



Cochrane
Library

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires (Review)

Edwards PJ, Roberts I, Clarke MJ, DiGuseppi C, Wentz R, Kwan I, Cooper R, Felix LM, Pratap S

Edwards PJ, Roberts I, Clarke MJ, DiGuseppi C, Wentz R, Kwan I, Cooper R, Felix LM, Pratap S.

Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires.

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2009, Issue 3. Art. No.: MR000008.

DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000008.pub4.

www.cochranelibrary.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HEADER	1
ABSTRACT	1
PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY	2
BACKGROUND	3
OBJECTIVES	3
METHODS	3
RESULTS	4
DISCUSSION	11
AUTHORS' CONCLUSIONS	11
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	12
REFERENCES	12
CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDIES	38
DATA AND ANALYSES	324
Analysis 1.1. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 1 First response.	354
Analysis 1.2. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.	357
Analysis 1.3. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 3 e - Log.	360
Analysis 1.4. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	361
Analysis 2.1. Comparison 2 Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive, Outcome 1 First response.	361
Analysis 2.2. Comparison 2 Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.	362
Analysis 3.1. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 1 First response.	364
Analysis 3.2. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.	365
Analysis 3.3. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 3 e - Login.	366
Analysis 3.4. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	366
Analysis 4.1. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 1 First response.	367
Analysis 4.2. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.	369
Analysis 4.3. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 3 e - Login.	372
Analysis 4.4. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	373
Analysis 5.1. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 1 First response.	374
Analysis 5.2. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 2 Final response.	375
Analysis 5.3. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 3 e - Login.	376
Analysis 5.4. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	376
Analysis 6.4. Comparison 6 Immediate notification of lottery results vs. delayed notification, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	377
Analysis 7.4. Comparison 7 Higher denominations in monetary lottery incentives vs. lower, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	378
Analysis 8.1. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 1 First response.	379
Analysis 8.2. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 2 Final response.	380
Analysis 8.3. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 3 e - Log.	381
Analysis 8.4. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	382
Analysis 9.1. Comparison 9 Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing, Outcome 1 First response.	382
Analysis 9.2. Comparison 9 Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing, Outcome 2 Final response.	383
Analysis 10.4. Comparison 10 Unconditional and conditional incentives vs. conditional incentives, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	384
Analysis 11.1. Comparison 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer, Outcome 1 First response.	385
Analysis 11.2. Comparison 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer, Outcome 2 Final response.	386
Analysis 11.4. Comparison 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	387
Analysis 12.1. Comparison 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.	387
Analysis 12.2. Comparison 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.	389
Analysis 12.4. Comparison 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	391
Analysis 13.1. Comparison 13 Double postcard vs. one page, Outcome 1 First response.	392
Analysis 13.2. Comparison 13 Double postcard vs. one page, Outcome 2 Final response.	392
Analysis 14.1. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 1 First response.	393
Analysis 14.2. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 2 Final response.	394

Analysis 14.3. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 3 e - Login.	397
Analysis 14.4. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	398
Analysis 15.1. Comparison 15 Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter, Outcome 1 First response.	399
Analysis 15.2. Comparison 15 Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter, Outcome 2 Final response.	400
Analysis 16.1. Comparison 16 Hand-written address vs. computer-printed , Outcome 1 First response.	401
Analysis 16.2. Comparison 16 Hand-written address vs. computer-printed , Outcome 2 Final response.	402
Analysis 17.2. Comparison 17 Signed vs. unsigned, Outcome 2 Final response.	403
Analysis 18.1. Comparison 18 Identifying feature on return vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	403
Analysis 18.2. Comparison 18 Identifying feature on return vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	404
Analysis 19.1. Comparison 19 Identifying number on return vs. other identifier, Outcome 1 First response.	405
Analysis 19.2. Comparison 19 Identifying number on return vs. other identifier, Outcome 2 Final response.	405
Analysis 20.1. Comparison 20 Brown vs. white envelope, Outcome 1 First response.	406
Analysis 20.2. Comparison 20 Brown vs. white envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	407
Analysis 21.1. Comparison 21 Coloured vs. white questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.	408
Analysis 21.2. Comparison 21 Coloured vs. white questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.	409
Analysis 22.1. Comparison 22 Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink, Outcome 1 First response.	410
Analysis 22.2. Comparison 22 Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink, Outcome 2 Final response.	410
Analysis 23.1. Comparison 23 Coloured vs. black & white letterhead, Outcome 1 First response.	411
Analysis 23.2. Comparison 23 Coloured vs. black & white letterhead, Outcome 2 Final response.	412
Analysis 24.2. Comparison 24 Illustration on cover of q'aire largely in black vs. largely in white, Outcome 2 Final response.	412
Analysis 25.1. Comparison 25 Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages, Outcome 1 First response.	413
Analysis 25.2. Comparison 25 Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages, Outcome 2 Final response.	413
Analysis 26.1. Comparison 26 Large paper size vs. small, Outcome 1 First response.	414
Analysis 26.2. Comparison 26 Large paper size vs. small, Outcome 2 Final response.	415
Analysis 27.2. Comparison 27 Dot matrix print vs. letter quality print, Outcome 2 Final response.	415
Analysis 28.2. Comparison 28 Questionnaire printed on high vs. standard quality paper or thick paper vs. thin, Outcome 2 Final response.	416
Analysis 29.1. Comparison 29 Single vs. double-sided questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.	416
Analysis 29.2. Comparison 29 Single vs. double-sided questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.	417
Analysis 30.2. Comparison 30 Large font size vs. small, Outcome 2 Final response.	417
Analysis 31.2. Comparison 31 Study logo on several items in the mailing package vs. on questionnaire only, Outcome 2 Final response.	418
Analysis 32.1. Comparison 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	419
Analysis 32.2. Comparison 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	419
Analysis 32.4. Comparison 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	420
Analysis 33.4. Comparison 33 Attractive vs. less attractive picture, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	421
Analysis 34.2. Comparison 34 Cartoons included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	421
Analysis 35.1. Comparison 35 Matrix vs. standard form, Outcome 1 First response.	422
Analysis 35.2. Comparison 35 Matrix vs. standard form, Outcome 2 Final response.	422
Analysis 36.3. Comparison 36 Questions ordered by time period vs. other order, Outcome 3 Final response.	423
Analysis 37.1. Comparison 37 Subject line vs. blank, Outcome 1 e - Login.	423
Analysis 37.2. Comparison 37 Subject line vs. blank, Outcome 2 e - Submission.	424
Analysis 38.1. Comparison 38 "Survey" subject line vs. blank, Outcome 1 e - Login.	424
Analysis 38.2. Comparison 38 "Survey" subject line vs. blank, Outcome 2 e - Submission.	425
Analysis 39.2. Comparison 39 Text vs. HTML file formats, Outcome 2 e - Submission.	425
Analysis 40.2. Comparison 40 White background vs. black, Outcome 2 e - Submission.	426
Analysis 41.2. Comparison 41 Header vs. no header, Outcome 2 e - Submission.	426
Analysis 42.2. Comparison 42 Simple vs. complex header, Outcome 2 e - Submission.	427
Analysis 43.4. Comparison 43 Textual presentation of response categories vs. visual presentation, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	427

Analysis 44.1. Comparison 44 Stamped vs. franked outward envelope, Outcome 1 First response.	428
Analysis 44.2. Comparison 44 Stamped vs. franked outward envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	429
Analysis 45.1. Comparison 45 First vs. second/third class outward mailing, Outcome 1 First response.	430
Analysis 45.2. Comparison 45 First vs. second/third class outward mailing, Outcome 2 Final response.	430
Analysis 46.1. Comparison 46 Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope, Outcome 1 First response.	431
Analysis 46.2. Comparison 46 Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	432
Analysis 47.1. Comparison 47 Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing, Outcome 1 First response.	433
Analysis 47.2. Comparison 47 Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing, Outcome 2 Final response.	434
Analysis 48.1. Comparison 48 Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope, Outcome 1 First response.	435
Analysis 48.2. Comparison 48 Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	436
Analysis 49.2. Comparison 49 Priority stamps vs. first-class stamps on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	437
Analysis 50.2. Comparison 50 First vs. second class stamp on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	438
Analysis 51.2. Comparison 51 Multiple stamps vs. single stamp on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	438
Analysis 52.1. Comparison 52 Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address, Outcome 1 First response.	439
Analysis 52.2. Comparison 52 Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address, Outcome 2 Final response.	439
Analysis 53.1. Comparison 53 Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid, Outcome 1 First response.	440
Analysis 53.2. Comparison 53 Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid, Outcome 2 Final response.	441
Analysis 54.2. Comparison 54 Stamped addressed return envelope vs. address label only included, Outcome 2 Final response.	441
Analysis 55.2. Comparison 55 Q'aire mailed in large vs. standard/small envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	442
Analysis 56.1. Comparison 56 Window vs. regular envelope, Outcome 1 First response.	443
Analysis 56.2. Comparison 56 Window vs. regular envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.	443
Analysis 57.1. Comparison 57 Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response, Outcome 1 First response.	444
Analysis 57.2. Comparison 57 Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response, Outcome 2 Final response.	444
Analysis 58.1. Comparison 58 Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday, Outcome 1 First response.	445
Analysis 58.2. Comparison 58 Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday, Outcome 2 Final response.	446
Analysis 59.2. Comparison 59 Questionnaire received on Monday vs. Friday, Outcome 2 Final response.	446
Analysis 60.2. Comparison 60 Q'aire sent 1-5 weeks vs. 9-14 weeks after hospital discharge, Outcome 2 Final response.	447
Analysis 61.1. Comparison 61 Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact, Outcome 1 First response.	448
Analysis 61.2. Comparison 61 Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact, Outcome 2 Final response.	449
Analysis 62.1. Comparison 62 Pre-contact by phone vs. mail, Outcome 1 First response.	451
Analysis 62.2. Comparison 62 Pre-contact by phone vs. mail, Outcome 2 Final response.	452
Analysis 63.1. Comparison 63 Follow up vs. no follow up, Outcome 1 First response.	453
Analysis 63.2. Comparison 63 Follow up vs. no follow up, Outcome 2 Final response.	454
Analysis 64.1. Comparison 64 Postal follow-up including vs. excluding q'aire, Outcome 1 First response.	455
Analysis 64.2. Comparison 64 Postal follow-up including vs. excluding q'aire, Outcome 2 Final response.	456
Analysis 65.1. Comparison 65 Follow up by phone vs. mail, Outcome 1 First Response.	457
Analysis 65.2. Comparison 65 Follow up by phone vs. mail, Outcome 2 Final Response.	458
Analysis 66.1. Comparison 66 Telephone reminder vs. no reminder, Outcome 1 First response.	458
Analysis 66.2. Comparison 66 Telephone reminder vs. no reminder, Outcome 2 Final response.	459
Analysis 67.2. Comparison 67 SMS vs. postcard reminder, Outcome 2 Final response.	460
Analysis 68.1. Comparison 68 Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days, Outcome 1 First response.	460
Analysis 68.2. Comparison 68 Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days, Outcome 2 Final response.	461
Analysis 69.1. Comparison 69 Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked, Outcome 1 First response.	462
Analysis 69.2. Comparison 69 Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked, Outcome 2 Final response.	463
Analysis 70.1. Comparison 70 More relevant questions first vs. last, Outcome 1 First response.	464
Analysis 70.2. Comparison 70 More relevant questions first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.	464
Analysis 71.2. Comparison 71 Most general question first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.	465
Analysis 72.1. Comparison 72 Demographic items first vs. last, Outcome 1 First response.	465
Analysis 72.2. Comparison 72 Demographic items first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.	466
Analysis 73.1. Comparison 73 Easier questions first vs. last, Outcome 1 First response.	467

Analysis 73.2. Comparison 73 Easier questions first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.	467
Analysis 74.1. Comparison 74 User friendly vs. standard questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.	468
Analysis 74.2. Comparison 74 User friendly vs. standard questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.	468
Analysis 75.1. Comparison 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low, Outcome 1 First response.	469
Analysis 75.2. Comparison 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low, Outcome 2 Final response.	469
Analysis 75.4. Comparison 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	470
Analysis 76.1. Comparison 76 Open-ended vs. closed questions, Outcome 1 First response.	471
Analysis 76.2. Comparison 76 Open-ended vs. closed questions, Outcome 2 Final response.	471
Analysis 77.1. Comparison 77 Open-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 1 First response.	472
Analysis 77.2. Comparison 77 Open-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 2 Final response.	472
Analysis 78.1. Comparison 78 Closed-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 1 First response.	473
Analysis 78.2. Comparison 78 Closed-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 2 Final response.	473
Analysis 79.2. Comparison 79 'Don't know' boxes included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	474
Analysis 80.2. Comparison 80 Circle answer vs. tick box format, Outcome 2 Final response.	474
Analysis 81.2. Comparison 81 Response options listed in increasing vs. decreasing order, Outcome 2 Final response.	475
Analysis 82.2. Comparison 82 High vs. medium frequency response alternatives, Outcome 2 Final response.	475
Analysis 83.2. Comparison 83 5-step vs. 10-step response scale, Outcome 2 Final response.	476
Analysis 84.1. Comparison 84 Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only, Outcome 1 First response.	476
Analysis 84.2. Comparison 84 Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only, Outcome 2 Final response.	477
Analysis 85.2. Comparison 85 Individual item vs. stem & leaf format, Outcome 2 Final response.	477
Analysis 86.2. Comparison 86 Horizontal vs. vertical orientation of response options, Outcome 2 Final response.	478
Analysis 87.1. Comparison 87 Conventional vs. randomised response technique, Outcome 1 First response.	478
Analysis 87.2. Comparison 87 Conventional vs. randomised response technique, Outcome 2 Final response.	479
Analysis 88.2. Comparison 88 Factual questions only vs. factual and attitudinal questions, Outcome 2 Final response.	479
Analysis 89.1. Comparison 89 Teaser on envelope vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	480
Analysis 89.2. Comparison 89 Teaser on envelope vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	481
Analysis 90.2. Comparison 90 Questionnaire sent with supplement vs. alone, Outcome 2 Final response.	481
Analysis 91.2. Comparison 91 Extra questionnaire for relatives included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	482
Analysis 92.1. Comparison 92 Consent form included vs. not, Outcome 1 First response.	482
Analysis 92.2. Comparison 92 Consent form included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	483
Analysis 93.2. Comparison 93 Multi-option vs. standard consent form, Outcome 2 Final response.	483
Analysis 94.1. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.	484
Analysis 94.2. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.	485
Analysis 94.3. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 3 e - Login.	486
Analysis 94.4. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	486
Analysis 95.1. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 1 First response.	487
Analysis 95.2. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 2 Final response.	488
Analysis 95.3. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 3 e - Login.	489
Analysis 95.4. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	489
Analysis 96.1. Comparison 96 University printed envelope vs. plain, Outcome 1 First response.	490
Analysis 96.2. Comparison 96 University printed envelope vs. plain, Outcome 2 Final response.	491
Analysis 97.2. Comparison 97 Pre-contact by medical researcher vs. non medical researcher, Outcome 2 Final response.	491
Analysis 98.1. Comparison 98 Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group, Outcome 1 First response.	492
Analysis 98.2. Comparison 98 Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group, Outcome 2 Final response.	492
Analysis 99.1. Comparison 99 Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name, Outcome 1 First response.	493
Analysis 99.2. Comparison 99 Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name, Outcome 2 Final response.	493
Analysis 100.1. Comparison 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature, Outcome 1 First response.	494
Analysis 100.2. Comparison 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature, Outcome 2 Final response.	495
Analysis 100.4. Comparison 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	495
Analysis 101.2. Comparison 101 Assurance of confidentiality vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	496
Analysis 102.1. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 1 First response.	497

Analysis 102.2. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 2 Final response.	497
Analysis 102.3. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 3 e - Login.	498
Analysis 102.4. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	498
Analysis 103.1. Comparison 103 Choice to opt-out from study vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	499
Analysis 103.2. Comparison 103 Choice to opt-out from study vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	499
Analysis 104.2. Comparison 104 Instructions given vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	500
Analysis 105.1. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 1 First response.	501
Analysis 105.2. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 2 Final response.	502
Analysis 105.3. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 3 e - Login.	503
Analysis 105.4. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	503
Analysis 106.1. Comparison 106 Mention of obligation to respond vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	504
Analysis 106.2. Comparison 106 Mention of obligation to respond vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	504
Analysis 107.1. Comparison 107 Request for telephone number vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	505
Analysis 107.2. Comparison 107 Request for telephone number vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	506
Analysis 108.1. Comparison 108 Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form, Outcome 1 First response.	506
Analysis 108.2. Comparison 108 Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form, Outcome 2 Final response.	507
Analysis 109.1. Comparison 109 Mention of follow-up contact vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	507
Analysis 109.2. Comparison 109 Mention of follow-up contact vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	508
Analysis 110.1. Comparison 110 Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not, Outcome 1 First response.	509
Analysis 110.2. Comparison 110 Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	509
Analysis 111.1. Comparison 111 Time estimate for completion given vs. not, Outcome 1 First response.	510
Analysis 111.2. Comparison 111 Time estimate for completion given vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.	510
Analysis 112.2. Comparison 112 Detailed vs. brief cover letter, Outcome 2 Final response.	511
Analysis 113.2. Comparison 113 Appeal vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	511
Analysis 113.3. Comparison 113 Appeal vs. none, Outcome 3 e - Login.	512
Analysis 113.4. Comparison 113 Appeal vs. none, Outcome 4 e - Submission.	512
Analysis 114.1. Comparison 114 Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	513
Analysis 114.2. Comparison 114 Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	513
Analysis 115.2. Comparison 115 Request for participant signature vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	514
Analysis 116.1. Comparison 116 Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed, Outcome 1 First response.	514
Analysis 116.2. Comparison 116 Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed, Outcome 2 Final response.	515
Analysis 117.1. Comparison 117 Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.	515
Analysis 117.2. Comparison 117 Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.	516
Analysis 118.1. Comparison 118 Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.	516
Analysis 118.2. Comparison 118 Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.	517
Analysis 119.1. Comparison 119 Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.	518
Analysis 119.2. Comparison 119 Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.	518
Analysis 120.1. Comparison 120 Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.	519
Analysis 120.2. Comparison 120 Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.	520
Analysis 121.2. Comparison 121 Anonymous vs. not anonymous, Outcome 2 Final response.	521
APPENDICES	521
WHAT'S NEW	526
HISTORY	526
CONTRIBUTIONS OF AUTHORS	526
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	527
SOURCES OF SUPPORT	527
INDEX TERMS	527

[Methodology Review]

Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Philip James Edwards¹, Ian Roberts², Mike J Clarke³, Carolyn DiGuseppi⁴, Reinhard Wentz⁵, Irene Kwan⁶, Rachel Cooper⁷, Lambert M Felix¹, Sarah Pratap⁸

¹Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, UK. ²Cochrane Injuries Group, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, UK. ³UK Cochrane Centre, Oxford, UK. ⁴Colorado Injury Control Research Center, Colorado School of Public Health, University of Colorado Denver, Denver, CO, USA. ⁵Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London, UK. ⁶National Collaborating Centre For Women's and Children's Health, Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, London, UK. ⁷Public Health Intervention Research Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK. ⁸Redhill, Reigate & Horley PCMH, Reigate, UK

Contact address: Philip James Edwards, Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London, WC1E 7HT, UK. phil.edwards@lshtm.ac.uk

Editorial group: Cochrane Methodology Review Group.

Publication status and date: Unchanged, published in Issue 1, 2010.

Review content assessed as up-to-date: 9 December 2008.

Citation: Edwards PJ, Roberts I, Clarke MJ, DiGuseppi C, Wentz R, Kwan I, Cooper R, Felix LM, Pratap S. Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2009, Issue 3. Art. No.: MR000008. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000008.pub4.

Copyright © 2010 The Cochrane Collaboration. Published by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

ABSTRACT

Background

Postal and electronic questionnaires are widely used for data collection in epidemiological studies but non-response reduces the effective sample size and can introduce bias. Finding ways to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires would improve the quality of health research.

Objectives

To identify effective strategies to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires.

Search methods

We searched 14 electronic databases to February 2008 and manually searched the reference lists of relevant trials and reviews, and all issues of two journals. We contacted the authors of all trials or reviews to ask about unpublished trials. Where necessary, we also contacted authors to confirm methods of allocation used and to clarify results presented. We assessed the eligibility of each trial using pre-defined criteria.

Selection criteria

Randomised controlled trials of methods to increase response to postal or electronic questionnaires.

Data collection and analysis

We extracted data on the trial participants, the intervention, the number randomised to intervention and comparison groups and allocation concealment. For each strategy, we estimated pooled odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) in a random-effects model. We assessed evidence for selection bias using Egger's weighted regression method and Begg's rank correlation test and funnel plot. We assessed heterogeneity among trial odds ratios using a Chi² test and the degree of inconsistency between trial results was quantified using the I² statistic.

Main results

Postal

We found 481 eligible trials. The trials evaluated 110 different ways of increasing response to postal questionnaires. We found substantial heterogeneity among trial results in half of the strategies. The odds of response were at least doubled using monetary incentives (odds ratio 1.87; 95% CI 1.73 to 2.04; heterogeneity $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 84\%$), recorded delivery (1.76; 95% CI 1.43 to 2.18; $P = 0.0001$, $I^2 = 71\%$), a teaser on the envelope - e.g. a comment suggesting to participants that they may benefit if they open it (3.08; 95% CI 1.27 to 7.44) and a more interesting questionnaire topic (2.00; 95% CI 1.32 to 3.04; $P = 0.06$, $I^2 = 80\%$). The odds of response were substantially higher with pre-notification (1.45; 95% CI 1.29 to 1.63; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 89\%$), follow-up contact (1.35; 95% CI 1.18 to 1.55; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 76\%$), unconditional incentives (1.61; 1.36 to 1.89; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 88\%$), shorter questionnaires (1.64; 95% CI 1.43 to 1.87; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 91\%$), providing a second copy of the questionnaire at follow up (1.46; 95% CI 1.13 to 1.90; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 82\%$), mentioning an obligation to respond (1.61; 95% CI 1.16 to 2.22; $P = 0.98$, $I^2 = 0\%$) and university sponsorship (1.32; 95% CI 1.13 to 1.54; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 83\%$). The odds of response were also increased with non-monetary incentives (1.15; 95% CI 1.08 to 1.22; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 79\%$), personalised questionnaires (1.14; 95% CI 1.07 to 1.22; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 63\%$), use of hand-written addresses (1.25; 95% CI 1.08 to 1.45; $P = 0.32$, $I^2 = 14\%$), use of stamped return envelopes as opposed to franked return envelopes (1.24; 95% CI 1.14 to 1.35; $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 69\%$), an assurance of confidentiality (1.33; 95% CI 1.24 to 1.42) and first class outward mailing (1.11; 95% CI 1.02 to 1.21; $P = 0.78$, $I^2 = 0\%$). The odds of response were reduced when the questionnaire included questions of a sensitive nature (0.94; 95% CI 0.88 to 1.00; $P = 0.51$, $I^2 = 0\%$).

Electronic

We found 32 eligible trials. The trials evaluated 27 different ways of increasing response to electronic questionnaires. We found substantial heterogeneity among trial results in half of the strategies. The odds of response were increased by more than a half using non-monetary incentives (1.72; 95% CI 1.09 to 2.72; heterogeneity $P < 0.00001$, $I^2 = 95\%$), shorter e-questionnaires (1.73; 1.40 to 2.13; $P = 0.08$, $I^2 = 68\%$), including a statement that others had responded (1.52; 95% CI 1.36 to 1.70), and a more interesting topic (1.85; 95% CI 1.52 to 2.26). The odds of response increased by a third using a lottery with immediate notification of results (1.37; 95% CI 1.13 to 1.65), an offer of survey results (1.36; 95% CI 1.15 to 1.61), and using a white background (1.31; 95% CI 1.10 to 1.56). The odds of response were also increased with personalised e-questionnaires (1.24; 95% CI 1.17 to 1.32; $P = 0.07$, $I^2 = 41\%$), using a simple header (1.23; 95% CI 1.03 to 1.48), using textual representation of response categories (1.19; 95% CI 1.05 to 1.36), and giving a deadline (1.18; 95% CI 1.03 to 1.34). The odds of response tripled when a picture was included in an e-mail (3.05; 95% CI 1.84 to 5.06; $P = 0.27$, $I^2 = 19\%$). The odds of response were reduced when "Survey" was mentioned in the e-mail subject line (0.81; 95% CI 0.67 to 0.97; $P = 0.33$, $I^2 = 0\%$), and when the e-mail included a male signature (0.55; 95% CI 0.38 to 0.80; $P = 0.96$, $I^2 = 0\%$).

Authors' conclusions

Health researchers using postal and electronic questionnaires can increase response using the strategies shown to be effective in this systematic review.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Postal and electronic questionnaires are a relatively inexpensive way to collect information from people for research purposes. If people do not reply (so called 'non-responders'), the research results will tend to be less accurate. This systematic review found several ways to increase response. People can be contacted before they are sent a postal questionnaire. Postal questionnaires can be sent by first class post or recorded delivery, and a stamped-return envelope can be provided. Questionnaires, letters and e-mails can be made more personal, and preferably kept short. Incentives can be offered, for example, a small amount of money with a postal questionnaire. One or more reminders can be sent with a copy of the questionnaire to people who do not reply.

BACKGROUND

Postal questionnaires are widely used in the collection of data in epidemiological studies. When collecting information from large, geographically dispersed populations, the postal questionnaire is often the only financially viable option. Non-response to postal questionnaires reduces the effective sample size and can introduce bias (Armstrong 1995). Because non-response can affect the validity of epidemiological studies, assessment of response is an important dimension in the critical appraisal of health research. For the same reason, the identification of effective strategies to increase response to postal questionnaires could improve the quality of health research. We sought to identify such strategies by conducting a systematic review of randomised controlled trials.

OBJECTIVES

To quantify the effects of methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires.

METHODS

Criteria for considering studies for this review

Types of studies

All unconfounded randomised controlled trials of methods designed to increase response to postal or electronic questionnaires. A postal questionnaire was defined as a questionnaire that is delivered to a person's home or work address by a distribution system. This includes questionnaires delivered by any postal service including internal organisational mail and those hand delivered to a person's address. It does not include questionnaires distributed at, for example, a shop or in a doctor's office. The 2008 update to this review included randomised controlled trials of questionnaires distributed by electronic mail, and strategies designed to improve response to online or web surveys.

Types of data

Any population (e.g. patients or healthcare providers, and including any participants of non-health studies).

Types of methods

Any methods designed to increase response to postal or electronic questionnaires. Strategies requiring telephone contact as a follow-up technique are included but those requiring home visits are not.

