

Shifting Interviewer Focus from Hours to Attempts in CAPI: Results of a Field Test

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Shifting Focus Motivation

- No contact attempt limit
 - Increase control over how cases are worked
- Hour limit arbitrary
 - Implement scientific protocol
- Reduce costs



Previous Research

- Truncated data by contact attempt
- Examined weighted estimates
- Potential to limit contact attempts to 11 or 13, without significantly changing response rates or key estimates, respectively

Field Test Goals

Observe if contact limit of 12 transferred well to field

- Impact on response, key estimates
- Challenges from procedural changes

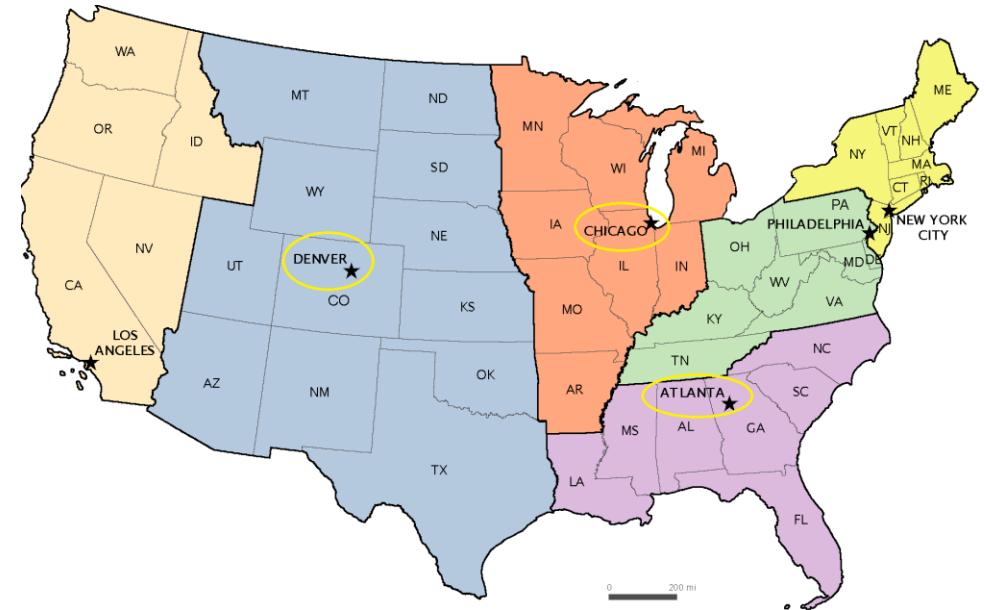
Field Test Constraints

- Risk
- Cost
- Limited IT functionality



Field Test Selection

- Nonrandom design
 - Regional Offices: Atlanta, Chicago, Denver
 - Primary Sampling Units (PSUs): low CATI, low vacancy
 - Machine learning: clustering PSUs
 - 2010 frame data
- 4,600 Households in treatment and control



Limitations

- Nonrandom, no weights
- 2010 frame data out-of-date
- Noncompliance
- Some interviewers thought 12 attempts was the goal, not the maximum

Evaluation Measures

- Response and retention rates
- Respondent/non-respondent demographics
 - Frequencies and R-indicators
- Four key estimates
- Interviewer behavior
- Interviewer feedback

