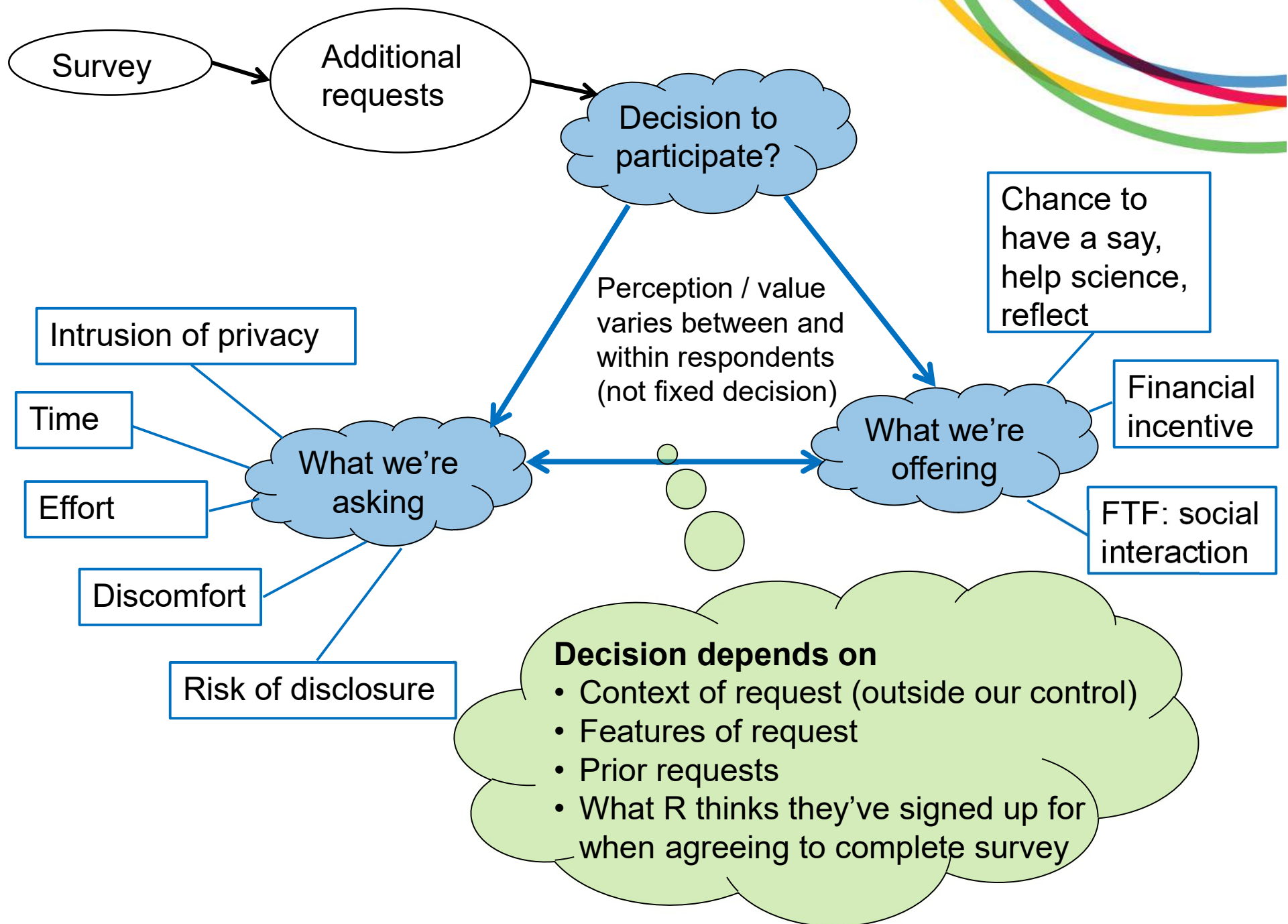
Experiment with conditional incentives (6 treatments):

Survey + serology	Survey
£2 + £5	£7
£7 + £5	£12
£12 + £5	£17

- % returned test kit:



**Value of survey vs additional task?**



# Looking ahead...



**Goal: Survey design to increase acceptability of additional requests in longitudinal studies**

- Theoretical framework (v1)
- Qualitative interviews with respondents
  - Consenters and non-consenters
  - Compliers and non-compliers
- Theoretical framework (v2)
- Hypotheses
- Experimental testing

**...no easy fixes**

# Thank you for listening



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