Types of outcome measures

- Proportion of completed, or partially completed questionnaires returned after the first mailing.
- Proportion of completed, or partially completed questionnaires returned after all mailings.
- Proportion of participants logging-in, or clicking the hyperlink to visit the online survey.
- Proportion of participants submitting the online survey.

Search methods for identification of studies

We identified trials by searching 14 electronic bibliographic databases, the reference lists of all identified trials, reference lists of relevant meta-analyses, contacting the authors of included trials and by handsearching. **Full details of the search strategies used are included in Appendix 1.**

Data collection and analysis

Trial identification

Two authors of this review examined the titles, abstracts and key words of all records identified from electronic bibliographic databases.

Quality assessment

Since the quality of allocation concealment affects the results of studies, two authors of the review scored quality on the scale used by Schulz (Schulz 1995) as shown below, assigning C to poorest quality and A to best quality:

A - trials deemed to have taken adequate measures to conceal allocation (i.e. central randomisation; computer-generated address labels; or other description that contained elements that would ensure concealment).

B - trials in which the authors either did not report an allocation concealment approach at all or reported an approach that did not fall into one of the other categories.

C - trials in which concealment was inadequate (such as alternation or reference to case record numbers or to dates of birth). Where the method used to conceal allocation was not clearly reported, the author was contacted, if possible, for clarification. We then compared the scores allocated and resolved differences by discussion.

Data extraction

Two authors of this review independently extracted data from eligible reports using a standard proforma, with disagreements resolved by a third author of the review. We extracted data on the

type of intervention evaluated, the number randomised to intervention or control groups, the quality of allocation concealment, and the types of participants, materials and follow-up methods used. Two outcomes were used to estimate the effect of each intervention on response: the proportion of questionnaires returned after the first mailing and the proportion returned after all follow-up contacts were complete. We wrote to the authors of reports where information was missing. We excluded trials in which we could not confirm that random allocation had been used to allocate participants.

Analysis

We classified and analysed interventions were classified and analysed under broad strategies to increase questionnaire response. In trials with factorial designs, we classified interventions under two or more strategies. When interventions were evaluated at more than two levels (e.g. highly, moderately and slightly personalised questionnaires), we combined the upper levels, creating a dichotomy. For example, we compared response to the least personalised questionnaire with the combined response for the moderately and highly personalised questionnaires. Monetary incentives were defined as any incentive that could be used by participants as money (i.e. cash or cheques). Incentives such as a donation to charity, or entrance into a lottery, were classified as 'non-monetary' incentives.

We made additional data analyses using STATA statistical software (StataCorp 1999). For each strategy, we estimated pooled odds ratios using a random-effects model. We calculated 95% confidence intervals and two-sided P values for each outcome. We assessed evidence for selection bias using Egger's weighted regression method and Begg's rank correlation test and funnel plot. We assessed heterogeneity among trial odds ratios using a Chi² test at a 5% significance level and the degree of inconsistency between trial results was quantified using the I² statistic, as proposed by Higgins and Thompson (2002). The I² statistic measures the percentage of variation across studies that is due to heterogeneity.

RESULTS

Description of studies

Postal

We identified 481 eligible trials that evaluated 110 different strategies for increasing response to postal questionnaires. There were 75 strategies for which the trials included over 1000 participants.

Electronic

We identified 32 eligible trials that evaluated 27 different strategies for increasing response to electronic questionnaires. There were 20 strategies for which the trials included over 1000 participants. See the table 'Characteristics of included studies' for further details.

Risk of bias in included studies

The method of randomisation was not known in the majority of eligible trials. Where information was available, the quality of allocation concealment was classified as C (inadequate) in 76 trials and as A (adequate) in 83 trials. The remaining trials were classified as B (unclear).

Effect of methods

Incentives - What are participants offered? (Strategies 1 - 11)

Postal

Ninety-four trials (160,004 participants) evaluated the effect of a monetary incentive on questionnaire response. The odds of response were almost doubled using monetary incentives (odds ratio (OR) 1.87; 95% confidence interval (CI) 1.73 to 2.03). There was, however, significant heterogeneity among the trial results ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 1.2). Thirty-seven trials (84,043 participants) evaluated the effect of a larger rather than a smaller monetary incentive on questionnaire response. The odds of response were a quarter higher when a larger monetary incentive was used (OR 1.26; 95% CI 1.14 to 1.39) (Analysis 2.2). Thirteen trials (26,484 participants) evaluated the effect of offering a monetary rather than a non-monetary incentive on questionnaire response. The odds of response were increased by over a half when a monetary incentive rather than a non-monetary incentive was used (OR 95% CI 1.62; 1.39 to 1.88). There was significant heterogeneity among the trial results ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 3.2).

Ninety-four trials (135,934 participants) evaluated the effect of a non-monetary incentive (e.g. key ring, lottery participation, offer of study results, etc.) on questionnaire response. The odds of response were increased by over a tenth when a non-monetary incentive was used (OR 1.15; 95% CI 1.08 to 1.22). There was significant heterogeneity among the results of non-monetary incentive trials ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 4.2). Seven trials (10,730 participants) evaluated the effect of a larger rather than a smaller non-monetary incentive on questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a larger non-monetary incentive (OR 1.09; 95% CI 0.97 to 1.22) (Analysis 5.2).

Twenty-four trials (27,569 participants) evaluated the timing of incentives on questionnaire response. The odds of response increased by more than a half when incentives were given with questionnaires rather than only given after participants had returned their questionnaires (OR 1.61; 95% CI 1.36 to 1.89). There was significant heterogeneity among the trial results ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 8.2). Three trials (7924 participants) evaluated the effect of offering an incentive with the first rather than a subsequent mailing. The odds of response were increased by over a tenth when the incentive was offered with the first mailing (OR 1.14; 95% CI 1.02 to 1.28) (Analysis 9.2). Twelve trials (15,256 participants) evaluated the effect of offering survey results as an incentive. There was no evidence for an effect on response of offering the study results (OR 0.90; 95% CI 0.76 to 1.07) (Analysis 11.2).

Electronic

One trial (1102 participants) evaluated the effect of a monetary incentive on electronic questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using monetary incentives (OR 1.19; 95% CI 0.82 to 1.75) (Analysis 1.4). Six trials (17,493 participants) evaluated the effect of a non-monetary incentive (e.g. Amazon gift cards, lottery participation, personal digital assistant, early grade feedback, etc.) on e-questionnaire response. The odds of response were almost doubled when a non-monetary incentive was used (OR 1.72; 95% CI 1.09 to 2.72) (Analysis 4.4). Seven trials (31,454 participants) evaluated the effect of a larger rather than a smaller non-monetary incentive on e-questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a larger non-monetary incentive (OR 0.95; 95% CI 0.78 to 1.15) (Analysis 5.4). Two trials (2856 participants) evaluated the effect of a monetary rather than a non-monetary incentive on e-questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a monetary rather than non-monetary incentive (OR 0.77; 95% CI 0.48 to 1.23) (Analysis 3.4).

One trial (2233 participants) evaluated the effect of immediate notification of lottery results compared to delayed notification on e-questionnaire response. The odds of response were increased by almost a half when lottery results were immediately notified (OR 1.37; 95% CI 1.13 to 1.65) (Analysis 6.4). Two trials (4721 participants) evaluated the effect of higher denominations of currencies in a monetary lottery compared to lower denominations on e-questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of offering higher denominations in a monetary lottery (OR 1.00; 95% CI 0.87 to 1.14) (Analysis 7.4).

Three trials (1401 participants) evaluated the timing of incentives on e-questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response when incentives were given with questionnaires rather than only given after participants had submitted their e-questionnaires (OR 1.08; 95% CI 0.77 to 1.50) (Analysis 8.4). One trial (1061 participants) evaluated the combined effect of conditional and unconditional incentives compared to conditional incentives alone. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using the

combined incentives (OR 1.19; 95% CI 0.92 to 1.54) (Analysis 10.4). A single trial (2332 participants) evaluated the effect of offering survey results as an incentive. The odds of response increased by almost a half when offer of results was used (OR 1.36; 95% CI 1.15 to 1.61) (Analysis 11.4).

Length - How long is the questionnaire? (Strategies 12 & 13)

Postal

Fifty-six trials (60,119 participants), including two unpublished trials, evaluated the effect of questionnaire length on response. The odds of response increased by more than a half using shorter questionnaires (OR 1.64; 95% CI 1.43 to 1.87). Heterogeneity among trial results was apparent on inspection of the forest plot and Chi^2 test result ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 12.2). One trial (600 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using a double postcard compared to one page. The odds ratio decreased by a half when a double postcard was used (OR 0.47; 95% CI 0.34 to 0.66) (Analysis 13.2).

Electronic

Two trials (7589 participants) evaluated the effect of the length of e-questionnaire on response. The odds of response increased by over a half when using shorter e-questionnaires (OR 1.73; 95% CI 1.40 to 2.13) (Analysis 12.4).

Appearance - How does the questionnaire look? (Strategies 14 - 43)

Postal

Fifty-eight trials (60,184 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of making questionnaire materials more personal, such as signing letters by hand. The odds of response were increased by more than a tenth with a more personalised approach to participants (OR 1.14; 95% CI 1.07 to 1.22). There was, however, significant heterogeneity among the results of these trials ($P < 0.0001$) (Analysis 14.2). Fourteen trials (15,006 participants) evaluated the effect of cover letters bearing a hand-written signature compared to those that are typed or scanned or printed. The odds of response increased by a quarter using hand-written signatures (OR 1.24; 95% CI 1.08 to 1.41) (Analysis 15.2). Seven trials (5091 participants) evaluated the effect of hand-written address label compared to computer-printed label. The odds of response increased by a quarter when using the hand-written labelled questionnaire (OR 1.25; 95% CI 1.08 to 1.45) (Analysis 16.2). Two trials (1030 participants) evaluated the presence of a signature within the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a signature within the questionnaire (OR 1.34;

95% CI 0.97 to 1.85) (Analysis 17.2). Eight trials (4134 participants) evaluated the effect of including an identifying feature, such as a participant's name or identity number, on questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using an identifying feature (OR 1.12; 95% CI 0.82 to 1.52) (Analysis 18.2).

Five trials (8637 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using brown envelopes compared to white. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using brown envelope (OR 1.23; 95% CI 0.81 to 1.87) (Analysis 20.2). Fourteen trials (41,421 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using questionnaires printed on coloured paper. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using coloured questionnaire (OR 1.04; 95% CI 0.99 to 1.10) (Analysis 21.2). Three trials (7040 participants) evaluated the effect of using coloured ink, compared with black or blue ink, on questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using coloured ink (OR 1.16; 95% CI 0.95 to 1.42) (Analysis 22.2). Two trials (2356 participants) evaluated the effect of a coloured letterhead compared to a black and white letterhead. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a coloured letterhead (OR 1.08; 95% CI 0.91 to 1.28) (Analysis 23.2). A single trial (320 participants) evaluated the effect of an illustration on the cover of the questionnaire largely in black, versus largely in white. The odds of response increased by more than a half when using an illustration on the cover of the questionnaire that was largely in black (OR 1.62; 95% CI 1.04 to 2.53) (Analysis 24.2).

Three trials (5681 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a booklet compared to stapled pages. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a booklet (OR 1.10; 95% CI 0.99 to 1.23) (Analysis 25.2). Two trials (2145 participants) evaluated the effect of the paper size of the questionnaire on response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a large paper size (OR 0.88; 95% CI 0.56 to 1.39) (Analysis 26.2). A single trial (176 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of printing the questionnaire using dot matrix compared to a letter-quality print. There was no evidence for an effect of response of using the dot matrix print (OR 1.15; 95% CI 0.63 to 2.10) (Analysis 27.2). Two trials (1039 participants) evaluated the effect of the questionnaire being printed on a high quality or thicker paper, compared to standard quality or thin paper. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a high quality or a thicker paper (OR 0.80; 95% CI 0.60 to 1.06) (Analysis 28.2). Four trials (4966 participants) evaluated the effect of using a single-sided questionnaire compared to a double-sided questionnaire. The odds of response increased by almost a quarter when a single-sided questionnaire was used (OR 1.22; 95% CI 1.01 to 1.47) (Analysis 29.2). One trial (650 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a larger font compared to a smaller font. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using larger font (OR 1.26; 95% CI 0.87 to 1.82) (Analysis 30.2).

A single trial (1000 participants) compared the presence of study

logo on several items in the mailing package to its presence in the questionnaire only. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using study logo on several items in the mailing package (OR 0.92; 95% CI 0.72 to 1.18) (Analysis 31.2). Four trials (3710 participants) evaluated the effect of the presence of a picture in the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a picture (OR 1.07; 95% CI 0.76 to 1.53) (Analysis 32.2). One trial (280 participants) evaluated the effect on response of including a cartoon in the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response of including a cartoon (OR 1.00; 95% CI 0.62 to 1.62) (Analysis 34.2). Two trials (316 participants) evaluated the effect of using a questionnaire in matrix form compared to standard form. There was no evidence for an effect on response using the matrix form (OR 0.58; 95% CI 0.29 to 1.16) (Analysis 35.2). One trial (259 participants) evaluated the effect on response of questions ordered by time period compared to those not ordered by time period. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using questionnaires where questions are ordered by time period (OR 1.48; 95% CI 0.84 to 2.59) (Analysis 36.3).

Electronic

Twelve trials (48,910 participants) evaluated the effect on e-questionnaire response by addressing the salutations in the cover letters accompanying the questionnaires personally, or by giving a touch of personalisation to the cover letters. The odds of response were increased by about a quarter when personalised approach was adopted (OR 1.24; 95% CI 1.17 to 1.32) (Analysis 14.4). Two trials (720 participants) evaluated the effect of the presence of a picture in the e-mail. The odds of response tripled when a picture was sent in the e-mail (OR 3.05; 95% CI 1.84 to 5.06) (Analysis 32.4). The same trials (520 participants) evaluated the effect of response when a more attractive picture was used compared to a less attractive picture. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a more attractive picture (OR 3.44; 95% CI 0.72 to 16.49) (Analysis 33.4).

Two trials (6152 participants) evaluated the presence of a topic in the subject line of the e-mail compared to a blank subject line. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a topic in the subject line (OR 0.84; 95% CI 0.71 to 1.01) (Analysis 37.2). Two trials (3845 participants) evaluated the presence of "Survey" as the subject line compared to a blank subject line. The odds of response decreased by a fifth when "Survey" was mentioned in the subject line (OR 0.81; 95% CI 0.67 to 0.97) (Analysis 38.2). One trial (6090 participants) evaluated the effect of sending the e-mails in text file formats compared to HTML. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using text file format (OR 1.00; 95% CI 0.84 to 1.19) (Analysis 39.2). The same trial (6090 participants) evaluated the presence of using a white background in the e-mail compared to a black background. The odds of response increased by over a quarter when a white background was used (OR 1.31; 95% CI 1.10 to 1.56) (Analysis 40.2).

One trial (6090 participants) evaluated the effect of including a header compared to no header in the e-mail. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a header (OR 1.13; 95% CI 0.90 to 1.41) (Analysis 41.2). The same trial (5075 participants) evaluated the effect of a simple header compared to a complex header. The odds of response increased by almost a quarter when a simple header was used (OR 1.23; 95% CI 1.03 to 1.48) (Analysis 42.2). One trial (5413 participants) evaluated the effect of textual presentation of response categories compared to visual presentation of response categories. The odds of response increased by almost a fifth when textual presentation was used (OR 1.19; 95% CI 1.05 to 1.36) (Analysis 43.4).

Delivery - How are the questionnaires received or returned? (Strategies 44 - 60)

Postal

Six trials (13,964 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using stamps on out-going envelopes compared to franked envelopes. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using stamps on outgoing envelopes (OR 0.95; 95% CI 0.88 to 1.03) (Analysis 44.2). Two trials (8300 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using first class compared to other classes of postage. The odds of response were increased by over one-tenth using first class postage (OR 1.11; 95% CI 1.02 to 1.21) (Analysis 45.2). Five trials (5461 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using commemorative stamps rather than standard stamps on return envelopes. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using commemorative stamps (OR 0.92; 95% CI 0.81 to 1.06) (Analysis 46.2). Fifteen trials (18,931 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using a special delivery service (including recorded, registered and certified delivery), rather than standard delivery. The odds of response increased by more than a half when special delivery was used (OR 1.76; 95% CI 1.43 to 2.18). Results were significantly heterogeneous ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 47.2).

Twenty-seven trials (48,612 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using a stamped return envelope compared to a pre-paid business or franked reply envelope. The odds of response increased by a quarter when stamps were used (OR 1.24; 95% CI 1.14 to 1.35). There was significant heterogeneity between the trial results ($P < 0.001$) (Analysis 48.2). One trial (205 participants) evaluated the effect of using priority stamps on return envelopes compared to using a first class stamp. The odds of response decreased by more than a half when priority stamps were used (OR 0.26; 95% CI 0.14 to 0.46) (Analysis 49.2). One trial (800 participants) evaluated the effect of using a first class stamp on return envelopes compared to a second class stamp. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using first class stamp on return envelope (OR 0.91; 95% CI 0.69 to 1.21) (Analysis 50.2).

A single trial (510 participants) evaluated the use of multiple stamps on return envelopes compared to a single stamp. The odds of response increased by almost a half when multiple stamps were used (OR 1.44; 95% CI 1.01 to 2.04) (Analysis 51.2). Four trials (4094 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of providing any sort of pre-paid return envelope rather than none. There was no evidence for an effect on response of including pre-paid envelopes (OR 1.09; 95% CI 0.71 to 1.68). There was significant heterogeneity among the trial results ($P < 0.0001$) (Analysis 53.2). A single trial (147 participants) evaluated the effect of stamped addressed return envelopes compared to only including an address label. In this trial there was no evidence for an effect on response of using a stamped addressed return envelope (OR 0.86; 95% CI 0.45 to 1.65) (Analysis 54.2).

Two trials (1140 participants) evaluated the effect on response of sending questionnaires to the participant's work address rather than to their home address. There was no evidence for an effect on response of sending questionnaires to work addresses (OR 1.16; 95% CI 0.89 to 1.52) (Analysis 52.2). Two trials (11,781 participants) evaluated the effect of using a window envelope on questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using window envelopes (OR 0.96; 95% CI 0.61 to 1.49) (Analysis 56.2). A single trial (1200 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of sending the questionnaire in a larger envelope compared to a standard or smaller envelope. There was no evidence for an effect of response of using larger envelopes (OR 0.93; 95% CI 0.74 to 1.17) (Analysis 55.2). A single trial (4213 participants) evaluated the effect of providing optional Internet response along with the traditional postal response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of providing optional Internet response (OR 0.93; 95% CI 0.82 to 1.05) (Analysis 57.2). One trial (504) evaluated the effect of questionnaires being mailed on Monday compared to being sent on Friday. There was no evidence for an effect on response of sending the questionnaire on Monday (OR 0.83; 95% CI 0.58 to 1.17) (Analysis 58.2). One trial (460 participants) evaluated the effect of a questionnaire being received on a Monday, compared to being received on a Friday. There was no evidence for an effect on response of questionnaires being received on a Monday (OR 1.00; 95% CI 0.64 to 1.56) (Analysis 59.2). Two trials (2324 participants) evaluated the effect on response of questionnaires being sent one to five weeks after discharge from hospital, compared to being sent after 9 to 14 weeks. There was no evidence for an effect on response of questionnaires being sent sooner after discharge from hospital (OR 2.26; 95% CI 0.69 to 7.37) (Analysis 60.2).

Contact - Methods and number of requests for participation (Strategies 61 - 68)

Postal

Forty-seven trials (79,651 participants) evaluated the effect on response of contacting participants before sending questionnaires. The odds of response were increased by a half when participants were pre-notified (OR 1.45; 95% CI 1.29 to 1.63). There was significant heterogeneity among the trial results ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 61.2). Seven trials (3322 participants) evaluated the effect on response of pre-notification by telephone compared to by post. There was no evidence for an effect on response when participants were pre-contacted by telephone instead of by post (OR 1.18; 95% CI 0.77 to 1.80) (Analysis 62.2).

Nineteen trials (32,778 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of follow-up contact (e.g. repeat mailings or telephone calls) with participants who do not respond to the initial questionnaire. The odds of response increased by more than a quarter when follow-up contact was used (OR 1.35; 95% CI 1.18 to 1.55). There was significant heterogeneity among the results and both Begg's and Egger's tests indicated evidence of selection bias (Analysis 63.2). Eleven trials (8619 participants) evaluated the effect on response of providing participants with another copy of the questionnaire during postal follow up. The odds of response were increased by a half when questionnaires were included during postal follow up (OR 1.46; 95% CI 1.13 to 1.90). There was significant heterogeneity among these results ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 64.2).

Five trials (2254 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using telephone rather than postal follow up. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using telephone follow up (OR 0.86; 95% CI 0.54 to 1.36) (Analysis 65.2). Three trials (13,922 participants) evaluated the effect on response of a telephone reminder compared to no reminder. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a telephone reminder (OR 1.29; 95% CI 0.85 to 1.96) (Analysis 66.2). Three trials (9947 participants) evaluated the effect of an SMS reminder compared to a postcard reminder. The odds of response increased by half when an SMS reminder was used (OR 1.49; 95% CI 1.23 to 1.81) (Analysis 67.2).

Two trials (1608 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using a follow-up interval of less than 31 days compared to a follow-up interval of 31 to 60 days. There was no evidence for an effect on response when a follow-up interval of less than 31 days was used (OR 0.97; 95% CI 0.75 to 1.26) (Analysis 68.2).

Content - Nature and style of questions (Strategies 69 - 93)

Postal

Ten trials (21,393 participants) evaluated the effect on response of including a 'sensitive' question in a questionnaire. The odds of response were reduced by nearly one-tenth when sensitive questions were included (OR 0.94; 95% CI 0.88 to 1.00) (Analysis

69.2). A single trial (5817 participants) evaluated the effect on response of placing the more relevant questions at the start of the questionnaire. The odds of response were increased by a quarter when more relevant questions were placed first (OR 1.23; 95% CI 1.10 to 1.37) (Analysis 70.2). Three trials (11,435 participants) evaluated the effect on response of placing the most general questions at the start of the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response of placing general questions first (OR 0.95; 95% CI 0.83 to 1.09) (Analysis 71.2).

Four trials (3598 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of placing questions asking for demographic information first. There was no evidence for an effect on response of placing demographic items first (OR 1.08; 95% CI 0.94 to 1.25) (Analysis 72.2). Two trials (3182 participants) evaluated the effect on response of placing the easiest questions at the start of the questionnaire. The odds of response were increased by over a half when the easiest questions were presented first (OR 1.61; 95% CI 1.14 to 2.26) (Analysis 73.2).

A single trial (3540 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a more 'user-friendly' questionnaire. The odds of response were increased by almost a half using user-friendly questionnaires (OR 1.46; 95% CI 1.21 to 1.75) (Analysis 74.2). Three trials (2711 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a more 'interesting' or high salient questionnaire (e.g. asking questions particularly relevant to the study participants). The odds of response were doubled using more interesting questionnaires (OR 2.00; 95% CI 1.32 to 3.04) (Analysis 75.2).

Three trials (1764 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using open-ended rather than closed questions. The odds of response were reduced by more than half when open-ended questions were used (OR 0.31; 95% CI 0.09 to 1.04) (Analysis 76.2). One trial (300 participants) evaluated the effect of using open-ended items first compared to other items first. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using open-ended items first (OR 1.26; 95% CI 0.73 to 2.19) (Analysis 77.2). One trial (300 participants) evaluated the effect of using closed-ended items first compared to other items first. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using closed-ended items first (OR 0.93; 95% CI 0.54 to 1.59) (Analysis 78.2).

A single trial (1360 participants) evaluated the effect on response of including 'don't know' boxes for questions. There was no evidence for an effect on response of including 'don't know' boxes (OR 1.03; 95% CI 0.82 to 1.29) (Analysis 79.2). Two trials (1125 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a circle answer rather than tick box format on question responses. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a circle answer format (OR 0.96; 95% CI 0.74 to 1.26) (Analysis 80.2). A single trial (6783 participants) evaluated the effect of listing response options in increasing order on questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of listing response options in increasing order (OR 1.06; 95% CI 0.94 to 1.18) (Analysis 81.2).

Two trials (3882 participants) evaluated the effect on response of

using high frequency response alternatives compared to medium frequency response alternatives. There was no evidence for an effect on response when high frequency response alternatives were used (OR 1.40; 95% CI 0.58 to 3.38) (Analysis 82.2). Another trial (654 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of using a 5-step response scale compared to a 10-step response scale. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a 5-step response scale (OR 0.78; 95% CI 0.52 to 1.19) (Analysis 83.2).

A single trial (1500 participants) evaluated the effect of using an individual-item rather than a stem-and-leaf format on questionnaire response. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using individual item format (OR 0.88; 95% CI 0.70 to 1.10) (Analysis 85.2). One trial (400 participants), evaluated the horizontal orientation of response options compared to vertical orientation of response options. The odds of response tripled when horizontal orientation was used (OR 3.12; 95% CI 1.63 to 5.96) (Analysis 86.2). Four trials (7345 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using conventional mode of response technique compared to randomised response technique. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using the conventional mode of response technique (OR 1.52; 95% CI 0.85 to 2.72) (Analysis 87.2).

A single trial (1280 participants) evaluated the effect on response of asking 'factual' questions only compared to factual and attitudinal questions. The odds of response were increased by more than a quarter using factual questions only (OR 1.34; 95% CI 1.01 to 1.77) (Analysis 88.2). One trial (190 participants) evaluated the effect of including a teaser on the envelope. The odds of response increased by over three times when a teaser was used (OR 3.08; 95% CI 1.27 to 7.44) (Analysis 89.2).

A single trial (1795 participants) evaluated the effect of sending the questionnaire with a supplement compared to sending the questionnaire alone. There was no evidence for an effect on response of sending questionnaire with a supplement (OR 0.86; 95% CI 0.70 to 1.07) (Analysis 90.2). Two trials (4943 participants) evaluated the effect on response of including a questionnaire for relatives. The odds of response were reduced by one third when a questionnaire for relatives was included (OR 0.67; 95% CI 0.60 to 0.76) (Analysis 91.2). One trial (414 participants) evaluated the effect of including a consent form with the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response of including a consent form (OR 1.32; 95% CI 0.89 to 1.95) (Analysis 92.2). Another trial (200 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a multi-option consent form compared to a standard consent form. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using a multi-option consent form (OR 0.91; 95% CI 0.49 to 1.68) (Analysis 93.2).