Four Key Estimates

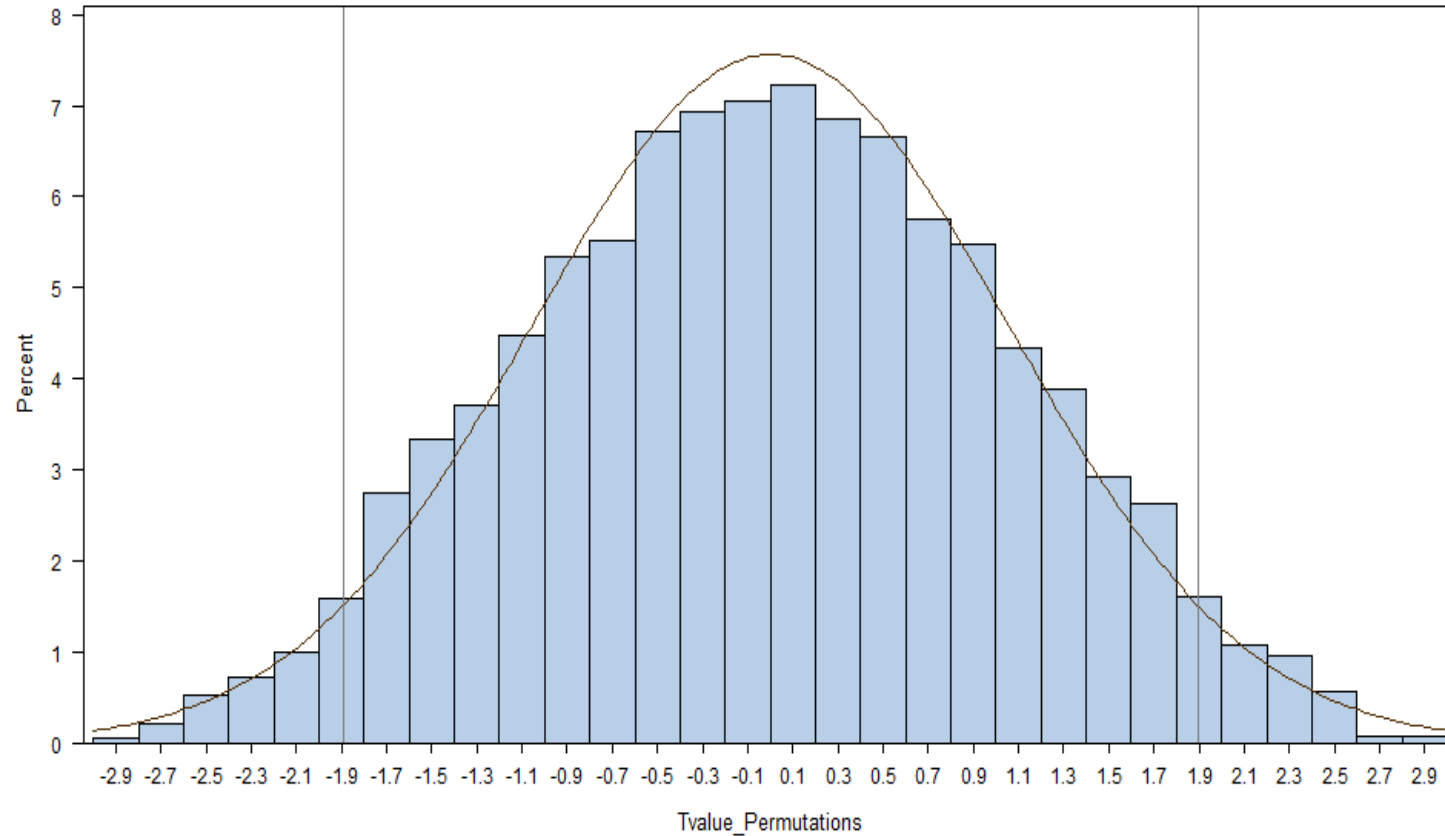
- Percent Reporting Unemployment
- Employment to Population Ratio
- Percent of Persons Not in the Labor Force
- Percent of Persons Employed Part-time for Economic Reasons

Comparison Method

Permutation Tests

- Generate reference distribution for test statistics
- No larger population assumptions
- Calculate two-sided t-statistic 10,000 times