Electronic

One trial (2176 participants) evaluated the effect on response of using a more 'interesting' e-questionnaire (e.g. asking questions

particularly relevant to the study participants). The odds of response were almost doubled using a more interesting e-questionnaire (OR 1.85; 95% CI 1.52 to 2.26) (Analysis 75.4).

Origin - Who sent the questionnaire? (Strategies 94 - 100)

Postal

Fourteen trials (21,628 participants) evaluated the effect on response of university sponsorship. The odds of response were increased by more than a quarter when questionnaires originated from a university rather than an alternative source, such as a government department or commercial organisation (OR 1.32; 95% CI 1.13 to 1.54). There was significant heterogeneity between trial results ($P < 0.00001$) (Analysis 94.2). Ten trials (5644 participants) evaluated the effect on response when questionnaires were sent or signed by a more senior or well-known person. There was no evidence for an effect on response when a more senior or well-known person sent or signed the questionnaire (OR 1.05; 95% CI 0.89 to 1.23) (Analysis 95.2).

A single trial (500 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of sending the questionnaire in a university printed envelope. There was no evidence for an effect on response of sending the questionnaire in a university printed envelope (OR 0.88; 95% CI 0.61 to 1.28) (Analysis 96.2). Two trials (924 participants) evaluated the effect on response of pre-contact by a medical researcher compared to a non medical researcher. There was no evidence for an effect on response of pre-contact by a medical researcher (OR 1.01; 95% CI 0.55 to 1.86) (Analysis 97.2). Two trials (1106 participants) evaluated the effect on response when questionnaires were sent from a GP rather than a research group. There was no evidence for an effect on response of sending questionnaires by a GP (OR 1.52; 95% CI 0.73 to 3.15) (Analysis 98.2).

Five trials (5959 participants) evaluated the effect on response of whether the ethnicity of the name of the person sending the questionnaire was identifiable. There was no evidence for an effect on response when names were ethnically identifiable (OR 1.07; 95% CI 0.90 to 1.27) (Analysis 99.2). Two trials (3146 participants) evaluated the effect of sending the questionnaire by a male investigator compared to a female investigator. There was no evidence for an effect on response of sending the questionnaire by a male investigator (OR 1.07; 95% CI 0.72 to 1.58) (Analysis 100.2).

Electronic

Two trials (3845 participants) evaluated the effect on e-questionnaire response of university sponsorship. There was no evidence for an effect on e-questionnaire response of using the university sponsorship (OR 0.84; 95% CI 0.69 to 1.01) (Analysis 94.4). Two trials (720 participants) evaluated the effect of sending the e-questionnaire signed by a male compared to that signed by a female.

The odds of response decreased by over a half when the e-questionnaire was signed by a male (OR 0.55; 95% CI 0.38 to 0.80) (Analysis 100.4). Three trials (23,027 participants) evaluated the effect on response when e-questionnaires were sent or signed by a more senior or well-known person. There was no evidence for an effect on response when a more senior or well-known person sent or signed the e-questionnaire (OR 1.05; 95% CI 0.95 to 1.15) (Analysis 95.4).

Communication - What are participants told? (Strategies 101 - 121)

Postal

One trial (25,000 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of providing participants with an assurance of confidentiality. The odds of response were increased by more than a quarter with an assurance of confidentiality (OR 1.33; 95% CI 1.24 to 1.42) (Analysis 101.2). One trial (468 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of including a statement that others had responded. There was no evidence for an effect on response when the statement was included (OR 1.12; 95% CI 0.76 to 1.65) (Analysis 102.2). Four trials (3555 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of offering participants the choice to opt-out from the study. There was no evidence for an effect on response when participants could opt-out (OR 0.92; 95% CI 0.66 to 1.28) (Analysis 103.2).

A single trial (2000 participants) evaluated the effect on response of providing instructions for completion of the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response when instructions were given (OR 0.89; 95% CI 0.74 to 1.06) (Analysis 104.2). Six trials (5661 participants) evaluated the effect on response of giving participants a deadline by which to respond. There was no evidence for an effect on response of giving deadlines (OR 1.00; 95% CI 0.84 to 1.19) (Analysis 105.2). Three trials (600 participants) evaluated the effect on response of mention of an obligation to respond compared to no mention of an obligation to respond. The odds of response increased by more than half with the mention of an obligation to respond (OR 1.61; 95% CI 1.16 to 2.22) (Analysis 106.2).

One trial (702 participants) evaluated the effect on response of questionnaires including a request for a telephone number. There was no evidence for an effect on response of requesting a telephone number (OR 1.00; 95% CI 0.65 to 1.54) (Analysis 107.2). One trial (200 participants) evaluated the effect of asking participants to respond on questionnaire itself compared to asking them to respond on a separate form. There was no evidence for an effect on response of asking the participants to respond on the questionnaire (OR 1.13; 95% CI 0.57 to 2.27) (Analysis 108.2).

Seven trials (7053 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of telling participants that they would be contacted again if they did not respond. There was no evidence for an effect

on response of questionnaire if mention of follow up was used (OR 1.02; 95% CI 0.91 to 1.15) (Analysis 109.2). Two trials (1907 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of requesting an explanation for non-participation. There was no evidence for an effect on response of requesting an explanation for non-participation (OR 1.14; 95% CI 0.83 to 1.57) (Analysis 110.2).

One trial (600 participants) evaluated the effect on response of providing a time estimate for completion of the questionnaire. There was no evidence for an effect on response when a time estimation was provided (OR 1.10; 95% CI 0.76 to 1.58) (Analysis 111.2). Another trial (500 participants) evaluated the effect on response of a detailed cover letter compared to a brief cover letter. There was no evidence for an effect on response in using the detailed cover letter (OR 1.08; 95% CI 0.74 to 1.58) (Analysis 112.2). Two trials (1251 participants) evaluated the effect on response of the presence of an appeal or a pleading factor in the cover letter. There was no evidence for an effect on response of using an appeal (OR 1.06; 95% CI 0.79 to 1.42) (Analysis 113.2). A small trial (100 participants) evaluated the effect of a note requesting participants not to remove an ID Code. The odds of response decreased by more than a half when the note was added (OR 0.37; 95% CI 0.14 to 0.96) (Analysis 114.2).

A single trial (201 participants) evaluated the effect on response of a request for the participant's signature. There was no evidence for an effect on response when requesting participants' signatures (OR 1.19; 95% CI 0.65 to 2.18) (Analysis 115.2). One trial (395 participants) evaluated the effect of endorsing the questionnaire by eminent professionals in the field. The odds of response decreased by more than a quarter when an endorsement was used (OR 0.63; 95% CI 0.43 to 0.94) (Analysis 116.2). One trial (671 participants) evaluated the effect of a veiled threat in follow-up letters. The odds of response doubled when a veiled threat was used (OR 2.09; 95% CI 1.49 to 2.93) (Analysis 117.2).

Eight trials (10,908 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of stressing how response would benefit the sponsor. There was no evidence for an effect on response when stressing the benefits to the sponsor (OR 0.99; 95% CI 0.86 to 1.13). There was significant heterogeneity between trial results and both Begg's and Egger's tests indicated evidence of selection bias (Analysis 118.2). Nine trials (13,175 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of stressing how response would benefit the participant. There was no evidence for an effect on response when stressing the benefits to participants (OR 0.98; 95% CI 0.82 to 1.16) (Analysis 119.2). Ten trials (12,731 participants) evaluated the effect on questionnaire response of stressing how response would benefit society. There was no evidence for an effect on response of stressing the benefits to society (OR 1.09; 95% CI 0.92 to 1.29). Again, there was significant heterogeneity between trial results and both Begg's and Egger's tests indicated evidence of selection bias (Analysis 120.2). Two trials (2070 participants) evaluated the effect on response of questionnaires remaining anonymous.

mous compared with being identifiable. There was no evidence for an effect on response of questionnaires remaining anonymous (OR 0.96; 95% CI 0.66 to 1.39) (Analysis 121.2).

Electronic

One trial (8586 participants) evaluated the effect on e-questionnaire response of including a statement that others had responded. The odds of response increased by half when the statement was included (OR 1.52; 95% CI 1.36 to 1.70) (Analysis 102.4). A single trial (8586 participants) evaluated the effect on e-questionnaire response of giving participants a deadline by which to respond. The odds of response increased by over a tenth when giving a deadline (OR 1.18; 95% CI 1.03 to 1.34) (Analysis 105.4). Two trials (3844 participants) evaluated the effect of including an appeal, such as "request for help" in the subject line of the e-mail. There was no evidence for an effect on response of including an appeal in the subject line (OR 0.84; 95% CI 0.70 to 1.01) (Analysis 113.4).

DISCUSSION

Many reviews and meta-analyses of strategies to increase response to postal questionnaires have appeared in the survey research literature over the last forty years. However, none was based on a systematic search of the published and unpublished literature and in particular they did not include the medical literature. The most comprehensive of these included 115 trials (Yammarino 1991), less than half the number of trials included in our review.

We have identified a range of strategies that increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires. The pooled intervention effects for some strategies are precise due to the large numbers of participants randomised in the combined trials. Before interpreting and applying the results of this review several methodological issues must be considered.

The identification and inclusion of all relevant trials in systematic reviews reduces random error in meta-analyses and, because ease of identification of trials is associated with treatment effects, complete ascertainment may also reduce bias (Clarke 1994). We excluded some trials because we could not confirm that participants had been randomly allocated to intervention and control groups and have not examined whether the results of these trials differ systematically from the included trials. Although tests for selection bias were significant in five strategies, these results may be due to true heterogeneity between trial results, rather than bias in the selection of trials (Egger 1997).

Inadequate allocation concealment can bias the results of clinical trials (Schulz 1995). In our review, information on allocation concealment was unavailable for most of the included trials. If they were inadequately concealed, this may have biased the results.

It may be inappropriate to combine heterogeneous trial results to produce a single estimate of effect (Engels 2000). We found substantial heterogeneity among trial results in half of the strategies, and for these, the pooled odds ratios may not be meaningful. Variation between trial interventions and populations is likely to explain some of the heterogeneity. For example, among trials evaluating non-monetary incentives, the types of incentive used are considerably heterogeneous including things such as donations to charity, lottery participation and free key rings or pens. Among trials evaluating monetary incentives, the amounts of money offered to participants vary between trials. A meta-regression analysis has shown that monetary incentives can increase response to postal questionnaires but that the relation between the amount of money and response is not linear (Edwards 2005).

Among the trials evaluating shorter and longer questionnaires, the lengths of the questionnaires used varies between trials, some comparing one page with a two page alternative, and others comparing four or more pages with longer alternatives. In a meta-regression analysis, most of the heterogeneity was explained by variation in the length of the questionnaires used in each trial (Edwards 2004). A subgroup analysis of the trials of personalisation in postal questionnaires found that response was increased by addressing participants by name on cover letters, and that the effect appears to be enhanced by including hand-written signatures (Scott 2006).

Further analyses may reveal important sources of variation, for example, due to methodological quality, questionnaire topic, study age, or type of population. In this review, our aim was to systematically identify and critically appraise eligible trials, and to present the relevant data. We did not intend to produce single effect estimates for every strategy. For many strategies, although there is statistical heterogeneity, the directions of the effects were similar. For these strategies we cannot be sure about the size of the effect, but we can be reasonably confident that there was an effect on response.

We have chosen to use odds ratios in our analyses for methodological reasons. However, the practical implication of the odds ratio for a strategy is difficult to interpret without knowing the baseline response rate (without the strategy). Moreover, the odds ratio for a strategy might vary in relationship to the baseline response rate. Therefore, those conducting postal and electronic surveys should scrutinise the data in the relevant results tables closely if the magnitude of the effect that they might expect from using a specific strategy is an important consideration for them in deciding whether or not to use the strategy. A table showing the conversion of odds ratios to response proportions for a range of different baselines is included in Appendix 2.

AUTHORS' CONCLUSIONS

Implication for methodological research

The results of this review show that questionnaire length has a substantial impact on non-response, particularly when questionnaires are very short. In the context of outcome data collection in a clinical trial, the use of a short questionnaire would be expected to minimise non-response, thus increasing the effective sample size and reducing sampling error. However, if the use of short questionnaires reduces the accuracy of the measurement process, the reduction in random error achieved by increased follow up would have to be traded-off against increased random error due to using less precise measurement. Further research is required to quantify this trade-off, so that outcome measures can be designed for use in clinical trials that minimise total random error (sampling error and measurement error).

This review examined the effectiveness of 121 different strategies to increase the response to postal and electronic questionnaires. The outcome of interest in this review was the overall response proportion and we did not examine the impact of factors that may influence the completeness of the returned questionnaires. However, factors that influence the readability of questionnaires, such as the number of syllables per word, words per sentence, typeface and font size may have an important effect on both the proportion of questions that are answered and indeed the overall

response proportion.

Finally, although postal questionnaires are commonly used in the collection of data in epidemiological studies, the identification of strategies to increase response to other forms of survey data collection methods, such as personal or telephone interviews and electronic mail, is also important. In the recent update to this review we have included electronic questionnaires, and a review of the evidence for increasing response to telephone interviews is in preparation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This systematic review was supported by a grant from The BUPA Foundation and by a Nuffield Trust Short Term Fellowship, and was conducted with support from the editorial base of the Cochrane Injuries Group. The initial motivation for the review came from the need to find ways to ensure high rates of follow up in the MRC CRASH Trial. The authors would like to thank Dr Iain Chalmers, Professor Peter Sandercock, Professor Catherine Peckham and the MRC CRASH Trial Management Group for their help and advice with the study. The 2008 update to this review was supported by a second grant from The BUPA Foundation.

REFERENCES

References to studies included in this review

Aadahl 2003 *{published data only}*

Aadahl M, Jørgensen T. The effect of conducting a lottery on questionnaire response rates: a randomised controlled trial. *European Journal of Epidemiology* 2003;**18**:941-4.

Adams 1982 *{published data only}*

Adams LL, Gale D. Solving the quandary between questionnaire length and response rate in educational research. *Research in Higher Education* 1982;**17**(3):231-40.

Albaum 1987 *{published data only}*

Albaum G. Do source and anonymity affect mail survey results?. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1987;**15**(3):74-81.

Albaum 1989 *{published data only}*

Albaum G, Strandskov J. Participation in a mail survey of international marketers: effects of pre-contact and detailed project explanation. *Journal of Global Marketing* 1989;**2**(4):7-23.

Alutto 1970 *{published data only}*

Alutto JA. Some dynamics of questionnaire completion and return among professional and managerial personnel: the relative impacts of reception at work site or place of residence. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1970;**54**(5):430-2.

Andreasen 1970 *{published data only}*

Andreasen AR. Personalizing mail questionnaire correspondence. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1970;**34**:273-7.

Arzheimer 1999 *{published data only}*

Arzheimer K, Klein M. The effect of material incentives on return rate, panel attrition and sample composition of a mail panel survey. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 1999;**11**(4):368-77.

Asch 1996 *{published data only}*

Asch DA. Use of a coded postcard to maintain anonymity in a highly sensitive mail survey: cost, response rates, and bias. *Epidemiology* 1996;**7**(5):550-1.

Asch 1998 *{published data only}*

Asch DA, Christakis NA, Ubel PA. Conducting physician mail surveys on a limited budget. A randomized trial comparing \$2 bill versus \$5 bill incentives. *Medical Care* 1998;**36**(1):95-9.

Ashing-Giwa 2000 *{published data only}*

Ashing-Giwa A, Ganz PA. Effect of timed incentives on subject participation in a study of long-term breast cancer survivors: are there ethnic differences?. *Journal of the National Medical Association* 2000;**92**:528-32.

- Aveyard 2001** {published data only}
Aveyard P, Manaseki S, Griffin C. The cost effectiveness of including pencils and erasers with self-completion epidemiological questionnaires. *Public Health* 2001;**115**: 80–1.
- Bachman 1987** {published data only}
Bachman DP. Cover letter appeals and sponsorship effects on mail survey response rates. *Journal of Marketing Education* 1987;**9**:45–51.
- Barker 1996** {published data only}
Barker PJ, Cooper RF. Do sexual health questions alter the public's response to lifestyle questionnaires?. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1996;**50**:688.
- Bauer 2004** {published data only}
Bauer JE, Rezaishiraz H, Head K, Cowell J, Bepler G, Aiken M, et al. Obtaining DNA from a geographically dispersed cohort of current and former smokers: use of mail-based mouthwash collection and monetary incentives. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* 2004;**6**:439–46.
- Becker 2000a** {published and unpublished data}
Becker H, Cookston J, Kulberg V. Mailed survey follow-ups - are postcard reminders more cost-effective than second questionnaires?. *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 2000; **22**(5):642–7.
- Becker 2000b** {published and unpublished data}
Becker H, Cookston J, Kulberg V. Mailed survey follow-ups - are postcard reminders more cost-effective than second questionnaires?. *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 2000; **22**(5):642–7.
- Beebe 2005a** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Davern ME, McAlpine DD, Call KT, Rockwood TH. Increasing response rates in a survey of medicaid enrollees: the effect of a prepaid monetary incentive and mixed modes (mail and telephone). *Medical Care* 2005a;**43** (4):411–20.
- Beebe 2005b** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Davern ME, McAlpine DD, Call KT, Rockwood TH. Increasing response rates in a survey of medicaid enrollees: the effect of a prepaid monetary incentive and mixed modes (mail and telephone). *Medical Care* 2005b;**43** (4):411–20.
- Beebe 2005c** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Davern ME, McAlpine DD, Call KT, Rockwood TH. Increasing response rates in a survey of medicaid enrollees: the effect of a prepaid monetary incentive and mixed modes (mail and telephone). *Medical Care* 2005c;**43** (4):411–20.
- Beebe 2005d** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Davern ME, McAlpine DD, Call KT, Rockwood TH. Increasing response rates in a survey of medicaid enrollees: the effect of a prepaid monetary incentive and mixed modes (mail and telephone). *Medical Care* 2005d;**43** (4):411–20.
- Beebe 2005e** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Davern ME, McAlpine DD, Call KT, Rockwood TH. Increasing response rates in a survey of medicaid enrollees: the effect of a prepaid monetary incentive and mixed modes (mail and telephone). *Medical Care* 2005e;**43** (4):411–20.
- Beebe 2005f** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Davern ME, McAlpine DD, Call KT, Rockwood TH. Increasing response rates in a survey of medicaid enrollees: the effect of a prepaid monetary incentive and mixed modes (mail and telephone). *Medical Care* 2005f;**43** (4):411–20.
- Beebe 2007** {published data only}
Beebe TJ, Stoner SM, Anderson KJ, Williams AR. Selected questionnaire size and color combinations were significantly related to mailed survey response rates. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2007;**60**:1184–9.
- Bell 2004** {published data only}
Bell LS, Butler TL, Herring RP, Yancey AK, Fraser GE. Recruiting blacks to the adventist health study: do follow-up phone calls increase response rates?. *Annals of Epidemiology* 2005;**15**(9):667–72.
- Bellizzi 1986** {published data only}
Bellizzi JA, Hite RE. Face-to-face advance contact and monetary incentives: effects on mail survey return rates, response differences, and survey costs. *Journal of Business Research* 1986;**14**:99–106.
- Berdie 1973** {published data only}
Berdie DR. Questionnaire length and response rate. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1973;**58**(2):278–80.
- Bergen 1957** {published data only}
Bergen AV, Spitz JC. [De introductie van een schriftelijke enquête]. *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor Psychologie* 1957;**12**: 68–96.
- Berk 1993** {published data only}
Berk ML, Edwards WS, Gay NL. The use of a prepaid incentive to convert non responders on a survey of physicians. *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 1993;**16**: 239–45.
- Berry 1987** {published data only}
Berry S. Physician response to a mailed survey. An experiment in timing of payment. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1987;**51**:102–14.
- Beydoun 2006** {published data only}
Beydoun H, Saftlas AF, Harland K, Triche E. Combining conditional and unconditional recruitment incentives could facilitate telephone tracing in surveys of postpartum women. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2006;**59**:732–8.
- Bhandari 2003** {published data only}
Bhandari M, Swiontkowski MF, Shankardass K, Sprague S, Schemitsch EH, Guyatt GH. A randomized trial of opinion leader endorsement in a survey of orthopaedic surgeons: effect on primary response rates. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2003;**32**:634–6.
- Biner 1988** {published data only}
Biner PM. Effects of cover letter appeal and monetary incentives on survey response: a reactance theory

- application. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 1988;**9**(2): 99–106.
- Biner 1990** *{published data only}*
Biner PM, Barton DL. Justifying the enclosure of monetary incentives in mail survey cover letters. *Psychology & Marketing* 1990;**7**(3):153–62.
- Biner 1994** *{published data only}*
Biner PM, Kidd HJ. The interactive effects of monetary incentive justification and questionnaire length on mail survey response rates. *Psychology & Marketing* 1994;**11**(5): 483–92.
- Birnholtz 2004** *{published data only}*
Birnholtz JP, Horn DB, Finholt TA, Bae SJ. The effect of cash, electronic, and paper gift certificates as respondent incentives for a web based survey of technologically sophisticated respondents. *Social Science Computer Review* 2004;**22**:355–62.
- Blass 1981** *{published data only}*
Blass T, Leichtman SR, Brown RA. The effect of perceived consensus and implied threat upon responses to mail surveys. *Journal of Social Psychology* 1981;**113**:213–6.
- Blass-Wilhelms 1982** *{published data only}*
Blass-Wilhelms W. Influence of 'real' postage stamp versus stamp 'postage paid' on return rate of response cards [Der Einfluß der Frankierungsart auf Rücklauf von Antwortkarten]. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 1982;**11**(1):64–8.
- Blomberg 1996** *{published data only}*
Blomberg J, Sandell R. Does a material incentive affect response on a psychotherapy follow-up questionnaire?. *Psychotherapy Research* 1996;**6**(3):155–63.
- Blythe 1986** *{published data only}*
Blythe BJ. Increasing mailed survey responses with a lottery. *Social Work Research Abstracts* 1986;**22**:18–9.
- Boser 1990** *{published data only}*
Boser JA. Surveying alumni by mail: effect of booklet/folder questionnaire format and style of type on response rate. *Research in Higher Education* 1990;**31**(2):149–59.
- Bosnjak 2003** *{published data only}*
Bosnjak M, Tuten TL. Prepaid and promised incentives in web surveys: an experiment. *Social Science Computer Review* 2003;**21**:208–17.
- Bredart 2002** *{published data only}*
Bredart A, Razavi D, Robertson C, Brignone S, Fonzo D, Petit J-Y, et al. Timing of patient satisfaction assessment: effect on questionnaire acceptability, completeness of data, reliability and variability of scores. *Patient Education and Counseling* 2002;**46**:131–6.
- Brehaut 2006** *{published data only}*
Brehaut JC, Graham ID, Visentin L, Stiell IG. Print format and sender recognition were related to survey completion rate. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2006;**59**:635–41.
- Brems 2006** *{published data only}*
Brems C, Johnson ME, Warner T. Survey return rates as a function of priority versus first-class mailing. *Psychological Reports* 2006;**99**:496–501.
- Brennan 1991** *{published data only}*
Brennan M, Hoek J, Astridge C. The effects of monetary incentives on the response rate and cost-effectiveness of a mail survey. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1991;**33**: 229–41.
- Brennan 1992a** *{published data only}*
Brennan M. The effect of a monetary incentive on mail survey response rates. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1992;**34**(2):173–7.
- Brennan 1992b** *{published data only}*
Brennan M. The effect of a monetary incentive on mail survey response rates. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1992;**34**(2):173–7.
- Brennan 1992c** *{published data only}*
Brennan M. The effect of a monetary incentive on mail survey response rates. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1992;**34**(2):173–7.
- Brennan 1993a** *{published data only}*
Brennan M, Seymour P, Gendall P. The effectiveness of monetary incentives in mail surveys: further data. *Marketing Bulletin* 1993;**4**:43–52.
- Brennan 1993b** *{published data only}*
Brennan M, Seymour P, Gendall P. The effectiveness of monetary incentives in mail surveys: further data. *Marketing Bulletin* 1993;**4**:43–52.
- Bright 2002** *{published data only}*
Bright KD, Smith PM. The use of incentives to affect response rates for a mail survey of US marina decision makers. *Forest Products Journal* 2002;**52**(10):26–9.
- Brook 1978** *{published data only}*
Brook LL. The effect of different postage combinations on response levels and speed of reply. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1978;**20**:238–44.
- Brown 1965** *{published data only}*
Brown ML. Use of a postcard query in mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1965;**29**:635–637.
- Brown 1975** *{published data only}*
* Brown GH. Randomised inquiry vs conventional questionnaire method in estimating drug usage rates through mail surveys (Technical Report). Human Resources Research Organisation (HumRRO). US Army Research Institute for the behavioural & Social Sciences, Virginia 1975.
- Bruce 2000** *{published data only}*
Bruce T, Salkeld G, Short L, Solomon M, Ward J. A randomised trial of telephone versus postcard prompts to enhance response rate in a phased population-based study about community preferences. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 2000;**24**(4):456–7.
- Brogger 2007** *{published data only}*
Brogger J, Nystad W, Cappelen I, Bakke P. No increase in response rate by adding a web response option to a postal population survey: A randomized trial. *Journal of Medical Internet Research* 2007;**9**(5):e40.