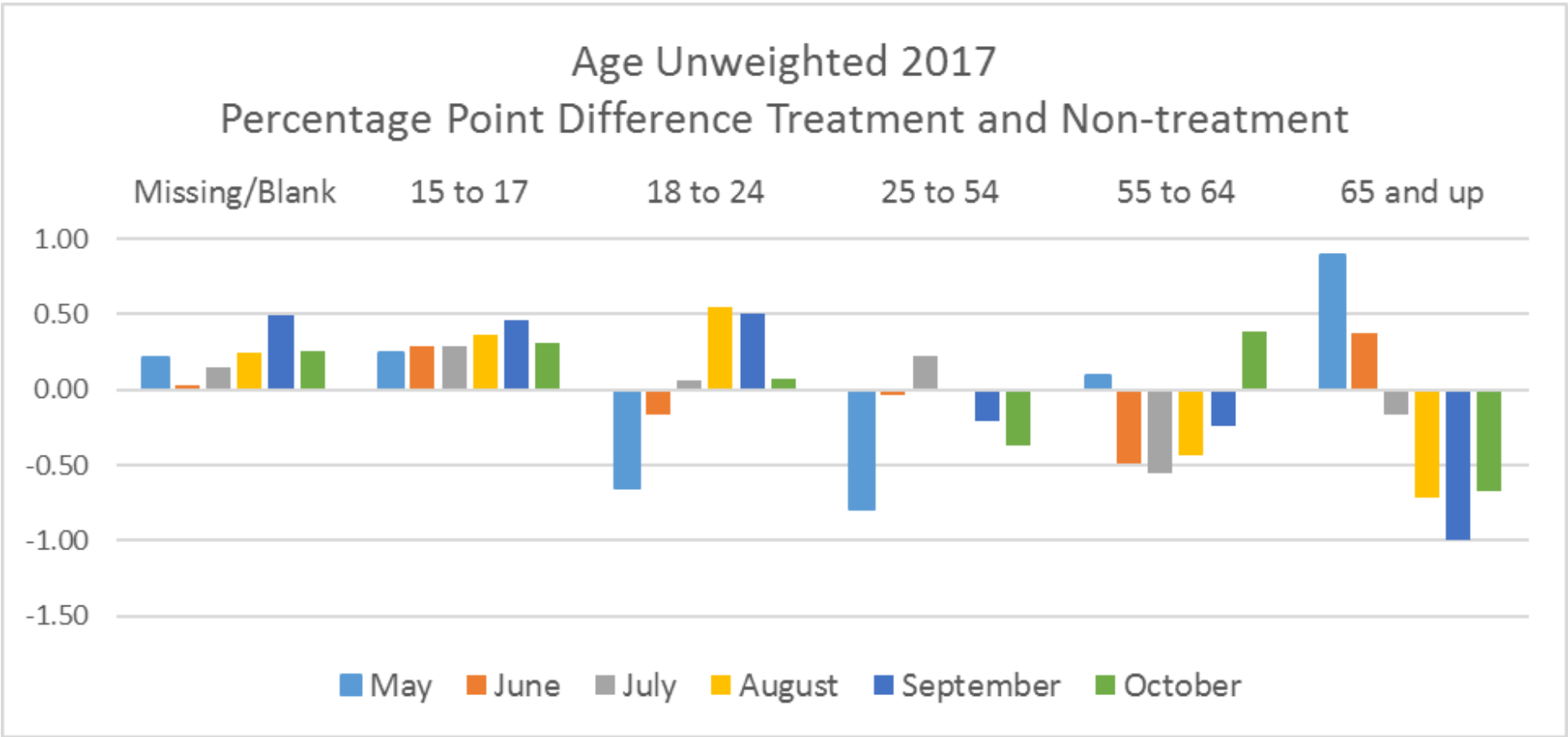
Comparison Method, Permutations



Response Rates

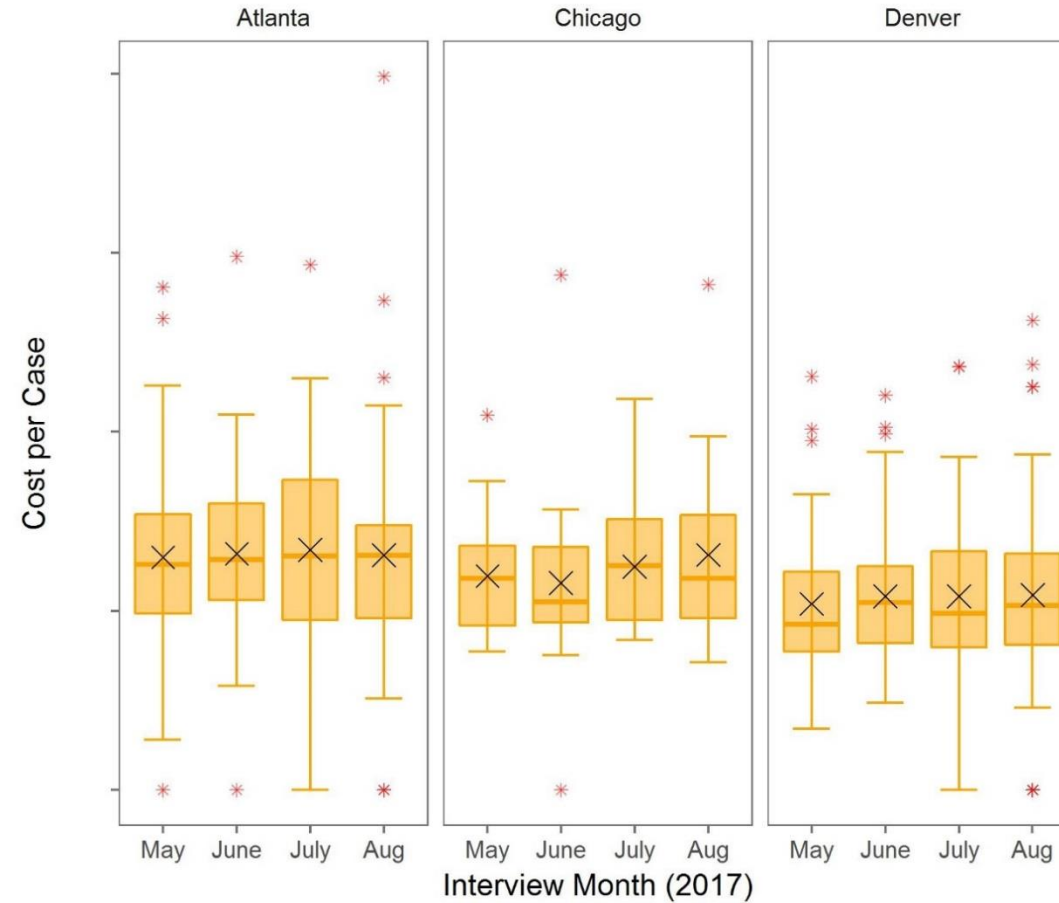
Unweighted Response Rates	
Groups	Response Rate (Percent)
Treatment	87.31
Control	86.06
Non-treatment (Control + Remaining CPS sample)	86.44