- Buchman 1982** *{published data only}*
Buchman TA, Tracy JA. Obtaining responses to sensitive questions: conventional questionnaire versus randomized response technique. *Journal of Accounting Research* 1982;**20**(1):263–271.
- Burns 1980** *{published data only}*
Burns AC, Hair JF. An analysis of mail survey responses from a commercial sample. *American Institute Decision Science* 1980;**1**:227–9.
- Buttle 1997** *{published data only}*
Buttle F, Thomas G. Questionnaire colour and mail survey response rate. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1997;**39**(4):625–6.
- Cabana 2000** *{published data only}*
Cabana MD, Becher O, Rubin HR, Freed GL. Effect of repeated presentations of a study logo on physician survey response rate. *Pediatric Research* 2000;**47**(4):p843.
- Campbell 1990** *{published data only}*
Campbell MJ, Waters WE. Does anonymity increase response rate in postal questionnaire surveys about sensitive subjects? A randomised trial. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1990;**44**:75–76.
- Camunas 1990** *{published data only}*
Camunas C, Alward RR, Vecchione E. Survey response rates to a professional association mail questionnaire. *Journal of the New York State Nurses Association* 1990;**21**(3):7–9.
- Carling 2004** *{published data only}*
Carling C. International Questionnaire Postal Response Rate: An experiment comparing no return postage to provision of International Postage Vouchers - "Coupon-Response International". *BMC Health Services Research* 2004;**4**(16):1–3.
- Carpenter 1974** *{published data only}*
Carpenter EH. Personalizing mail surveys: a replication and reassessment. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1974;**38**:614–620.
- Carpenter 1977** *{published data only}*
Carpenter EH. Evaluation of mail questionnaires for obtaining data from more than one respondent in a household. *Rural Sociology* 1977;**42**(2):250–9.
- Cartwright 1986** *{published data only}*
Cartwright A. Some experiments with factors that might affect the response of mothers to a postal questionnaire. *Statistics in Medicine* 1986;**5**:607–17.
- Cartwright 1987** *{published data only}*
Cartwright A, Smith C. Identifying a sample of elderly people by a postal screen. *Age & Ageing* 1987;**16**:119–22.
- Chan 2003** *{published data only}*
Chan TMT, Tse SHM, Day MC, Tong ETF, Suen LKP. Randomized trial of use of incentive to increase the response rate to a mailed survey. *Asian Journal of Nursing Studies* 2003;**6**(3):36–43.
- Chebat 1991** *{published data only}*
Chebat J-C, Picard J. Does prenotification increase response rates in mail surveys? A self-perception approach. *Journal of Social Psychology* 1991;**13**(4):477–81.
- Chen 1984** *{published data only}*
Chen C. Questionnaire length, salience and researchers' authority, and follow-up: the effect on response rates for postal questionnaires. *Chinese Journal of Psychology* 1984;**26**(2):77–84.
- Childers 1979** *{published data only}*
Childers TL, Skinner SJ. Gaining respondent cooperation in mail surveys through prior commitment. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1979;**43**:558–61.
- Childers 1980a** *{published data only}*
Childers TL, Pride WM, Ferrell OC. A reassessment of the effects of appeals on response to mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1980;**17**:365–70.
- Childers 1980b** *{published data only}*
Childers TL, Pride WM, Ferrell OC. A reassessment of the effects of appeals on response to mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1980;**17**:365–70.
- Childers 1985** *{published data only}*
Childers TL, Skinner SJ. Theoretical and empirical issues in the identification of survey respondents. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1985;**27**(1):39–53.
- Childers TL 1979** *{published data only}*
Childers TL, Ferrell OC. Response rates and perceived questionnaire length in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1979;**16**:429–31.
- Choi 1990** *{published data only}*
Choi BC, Pak AW, Purdham JT. Effects of mailing strategies on response rate, response time, and cost in a questionnaire study among nurses. *Epidemiology* 1990;**1**(1):72–4.
- Christie 1985** *{unpublished data only}*
Christie SC. An analysis of three different treatments on the response rate of a mail survey. Student Research Report, Department of Marketing, Massey University 1985.
- Church 2004** *{published data only}*
Church TR, Yeazel MW, Jones RM, Kochevar LK, Watt GD, Mongin SJ, et al. A randomized trial of direct mailing of fecal occult blood tests to increase colorectal cancer screening. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 2004;**96**(10):770–80.
- Clark 2001** *{published data only}*
Clark TJ, Khan KS, Gupta JK. Provision of pen along with questionnaire does not increase the response rate to a postal survey: a randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2001;**55**:595–6.
- Clark TJ 2001** *{published data only}*
Clark TJ, Khan KS, Gupta JK. Effect of paper quality on the response rate to a postal survey: a randomised controlled trial. *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 2001;**1**:12.
- Clarke 1998** *{published data only}*
Clarke R, Breeze E, Sherliker P, Shipley M, Youngman L. Design, objectives, and lessons from a pilot 25 year follow up re-survey of survivors in the Whitehall study of London civil servants. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1998;**52**:364–9.

- Clausen 1947** *{published data only}*
Clausen JA, Ford RN. Controlling bias in mail questionnaires. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 1947;**42**(240):497–511.
- Claycomb 2000** *{published data only}*
Claycomb C, Porter SS, Martin CL. Riding the wave: response rates and the effects of time intervals between successive mail survey follow-up efforts. *Journal of Business Research* 2000;**48**:157–62.
- Cleopas 2006** *{published data only}*
Cleopas A, Kolly V, Perneger TV. Longer response scales improved the acceptability and performance of the Nottingham Health Profile. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2006;**59**(11):1183–90.
- Cobanoglu 2003** *{published data only}*
Cobanoglu C, Cobanoglu N. The effect of incentives in websurveys: application and ethical considerations. *International Journal of Market Research* 2003;**45**(4):475–88.
- Cockayne 2005** *{published data only}*
Cockayne S, Torgerson DJ. A randomised controlled trial to assess the effectiveness of offering study results as an incentive to increase response rates to postal questionnaires. *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 2005;**5**(34):1–5.
- Collins 2000** *{published data only}*
Collins RL, Ellickson PL, Hays RD, McCaffrey DF. Effects on incentive size and timing on response rates to a follow-up wave of a longitudinal mailed survey. *Evaluation Review* 2000;**24**(4):347–63.
- Corcoran 1985** *{published data only}*
Corcoran KJ. Enhancing the response rate in survey research. *Social Work Research & Abstracts* 1985;**21**:2.
- Cox 1974** *{published data only}*
Cox EP, Anderson T, Fulcher DG. Reappraising mail survey response rates. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1974;**11**: 413–7.
- Crittenden 1985** *{published data only}*
Crittenden WF, Crittenden VL, Hawes JM. Examining the effects of questionnaire color and print font on mail survey response rates. *Akron Business and Economic Review* 1985; **16**(4):31–56.
- Cycyota 2002** *{published data only}*
Cycyota C, Harrison DA. Enhancing survey response rates at the executive level: Are employee- or consumer-level techniques effective?. *Journal of Management* 2002;**28**(2): 151–76.
- Deehan 1997** *{published data only}*
Deehan A, Templeton L, Taylor C, Drummond C, Strang J. The effect of cash and other financial inducements on the response rate of general practitioners in a national postal study. *British Journal of General Practice* 1997;**47**:87–90.
- Del Valle 1997** *{published data only}*
Del Valle ML, Morgenstern H, Rogstad TL, Albright C, Vickrey BG. A randomised trial of the impact of certified mail on response rate to a physician survey, and a cost-effectiveness analysis. *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 1997;**20**(4):389–406.
- Delnevo 2004** *{published data only}*
Delnevo CD, Abatemarco DJ, Steinberg MB. Physician response rates to a mail survey by specialty and timing of incentive. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2004;**26** (3):234–6.
- Denton 1988** *{published data only}*
Denton J, Tsai C-Y, Chevrette P. Effects on survey responses of subjects, incentives, and multiple mailings. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1988;**56**:77–82.
- Denton 1991** *{published data only}*
Denton JJ, Tsai C-Y. Two investigations into the influence of incentives and subject characteristics on mail survey responses in teacher education. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1991;**59**:352–66.
- Deutskens 2004a** *{published data only}*
Deutskens E, Ruyter KD, Wetzels M, Oosterveld P. Response rate and response quality of internet-based surveys: an experimental study. *Marketing Letters* 2004;**15** (1):21–36.
- Deutskens 2004b** *{published data only}*
Deutskens E, Ruyter KD, Wetzels M, Oosterveld P. Response rate and response quality of internet-based surveys: an experimental study. *Marketing Letters* 2004;**15** (1):21–36.
- Dillman 1974a** *{published data only}*
Dillman DA, Frey JH. Contribution of personalization to mail questionnaire response as an element of a previously tested method. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974;**59**(3): 297–301.
- Dillman 1974b** *{published data only}*
Dillman DA, Frey JH. Contribution of personalization to mail questionnaire response as an element of a previously tested method. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974;**59**(3): 297–301.
- Dillman 1993** *{published data only}*
Dillman DA, Sinclair MD, Clark JR. Effects of questionnaire length, respondent-friendly design, and a difficult question on response rates for occupant-addressed census mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1993;**57**(3): 289–304.
- Dillman 1996** *{published data only}*
Dillman DA, Singer E, Clark JR, Treat JB. Effects of benefits appeals, mandatory appeals, and variations in statements of confidentiality on completion rates for census questionnaires. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1996;**60**:376–89.
- Dirmaier 2007** *{published data only}*
Dirmaier J, Harfst T, Koch U, Schulz H. Incentives increased return rates but did not influence partial nonresponse or treatment outcome in a randomized trial. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2007;**60**:1263–70.
- Dodd 1987** *{published data only}*
Dodd DK, Markwiese BJ. Survey response rate as a function of personalized signature on cover letter. *Journal of Social Psychology* 1987;**127**(1):97–8.

- Dommeyer 1980a** *{unpublished data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. Experimentation on threatening appeals in the follow-up letters of a mail survey. Doctoral Dissertation 1980.
- Dommeyer 1980b** *{unpublished data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. Experimentation on threatening appeals in the follow-up letters of a mail survey. *Doctoral Dissertation* 1980.
- Dommeyer 1985** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. Does response to an offer of mail survey results interact with questionnaire interest?. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1985;**27**(1):27–38.
- Dommeyer 1987** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. The effects of negative cover letter appeals on mail survey response. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1987;**29**(4):445–51.
- Dommeyer 1988** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. How form of the monetary incentive affects mail survey response. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1988;**30**(3):379–85.
- Dommeyer 1989** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. Offering mail survey results in a lift letter. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1989;**31**(3):399–408.
- Dommeyer 1991** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ, Elganayan D, Umans C. Increasing mail survey response with an envelope teaser. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1991;**33**(2):137–40.
- Dommeyer 1996** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ, Ruggiero LA. The effects of a photograph on mail survey response. *Marketing Bulletin* 1996;**7**:51–7.
- Dommeyer 2004** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ, Baum P, Hanna RW, Chapman KS. Gathering faculty teaching evaluations by in-class and online surveys: their effects on response rates and evaluations. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 2004;**29**(5): 611–23.
- Donaldson 1999** *{published data only}*
Donaldson GW, Moinspour CM, Bush NE, Chapko M, Jocom J, Siadak M, et al. Physician participation in research surveys: a randomized study of inducements to return mailed research questionnaires. *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 1999;**22**(4):427–41.
- Doob 1971a** *{published data only}*
Doob A, Zabrack M. The effect of freedom-threatening instructions and monetary inducement on compliance. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* 1971;**3**(4):408–12.
- Doob 1971b** *{published data only}*
Doob A, Zabrack M. The effect of freedom-threatening instructions and monetary inducement on compliance. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* 1971;**3**(4):408–12.
- Doob 1971c** *{published data only}*
Doob A, Zabrack M. The effect of freedom-threatening instructions and monetary inducement on compliance. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science* 1971;**3**(4):408–12.
- Doob 1973** *{published data only}*
Doob AN, Freedman JL, Carlsmith JM. Effects of sponsor and prepayment on compliance with a mailed request. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1973;**57**:346–7.
- Doody 2003a** *{published data only}*
Doody MM, Sigurdson AS, Kampa D, Chimes K, Alexander BH, Ron E, et al. Randomized trial of financial incentives and delivery methods for improving response to a mailed questionnaire. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2003;**157**(7):643–51.
- Doody 2003b** *{published data only}*
Doody MM, Sigurdson AS, Kampa D, Chimes K, Alexander BH, Ron E, et al. Randomized trial of financial incentives and delivery methods for improving response to a mailed questionnaire. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2003;**157**(7):643–51.
- Dorman 1997** *{unpublished data only}*
Dorman PJ, Slattery JM, Farrell B, Dennis MS, Sandercock PAG, the United Kingdom Collaborators in the International Stroke Trial. A randomised comparison of the EuroQol and SF-36 after stroke. *BMJ* 1997;**315**:461.
- Downes-Le Guin 2002** *{published data only}*
Downes-Le Guin T, Janowitz P, Stone R, Khorram S. Use of pre-incentives in an Internet survey. *Journal of Online Research* 2002; Vol. www.ijor.org/ijor_archives/articles/Use_of_pre-incentives_in_an_internet_survey.pdf.
- Drummond 2008** *{published data only}*
Drummond FJ, Sharp L, Carsin AE, Kelleher T, Comber H. Questionnaire order significantly increased response to a postal survey sent to primary care physicians. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2008;**61**:177–85.
- Duffy 2001** *{published data only}*
Duffy DL, Martin NG. Increasing the response rate to a mailed questionnaire by including more stamps on the return envelope: a corwin control study. *Twin Research* 2001;**4**(2):71–2.
- Duhan 1990** *{published data only}*
Duhan DF, Wilson RD. Prenotification and industrial survey responses. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1990;**19**:95–105.
- Dunn 2003** *{published data only}*
Dunn KM, Jordan K, Croft PR. Does questionnaire structure influence response in postal surveys?. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2003;**56**:10–6.
- Eaker 1998** *{published data only}*
Eaker S, Bergstrom R, Bergstrom A, Hans-Olov A, Nyren O. Response rate to mailed epidemiologic questionnaires: a population-based randomized trial of variations in design and mailing routines. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1998;**147**(1):74–82.
- Easton 1997** *{published data only}*
Easton AN, Price JH, Telljohann SK, Boehm K. An informational versus monetary incentive in increasing physicians' response rates. *Psychological Reports* 1997;**81**: 968–70.

- Edwards 2001** {unpublished data only}
Edwards P, Roberts I. A comparison of two questionnaires for assessing outcome after head injury.
- Elkind 1986** {published data only}
Elkind M, Tryon GS, De Vito AJ. Effects of type of postage and covering envelope on response rates in a mail survey. *Psychological Reports* 1986;**59**:279–83.
- Enger 1993** {unpublished data only}
Enger JM. Survey questionnaire format effect on response rate and cost per return. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta 1993.
- Erdogan 2002** {published data only}
Erdogan BZ, Baker MJ. Increasing mail survey response rates from an industrial population: a cost-effectiveness analysis of four follow-up techniques. *Industrial Marketing Management* 2002;**31**:65–73.
- Etter 1996** {published data only}
Etter J-F, Perneger TV, Rougemont A. Does sponsorship matter in patient satisfaction surveys? A randomized trial. *Medical Care* 1996;**34**(4):327–35.
- Etter 1998a** {published data only}
Etter J-F, Perneger TV, Ronchi A. Collecting saliva samples by mail. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1998;**147**(2):141–6.
- Etter 1998b** {published data only}
Etter J-F, Perneger TV, Laporte J-D. Unexpected effects of a prior feedback letter and a professional layout on the response rate to a mail survey in Geneva. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1998;**52**:128–9.
- Etter 2002** {published data only}
Etter JF, Cucherat M, Perneger TV. Questionnaire color and response patterns in mailed surveys: a randomised trial and meta-analysis. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2002;**25**(2):185–99.
- Etzel 1974** {published data only}
Etzel MJ, Walker BJ. Effects of alternative follow-up procedures on mail survey response rates. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974;**59**(2):219–21.
- Evans 2004** {published data only}
Evans BR, Peterson BL, Demark-Wahnefried W. No difference in response rate to a mailed survey among prostate cancer survivors using conditional versus unconditional incentives. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* 2004;**13**(2):277–8.
- Falthzik 1971** {published data only}
Falthzik AM, Carroll SJ. Rate of return for closed versus open-ended questions in a mail questionnaire survey of industrial organizations. *Psychological Reports* 1971;**29**:1121–2.
- Faria 1990** {published data only}
Faria AJ, Dickinson JR, Filipic TV. The effect of telephone versus letter prenotification on mail survey response rate, speed, quality and cost. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1990;**32**(4):551–68.
- Faria 1992** {published data only}
Faria AJ, Dickinson JR. Mail survey response, speed, and cost. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1992;**21**:51–60.
- Faria 1997** {published data only}
Faria MC, Mateus CL, Coelho F, Martins R, Barros H. Postal questionnaires: a useful strategy for the follow up of stroke cases? [Uma Estrategia util para o seguimento de doentes com Acidente Vascular Cerebral?]. *Acta Medica Portuguesa* 1997;**10**:61–5.
- Feild 1975** {published data only}
Feild HS. Effects of sex of investigator on mail survey response rates and response bias. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**60**(6):772–3.
- Ferrell 1984** {published data only}
Ferrell OC, Childers TL, Reukert RW. Effects of situational factors on mail survey response. *Educators' Conference Proceedings* 1984:364–7.
- Finn 1983** {published data only}
Finn DW. Response speeds, functions, and predictability in mail surveys. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1983;**11**(2):61–70.
- Finsen 2006** {published data only}
Finsen V, Storeheier AH. Scratch lottery tickets are a poor incentive to respond to mailed questionnaires. *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 2006;**6**(19):1–5.
- Fiset 1994** {published data only}
Fiset L, Milgrom P, Tarnai J. Dentists' response to financial incentives in a mail survey of malpractice liability experience. *Journal of Public Health Dentistry* 1994;**54**(2):68–72.
- Ford 1967a** {published data only}
Ford NM. The advance letter in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1967;**4**:202–4.
- Ford 1967b** {published data only}
Ford NM. The advance letter in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1967;**4**:202–4.
- Ford 1968** {published data only}
Ford NM. Questionnaire appearance and response rates in mail surveys. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1968;**8**(3):43–5.
- Foushee 1990** {published data only}
Foushee KD, McLellan RW. The effect of the timing of follow-up on response rates to international surveys. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 1990;**9**(1):21–5.
- Freise 2001** {published data only}
Freise DC, Scheibler F, Pfaff H. Der zusammenhang zwischen fragebogenlange und der hohe des rucklaufs bei patientenbefragungen [Correlation between questionnaire length and response rate in patient surveys]. *Gesundheitswesen* 2001;**63**:A13.
- Friedman 1975** {published data only}
Friedman HH, Goldstein L. Effect of ethnicity of signature on the rate of return and content of a mail questionnaire. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**60**(6):770–1.

- Friedman 1979** *{published data only}*
Friedman HH, San Augustine AJ. The effects of a monetary incentive and the ethnicity of the sponsors signature on the rate and quality of response to a mail survey. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1979;7(2):95–101.
- Furse 1982** *{published data only}*
Furse DH, Stewart DW. Monetary incentives versus promised contribution to charity: new evidence on mail survey response. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1982;XIX:375–80.
- Furst 1979** *{published and unpublished data}*
Furst LG, Blitchington WP. The use of a descriptive cover letter and secretary pre-letter to increase response rate in a mailed survey. *Personnel Psychology* 1979;32:155–9.
- Futrell 1977** *{published data only}*
Futrell CM, Swan J. Anonymity and response by salespeople to a mail questionnaire. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1977;14:611–6.
- Futrell 1978** *{published data only}*
Futrell CM, Stem DE, Fortune BD. Effects of signed versus unsigned internally administered questionnaires for managers. *Journal of Business Research* 1978;6:91–8.
- Futrell 1981** *{published data only}*
Futrell CM, Lamb C. Effect on mail survey return rates of including questionnaires with follow up letters. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 1981;52:11–5.
- Futrell 1982** *{published data only}*
Futrell CM, Hise RT. The effects of anonymity and a same-day deadline on the response rate to mail surveys. *European Research* 1982;10:171–5.
- Gajraj 1990** *{published data only}*
Gajraj AM, Faria AJ, Dickinson JR. A comparison of the effect of promised and provided lotteries, monetary and gift incentives on mail survey response rate, speed and cost. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1990;32(1):141–62.
- Gaski 2004a** *{published data only}*
Gaski JF. Efficacy of a particular mail survey appeal: does it help to disclose that the purpose is a dissertation?. *Perceptual & Motor Skills* 2004a;99(3 Pt 2):1295–8.
- Gaski 2004b** *{published data only}*
Gaski JF. Efficacy of a particular mail survey appeal: does it help to disclose that the purpose is a dissertation?. *Perceptual & Motor Skills* 2004b;99(3 Pt 2):1295–8.
- Gattellari 2001** *{published data only}*
Gattellari M, Ward JE. Will donations to their learned college increase surgeons' participation in surveys? A randomized trial. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2001;54:645–50.
- Gattellari 2004** *{published data only}*
Gattellari M, Ward JE. Does a deadline improve men's participation in self-administered health surveys? A randomized controlled trial in general practice. *Journal of Public Health* 2004;26(4):384–7.
- Gendall 1996** *{published data only}*
Gendall P. The effect of questionnaire cover design in mail surveys. *Marketing Bulletin* 1996;7:30–8.
- Gendall 1998** *{published data only}*
Gendall P, Hoek J, Brennan M. The tea bag experiment: more evidence on incentives in mail surveys. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1998;40(4):347–51.
- Gendall 2005a** *{published data only}*
Gendall P. The effect of covering letter personalisation in mail surveys. *International Journal of Market Research* 2005a;47(4):376–82.
- Gendall 2005b** *{published data only}*
Gendall P. Can you judge a questionnaire by its cover? The effect of questionnaire cover design on mail survey response. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2005b;17(3):346–61.
- Gendall 2005c** *{published data only}*
Gendall P, Leong M, Healey B. The effect of prepaid non-monetary incentives in mail surveys. *ANZMAC 2005 Conference: Marketing Research and Research Methodologies (quantitative)* 2005:21–7.
- Gibson 1999a** *{published data only}*
Gibson PJ, Koepsell TD, Diehr P, Hale C. Increasing response rates for mailed surveys of medicaid clients and other low-income populations. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1999;149(11):1057–62.
- Gibson 1999b** *{published data only}*
Gibson PJ, Koepsell TD, Diehr P, Hale C. Increasing response rates for mailed surveys of medicaid clients and other low-income populations. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1999;149(11):1057–62.
- Gibson 1999c** *{published data only}*
Gibson PJ, Koepsell TD, Diehr P, Hale C. Increasing response rates for mailed surveys of medicaid clients and other low-income populations. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1999;149(11):1057–62.
- Giles 1978** *{published data only}*
Giles WF, Feild HS. Effects of amount, format, and location of demographic information on questionnaire return rate and response bias of sensitive and non sensitive items. *Personnel Psychology* 1978;31:549–59.
- Gillpatrick 1994** *{published and unpublished data}*
Gillpatrick TR, Harmon RR, Tseng LP. The effect of a nominal monetary gift and different contacting approaches on mail survey response among engineers. *IEE Transactions of Engineering Management* 1994;41:285–90.
- Gitelson 1992** *{published data only}*
Gitelson RJ, Drogen EB. An experiment on the efficacy of a certified final mailing. *Journal of Leisure Research* 1992;24(1):72–8.
- Glisan 1982** *{published data only}*
Glisan G, Grimm JL. Improving response rate in an industrial setting: will traditional variables work?. *Southern Marketing Association Proc* 1982;20:265–8.
- Godwin 1979** *{published data only}*
Godwin K. The consequences of large monetary incentives in mail surveys of elites. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1979;43:378–87.

- Goldstein 1975** *{published data only}*
Goldstein L, Friedman HH. A case for double postcards in surveys. *J Advertising Research* 1975;**15**:43–7.
- Goodstadt 1977** *{published data only}*
Goodstadt MS, Chung L, Kronitz R, Cook G. Mail survey response rates: their manipulation and impact. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1977;**14**:391–5.
- Green 1986** *{published data only}*
Green KE, Stager SF. The effects of personalization, sex, locale, and level taught on educators' responses to a mail survey. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1986;**54**:203–6.
- Green 1989** *{published data only}*
Green KE, Kvidahl RF. Personalization and offers of results: effects on response rates. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1989;**57**:263–70.
- Green 2000** *{published data only}*
Green RG, Murphy KD, Snyder SM. Should demographics be placed at the end or at the beginning of mailed questionnaires? An empirical answer to a persistent methodological question. *Social Work Research* 2000;**24**(4): 237–40.
- Greer 1994** *{published data only}*
Greer TV, Lohtia R. Effects of source and paper color on response rates in mail surveys. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1994;**23**:47–54.
- Griffith 1999** *{published data only}*
Griffith LE, Cook DJ, Guyatt GH, Charles CA. Comparison of open and closed questionnaire formats in obtaining demographic information from Canadian general internists. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 1999;**52**(10): 997–1005.
- Groeneman 1986** *{published data only}*
Groeneman S. People respond to surveys when the price is right. *Marketing News* 1986;**19**:29.
- Groves 2000** *{published data only}*
Groves BW, Olsson RH. Response rates to surveys with self-addressed, stamped envelopes versus a self-addressed label. *Psychological Reports* 2000;**86**:1226–8.
- Gueguen 2003a** *{published data only}*
Gueguen N, Legohere P, Jacob C. Sollicitation de participation à une enquête par courriel : effet de la présence sociale et de l'attrait physique dudemandeur sur le taux de réponse. *Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement* 2003a;**35**(2):84–96.
- Gueguen 2003b** *{published data only}*
Gueguen N, Legohere P, Jacob C. Sollicitation de participation à une enquête par courriel : effet de la présence sociale et de l'attrait physique dudemandeur sur le taux de réponse. *Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, 2003b;**35**(2):84–96.
- Gullahorn 1959** *{published data only}*
Gullahorn JT, Gullahorn JE. Increasing returns from non-respondents. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1959;**23**(1):119–21.
- Gullahorn 1963** *{published data only}*
Gullahorn JE, Gullahorn JT. An investigation of the effects of three factors on response to mail questionnaires. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1963;**27**:294–6.
- Gupta 1997** *{published data only}*
Gupta L, Ward J, D'Este C. Differential effectiveness of telephone prompts by medical and nonmedical staff in increasing survey response rates: a randomised trial. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 1997; **21**(1):98–9.
- Görritz 2004a** *{published data only}*
Görritz AS. The impact of material incentives on response quantity, response quality, sample composition, survey outcome, and cost in online access panels. *International Journal of Market Research* 2004a;**46**(3):327–45.
- Görritz 2004b** *{published data only}*
Görritz AS. The impact of material incentives on response quantity, response quality, sample composition, survey outcome, and cost in online access panels. *International Journal of Market Research* 2004b;**46**(3):327–45.
- Hackler 1973** *{published data only}*
Hackler JC, Bourgette P. Dollars, dissonance and survey returns. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1973;**37**:276–81.
- Halpern 2002** *{published data only}*
Halpern SD, Ubel PA, Berlin JA, Asch DA. Randomized trial of \$5 versus \$10 monetary incentives, envelope size, and candy to increase physician response rates to mailed questionnaires. *Medical Care* 2002;**40**(9):834–9.
- Hancock 1940** *{published data only}*
Hancock JW. An experimental study of four methods of measuring unit costs of obtaining attitude toward the retail store. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1940;**24**:213–30.
- Hansen 1980** *{published data only}*
Hansen RA, Robinson LM. Testing the effectiveness of alternative foot-in-the-door manipulations. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1980;**17**:359–64.
- Hansen RA 1980** *{published data only}*
Hansen RA. A self-perception interpretation of the effect of monetary and nonmonetary incentives on mail survey respondent behaviour. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1980; **17**:77–83.
- Harris 1978** *{published data only}*
Harris JR, Guffey Jr HJ. Questionnaire returns: stamps versus business reply envelopes revisited. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1978;**15**:290–3.
- Harrison 2002** *{published data only}*
Harrison RA, Holt D, Elton PJ. Do postage-stamps increase response rates to postal surveys? A randomized controlled trial. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2002;**31**:872–4.
- Harrison 2004** *{published data only}*
Harrison RA, Cock D. Increasing response to a postal survey of sedentary patients - a randomised controlled trial. *BMC Health Services Research* 2004;**4**(31):1–5.

- Harvey 1986** {published data only}
Harvey L. A research note on the impact of class-of-mail on response rates to mailed questionnaires. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1986;**28**(3):299–300.
- Hawkins 1979** {published data only}
Hawkins DI. The impact of sponsor identification and direct disclosure of respondent rights on the quantity and quality of mail survey data. *Journal of Business* 1979;**52**(4): 577–90.
- Heaton 1965** {published data only}
Heaton E. Increasing mail questionnaire returns with a preliminary letter. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1965;**5**: 36–9.
- Heerwegh 2005a** {published data only}
Heerwegh D, Vanhove T, Matthijs K, Loosveldt G. The effect of personalizing on response rates and data quality in web surveys. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 2005a;**8**(2):85–99.
- Heerwegh 2005b** {published data only}
Heerwegh D. Effects of personal salutations in e-mail invitations to participate in a web survey. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2005b;**69**(4):588–98.
- Heerwegh 2006** {published data only}
Heerwegh D, Loosveldt G. Personalizing e-mail contacts: its influence on web survey response rate and social desirability response bias. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2006;**19**(2):258–68.
- Hendrick 1972** {published data only}
Hendrick C, Borden R, Giesen M, Murray EJ, Seyfried BA. Effectiveness of ingratiation tactics in a cover letter on mail questionnaire response. *Psychonomic Science* 1972;**26**(6): 349–51.
- Hendriks 2001** {published data only}
Hendriks AAJ, Vrieling MR, Smets EMA, van Es SQ, de Haes JCJM. Improving the assessment of (in)patients' satisfaction with hospital care. *Medical Care* 2001;**39**(3): 270–83.
- Henley 1976** {published data only}
Henley JR. Response rate to mail questionnaires with a return deadline. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1976;**40**:374–5.
- Hensley 1974** {published data only}
Hensley WE. Increasing response rate by choice of postage stamp. *Current Opinion Quarterly* 1974;**38**:280–3.
- Hewett 1974** {published data only}
Hewett WC. How different combinations of postage on outgoing and return envelopes affect questionnaire returns. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1974;**16**(1):49–50.
- Hoffman 1998** {published data only}
Hoffman SC, Burke AE, Helzlsouer KJ, Comstock GW. Controlled trial of the effect of length, incentives, and follow-up techniques on response to a mailed questionnaire. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1998;**148**(10):1007–11.
- Hopkins 1988** {published data only}
Hopkins KD, Hopkins BR, Schon I. Mail surveys of professional populations: the effects of monetary gratuities on return rates. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1988;**56**: 173–5.
- Hornik 1981** {published data only}
Hornik J. Time cue and time perception effect on response to mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1981;**18**: 243–8.
- Hornik 1982** {published data only}
Hornik J. Impact of pre-call request form and gender interaction on response to a mail survey. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1982;**19**:144–51.
- Horowitz 1974** {published data only}
Horowitz JL, Sedlacek WE. Initial returns on mail questionnaires: a literature review and research note. *Research in Higher Education* 1974;**2**:361–7.
- Houston 1975** {published data only}
Houston MJ, Jefferson RW. The negative effects of personalization on response patterns in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1975;**12**:114–7.
- Houston 1977** {published data only}
Houston MJ, Nevin JR. The effect of source and appeal on mail survey response patterns. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1977;**14**:374–8.
- Hubbard 1988a** {published data only}
Hubbard R, Little EL. Promised contributions to charity and mail survey responses: replication with extension. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1988;**52**:223–30.
- Hubbard 1988b** {published data only}
Hubbard R, Little EL. Cash prizes and mail survey response rates: a threshold analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1988;**16**(3&4):42–4.
- Huck 1974** {published data only}
Huck SW, Gleason E. Using monetary inducements to increase response rates from mailed surveys. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974;**59**(2):222–5.
- Hyett 1977** {published data only}
Hyett GP, Farr DJ. Postal questionnaires: double-sided printing compared with single-sided printing. *European Research* 1977;**5**:136–7.
- Iglesias 2000** {published data only}
Iglesias CP, Torgerson DJ. Does length of questionnaire matter? A randomised trial of response rates to a mailed questionnaire. *Journal of Health Services Research and Policy* 2000;**5**(2):19–21.
- Iglesias 2001** {published data only}
Iglesias CP, Birks YF, Torgerson DJ. Improving the measurement of quality of life in older people: the York SF-12. *Quarterly Journal of Medicine* 2001;**94**:695–8.
- Jacobs 1986** {published data only}
Jacobs LC. Effect of the use of optical scan sheets on survey response rate. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association 1986.
- Jacoby 1990** {published data only}
Jacoby A. Possible factors affecting response to postal questionnaires: findings from a study of general practitioner

- services. *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 1990;**12**(2): 131–5.
- James 1990a** *{published data only}*
James J, Bolstein R. The effect of monetary incentives and follow-up mailings on the response rate and response quality in mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1990;**54**:346–61.
- James 1990b** *{published data only}*
James J, Bolstein R. The effect of monetary incentives and follow-up mailings on the response rate and response quality in mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1990;**54**:346–61.
- James 1992** *{published data only}*
James J, Bolstein R. Large monetary incentives and their effect on mail survey response rates. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1992;**56**:442–53.
- Jamtvedt 2008** *{published data only}*
Jamtvedt G, Rosenbaum S, Dahm KT, Flottorp S. Chocolate bar as an incentive did not increase response rate among physiotherapists: a randomised controlled trial. *BMC Research Notes* 2008;**1**(34):1–4.
- Jenkinson 2003** *{published data only}*
Jenkinson C, Coulter A, Reeves R, Bruster S, Richards N. Properties of the Picker Patient Experience questionnaire in a randomized controlled trial of long versus short form survey instruments. *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 2003; **25**(3):197–201.
- Jensen 1994** *{published data only}*
Jensen JL. The effect of survey format on response rate and patterns of response. Doctoral Dissertation 1994.
- Jepson 2005a** *{published data only}*
Jepson C, Asch DA, Hershey JC, Ubel PA. In a mailed physician survey, questionnaire length had a threshold effect on response rate. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2005a;**58** (1):103–5.
- Jepson 2005b** *{published data only}*
Jepson C, Asch DA, Hershey JC, Ubel PA. In a mailed physician survey, questionnaire length had a threshold effect on response rate. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2005b;**58** (1):103–5.
- Jobber 1983** *{published data only}*
Jobber D, Sanderson S. The effects of a prior letter and coloured questionnaire paper on mail survey response rates. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1983;**25**(4):339–49.
- Jobber 1985** *{published data only}*
Jobber D, Sanderson S. The effect of two variables on industrial mail survey returns. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1985;**14**:119–21.
- Jobber 1988** *{published data only}*
Jobber D, Birro K, Sanderson SM. A factorial investigation of methods of stimulating response to mail surveys. *European Journal of Operational Research* 1988;**37**:158–64.
- Jobber 1989** *{published data only}*
Jobber D. An examination of the effects of questionnaire factors on response to an industrial mail survey. *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 1989;**6**:129–40.
- Jobber D 1985** *{published data only}*
Jobber D, Allen N, Oakland J. The impact of telephone notification strategies on response to an industrial mail survey. *International Journal of Research Marketing* 1985;**2**: 291–8.
- Johansson 1997a** *{published data only}*
Johansson L, Solvoll K, Opdahl S, Bjorneboe G-E, Drevon CA. Response rates with different distribution methods and reward, and reproducibility of a quantitative food frequency questionnaire. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 1997; **51**:346–53.
- Johansson 1997b** *{published data only}*
Johansson L, Solvoll K, Opdahl S, Bjorneboe G-E, Drevon CA. Response rates with different distribution methods and reward, and reproducibility of a quantitative food frequency questionnaire. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 1997; **51**:346–53.
- Johansson 1997c** *{published data only}*
Johansson L, Solvoll K, Opdahl S, Bjorneboe G-E, Drevon CA. Response rates with different distribution methods and reward, and reproducibility of a quantitative food frequency questionnaire. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 1997; **51**:346–53.
- John 1994** *{published data only}*
John EM, Savitz DA. Effect of a monetary incentive on response to a mail survey. *Annals of Epidemiology* 1994;**4** (3):231–5.
- Joinson 2005a** *{published data only}*
Joinson AN, Reips UD. Personalized salutation, power of sender and response rates to Web-based surveys. *Computers in Human Behavior* 2005a:1–12.
- Joinson 2005b** *{published data only}*
Joinson AN, Reips UD. Personalized salutation, power of sender and response rates to Web-based surveys. *Computers in Human Behavior* 2005b:1–10.
- Joinson 2005c** *{published data only}*
Joinson AN, Reips UD. Personalized salutation, power of sender and response rates to Web-based surveys. *Computers in Human Behavior* 2005:1–10.
- Joinson 2007a** *{published data only}*
Joinson AN, Woodley A, Reips UD. Personalization, authentication and self-disclosure in self-administered Internet surveys. *Computers in Human Behavior* 2007a;**23**: 275–85.
- Joinson 2007b** *{published data only}*
Joinson AN, Woodley A, Reips UD. Personalization, authentication and self-disclosure in self-administered Internet surveys. *Computers in Human Behavior* 2007b;**23**: 275–85.
- Jones 1978** *{published data only}*
Jones WH, Linda G. Multiple criteria effects in a mail survey experiment. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1978;**15**: 280–4.
- Jones 2000** *{published data only}*
Jones R, Zhou M, Yates WR. Improving return rates for health-care outcome. *Psychological Reports* 2000;**87**:639–42.

- Junghans 2005** *{published data only}*
Junghans C, Feder G, Hemingway H, Timmis A, Jones M. Recruiting patients to medical research: double blind randomised trial of "opt-in" versus "opt-out" strategies. *BMJ* 2005;**331**(940-):1-4.
- Kahle 1978** *{published data only}*
Kahle LR, Sales BD. Personalization of the outside envelope in mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1978;**42**:547-50.
- Kalafatis 1995** *{published data only}*
Kalafatis SP, Madden FJ. The effect of discount coupons and gifts on mail survey response rates among high involvement respondents. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1995;**37**(2):171-84.
- Kalantar 1999** *{published data only}*
Kalantar JS, Talley NJ. The effects of lottery incentive and length of questionnaire on health survey response rates: a randomized study. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 1999;**52**(11):1117-22.
- Kaplan 1970a** *{published data only}*
Kaplan S, Cole P. Factors affecting response to postal questionnaires. *British Journal of Preventive and Social Medicine* 1970a;**24**:245-7.
- Kaplan 1970b** *{published data only}*
Kaplan S, Cole P. Factors affecting response to postal questionnaires. *British Journal of Preventive and Social Medicine* 1970b;**24**:245-7.
- Kaplowitz 2004** *{published data only}*
Kaplowitz MD, Lupi F. Color photographs and mail survey response rates. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2004;**16**(2):199-206.
- Kasprzyk 2001** *{published data only}*
Kasprzyk D, Montano DE, St Lawrence JS, Phillips WR. The effects of variations in mode of delivery and monetary incentive on physicians' responses to a mailed survey assessing STD practice patterns. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2001;**24**(1):3-17.
- Kawash 1971** *{published data only}*
Kawash MB, Aleamoni LM. Effect of a personal signature on the initial rate of return of a mailed questionnaire. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1971;**55**(6):589-92.
- Keeter 2001** *{published data only}*
Keeter S, Kennamer JD, Ellis JM, Green RG. Does the use of colored paper improve response rate to mail surveys?: A multivariate experimental evaluation. *Journal of Social Service Research* 2001;**28**(1):69-78.
- Kenyon 2005** *{published data only}*
Kenyon S, Pike K, Jones D, Taylor D, Salt A, Marlow N, et al. The effect of a monetary incentive on return of a postal health and development questionnaire: a randomised trial. *BMC Health Services Research* 2005;**5**(55):1-4.
- Keown 1985a** *{published data only}*
Keown CF. Foreign mail surveys: response rates using monetary incentives. *Journal of International Business Studies* 1985;**16**:151-3.
- Keown 1985b** *{published data only}*
Keown CF. Foreign mail surveys: response rates using monetary incentives. *Journal of International Business Studies* 1985;**16**:151-3.
- Kephart 1958** *{published data only}*
Kephart WM, Bressler M. Increasing the response to mail questionnaires: a research study. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1958;**21**:123-32.
- Kerin 1976** *{published data only}*
Kerin RA, Harvey MG. Methodological considerations in corporate mail surveys: a research note. *Journal of Business Research* 1976;**4**(3):277-81.
- Kerin 1981** *{published data only}*
Kerin RA, Barry TE, Dubinsky AJ, Harvey MG. Offer of results and mail survey response from a commercial population: a test of Gouldner's Norm of Reciprocity. *Proceeding of the American Institute of Decision Sciences* 1981: 283-5.
- Kernan 1971** *{published data only}*
Kernan JB. Are 'bulk rate occupants' really unresponsive?. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1971;**35**:420-2.
- Kindra 1985** *{published data only}*
Kindra GS, McGown KL, Bougie M. Stimulating responses to mailed questionnaires. An experimental study. *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 1985;**2**: 219-35.
- King 1978** *{published data only}*
King JO. The influence of personalization on mail survey response rates. *Arkansas Business and Economic Review* 1978; **11**:5-8.
- Koloski 2001** *{published data only}*
Koloski NA, Talley NJ, Boyce PM, Morris-Yates AD. The effects of questionnaire length and lottery ticket inducement on the response rate in mail surveys. *Psychology and Health* 2001;**16**:67-75.
- Koo 1995** *{published data only}*
Koo MM, Rohan TE. Printed signatures and response rates. *Epidemiology* 1995;**6**(5):568.
- Koo 1996** *{published data only}*
Koo MM, Rohan TE. Types of advance notification in reminder letters and response rates. *Epidemiology* 1996;**7**(2):215-6.
- Kropf 2005** *{published data only}*
Kropf ME, Blair J. Eliciting survey cooperation: incentives, self-interest, and norms of cooperation. *Evaluation Review* 2005;**29**(6):559-75.
- Kurth 1987** *{unpublished data only}*
Kurth LA. Message responses as functions of communication mode: a comparison of electronic mail and typed memoranda. Doctoral dissertation 1987.
- Kuskowska-Wolk 1992** *{published data only}*
Kuskowska-Wolk A, Holte S, Ohlander EM, Bruce A, Holmberg L, Adami HO, et al. Effects of different designs and extension of a food frequency questionnaire on response

- rate, completeness of data and food frequency responses. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1992;**21**(6):1144–50.
- Kypri 2003** *{published data only}*
Kypri K, Gallagher SJ. Incentives to increase participation in an Internet survey of alcohol use: a controlled experiment. *Alcohol & Alcoholism* 2003;**38**(5):437–41.
- La Garce 1995** *{published data only}*
La Garce R, Kuhn LD. The effect of visual stimuli on mail survey response rates. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1995;**24**:11–8.
- Labarere 2000** *{published data only}*
Labarere J, Francois P, Bertrand D, Fourny M, Olive F, Peyrin JC. Survey of inpatient satisfaction: comparison of different survey methods [Evaluation de la satisfaction des patients hospitalisés: Comparaison de plusieurs méthodes d'enquête]. *La Presse Médicale* 2000;**29**:1112–4.
- Labrecque 1978** *{published data only}*
Labrecque DP. A response rate experiment using mail questionnaires. *Journal of Marketing* 1978;**42**:82–3.
- Lavelle 2008** *{published data only}*
Lavelle K, Todd C, Campbell M. Do postage stamps versus pre-paid envelopes increase responses to patient mail surveys? A randomised controlled trial. *BMC Health Services Research* 2008;**8**(113):1–5.
- Leece 2006a** *{published data only}*
Leece P, Bhandari M, Sprague S, Swiontkowski MF, Schemitsch EH, Tornetta P. Does flattery work? A comparison of 2 different cover letters for an international survey of orthopedic surgeons. *Canadian Journal of Surgery* 2006a;**49**(2):90–5.
- Leece 2006b** *{published data only}*
Leece P, Bhandari M, Sprague S, Swiontkowski MF, Schemitsch EH, Tornetta P. Does flattery work? A comparison of 2 different cover letters for an international survey of orthopedic surgeons. *Canadian Journal of Surgery* 2006b;**49**(2):90–5.
- Leigh Brown 1997** *{published data only}*
Leigh Brown AP, Lawrie HE, Kennedy AD, Webb JA, Torgerson DJ, Grant AM. Cost effectiveness of a prize draw on response to a postal questionnaire: results of a randomised trial among orthopaedic outpatients in Edinburgh. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1997;**51**:463–4.
- Leung 2002** *{published data only}*
Leung GM, Ho LM, Chan MF, Johnston JM, Wong FK. The effects of cash and lottery incentives on mailed surveys to physicians: a randomized trial. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2002;**55**:801–7.
- Leung 2004** *{published data only}*
Leung GM, Johnston JM, Saing H, Tin KY, Wong IO, Ho, LM. Prepayment was superior to postpayment cash incentives in a randomized postal survey among physicians. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2004;**57**(8):777–84.
- Linsky 1965** *{published data only}*
Linsky AS. A factorial experiment in inducing responses to a mail questionnaire. *Sociology and Social Research* 1965;**49**:183–9.
- Little 1990** *{published data only}*
Little EL, Engelbrecht EG. The use of incentives to increase mail survey response rates in a business environment. *Journal of Direct Marketing* 1990;**4**(4):46–9.
- London 1990a** *{published data only}*
London SJ, Dommeyer CJ. Increasing response to industrial mail surveys. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1990;**19**:235–41.
- London 1990b** *{published data only}*
London SJ, Dommeyer CJ. Increasing response to industrial mail surveys. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1990;**19**:235–41.
- Lorenzi 1988** *{published data only}*
Lorenzi P, Friedman R, Paolollo JGP. Consumer mail survey responses: more (unbiased) bang for the buck. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 1988;**5**(4):31–40.
- Lund 1998** *{published data only}*
Lund E, Gram IT. Response rate according to title and length of questionnaire. *Scandinavian Journal of Social Medicine* 1998;**26**(2):154–60.
- Maheux 1989a** *{published data only}*
Maheux B, Legault C, Lambert J. Increasing response rates in physicians' mail surveys: an experimental study. *American Journal of Public Health* 1989;**79**(5):638–9.
- Maheux 1989b** *{published data only}*
Maheux B, Legault C, Lambert J. Increasing response rates in physicians' mail surveys: an experimental study. *American Journal of Public Health* 1979;**79**(5):638–9.
- Mallen 2008** *{unpublished data only}*
Mallen C, Dunn KM, Thomas E, Peat G. Thicker paper and larger font increased response and completeness in a postal survey. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2008;**61**(12):1296–300.
- Mann 2005** *{published data only}*
Mann CB. Do advance letters improve preselection forecast accuracy?. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2005;**69**(4):561–71.
- Marcus 2007** *{published data only}*
Marcus B, Bosnjak M, Lindner S, Pilischenko S, Schütz A. Compensating for low topic interest and long surveys. A field experiment on nonresponse in web surveys. *Social Science Computer Review* 2007;**25**:372–83.
- Marrett 1992** *{published data only}*
Marrett LD, Kreiger N, Dodds L, Hilditch S. The effect on response rates of offering a small incentive with a mailed questionnaire. *AEP* 1992;**2**(5):745–53.
- Marsh 1999** *{published data only}*
Marsh P, Kendrick D. Using a diary to record near misses and minor injuries - which method of administration is best?. *Injury Prevention* 1999;**5**:305–9.

- Martin 1970** *{published data only}*
Martin JD, McConnell JP. Mail questionnaire response induction: the effect of four variables on the response of a random sample to a difficult questionnaire. *Social Science Quarterly* 1970;**51**:409–14.
- Martin 1989** *{published data only}*
Martin WS, Duncan WJ, Powers TL, Sawyer JC. Costs and benefits of selected response inducement techniques in mail survey research. *Journal of Business Research* 1989;**19**:67–79.
- Martin 1994** *{published data only}*
Martin CL. The impact of topic interest on mail survey response behaviour. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1994;**36**(4):327–38.
- Martinson 2000** *{published data only}*
Martinson BC, Lazovich D, Lando HA, Perry CL, McGovern PG, Boyle RG. Effectiveness of monetary incentives for recruiting adolescents to an intervention trial to reduce smoking. *Preventive Medicine* 2000;**31**:706–13.
- Mason 1961** *{published data only}*
Mason WS, Dressel RJ, Bain RK. An experimental study of factors affecting response to a mail survey of beginning teachers. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1961;**25**:296–9.
- Matteson 1974** *{published data only}*
Matteson MT. Type of transmittal letter and questionnaire colour as two variables influencing response rates in a mail survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974;**59**(4):535–6.
- McColl 2003a** *{published data only}*
McColl E, Eccles MP, Rousseau NS, Steen IN, Parkin DW, Grimshaw JM. From the generic to the condition-specific? Instrument order effects in quality of life assessment. *Medical Care* 2003a;**7**:777–90.
- McColl 2003b** *{published data only}*
McColl E, Eccles MP, Rousseau NS, Steen IN, Parkin DW, Grimshaw JM. From the generic to the condition-specific? Instrument order effects in quality of life assessment. *Medical Care* 2003b;**7**:777–90.
- McConochie 1985** *{published data only}*
McConochie RM, Rankin CA. Effects of monetary premium variations on response/non response bias: representation of black and non black respondents in surveys of radio listening. *Proceeding of the Section on Surveys, American Statistical Association* 1985:42–5.
- McCoy 2007** *{published data only}*
McCoy M, Hargie O. Effects of personalization and envelope color on response rate, speed and quality among a business population. *Industrial Marketing Management* 2007;**36**:799–809.
- McDaniel 1980** *{published data only}*
McDaniel SW. The effect of monetary inducement on mailed questionnaire response quality. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1980;**17**:265–8.
- McDaniel 1981** *{published data only}*
McDaniel SW. An investigation of respondent anonymity's effect on mailed questionnaire response rate and quality. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1981;**23**(3):150–60.
- McKee 1992** *{published data only}*
McKee D. The effect of using a questionnaire identification code and message about non-response follow-up plans on mail survey response characteristics. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1992;**34**(2):179–91.
- McKenzie-McHarg 2005** *{published data only}*
McKenzie-McHarg K, Tully L, Gates S, Ayers S, Brocklehurst P. Effect on survey response rate of hand written versus printed signature on a covering letter: randomised controlled trial. *BMC Health Services Research* 2005;**5**(52):1–5.
- McKillip 1984** *{published data only}*
McKillip J, Lockhart DC. The effectiveness of cover-letter appeals. *Journal of Social Psychology* 1984;**122**:85–91.
- McLaren 2000a** *{published data only}*
McLaren B, Shelley J. Response rates of Victorian general practitioners to a mailed survey on miscarriage: randomised trial of a prize and two forms of introduction to the research. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 2000;**24**(4):360–4.
- McLaren 2000b** *{published data only}*
McLaren B, Shelley J. Response rates of Victorian general practitioners to a mailed survey on miscarriage: randomised trial of a prize and two forms of introduction to the research. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 2000;**24**(4):360–4.
- Meadows 2000** *{published data only}*
Meadows KA, Greene T, Foster L, Beer S. The impact of different response alternatives on responders' reporting of health-related behaviour in a postal survey. *Quality of Life Research* 2000;**9**:385–91.
- Miller 1994** *{published data only}*
Miller MM. The effects of cover letter appeal and non monetary incentives on university professors' response to a mail survey. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association 1994; Vol. April.
- Mizes 1984** *{published data only}*
Mizes JS, Fleece EL, Roos C. Incentives for increasing return rates: magnitude levels, response bias, and format. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1984;**48**(4):794–800.
- Mond 2004** *{published data only}*
Mond JM, Rodgers B, Hay PJ, Owen C, Beumont PJV. Mode of delivery, but not questionnaire length, affected response in an epidemiological study of eating-disordered behavior. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2004;**57**:1167–71.
- Morrison 2003** *{published data only}*
Morrison DS, Thomson H, Petticrew M. Effects of disseminating research findings on response rates in a community survey: a randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2003;**57**:536–7.
- Mortagy 1985** *{published data only}*
Mortagy AK, Howell JB, Waters WE. A useless raffle. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1985;**39**:183–4.