Demographic Comparisons



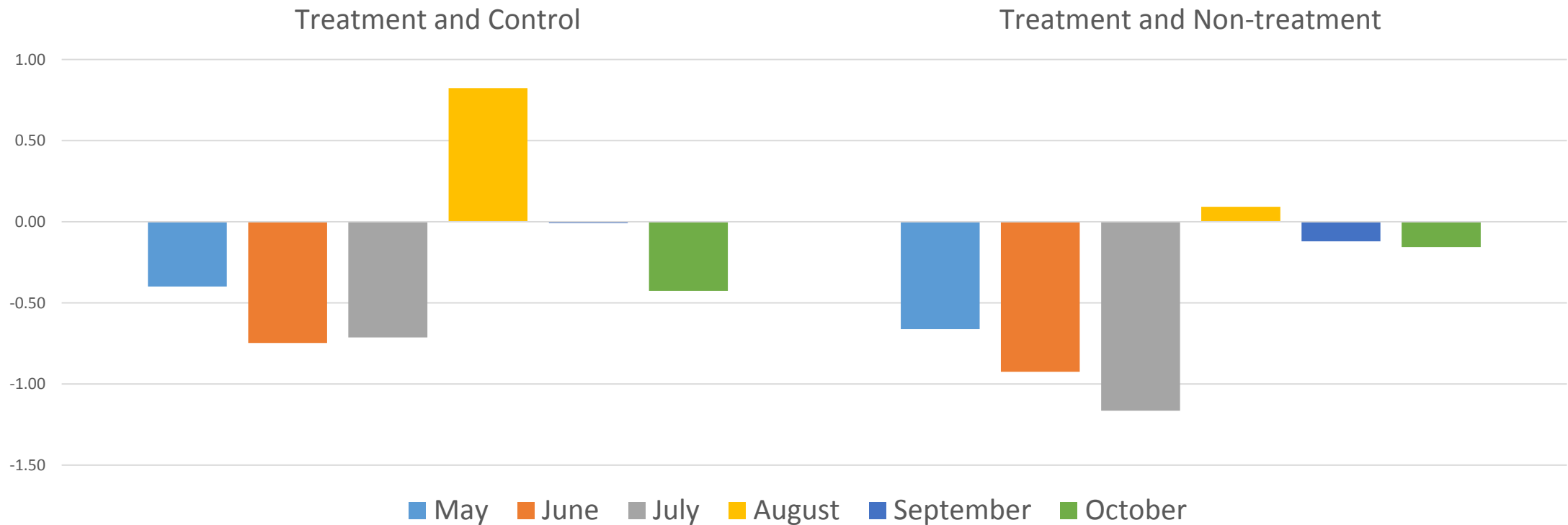
Previous Month Comparisons

Average Cost per Case



Estimate Differences Over Time

Proportion Unemployed Unweighted 2017
Percentage Point Difference



Conclusions

Shifting from hours to contact attempts

No influence:

- Response or retention rates
- 3 of 4 key estimates
- Respondents demographics
- Interviewer behavior and costs

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