- Moses 2004** *{published data only}*
Moses SH, Clark TJ. Effect of prize draw incentive on the response rate to a postal survey of obstetricians and gynaecologists: a randomised controlled trial. *BMC Health Services Research* 2004;**4**(14):1–3.
- Moss 1991** *{published data only}*
Moss VD, Worthen BR. Do personalization and postage make a difference on response rates to surveys of professional populations. *Psychological Reports* 1991;**68**:692–4.
- Mullen 1987** *{published data only}*
Mullen P, Easling I, Nixon SA, Koester DR, Biddle AK. The cost-effectiveness of randomised incentive and follow-up contacts in a national mail survey of family physicians. *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 1987;**10**(2):232–45.
- Mullner 1982** *{published data only}*
Mullner RM, Levy PS, Byre CS, Matthews D. Effects of characteristics of the survey instrument on response rates to a mail survey of community hospitals. *Public Health Reports* 1982;**97**(5):465–9.
- Murawski 1996** *{published data only}*
Murawski MM, Carroll NV. Direct mail performance of selected health related quality of life scales. *Journal of Pharmacoepidemiology* 1996;**5**(1):17–38.
- Murphy 1991** *{published data only}*
Murphy PM, Daley JM. Exploring the effects of postcard prenotification on industrial firms' response to mail surveys. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1991;**33**(4):335–41.
- Myers 1969** *{published data only}*
Myers JH, Haug AF. How a preliminary letter affects mail survey returns and costs. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1969;**9**(3):37–9.
- Nagata 1995** *{published data only}*
Nagata C, Hara S, Shimizu H. Factors affecting response to mail questionnaire: research topics, questionnaire length, and non-response bias. *Journal of Epidemiology* 1995;**5**(5): 81–5.
- Nakai 1997** *{published data only}*
Nakai S, Hashimoto S, Murakami Y, Hayashi M, Manabe K, Noda H. Response rates and non-response bias in a health-related mailed survey. *Nippon-Koshu-Eisei-Zasshi* 1997;**44**(3):184–91.
- Napoles-Springer 2004** *{published data only}*
Napoles-Springer AM, Fongwa MN, Stewart AL, Gildengorin G, Perez-Stable EJ. The effectiveness of an advance notice letter on the recruitment of African Americans and Whites for a mailed patient satisfaction survey. *Journal of Aging & Health* 2004;**16**(5 Suppl): 124S–36S.
- Nederhof 1982** *{published data only}*
Nederhof AJ. Effects of preliminary contacts on volunteering in mail surveys. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 1982;**54**: 1333–4.
- Nederhof 1983a** *{published data only}*
Nederhof AJ. Effects of repetition and consistency of personalization treatments on response rate in mail surveys. *Social Science Research* 1983a;**12**:1–9.
- Nederhof 1983b** *{published data only}*
Nederhof AJ. Effects of repetition and consistency of personalization treatments on response rate in mail surveys. *Social Science Research* 1983b;**12**:1–9.
- Nederhof 1988** *{published data only}*
Nederhof AJ. Effects of a final telephone reminder and questionnaire cover design in mail surveys. *Social Science Research* 1988;**17**:353–61.
- Neider 1981a** *{published data only}*
Neider L, Sugrue P. Personalization as a response inducement technique in mail surveys. *American Institute of Decision Sciences* 1981;**13**:238–9.
- Neider 1981b** *{published data only}*
Neider L, Sugrue P. Personalization as a response inducement technique in mail surveys. *American Institute of Decision Sciences* 1981;**13**:238–9.
- Nevin 1975a** *{published data only}*
Nevin JR, Ford NM. Effects of a deadline and veiled threat on mail survey responses. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**61**(1):116–8.
- Nevin 1975b** *{published data only}*
Nevin JR, Ford NM. Effects of a deadline and veiled threat on mail survey responses. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**61**(1):116–8.
- Newby 2003** *{published data only}*
Newby R, Watson J, Woodliff D. SME survey methodology: response rates, data quality, and cost effectiveness. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 2003:163–72.
- Newland 1977** *{published data only}*
Newland CA, Waters WE, Standford AP, Batchelor BG. A study of mail survey method. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1977;**6**(1):65–7.
- Nichols 1966** *{published data only}*
Nichols RC, Meyer MA. Timing postcard follow-ups in mail questionnaire surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1966; **30**:3006–7.
- Nichols 1988** *{published data only}*
Nichols S, Waters WE, Woolaway M, Hamilton-Smith MB. Evaluation of the effectiveness of a nutritional health education leaflet in changing public knowledge and attitudes about eating and health. *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics* 1988;**1**:233–8.
- Ogborne 1986** *{published data only}*
Ogborne AC, Rush B, Fondacaro R. Dealing with nonrespondents in a mail survey of professionals. *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 1986;**9**(1):121–8.
- Olivarius 1995** *{published data only}*
Olivarius N de F, Andreassen AH. Day-of-the-week effect on doctors' response to a postal questionnaire. *Scandinavian Journal of Primary Health Care* 1995;**13**:65–7.
- Osborne 1996** *{published data only}*
Osborne MO, Ward J, Boyle C. Effectiveness of telephone prompts when surveying general practitioners: a randomised trial. *Australian Family Physician* 1996;**25**(1):S41–3.

- Paolillo 1984** {published data only}
Paolillo JG, Lorenzi P. Monetary incentives and mail questionnaire response rates. *Journal of Advertising* 1984; **13**:46–8.
- Parasuraman 1981** {published data only}
Parasuraman A. Impact of cover letter detail on response patterns in a mail survey. *American Institute of Decision Science* 1981; **13th Meeting**:289–91.
- Parkes 2000a** {published data only}
Parkes R, Kreiger N, James B, Johnson KC. Effects on subject response of information brochures and small cash incentives in a mail-based case-control study. *Annals of Epidemiology* 2000; **10**:117–24.
- Parkes 2000b** {published data only}
Parkes R, Kreiger N, James B, Johnson KC. Effects on subject response of information brochures and small cash incentives in a mail-based case-control study. *Annals of Epidemiology* 2000; **10**:117–24.
- Parsons 1972a** {published data only}
Parsons RJ, Medford TS. The effect of advance notice in mail surveys of homogeneous groups. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1972; **36**:258–9.
- Parsons 1972b** {published data only}
Parsons RJ, Medford TS. The effect of advance notice in mail surveys of homogenous groups. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1972; **36**:258–9.
- Paul 2005** {published data only}
Paul CL, Walsh RA, Tzelepis F. A monetary incentive increases postal survey response rates for pharmacists. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2005; **59**:1099–101.
- Pearson 2003** {published data only}
Pearson J, Levine RA. Salutations and Response Rates to Online Surveys. *Association for Survey Computing, Fourth International Conference on the Impact of Technology on the Survey Process* 2003:1–9.
- Peck 1981** {published data only}
Peck JK, Dresch SP. Financial incentives, survey response, and sample representativeness: does money matter?. *Review of Public Data Use* 1981; **9**:245–66.
- Perneger 1993** {published data only}
Perneger TV, Etter J-F, Rougemont A. Randomized trial of use of a monetary incentive and a reminder card to increase the response rate to a mailed questionnaire. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1993; **138**(9):714–22.
- Perry 1974** {published data only}
Perry N. Postage combinations in postal questionnaire surveys - another view. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1974; **16**(3):245–6.
- Peters 1998** {published data only}
Peters TJ, Harvey IM, Bachmann MO, Eachus JI. Does requesting sensitive information on postal questionnaires have an impact on response rates? A randomised controlled trial in the south west of England. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1998; **52**:130.
- Peterson 1975** {published data only}
Peterson RA. An experimental investigation of mail survey responses. *Journal of Business Research* 1975; **3**(3):199–210.
- Phillips 1951** {published data only}
Phillips WM. Weaknesses of the mail questionnaire: a methodological study. *Sociology & Social Research* 1951; **35**:260–7.
- Pirotta 1999** {published data only}
Pirotta M, Gunn J, Farish S, Karabatsos G. Primer postcard improves postal survey response rates. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 1999; **23**(2):196–7.
- Poe 1988** {published data only}
Poe GS, Seeman I, McLaughlin J, Mehl E, Dietz M. 'Don't know' boxes in factual questions in a mail questionnaire. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1988; **52**:212–22.
- Porter 2003a** {published data only}
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. The impact of lottery incentives on student survey response rates. *Research in Higher Education* 2003; **44**(4):389–407.
- Porter 2003b** {published data only}
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. The impact of contact type on web survey response rates. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2003b; **67**:579–88.
- Porter 2005a** {published data only}
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. E-mail subject lines and their effect on web survey viewing and response. *Social Science Computer Review* 2005; **23**:280–7.
- Porter 2005b** {published data only}
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. E-mail subject lines and their effect on web survey viewing and response. *Social Science Computer Review* 2005; **23**:280–7.
- Porter S 2003b** {published data only}
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. The impact of contact type on web survey response rates. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2003b; **67**:579–88.
- Pourjalali 1994** {published data only}
Pourjalali H, Kimbrell J. Effects of four instrumental variables on survey response. *Psychological Reports* 1994; **75**:895–8.
- Powers 1982** {published data only}
Powers DE, Alderman DL. Feedback as an incentive for responding to a mail questionnaire. *Research in Higher Education* 1982; **17**(3):207–11.
- Pressley 1977** {published data only}
Pressley MM, Tullar WL. A factor interactive investigation of mail survey response rates from a commercial population. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1977; **14**:108–11.
- Pressley 1978** {published data only}
Pressley MM. Care needed when selecting response inducements in mail surveys of commercial populations. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1978; **6**(4):336–43.
- Pressley 1985** {published data only}
Pressley MM, Dunn MG. A factor-interactive experimental investigation of inducing response to questionnaires mailed

- to commercial populations. *AMA Educators Conference Proceedings* 1985;356–61.
- Price 1996** *{published data only}*
Price JH, Easton A, Kandakai T, Oden L. Race-specific versus general stamps on African-American women's survey return rates. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 1996;**82**:928–30.
- Price 2003** *{published data only}*
Price JH, Dake JA, Akpanudo S, Kleinfelder J. The effect of survey return rates of having a signed or unsigned postcard as the third wave mailing. *Psychological Reports* 2003;**92**(2): 1099–102.
- Pucel 1971** *{published data only}*
Pucel DJ, Nelson HF, Wheeler DN. Questionnaire follow-up returns as a function of incentives and responder characteristics. *Vocational Guidance Quarterly* 1971;**March**: 188–93.
- Puffer 2004** *{published data only}*
Puffer S, Porthouse J, Birks Y, Morton V, Torgerson D. Increasing response rates to postal questionnaires: a randomised trial of variations in design. *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy* 2004;**9**(4):213–7.
- Renfro 2002** *{published data only}*
Renfro EG, Heywood G, Foreman L, Schron E, Powell J, Baessler C, et al. for the AVID Coordinators and Investigators. The end-of-study patient survey: methods influencing response rate in the AVID Trial. *Controlled Clinical Trials* 2002;**23**:521–33.
- Riesenberg 2006** *{published data only}*
Riesenberg LA, Rosebaum P, Stick SL. Unexpected mailed survey response rates. *Family Medicine* 2006;**38**(2):83.
- Rikard-Bell 2000** *{published data only}*
Rikard-Bell G, Ward J. Maximizing response rates to a survey of dentists: a randomized trial. *Australian Dental Journal* 2000;**45**(1):46–8.
- Rimm 1990** *{published data only}*
Rimm EB, Stampfer MJ, Colditz GA, Giovannuci E, Willet WC. Effectiveness of various mailing strategies among nonrespondents in a prospective cohort study. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1990;**131**(6):1068–71.
- Roberts 1978** *{published data only}*
Roberts RE, McCrory OF, Forthofer RN. Further evidence on using a deadline to stimulate responses to a mail survey. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1978;**42**:407–10.
- Roberts 1993** *{published data only}*
Roberts H, Pearson JC, Dengler R. Impact of a postcard versus a questionnaire as a first reminder in a postal lifestyle survey. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1993;**47**:334–5.
- Roberts 1994** *{published data only}*
Roberts I, Coggan C, Fanslow J. Epidemiological methods: the effect of envelope type on response rates in an epidemiological study of back pain. *Aust NZ Journal of Occupational Health and Safety* 1994;**10**(1):55–7.
- Roberts 2000** *{published data only}*
Roberts P-J, Roberts C, Sibbald B, Torgerson DJ. The effect of a direct payment or a lottery on questionnaire response rates: a randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2000;**54**:71–2.
- Roberts 2004** *{published data only}*
Roberts LM, Wilson S, Roalfe A, Bridge P. A randomised controlled trial to determine the effect on response of including a lottery incentive in health surveys. *BMC Health Services Research* 2004;**4**(30):1–8.
- Robertson 1978** *{published data only}*
Robertson DH, Bellenger DN. A new method of increasing mail survey responses: Contributions to charity. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1978;**15**:632–3.
- Robertson 2005** *{published data only}*
Robertson J, Walkom EJ, McGettigan P. Response rates and representativeness: a lottery incentive improves physician survey response rates. *Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety* 2005;**14**:571–7.
- Rolnick 1989** *{published data only}*
Rolnick SJ, Gross CR, Garrard J, Gibson RW. A comparison of response rate, data quality, and cost in the collection of data on sexual history and personal behaviours. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1989;**129**(5):1052–61.
- Romney 1993** *{unpublished data only}*
Romney VA. A comparison of responses to open-ended and closed ended items on a state-level community education needs assessment instrument. Doctoral Dissertation 1993.
- Ronckers 2004** *{published data only}*
Ronckers C, Land C, Hayes R, Verdunijn P, Van Leeuwen F. Factors impacting questionnaire response in a Dutch retrospective cohort study. *Annals of Epidemiology* 2004;**14**(1):66–72.
- Roscoe 1975** *{published data only}*
Roscoe AM, Lang D, Sheth JN. Follow-up methods, questionnaire length, and market differences in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing* 1975;**39**:20–7.
- Rose 2007a** *{published data only}*
Rose DS, Sidle SD, Griffith KH. A penny for your thoughts. Monetary incentives improve response rates for company-sponsored employee surveys. *Organizational Research Methods* 2007a;**10**(2):225–40.
- Rose 2007b** *{published data only}*
Rose DS, Sidle SD, Griffith KH. A penny for your thoughts. Monetary incentives improve response rates for company-sponsored employee surveys. *Organizational Research Methods* 2007;**10**(2):225–40.
- Rosoff 2005a** *{published data only}*
Rosoff PM, Werner C, Clipp EC, Guill AB, Bonner M, Demark-Wahnefried W. Response rates to a mailed survey targeting childhood cancer survivors: A comparison of conditional versus unconditional incentives. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* 2005a;**14**(5): 1330–2.

- Rosoff 2005b** *{published data only}*
Rosoff PM, Werner C, Clipp EC, Guill AB, Bonner M, Demark-Wahnefried W. Response rates to a mailed survey targeting childhood cancer survivors: A comparison of conditional versus unconditional incentives. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* 2005b;**14**(5): 1330–2.
- Rosoff 2005c** *{published data only}*
Rosoff PM, Werner C, Clipp EC, Guill AB, Bonner M, Demark-Wahnefried W. Response rates to a mailed survey targeting childhood cancer survivors: A comparison of conditional versus unconditional incentives. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* 2005c;**14**(5): 1330–2.
- Roszkowski 1990a** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990b** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990c** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990d** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990e** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990f** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990g** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990h** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990i** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990j** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990k** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990l** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990m** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Roszkowski 1990n** *{published data only}*
Roszkowski MJ, Bean AG. Believe it or not! Longer questionnaires have lower response rates. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 1990;**4**(4):495–509.
- Rucker 1979a** *{published data only}*
Rucker MH, Arbaugh JE. A comparison of matrix questionnaires with standard questionnaires. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 1979;**39**:637–43.
- Rucker 1979b** *{published data only}*
Rucker MH, Arbaugh JE. A comparison of matrix questionnaires with standard questionnaires. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 1979;**39**:637–43.
- Rucker 1984** *{published data only}*
Rucker M, et al. Personalization of mail surveys: too much of a good thing?. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 1984;**44**(4):893–905.
- Russell 2003** *{published data only}*
Russell ML, Mutasingwa DR, Verhoef MJ, Injeyan HS. Effect of a monetary incentive on chiropractors' response rate and time to respond to a mail survey. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2003;**56**:1027–8.
- Ryu 2006** *{published data only}*
Ryu E, Couper MP, Marans RW. Survey incentives: cash vs. in-kind; face-to-face vs. mail; response rate vs. nonresponse error. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2006;**18**(1):89–106.
- Saal 2005** *{published data only}*
Saal D, Nuebling M, Husemann Y, Heidegger T. Effect of timing on the response to postal questionnaires concerning satisfaction with anaesthesia care. *British Journal of Anaesthesia* 2005;**94**(2):206–10.
- Salim Silva 2002** *{published data only}*
Salim Silva M, Smith WT, Bammer G. Telephone reminders are a cost effective way to improve responses in postal health surveys. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2002;**56**:115–8.
- Sallis 1984** *{published data only}*
Sallis JF, Fortmann SP, Solomon DS, Farquhar JW. Increasing returns of physician surveys. *American Journal of Public Health* 1984;**74**(9):1043.

- Salvesen 1992** *{published data only}*
Salvesen K, Vatten L. Effect of a newspaper article on the response to a postal questionnaire. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1992;**46**:86.
- Sang-Wook 2005** *{published data only}*
Sang-Wook Y, Hong JS, Ohr H, Yi JJ. A comparison of response rate and time according to the survey methods used: a randomized controlled trial. *European Journal of Epidemiology* 2005;**20**:131-5.
- Sauerland 2002** *{published data only}*
Sauerland S, Neugebauer EAM. An experiment of mailing physician surveys on two different issues in joint or separate mail. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2002;**55**:1046-8.
- Schmidt 2005** *{published data only}*
Schmidt JB, Calantone RJ, Griffin A, Montoya-Weiss MM. Do certified mail third-wave follow-ups really boost response rates and quality?. *Marketing Letters* 2005;**16**(2): 129-41.
- Schweitzer 1995** *{published data only}*
Schweitzer M, Asch D. Timing payments to subjects of mail surveys: cost-effectiveness and bias. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 1995;**48**(11):1325-9.
- Scott 1957** *{published data only}*
Scott FG. Mail questionnaires used in a study of older women. *Sociology and Social Research* 1957;**41**:281-4.
- See Tai 1997** *{published data only}*
See Tai S, Nazareth I, Haines A, Jowett C. A randomized trial of the impact of telephone and recorded delivery reminders on the response rate to research questionnaires. *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 1997;**19**(2):219-21.
- Shackleton 1980** *{published data only}*
Shackleton VJ, Wild JM, Wolffe M. Screening optometric patients by questionnaire: methods of improving response. *American Journal of Optometry and Physiological Optics* 1980;**57**(6):404-6.
- Shah 2001** *{published data only}*
Shah S, Harris TJ, Rink E, DeWilde S, Victor CR, Cook DG. Do income questions and seeking consent to link medical records reduce survey response rates? A randomised controlled trial among older people. *British Journal of General Practice* 2001;**51**:223-5.
- Shahar 1993** *{published data only}*
Shahar E, Bisgard KM, Folsom AR. Response to mail surveys: effect of a request to explain refusal to participate. *Epidemiology* 1993;**4**:480-2.
- Sharp 2006** *{published data only}*
Sharp L, Cochran C, Cotton SC, Gray NM, Gallagher ME. Enclosing a pen with a postal questionnaire can significantly increase the response rate. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2006;**59**:747-54.
- Shaw 2001** *{published data only}*
Shaw MJ, Beebe TJ, Jensen HL, Adlis SA. The use of monetary incentives in a community survey: Impact on response rates, data quality, and cost. *Health Services Research* 2001;**35**(6):1339-46.
- Sheikh 1982** *{published data only}*
Sheikh K. Response to postal questionnaire: the effects of enquiry about earnings. *International Review of Applied Psychology* 1982;**31**:345-9.
- Shin 1992** *{unpublished data only}*
Shin E. An experimental study of techniques to improve response rates of mail questionnaire. Utah State University 1992.
- Shiono 1991** *{published data only}*
Shiono PH, Klebanoff MA. The effect of two mailing strategies on the response to a survey of physicians. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1991;**134**(5):539-42.
- Simon 1967a** *{published data only}*
Simon R. Responses to personal and form letters in mail surveys. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1967;**7**:28-30.
- Simon 1967b** *{published data only}*
Simon R. Responses to personal and form letters in mail surveys. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1967;**7**:28-30.
- Simon 1967c** *{published data only}*
Simon R. Responses to personal and form letters in mail surveys. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1967;**7**:28-30.
- Skinner 1984** *{published data only}*
Skinner SJ, Ferrell OC, Pride WM. Personal and nonpersonal incentives in mail surveys: immediate versus delayed inducements. *Academy of Marketing Science* 1984;**12**(1):106-14.
- Sletto 1940** *{published data only}*
Sletto R. Pretesting of questionnaires. *American Sociological Review* 1940;**5**:193-200.
- Sloan 1997** *{published data only}*
Sloan M, Kreiger N, James B. Improving response rates among doctors: randomised trial. *BMJ* 1997;**315**:1136.
- Smith 1985** *{published data only}*
Smith WCS, Crombie IK, Campion PD, Knox JDE. Comparison of response rates to a postal questionnaire from a general practice and a research unit. *British Medical Journal* 1985;**291**:1483-5.
- Spry 1989a** *{published data only}*
Spry VM, Hovell MF, Sallis JG, Hofsteter CR, Elder JP, Molgaard CA. Recruiting survey respondents to mailed surveys: controlled trials of incentives and prompts. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1989;**130**(1):166-72.
- Spry 1989b** *{published data only}*
Spry VM, Hovell MF, Sallis JG, Hofsteter CR, Elder JP, Molgaard CA. Recruiting survey respondents to mailed surveys: controlled trials of incentives and prompts. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1989;**130**(1):166-72.
- Spry 1989c** *{published data only}*
Spry VM, Hovell MF, Sallis JG, Hofsteter CR, Elder JP, Molgaard CA. Recruiting survey respondents to mailed surveys: controlled trials of incentives and prompts. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1989;**130**(1):166-72.
- Stafford 1966** *{published data only}*
Stafford JE. Influence of preliminary contact on mail returns. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1966;**3**:410-1.

- Stapulonis 2004** {published data only}
Stapulonis RA, Marsh S, Markesich J. Incentives with low-income populations: an experiment with merchant point-of-sale (POS) cards. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Phoenix, Arizona 2004.
- Stem 1984a** {published data only}
Stem DE, Steinhorst RK. Telephone interview and mail questionnaire applications of the randomized response model. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 1984a; **79**(387):555–64.
- Stem 1984b** {published data only}
Stem DE, Steinhorst RK. Telephone interview and mail questionnaire applications of the randomized response model. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 1984a; **79**(387):555–64.
- Stevens 1975** {published data only}
Stevens RE. Does precoding mail questionnaires affect response rates. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1975;**38**:621–2.
- Streiff 2001** {published data only}
Streiff MB, Dundes L, Spivak JL. A mail survey of United States hematologists and oncologists: a comparison of business reply versus stamped return envelopes. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2001;**54**:430–2.
- Subar 2001** {published data only}
Subar AF, Ziegler RG, Thompson FE, Johnson CC, Weissfeld JL, Reding D, et al. Is shorter always better? Relative importance of questionnaire length and cognitive ease on response rates and data quality for two dietary questionnaires. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2001;**153**:404–9.
- Sutton 1992** {published data only}
Sutton RJ, Zeitz LL. Multiple prior notifications, personalization, and reminder surveys. *Marketing Research* 1992;**4**:14–21.
- Svoboda 2001** {unpublished data only}
Svoboda P. A comparison of two questionnaires for assessing outcome after head injury in the Czech Republic.
- Swan 1980** {published data only}
Swan JE, Epley DE, Burns WL. Can follow-up response rates to a mail survey be increased by including another copy of the questionnaire?. *Psychological Reports* 1980;**47**:103–6.
- Szirony 2002** {published data only}
Szirony TA, Price JH, Telljohann SK, Wolfe E. Survey return rates using a covering letter signed by a graduate student or faculty member. *Psychological Reports* 2002;**91**:1174–6.
- Tamayo-Sarver 2004** {published data only}
Tamayo-Sarver JH, Baker DW. Comparison of responses to a US 2 dollar bill versus a chance to win 250 US dollars in a mail survey of emergency physicians. *Academic Emergency Medicine* 2004;**11**(8):888–91.
- Tambor 1993** {published and unpublished data}
Tambor ES, Chase GA, Faden RR, Geller G, Hofman KJ, Holtzman NA. Improving response rates through incentives and follow-up: the effect on a survey of physician's knowledge of genetics. *American Journal of Public Health* 1993;**83**:1599–603.
- Taylor 1998** {published data only}
Taylor S, Lynn P. The effect of a preliminary notification letter on response to a postal survey of young people. *The Journal of the Market Research Society* 1998;**40**(2):165–73.
- Taylor 2006** {published data only}
Taylor KS, Counsell CE, Harris CE, Gordon JC, Fonseca SC, Lee AJ. In a randomized study of envelope and ink color, colored ink was found to increase the response rate to a postal questionnaire. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2006;**59**(12):1326–30.
- Teisl 2005** {published data only}
Teisl MF, Roe B, Vayda M. Incentive effects on response rates, data quality, and survey administration costs. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2005;**18**(3):364–73.
- Temple-Smith 1998** {published data only}
Temple-Smith M, Mulvey G, Doyle W. Maximising response rates in a survey of general practitioners - lessons from a Victorian survey on sexually transmissible diseases. *Australian Family Physician* 1998;**27**(Suppl 1):S15–8.
- Thistlethwaite 1993** {published data only}
Thistlethwaite PC. The impact of selected mail response enhancement techniques on surveys of the mature market: some new evidence. *Journal of Professional Services Marketing* 1993;**8**(2):269–76.
- Thomson 2004** {published data only}
Thomson CE, Paterson-Brown S, Russell D, McCaldin D, Russell IT. Short report: encouraging GPs to complete postal questionnaires - one big prize or many small prizes? A randomized controlled trial. *Family Practice* 2004;**21**(6):697–8.
- Tjerbo 2005** {published data only}
Tjerbo T, Kvaerner KJ, Botten G, Aasland OG. Bruk av incentiver for a oke svarandelen i sporreskjemaundersokelser. *Tidsskr Nor Laegeforen* 2005;**18**(125):2496–7.
- Trussell 2004a** {published data only}
Trussell N, Lavrakas PJ. The influence of incremental increases in token cash incentives on mail survey response. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2004a;**68**(3):349–67.
- Trussell 2004b** {published data only}
Trussell N, Lavrakas PJ. The influence of incremental increases in token cash incentives on mail survey response. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2004b;**68**(3):349–67.
- Trussell 2004c** {published data only}
Trussell N, Lavrakas PJ. The influence of incremental increases in token cash incentives on mail survey response. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2004c;**68**(3):349–67.
- Tullar 1979** {published data only}
Tullar WL, Pressley MM, Gentry DL. Toward a theoretical framework for mail survey response. *Proceeding of the Third Annual Conference of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1979; **2**:243–7.

- Tullar 2004** *{published data only}*
Tullar JM, Katz JN, Wright EA, Fossel AH, Phillips CB, Maher NE, et al. Effect of handwritten, hand-stamped envelopes on response rate in a follow up study of hip replacement patients. *Arthritis & Rheumatism* 2004;**51**(3): 501–4.
- Tuten 2004** *{published data only}*
Tuten TL, Galesic M, Bosnjak M. Effects of immediate versus delayed notification of prize draw results on response behavior in web surveys: an experiment. *Social Science Computer Review* 2004;**22**:377–84.
- Ulrich 2005** *{published data only}*
Ulrich CM, Danis M, Koziol D, Garrett-Mayer E, Hubbard R, Grady C. Does it pay to pay? A randomized trial of prepaid financial incentives and lottery incentives in surveys of nonphysician healthcare professionals. *Nursing Research* 2005;**54**(3):178–83.
- Urban 1993** *{published data only}*
Urban N, Anderson GL, Tseng A. Effects on response rates and costs of stamps vs business reply in a mail survey of physicians. *Clinical Epidemiology* 1993;**46**(5):455–9.
- VanGeest 2001** *{published data only}*
VanGeest JB, Wynia MK, Cummins DS, Wilson IB. Effects of different monetary incentives on the return rate of a national mail survey of physicians. *Medical Care* 2001;**39**(2):197–201.
- Veiga 1974** *{published data only}*
Veiga JF. Getting the mail questionnaire returned: Some practical research considerations. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1974;**59**(2):217–8.
- Virtanen 2007a** *{published data only}*
Virtanen V, Sirkiä T, Jokiranta V. Reducing nonresponse by SMS reminders in mail surveys. *Social Science Computer Review* 2007a;**25**:384–95.
- Virtanen 2007b** *{published data only}*
Virtanen V, Sirkiä T, Jokiranta V. Reducing nonresponse by SMS reminders in mail surveys. *Social Science Computer Review* 2007b;**25**:384–95.
- Virtanen 2007c** *{published data only}*
Virtanen V, Sirkiä T, Jokiranta V. Reducing nonresponse by SMS reminders in mail surveys. *Social Science Computer Review* 2007c;**25**:384–95.
- Vocino 1977** *{published data only}*
Vocino T. Three variables in stimulating responses to mailed questionnaires. *Journal of Marketing* 1977;**41**:76–7.
- Vogel 1992** *{published data only}*
Vogel PA, Skjostad K, Eriksen L. Influencing return rate by mail of alcoholics' questionnaires at follow-up by varying lottery procedures and questionnaire lengths. Two experimental studies. *European Journal of Psychiatry* 1992;**6**(4):213–22.
- VonRiesen 1979** *{published data only}*
VonRiesen RD. Postcard reminders versus replacement questionnaires and mail survey response rates from a professional population. *Journal of Business Research* 1979;**7**:1–7.
- Waisanen 1954** *{published data only}*
Waisanen FB. A note on the response to a mailed questionnaire. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1954;**18**:210–2.
- Walker 1997** *{unpublished data only}*
Walker N on behalf of the Auckland Leg Ulcer Study Group. Auckland Leg Ulcer Study - Trial data 1997–8.
- Waltemyer 2005** *{published data only}*
Waltemyer S, Sagas M, Cunningham GB, Jordan JS, Turner BA. The effects of personalization and colored paper on mailed questionnaire response rates in a coaching sample. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 2005;**76**(1):A130.
- Ward 1996** *{published data only}*
Ward J, Boyle C, Long D, Ovadia C. Patient surveys in general practice. *Australian Family Physician* 1996;**25**(1): S19–S20.
- Ward 1998** *{published data only}*
Ward J, Bruce T, Holt P, D'Este K, Sladden M. Labour-saving strategies to maintain survey response rates: a randomised trial. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 1998;**22**(3 Suppl):394–6.
- Warriner 1996** *{published and unpublished data}*
Warriner K, Goyder J, Gjertsen H, Hohner P, McSpurren K. Charities, no; lotteries, no; cash, yes. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1996;**60**:542–62.
- Weilbacher 1952** *{published data only}*
Weilbacher WM, Walsh HR. Mail questionnaires and the personalized letter of transmittal. *Marketing Notes* 1952;**16**: 331–6.
- Weir 1999** *{unpublished data only}*
Weir N. Methods of following up stroke patients. Neurosciences Trials Unit, University of Edinburgh.
- Wells 1984** *{unpublished data only}*
Wells DV. The representativeness of mail questionnaires as a function of sponsorship, return postage, and time of response. Doctoral Dissertation 1984.
- Weltzien 1986** *{published data only}*
Weltzien RT, McIntyre TJ, Ernst JA, Walsh JA, Parker JK. Crossvalidation of some psychometric properties of the CSQ and its differential return rate as a function of token financial incentives. *Community Mental Health Journal* 1986;**22**(1):49–55.
- Wensing 1999a** *{published data only}*
Wensing M, Mainz J, Kramme O, Jung HP, Ribacke M. Effect of mailed reminders on the response rate in surveys among patients in general practice. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 1999;**52**(6):585–7.
- Wensing 1999b** *{published data only}*
Wensing M, Mainz J, Kramme O, Jung HP, Ribacke M. Effect of mailed reminders on the response rate in surveys among patients in general practice. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 1999;**52**(6):585–7.

- Wensing 2005** {published data only}
Wensing M, Schattenberg G. Initial nonresponders had an increased response rate after repeated questionnaire mailings. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2005;**58**:959-61.
- Whitcomb 2004** {published data only}
Whitcomb ME, Porter SR. E-mail contacts: a test of complex graphical designs in survey research. *Social Science Computer Review* 2004;**22**:370-6.
- White 1997** {published data only}
White MB, Chambers KM. Type of cover letter and questionnaire color: do they influence the response rate in survey research with marriage and family therapists?. *Family Therapy* 1997;**24**(1):19-24.
- White 2005a** {published data only}
White E, Carney PA, Kolar AS. Increasing response to mailed questionnaires by including a pencil/pen. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2005a;**162**(3):261-6.
- White 2005b** {published data only}
White E, Carney PA, Kolar AS. Increasing response to mailed questionnaires by including a pencil/pen. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2005b;**162**(3):261-5.
- Whiteman 2003** {published data only}
Whiteman MK, Langenberg P, Kjerulff K, McCarter R, Flaws JA. A randomized trial of incentives to improve response rates to a mailed women's health questionnaire. *Journal of Women's Health* 2003;**12**(8):821-8.
- Whitmore 1976** {published data only}
Whitmore WJ. Mail survey premiums and response bias. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1976;**13**:46-50.
- Willits 1995** {published data only}
Willits FK, Ke B. Part-whole question order effects. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1995;**59**:392-403.
- Windsor 1992** {published data only}
Windsor J. What can you ask about? The effect on response to a postal screen of asking about two potentially sensitive questions. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 1992;**46**:83-5.
- Wiseman 1972** {published data only}
Wiseman F. Methodological bias in public opinion surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1972;**36**:105-8.
- Wiseman 1973** {published data only}
Wiseman F. Factor interaction effects in mail survey response rates. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1973;**10**:330-3.
- Woodward 1985** {published data only}
Woodward A, Douglas B, Miles H. Chance of a free dinner increases response to mail questionnaire. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1985;**14**:641-2.
- Worthen 1985a** {published data only}
Worthen BR, Valcarce RW. Relative effectiveness of personalized and form covering letters in initial and follow-up mail surveys. *Psychology Reports* 1985;**57**:735-44.
- Worthen 1985b** {published data only}
Worthen BR, Valcarce RW. Relative effectiveness of personalized and form covering letters in initial and follow-up mail surveys. *Psychology Reports* 1985;**57**:735-44.
- Worthen 1985c** {published data only}
Worthen BR, Valcarce RW. Relative effectiveness of personalized and form covering letters in initial and follow-up mail surveys. *Psychology Reports* 1985;**57**:735-44.
- Wotruba 1966** {published data only}
Wotruba TR. Monetary inducements and mail questionnaire response. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1966;**3**:398-400.
- Wright 1984** {unpublished data only}
Wright SJ. Mail survey response rates: a test of four techniques designed to increase response rates and a discussion of the associated cost considerations. Student Research Report, Department of Marketing, Massey University 1984.
- Wright 1995** {published data only}
Wright M. The effect of pre-notification on mail survey response rates: an experimental result. *Marketing Bulletin* 1995;**6**:59-64.
- Wunder 1988** {published data only}
Wunder GC, Wynn GW. The effects of address personalisation on mailed questionnaires response rate, time and quality. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1988;**30**(1):95-101.
- Wynn 1985** {published data only}
Wynn GW, McDaniel SW. The effect of alternative foot-in-the-door manipulations on mailed questionnaire response rate and quality. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1985;**27**(1):15-26.
- Zusman 1987** {published data only}
Zusman BJ, Duby P. An evaluation of the use of monetary incentives in postsecondary survey research. *Journal of Research and Development in Education* 1987;**20**(4):73-8.

References to studies excluded from this review

- Allen 1980** {published data only}
Allen CT. More on self-perception theory's foot technique in the pre-call/mail survey setting. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1980;**17**:498-502.
- Anderson 1975** {published data only}
Anderson JF. Effects of response rates of formal and informal questionnaire follow-up techniques. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**60**(2):255-7.
- Angus 2003** {published data only}
Angus VC, Entwistle VA, Emslie MJ, Walker KA, Andrew JE. The requirement for prior consent to participate on survey response rates: a population-based survey in Grampian. *BMC Health Services Research* 2003;**3**(21):1-10.
- Armstrong 1975** {published data only}
Armstrong JS. Monetary incentives in mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1975;**39**:111-6.

- Asch 1994** {published data only}
Asch DA, Christakis NA. Different response rates in a trial of two envelope styles in mail survey research. *Epidemiology* 1994;**5**(3):364–5.
- Ash 1952** {published data only}
Ash P. The effect of anonymity on attitude-questionnaire response. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 1952;**47**:722–3.
- Baron 2001** {published data only}
Baron G, De Wals P, Milord F. Cost-effectiveness of a lottery for increasing physicians' responses to a mail survey. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2001;**24**(1):47–52.
- Bevis 1948** {published data only}
Bevis JC. Economical incentive used for mail questionnaire. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1948;**12**:492–3.
- Biggar 1992** {published data only}
Biggar RJ, Melbye M. Responses to anonymous questionnaires concerning sexual behaviour: a method to examine potential biases. *American Journal of Public Health* 1992;**82**(11):1506–12.
- Blumberg 1974** {published data only}
Blumberg H, Fuller C, Hare AP. Response rates in postal surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1974;**38**:113–23.
- Blumenfeld 1973** {published data only}
Blumenfeld WS. Effect of appearance of correspondence on response rate to a mail questionnaire survey. *Psychological Reports* 1973;**32**:178.
- Brechner 1976** {published data only}
Brechner K, Shippee G, Obitz FW. Compliance techniques to increase mailed questionnaire return rates from alcoholics. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 1976;**37**(7):995–6.
- Brennan 1958** {published data only}
Brennan RD. Trading stamps as an incentive in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing* 1958:306–7.
- Brennan 1990** {published data only}
- Cartwright 1968** {published data only}
Cartwright A, Ward AWM. Variations in general practitioners' response to postal questionnaires. *British Journal of Preventive and Social Medicine* 1968;**22**:199–205.
- Cartwright 1989** {published data only}
Cartwright A, Windsor J. Some further experiments with factors that might affect the response to postal questionnaires. *Survey of Methodology Bulletin* 1989;**25**: 11–5.
- Champion 1969** {published data only}
Champion DJ, Sear AM. Questionnaire response rate: a methodological analysis. *Social Forces* 1969;**47**(3):335–9.
- Childs 2005** {published data only}
Childs LA, The Submacular Surgery Trials Research Group. Effect of order of administration of health-related quality of life interview instruments on responses. *Quality of Life Research* 2005;**14**:493–500.
- Cook 1985** {published data only}
Cook JR, Schoeps N, Kim S. Program responses to mail surveys as a function of monetary incentives. *Psychological Reports* 1985;**57**:366.
- Dillman 1972** {published data only}
Dillman DA. Increasing mail questionnaire response in large samples of the general public. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1972;**36**:254–7.
- Dunlap 1950** {published data only}
Dunlap JW. The effect of colour in direct mail advertising. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1950;**34**:280–1.
- Eisinger 1974** {published data only}
Eisinger RA, Janicki WP, Stevenson RL, Thompson WL. Increasing returns in international mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1974;**38**:126–30.
- Elinson 1950** {published data only}
Elinson J, Haines VT. Role of anonymity in attitude surveys. *American Psychologist* 1950;**5**:315.
- Everett 1997** {published data only}
Everett SA, Price JH, Bedell A, Telljohann SK. The effect of a monetary incentive in increasing the return rate of a survey to family physicians. *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 1997;**20**(2):207–14.
- Fang 2006** {published data only}
Fang J, Shao P. Does material incentive really improve the response rate in web-based survey? A classification model of the potential respondents. *International Conference on Management Science & Engineering (13th)* 2006;**1-3**:74–7.
- Ferriss 1951** {published data only}
Ferriss AL. A note on stimulating response to questionnaires. *American Sociological Review* 1951;**16**:247–9.
- Furse 1981** {published data only}
Furse DH, Stewart DW, Rados DL. Effects of foot-in-the-door, cash incentives, and follow-ups on survey response. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1981;**18**:473–8.
- Gerace 1995** {published data only}
Gerace TA, George VA, Arango IG. Response rates to six recruitment mailing formats and two messages about a nutrition program for women 50–79 years old. *Controlled Clinical Trials* 1995;**16**:422–31.
- Gillespie 1975** {published data only}
Gillespie DF, Perry RW. Survey return rates and questionnaire appearance. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology* 1975;**11**(3):71–2.
- Hansen 2004** {published data only}
Hansen J, Alessandrini PT, Croft ML, Burton PR, de Klerk NH. The Western Australian register of childhood multiples: effects of questionnaire design and follow-up protocol on response rates and representativeness. *Twin Research* 2004;**7**(2):149–61.
- Hare 1998** {published data only}
Hare S, Price JH, Flynn MG, King KA. Increasing return rates of a mail survey to exercise professionals using a modest monetary incentive. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 1998;**86**: 217–8.

- Harlow 1993** *{published data only}*
Harlow BL. Telephone answering machines: the influence of leaving messages on telephone interviewing response rates. *Epidemiology* 1993;**4**(4):380–3.
- Haugejorden 1987** *{published and unpublished data}*
Haugejorden O, Nielsen WA. Experimental study of two methods of data collection by questionnaire. *Community Dentistry & Oral Epidemiology* 1987;**15**:205–8.
- Hawes 1987** *{published data only}*
Hawes JM, Crittenden VL, Crittenden WF. The effects of personalisation, source, and offer on mail survey response rate and speed. *Akron Business and Economic Review* 1987;**18**:54–63.
- Heads 1966** *{published data only}*
Heads J, Thrift HJ. Notes on a study in postal response rates. *Commentary* 1966;**8**(4):257–62.
- Heje 2006** *{published data only}*
Heje NH, Vedsted P, Olesen F. A cluster-randomized trial of the significance of a reminder procedure in a patient evaluation survey in general practice. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care* 2006;**18**(3):232–7.
- Helgeson 2002** *{published data only}*
Helgeson JG, Voss KE, Terpening WD. Determinants of mail-survey response: survey design factors and respondent factors. *Psychology & Marketing* 2002;**19**(3):303–28.
- Hing 2005** *{published data only}*
Hing E, Schappert SM, Burt CW, Shimizu IM. Effects of form length and item format on response patterns and estimates of physician office and hospital outpatient department visits. *Vital Health Statistics* 2005;**2**(139):1–32.
- Hinrichs 1975** *{published data only}*
Hinrichs JR. Factors related to survey response rates: effects of sampling, follow up letters, and commitment to participation on mail attitude survey response. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**60**(2):249–51.
- Hughes 1989** *{published data only}*
Hughes JR. Free reprints to increase the return of follow-up questionnaires. *Controlled Clinical Trials* 1989;**10**:352.
- Ives 1990** *{published data only}*
Ives D, Traven N, Kuller L. Comparison of recruitment strategies for health promotion and disease prevalence in the elderly. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1990;**132**:790.
- Jiang 2005** *{published data only}*
Jiang P, Rosenbloom B. Customer intention to return online: price perception, attribute-level performance, and satisfaction unfolding over time. *European Journal of Marketing* 2005;**39**(1–2):150–74.
- Kerin 1974** *{published data only}*
Kerin RA. Personalization strategies, response rate and response quality in a mail survey. *Social Science Quarterly* 1974;**55**:175–81.
- Kerin 1977** *{published data only}*
Kerin RA, Peterson RA. Personalization, respondent anonymity, and response distortion in mail surveys. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1977;**62**(1):86–9.
- Kerin 1983** *{published data only}*
Kerin RA. Effects of preliminary contacts on volunteering in mail surveys: another view. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 1983;**57**:1282.
- Kimball 1961** *{published data only}*
Kimball AE. Increasing the rate of return in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing* 1961;**25**:63–5.
- Larsson 1970** *{published data only}*
Larsson I. Increasing the rate of returns in mail surveys. A methodological study. *Didakometry & Sociometry* 1970;**2**:43–70.
- Longworth 1953** *{published data only}*
Longworth DS. Use of a mail questionnaire. *American Sociologist* 1953;**18**:310–3.
- Lopez- Cano 2007** *{published data only}*
Lopez-Cano M, Vilallonga R, Sanchez JL, Hermosilla E, Armengol M. Short postal questionnaire and selective clinical examination combined with repeat mailing and telephone reminders as a method of follow-up in hernia surgery. *Hernia* 2007;**11**:397–402.
- Lund 1988** *{published data only}*
Lund DB, Malhotra NK, Smith AE. Field validation study of conjoint analysis using selected mail survey response rate facilitators. *Journal of Business Research* 1988;**16**:351–68.
- Marks 1981** *{published data only}*
Mark RB. A factorial experiment in stimulating response to mail surveys. American Marketing Association Educators Conference. 1981; Vol. 47:398–400.
- May 1960** *{published data only}*
May RC. What approach gets the best return in mail surveys?. *Industrial Marketing* 1960;**45**:50–1.
- McDermott 2003** *{published data only}*
McDermott MM, Greenland P, Hahn EA, Brogan D, Cella D, Ockene J, P, et al. The effects of continuing medical education credits on physician response rates to a mailed questionnaire. *Health Marketing Quarterly* 2003;**20**(4):27–42.
- Mehta 1995** *{published data only}*
Mehta R, Sivasdas E. Comparing response rates and response content in mail versus electronic mail surveys. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1995;**37**:429–39.
- Nitecki 1975** *{published data only}*
Nitecki DA. Effects of sponsorship and nonmonetary incentive on response rate. *Journalism Quarterly* 1975;**55**:581–3.
- Oden 1999** *{published data only}*
Oden L, Price JH. Effects of a small monetary incentive and follow-up mailings on return rates of a survey to nurse practitioners. *Psychological Reports* 1999;**85**:1154–6.
- Perneger 2003** *{published data only}*
Perneger TV, Kossovsky MP, Cathieni F, Florio VD, Burnand B. A randomized trial of four patient satisfaction questionnaires. *Medical Care* 2003;**41**(12):1343–52.

- Peytreman-Bridevaux 2006a** *{published data only}*
Peytreman-Bridevaux I, Scherer F, Peer L, Cathieni F, Bonsack C, Cléopas A, et al. Satisfaction of patients hospitalised in psychiatric hospitals: a randomised comparison of two psychiatric-specific and one generic satisfaction questionnaires. *BMC Health Services Research* 2006;**6**(108):1–9.
- Porter 2004** *{published data only}*
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. Understanding the effect of prizes on response rates. *New Directions for Institutional Research* 2004;**121**:51–62.
- Pottick 1991** *{published data only}*
Pottick KJ, Lerman P. Maximising survey response rates for hard-to-reach inner-city populations. *Social Science Quarterly* 1991;**72**:172–80.
- Robin 1973** *{published data only}*
Robin DP, Nash HW, Jones SR. An analysis of monetary incentives in mail questionnaire studies. *J Business Comm* 1973;**11**:38–42.
- Robin 1976** *{published data only}*
Robin DP, Walters CG. The effect on return rate of messages explaining monetary incentives in mail questionnaire studies. *Journal of the Business Community* 1976;**13**(3): 49–54.
- Roehrer 1963** *{published data only}*
Roehrer GA. Effective techniques in increasing response to mailed questionnaires. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1963;**27**: 299–302.
- Rudd 1980** *{published data only}*
Rudd NM, Maxwell NL. Mail survey response rates: effects of questionnaire topic and length and recipients community. *Psychological Reports* 1980;**46**:435–40.
- Salomone 1978** *{published data only}*
Salomone PR, Miller GC. Increasing the response rates of rehabilitation counselors to mailed questionnaires. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* 1978;**22**:138–41.
- Senf 1987** *{published and unpublished data}*
Senf JH. The option to refuse: a tool in understanding nonresponse in mailed surveys. *Evaluation Review* 1987;**11**: 775–81.
- Shackleton 1982** *{published data only}*
Shackleton VJ, Wild JM. Effect of incentives and personal contact on response rate to a mailed questionnaire. *Psychological Reports* 1982;**50**:365–6.
- Shermis 1982** *{published data only}*
Shermis MD. Issues in survey data quality: four field experiments. *Doctoral Dissertation* 1982.
- Sheth 1975** *{published data only}*
Sheth JN, Roscoe AM. Impact of questionnaire length, follow-up methods, and geographical location on response rate to a mail survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1975;**60** (2):252–4.
- Sirken 1960** *{published and unpublished data}*
Sirken MG, Pifer JW, Brown ML. Survey procedures for supplementing mortality statistics. *American Journal of Public Health* 1960;**50**:1753–64.
- Smith 1972** *{published data only}*
Smith EM, Hewett W. The value of a preliminary letter in postal survey response. *Journal of the Marketing Research Society* 1972;**14**(3):145–51.
- Smith 1977** *{published data only}*
Smith K. Signing off in the right colour can boost mail survey response. *Industrial Marketing* 1977;**62**:61–2.
- Smith 1987** *{published data only}*
Smith K, Bers T. Improving alumni survey response rates: an experiment and cost-benefit analysis. *Research in Higher Education* 1987;**27**(3):218–25.
- Snyder 1984** *{published data only}*
Snyder M, Lapovsky D. Enhancing survey response from initial non-consenters. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1984; **24**:17–20.
- Surhe 1989** *{published and unpublished data}*
Surhe C. Schools over the gangway: an experiment on response improving procedures. *Tijdschrift voor Onderwijsresearch* 1989;**14**:172–80.
- Sullivan 1995** *{published data only}*
Sullivan LM, Dukes KA, Harris L, Dittus RS, Greenfield S, Kaplan SH. A comparison of various methods of collecting self-reported health outcomes data among low-income and minority patients. *Medical Care* 1995;**33**(4):AS183–94.
- Sutherland 1996** *{published data only}*
Sutherland HJ, Beaton M, Mazer R, Kriukov V, Boyd NF. A randomized trial of the total design method for the postal follow-up of women in a cancer prevention trial. *European Journal of Cancer Prevention* 1996;**5**:165–8.
- Tan 1997** *{published data only}*
Tan RT, Burke FJT. Response rates to questionnaires mailed to dentists. A review of 77 publications. *International Dental Journal* 1997;**47**:349–54.
- Trice 1985** *{published data only}*
Trice AD. Maximizing participation in surveys: hotel ratings VII. *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality* 1985; **1**(1):137–41.
- Walker 1977** *{published data only}*
Walker BJ, Burdick RK. Advance correspondence and error in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1977;**14**: 379–82.
- Ward 1994** *{published data only}*
Ward J, Wain G. Increasing response rates of gynaecologists to a survey: a randomised trial of telephone prompts. *Australian Journal of Public Health* 1994;**18**(3):332–4.
- Watson 1965** *{published data only}*
Watson JJ. Improving the response rate in mail research. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1965;**5**:48–50.

- Weiss 1985** *{published data only}*
Weiss LI, Friedman D, Shoemaker CL. Prepaid incentives yield higher response rates to mail surveys. *Marketing News* 1985;**19**:30–1.
- Weissenburger 1987** *{published data only}*
Weissenburger FE. Effects of prior information on teacher ratings of students with behaviour problems. Doctoral Dissertation 1987.
- Wildman 1977** *{published data only}*
Wildman RC. Effects of anonymity and social setting on survey responses. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1977;**41**:74–9.
- Zagumny 1996** *{published data only}*
Zagumny MJ, Ramsey R, Upchurch MP. Is anonymity important in AIDS survey research?. *Psychological Reports* 1996;**78**:270.
- Zwisler 2004** *{published data only}*
Zwisler LJ, Jarbol LDE, Lous J. Sporgeskesmaundersogelser - hvordan opnar jeg en hoy besvarelsesprocent?. *Ugeskr Laeger* 2004;**166**(7):575–8.
- References to studies awaiting assessment**
- Alexander 2008** *{published data only}*
Alexander GL, Divine GW, Couper MP, McClure JB, Stopponi MA, Fortman KK, et al. Effect of incentives and mailing features on online health program enrolment. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2008;**34**(5):382–8.
- Balabanis 2007** *{published data only}*
Balabanis G, Mitchell VW, Heinonen-Mavrovouniotis S. SMS-based surveys: Strategies to improve participation. *International Journal of Advertising* 2007;**26**(3):369–85.
- Clarke 2007** *{published data only}*
Clarke M, Clarke L, Clarke T. Yes Sir, no Sir, not much difference Sir. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 2007;**100**(12):571–2.
- Dommeyer 2008** *{published data only}*
Dommeyer CJ. The effects of the researcher's physical attractiveness and gender on mail survey response. *Psychology & Marketing* 2008;**25**(1):47–70.
- Epperson 1997** *{published data only}*
Epperson WV, Peck RC. Questionnaire response bias as a function of respondent anonymity. *Accident Analysis & Prevention* 1997;**9**:249–56.
- Harris 2008** *{published data only}*
Harris IA, Khoo OK, Young JM, Solomon MJ, Rae H. Lottery incentives did not improve response rate to a mailed survey: a randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2008;**61**(6):609–10.
- Ho-A-Yun 2007** *{published data only}*
Ho-A-Yun J, Crawford F, Newton J, Clarkson J. The effect of advance telephone prompting in a survey of general dental practitioners in Scotland: a randomised controlled trial. *Community Dental Health* 2007;**24**(4):233–7.
- Hopkins 1983** *{published data only}*
Hopkins KD, Podolak J. Class-of-mail and the effects of monetary gratuity on the response rates of mailed questionnaires. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1983;**51**:169–70.
- Keating 2008** *{published data only}*
Keating NL, Zaslavsky AM, Goldstein J, West DW, Ayanian JZ. Randomized trial of \$20 versus \$50 incentives to increase physician survey response rates. *Medical Care* 2008;**46**(8):878–81.
- Maynard 1996** *{published data only}*
Maynard ML. Effectiveness of 'begging' as a persuasive tactic for improving response rate on a client / agency mail survey. *Psychological Reports* 1996;**78**:204–6.
- McCrohan 1981** *{published data only}*
McCrohan KF, Lowe LS. A cost/benefit approach to postage used on mail questionnaires. *Journal of Marketing* 1981;**45**:130–3.
- Newton 1998** *{published data only}*
Newton K, Stein SM, Lucey C. Influence of mailing strategies on response to questionnaires. *Psychiatric Bulletin* 1998;**22**:692–4.
- O'Keefe 1987** *{published data only}*
O'Keefe LB. Selecting cost-effective survey methods: foot-in-door and prepaid monetary incentives. *Journal of Business Research* 1987;**15**:365–76.
- Pedrana 2008** *{published data only}*
Pedrana A, Hellard M, Giles M. Registered post achieved a higher response rate than normal mail - a randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2008;**61**(9):896–9.
- Porter 2007** *{published data only}*
Porter SR, Whitcomb ME. Mixed-mode contacts in Web surveys: paper is not necessarily better. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2007;**71**(4):635–48.
- Price 2004a** *{published data only}*
Price JH, Yingling F, Walsh E, Murnan J, Dake JA. Tone of postcards in increasing survey response rates. *Psychological Reports* 2004a;**94**(2):444–8.
- Price 2004b** *{published data only}*
Price JH, Yingling F, Walsh E, Murnan J, Dake JA. Tone of postcards in increasing survey response rates. *Psychological Reports* 2004b;**94**(2):444–8.
- Price 2004c** *{published data only}*
Price JH, Yingling F, Walsh E, Murnan J, Dake JA. Tone of postcards in increasing survey response rates. *Psychological Reports* 2004c;**94**(2):444–8.
- Rach 1994** *{unpublished data only}*
Rach PJ. An analysis of factors effecting initial response rates to mailed questionnaires. Doctoral Dissertation 1994.
- Satia 2005** *{published data only}*
Satia JA, Galanko JA, Rimer BK. Methods and strategies to recruit African Americans into cancer prevention surveillance studies. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention* 2005;**14**(3):718–21.

Siera 1988 *{published data only}*

Siera S. Four methods of following up mailed questionnaires. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association* 1988.

Strickland 1980 *{published data only}*

Strickland S. The effect of wording and scale format on student response to educational evaluation questionnaires. *Doctoral Dissertation* 1980.

Treat 1996 *{published data only}*

Treat JB. The effect of questionnaire length on response. *Proceedings of the Section on Survey, American Statistical Association* 1996;**1**:734–9.

Additional references**Armstrong 1995**

Armstrong BK, White E, Saracci R. Principles of exposure measurement in epidemiology. In: Kelsey JL, Marmot MG, Stolley PD, Vessey MP editor(s). *Monographs in Epidemiology and Biostatistics*. First Edition. Vol. **21**, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1995:294–321.

Clarke 1994

Clarke MJ, Stewart LA. Obtaining data from randomised controlled trials: how much do we need for reliable and informative meta-analyses?. *BMJ* 1994;**309**:1007–10.

Edwards 2004

Edwards P, Roberts I, Sandercock P, Frost C. Follow-up by mail in clinical trials: does questionnaire length matter?. *Controlled Clinical Trials* 2004;**25**(1):31–52.

Edwards 2005

Edwards P, Cooper R, Roberts I, Frost C. Meta-analysis of randomised trials of monetary incentives and response to mailed questionnaires. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2005;**59**:987–99.

Egger 1997

Egger M, Davey Smith G, Schneider M, Minder C. Bias in meta-analysis detected by a simple graphical test. *BMJ* 1997;**315**:629–34.

Engels 2000

Engels EA, Schmid CH, Terrin N, Oikkin I, Lau J. Heterogeneity and statistical significance in meta-analyses: an empirical study of 125 meta-analyses. *Statistics in Medicine* 2000;**19**:1707–28.

Hook 1992

Hook EB, Regal RR. The value of capture-recapture methods even for apparently exhaustive surveys. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 1992;**135**:1060–7.

Schulz 1995

Schulz KF, Chalmers I, Hayes RJ, Altman DG. Dimensions of methodological quality associated with estimates of treatment effects in controlled trials. *JAMA* 1995;**273**(5):408–12.

Scott 2006

Scott P, Edwards P. Personally addressed hand-signed letters increase questionnaire response: a meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *BMC Health Services Research* 2006;**6**:111.

StataCorp 1999 [Computer program]

StataCorp. Stata Statistical software [Stata Corporation]. Version Release 6.0 College Station, TX. Stata Corporation, 1999.

Yammarino 1991

Yammarino FJ, Skinner SJ, Childers TL. Understanding mail survey response behaviour: a meta-analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1991;**55**:613–39.

References to other published versions of this review**Edwards 2002**

Edwards P, Clarke M, DiGiuseppi C, Prata S, Wentz R, Kwan I. Increasing response rates to postal questionnaires: systematic review. *BMJ* 2002;**324**(7347):1183–5.

* Indicates the major publication for the study

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDIES

Characteristics of included studies [ordered by study ID]

Aadahl 2003

Methods	Random allocation: random numbers using SAS	
Data	Random sample of 2543 men and women from the Danish Civil Registration System (Copenhagen County, Denmark)	
Comparisons	1. Lottery (25 euro voucher) 2. Control	
Outcomes	Response at 4 weeks	
Topic	Health: Self-rated health, physical activity, and socio-demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 40.5 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Adams 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Full-time students (Brigham Young University, US)	
Comparisons	1. 1-page questionnaire 2. 3-page questionnaire 3. 5- page questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response at 3 months	
Topic	Non-health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Adams 1982 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Albaum 1987

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Members of a public employees credit
Comparisons	1. University source; Open code 2. Research firm source; Open code 3. Credit union source; Open code 4. University source; No code 5. Research firm source; No code 6. Credit union source; No code Mailed reminder notification and follow up
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Albaum 1989

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Marketing managers of manufacturing firms (Denmark)
Comparisons	1. Pre-contact by letter; Brochure explaining the study in depth 2. Pre-contact; No brochure 3. No pre-contact; Brochure 4. No pre-contact; No brochure
Outcomes	Response within 67 days
Topic	Non-health: Business, Employment, and Finance
Mode of Administration	Postal

Albaum 1989 (Continued)

Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Alutto 1970

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Members of a western New York State chamber of commerce	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent to work address 2. Questionnaire sent to home address	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards universities	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Andreasen 1970

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	New York State lottery winners	
Comparisons	1. Mimeographed salutation; Follow-up mimeographed 2. Mimeographed salutation; Follow-up handwritten 3. Hand-typed salutation; Follow-up mimeographed 4. Hand-typed salutation; Follow-up handwritten 5. Hand-typed salutation using name of participant with hand-written postscript; Follow-up mimeographed 6. Hand-typed salutation using name of participant with hand-written postscript; Follow-up handwritten Follow-up letters sent after 3 weeks. Follow-up questionnaires sent after 4 weeks	

Andreasen 1970 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Arzheimer 1999

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A random sample of people listed on registration file, Hamburg, Germany	
Comparisons	1. Phonecard worth 6 Deutsch marks included 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response in first wave of mailing	
Topic	Non-health: Voting behaviour	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Asch 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Subscribers to Nursing who had previously indicated practice in critical care settings (US)	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent 3 times 2. Questionnaire sent with postcard. If postcard was returned, participant received no follow-up mailings	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Asch 1996 (Continued)

Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: no further information on allocation concealment	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Asch 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Primary care physicians identified through the American Medical Association Physician Master File (US)	
Comparisons	1. \$2 incentive sent with questionnaire 2. \$5 incentive sent with questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: no further information on allocation concealment	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ashing-Giwa 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A sample of African-American and white American breast cancer patients diagnosed in 1989 and 1990	
Comparisons	1. \$5 gift certificate sent with questionnaire 2. Promise of \$5 gift certificate on response	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Ashing-Giwa 2000 (Continued)

Topic	Health: Quality of life in long-term breast cancer survivors	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 63.6 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Aveyard 2001

Methods	Random allocation: participants randomly sorted and then first 150 given intervention	
Data	300 smokers selected randomly from 2 general practices in the United Kingdom	
Comparisons	1. Pencil and eraser sent with questionnaire 2. No pencil or eraser sent with questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Recruitment for a smoking cessation programme	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Bachman 1987

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Tax payers (Missouri)	
Comparisons	1. Student sponsor; Social appeal 2. Student sponsor; Help the sponsor appeal 3. Business sponsor; Social appeal 4. Business sponsor; Help the sponsor appeal 5. Commercial sponsor; Social appeal 6. Commercial sponsor; Help the sponsor appeal	

Bachman 1987 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Public attitude towards Missouri Department of Revenue	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: no further information on allocation concealment	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Barker 1996

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	Individuals randomly selected from electoral registers (Solihull, UK)	
Comparisons	1. Question on sexual health included 2. Question on sexual health not included Reminder letter and questionnaire sent to non-responders 3 weeks after initial mailing	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Sexual health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Bauer 2004

Methods	Random allocation	
Data	People who participated both in the Community Intervention Trial for Smoking Cessation (COMMIT) as well as the follow-up study	

Bauer 2004 (Continued)

Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Cheque 2. US\$ 10 Cheque 3. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Smoking cessation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly 48-57 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Becker 2000a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	BSN alumni who graduated between 1989 and 1997 who had not returned an initial survey	
Comparisons	1. Second questionnaire sent as follow up 2. Postcard follow up (no second questionnaire)	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Professional experience since graduation and perceptions of academic preparation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Additional data obtained from author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Becker 2000b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Alumni who graduated with a PhD or MSN between 1988 and 1997 who had not returned an initial survey	
Comparisons	1. Second questionnaire sent as follow up 2. Postcard follow up (no second questionnaire)	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Professional experience since graduation and perceptions of academic preparation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Additional data obtained from author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Beebe 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS	
Data	Medicaid enrollees.Simple random sample	
Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Bill 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Racial and ethnic disparities in the use of health services and barriers to care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Beebe 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS	
Data	Medicaid enrollees, American Indian	
Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Bill 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Racial and ethnic disparities in the use of health services and barriers to care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Beebe 2005c

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS	
Data	Medicaid enrollees	
Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Bill 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Racial and ethnic disparities in the use of health services and barriers to care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Beebe 2005d

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS	
Data	Medicaid enrollees. Somali	
Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Bill 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Racial and ethnic disparities in the use of health services and barriers to care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Beebe 2005e

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS	
Data	Medicaid enrollees. Latino	
Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Bill 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Racial and ethnic disparities in the use of health services and barriers to care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Beebe 2005f

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS
Data	Medicaid enrollees. African American
Comparisons	1. US\$ 2 Bill 2. No incentive
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Racial and ethnic disparities in the use of health services and barriers to care
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Beebe 2007

Methods	Random allocation: using RANUNI function in SAS
Data	Mayo clinic patients
Comparisons	1. Small booklet (6 1/8 X 8 1/4") 2. Large booklet (8 1/4 X 11") 3. Blue booklet 8. White booklet
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Measure awareness and knowledge of privacy practices, and general opinions on privacy and health care
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author; Mean age: 57.6 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Bell 2004

Methods	Random allocation : computerised random number generation
Data	People who had signed up for the 'Adventist Health Study-2'
Comparisons	1. Follow-up phone call 2. No follow-up phone call
Outcomes	Response within approximately 6 months
Topic	Health: Dietary habits and risk of cancer
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Me an age: 67.5 years; Additional data obtained from author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Bellizzi 1986

Methods	Random allocation: random draw
Data	People randomly selected from a local city telephone directory, USA
Comparisons	1. \$1 bill included with questionnaire 2. No incentive
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Supermarket shopping
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Berdie 1973

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Staff of University of Minnesota, including professors of each rank	
Comparisons	1. 1-page questionnaire 2. 2-page questionnaire 3. 4- page questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response within 20 days	
Topic	Non-health: Current social problems	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Bergen 1957

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Teachers in municipal elementary schools (Amsterdam)	
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification 2. None	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Berk 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians	
Comparisons	1. \$10 with first mailing; Follow-up questionnaire and letter mentioning the incentive 2. No incentive with first mailing; Follow-up questionnaire with a \$10 incentive and letter explaining the importance of the study 3. No mention of \$10 incentive in either first or second mailing Follow-ups sent after 3 weeks	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Cost-effectiveness of 2 alternative methods of diagnosing allergies	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Berry 1987

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physician members of the American Medical Association	
Comparisons	1. Cheque sent with first mailing 2. Promise of cheque with first mailing Non-responders received a second mailing followed by a telephone call. If they no longer had the questionnaire, a third copy was sent	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Evaluation of National Institute of Health Consensus Development Programme	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 48 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Berry 1987 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Beydoun 2006

Methods	Random allocation: using computerised database
Data	Women of reproductive age residing in Iowa county
Comparisons	1. Unconditional \$5 Telephone card + Conditional \$25 Check 2. Conditional \$ 30 Check
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Electronic: CATI
Notes	Age: 18-49 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Bhandari 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	Surgeon members of the orthopaedic trauma association
Comparisons	1. Survey endorsed in cover letter by 'opinion leaders' (high profile surgeons) 2. Survey not endorsed
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Evaluate surgeons opinions regarding optimal treatment of fractures of the tibial shaft
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mean age: 30.5 years; Mainly males

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Bhandari 2003 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate
-------------------------	-----	--------------

Biner 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of a mid-western US city	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reactance appeal; \$1 incentive 2. Reactance appeal; No incentive 3. No reactance appeal; \$1 incentive 4. No reactance appeal; No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Residents attitudes about the city	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Biner 1990

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of a mid-western US city	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$1 incentive; Obligatory cover letter 2. \$1 incentive; Appreciative cover letter 3. \$0.25 incentive; Obligatory cover letter 4. \$0.25 incentive; Appreciative cover letter 	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Residents attitudes about the city	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Biner 1990 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Biner 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of a mid-western US city	
Comparisons	1. Short questionnaire; \$1 incentive and obligatory cover letter 2. Short questionnaire; \$1 incentive and appreciative cover letter 3. Long questionnaire; \$1 incentive and obligatory cover letter 4. Long questionnaire; \$1 incentive and appreciative cover letter	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Residents attitudes about the city	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Birnholtz 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Users of a collaboratory for earthquake engineering research	
Comparisons	1. \$5 bill 2. Gift certificate for Amazon.com	
Outcomes	Response period was 6 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Participants research work and perception of a set of collaboration tools	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web based	
Notes	Additional data obtained from the author	

Risk of bias

Birnholtz 2004 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Blass 1981

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Certified psychologists who did not respond to previous mailing of the questionnaire	
Comparisons	1. Consensus statement; Threat of follow up 2. Consensus statement; No threat of follow up 3. No consensus statement; Threat of follow up 4. No consensus statement; No threat of follow up	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Psychologist behavior and attitudes towards continuing education	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Blass-Wilhems 1982

Methods	Random allocation: random walk sampling	
Data	Not known	
Comparisons	1. Real postage stamp 2. Postage paid reply	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Blass-Wilhems 1982 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Blomberg 1996

Methods	Random allocation: using a list of numbers between 1-99 selected in a 'random' order by a researcher	
Data	Patients at the Stockholm County Council Institute of Psychotherapy	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire with promise of lottery ticket on response 2. Questionnaire with lottery ticket enclosed 3. Questionnaire with no incentive All non-respondents were sent reminders at 3, 6 and 10 weeks after initial mailing At 14 weeks, non-responders were sent a brief questionnaire regarding their reasons for not responding	
Outcomes	Response within 12 weeks. Response period for second questionnaire not specified	
Topic	Health: Psychotherapy measures - General Symptom Index, Sense of Coherence, and Change in Target Complaints	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Author confirmed allocation concealment	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Blythe 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Social workers	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire with an opportunity to enter a lottery 2. Questionnaire without lottery offer Reminder letter sent after 1 week. Non-respondents followed-up at 3 and 7 weeks with offer to participate in the lottery	
Outcomes	Response within 30 days	
Topic	Health: Application of clinical evaluation tools in practice	

Blythe 1986 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Boser 1990

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Graduates from the College of Education of a major university (US)	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire in folder format 2. Questionnaire in stapled format	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Teaching	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Bosnjak 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Local professional sales association members in the mid-atlantic US	
Comparisons	1. Unconditional \$2 via Paypal 2. Conditional \$2 3. Conditional Prize draw (two \$50 and four \$25 prizes) 4. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-Health: Trends and concerns in real estates	

Bosnjak 2003 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate.

Bredart 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Breast cancer patients undergoing surgical treatment within the surgery department of the European Institute of Oncology in Milan	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent 2 weeks after hospital discharge 2. Questionnaire sent 3 months after hospital discharge	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brehaut 2006

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Members of the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians	
Comparisons	1. Single sided print format 2. Double sided print format 3. Known sender recognition 4. Unknown sender recognition	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Brehaut 2006 (Continued)

Topic	Health: Clinical decision rules	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Brems 2006

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Licensed healthcare professionals from Alaska and New Mexico in the US	
Comparisons	1. First-class mail 2. Priority mail	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Range of treatment used by physical and behavioural healthcare providers, ethical issues	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Brennan 1991

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed on 1 of the 57 electoral rolls representing the main urban centres, New Zealand	
Comparisons	1. Control - no incentive 2. 20c coin with first mailing 3. 50c coin with first mailing 4. \$1 note with first mailing 5. 20c coin with second mailing 6. 50c coin with second mailing	

Brennan 1991 (Continued)

	7. \$1 note with second mailing 8. Entry into prize draw for \$200 cash offered with each mail out 9. Entry into prize draw for \$200 gift voucher offered with each mail out	
Outcomes	Response within 21 days of the third mailing (49 days after initial mailing)	
Topic	Non-health: Personal finance status	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Randomisation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brennan 1992a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed on a financial service company's 'hot prospect' list	
Comparisons	1. \$0.50 incentive 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Finances and shopping behaviours	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brennan 1992b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed on the electoral roll (New Zealand)	
Comparisons	1. \$0.50 incentive 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Finances and shopping behaviours	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brennan 1992c

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed on the electoral roll (New Zealand)	
Comparisons	1. \$0.50 incentive 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Finances and shopping behaviours	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brennan 1993a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Dairy and beef farmers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$0.50 coin with first mailing 2. \$1 coin with first mailing 3. \$1 lottery ticket with first mailing 4. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brennan 1993b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed on the electoral roll (New Zealand)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$0.50 coin with first mailing 2. \$1 coin with first mailing 3. Promise that \$1 would be donated to a charity for each valid return (in each of 3 mailings) 4. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Bright 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	US Marinas	
Comparisons	1. Offer of entry into a prize draw and summary of study results on return of questionnaire 2. No incentive offered	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Perceptions of decision makers at US Marinas	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brook 1978

Methods	Random allocation: alternation.	
Data	People who had been interviewed when shopping (Southampton, UK)	
Comparisons	1. First class stamp out; First class stamp return 2. First class stamp out; Second class stamp return 3. Second class stamp out; First class stamp return 4. Second class stamp out; Second class stamp return 5. First class stamp out; Second class business reply return 6. Second class stamp out; Second class business reply return	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Brown 1965

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Non-paediatric physicians (US)
Comparisons	1. 2-page questionnaire (first page was letter with 2 cystic fibrosis screening questions; second page asked for details of patients seen) 2. 1-page cover letter and postcard with 2 cystic fibrosis screening questions
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Cystic fibrosis
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brown 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Officers and enlisted men
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification; Randomised enquiry method 2. No pre-notification; Randomised enquiry method 3. Pre-notification; Conventional method 4. No pre-notification; Conventional method
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Assessment of illicit drug use
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Bruce 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People randomly selected from households in central Sydney (Australia) who had agreed to participate during an earlier phone interview	
Comparisons	1. Phone call reminder to non-responders 2. Postcard reminder to non-responders	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Colorectal Cancer Screening	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Brogger 2007

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Permanent residents of Norway	
Comparisons	1. Postal plus optional Internet response 2. Only postal response	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Respiratory survey (to establish the occurrence and risk factors for asthma and allergies)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 30.7 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Buchman 1982

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Certified public accountants	
Comparisons	1. Conventional questionnaire 2. Randomised response technique employed for each question	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Audit procedures	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Burns 1980

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A random sample of bank and savings and loan chief executive officers, USA	
Comparisons	1. No incentive; No follow up 2. 25 cent incentive; No follow up 3. 25 cent incentive; Follow-up postcard sent 10 days after initial mailing 4. No incentive; Follow-up postcard sent 10 days after initial mailing	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Commercial population	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Buttle 1997

Methods	Random allocation	
Data	Managing Directors of the companies listed on the DTI Quality Assurance Register 1995	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaires printed on white paper 2. Questionnaires printed on yellow paper	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Perceived costs and benefits of ISO 9000 in certified organisations	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Cabana 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Paediatricians listed as general paediatricians in the American Medical Association master file	
Comparisons	1. Survey logo on questionnaire only 2. Survey logo on cover letter, return envelope, questionnaire and outer envelope	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Campbell 1990

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	People listed on the electoral roll (Southampton, UK)
Comparisons	1. Participants told replies would be anonymous 2. Participants told replies would not be anonymous and would be followed-up after 3 weeks
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Knowledge of AIDS
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Camunas 1990

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Nurses who were members of the New York State Nurses Association
Comparisons	Experiment 1: 1. Questionnaire, cover letter and brochure 2. Questionnaire, cover letter with an invitation to join the Nursing association and brochure 3. Questionnaire and cover letter only Experiment 2: 1. Questionnaire, cover letter and \$1bill incentive 2. Questionnaire and cover letter only Questionnaires were colour-coded for each group. No pre-contact or follow up used
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Professional membership behaviour
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Camunas 1990 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Carling 2004

Methods	Random allocation:method not specified	
Data	Journalists in the health field	
Comparisons	1. International postal vouchers 2. No International postal vouchers	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: barriers and facilitators to high quality health journalism	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Carpenter 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed on an automobile registration list (Arizona, US)	
Comparisons	1. Least personalised questionnaire 2. Somewhat personalised questionnaire 3. Most personalised questionnaire 4. Control group	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Migration behaviour	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Carpenter 1974 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Carpenter 1977

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Heads of households and their spouses selected from the annually compiled auto registration list
Comparisons	1. 2 questionnaires allocated per household 2. 1 questionnaire allocated per household
Outcomes	Response within 7 weeks
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Cartwright 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Recent mothers
Comparisons	Experiment 1: 1. Long questionnaire about facts and attitudes 2. Medium questionnaire about facts and attitudes 3. Short questionnaire about facts and attitudes 4. Long questionnaire about facts only 5. Medium questionnaire about facts only 6. Short questionnaire about facts only Experiment 2: 1. Government department sponsor (OPCS, UK) 2. University sponsor (Institute for Social Studies in Medical Care) Experiment 3: 1. Asked to tick boxes in response 2. Asked to ring pre-codes in response

Cartwright 1986 (Continued)

Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Maternity	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Cartwright 1987

Methods	Random allocation: systematic division	
Data	Elderly people from the electoral registers in Woodford and Wanstead, London and Blackley, Manchester, UK	
Comparisons	1. Shorter questionnaire (2 questions) 2. Longer questionnaire (5 questions)	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Medication and relationship with GPs	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Chan 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Chinese Medicine Practitioners registered with the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong	
Comparisons	1. HK \$ 20 2. HK \$ 30 3. No Incentives	

Chan 2003 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Knowledge, attitudes, and practices on computers and computer use in clinical practice	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly 40-59 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Chebat 1991

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	The Quebec population within the legal driving age	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-notification; Non-monetary incentive 2. Pre-notification; No incentive 3. No pre notification; Non-monetary incentive 4. No pre notification; No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Driving behaviour	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation and concealment ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Chen 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students from 4 Taipei Universities	

Chen 1984 (Continued)

Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long questionnaire - 5 pages 2. Short questionnaire - 2 pages 3. High salient topic - cutting-class behaviours in undergraduates 4. Low salient topic - cutting-class behaviours in PhD students 5. High authority researcher - University professor with a PhD in Psychology 6. Low authority researcher - Student from the Psychology department 	
Outcomes	Response period within 10 days	
Topic	Non-health: Class cutting behaviour	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Language of publication is Chinese	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Childers 1979

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Agents of large Midwest-based multiple-line insurance company (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advance letter with commitment postcard. Asked to return the postcard to say if will participate and how long they will take to respond. 'Yes' responses then sent a questionnaire 2. Advance letter with commitment postcard. Asked to return the postcard only to say if will participate. 'Yes' responses then sent questionnaire 3. Control - no prior commitment sought. All sent questionnaires <p>Reminder postcards sent after 4 days. Non respondents sent another questionnaire after 3 weeks</p>	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Insurance	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Childers 1980a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Academics on the American Marketing Association Roster	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Egoistic appeal; Hand-written postscript 2. Egoistic appeal; Typed postscript 3. Help the sponsor appeal; Hand-written postscript 4. Help the sponsor appeal; Typed postscript 5. Social utility appeal; Hand-written postscript 6. Social utility appeal; Typed postscript <p>All participants received reminders after 1 week</p>	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing texts	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Childers 1980b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Business practitioners on a mailing list of a major south-western university (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Egoistic appeal; Hand-written postscript 2. Egoistic appeal; Typed postscript 3. Help the sponsor appeal; Hand-written postscript 4. Help the sponsor appeal; Typed postscript 5. Social utility appeal; Hand-written postscript 6. Social utility appeal; Typed postscript <p>All participants received reminders after 1 week</p>	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing texts	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Childers 1980b (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Childers 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Policyholders of a national insurance company (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computer-printed out-going envelope, computer-printed return-envelope, cover letter explained name and address were for research only 2. Computer-printed out-going envelope, computer-printed return-envelope, cover letter did not explain name and address were for research only 3. Computer-printed out-going envelope, participants given provision to write own name and address on return envelope, cover letter explained name and address were for research only 4. Computer-printed out-going envelope, participants given provision to write own name and address on return envelope, cover letter did not explain name and address were for research only 5. Labelled address on out-going envelope, computer-printed return address, cover letter explained name and address were for research only 6. Labelled address on out-going envelope, computer-printed return address, cover letter did not explain name and address were for research only 7. Labelled address on out-going envelope, participants given provision to write own name and address on return envelope, cover letter explained name and address were for research only 8. Labelled address on out-going envelope, participants given provision to write own name and address on return envelope, cover letter did not explain name and address were for research only 	
Outcomes	Response within 12 days	
Topic	Non-health: Payment of car insurance	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Childers TL 1979

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	American marketing association practitioner members	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small paper size (8½ X 11“) 2. Large paper size (8½ X 14”) 3. Single sided 4. Double sided 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing concepts, Employment features	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate.

Choi 1990

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Members of the Ontario Nurses' Association	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No stamp on return envelope 2. Business-reply stamp 3. Metered stamp 4. Small regular stamp 5. Large commemorative stamp 	
Outcomes	Response within 92 days	
Topic	-	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Christie 1985

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	People aged 18+ years listed in the 1984 Auckland telephone directory, New Zealand
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hand written signature on covering letter (HW); Actual age and income asked for (AAI); Typed address on outgoing envelope (Ty) 2. HW; AAI; Hand written address on outgoing envelope (HE) 3. HW; Age and income bracket asked for (AIB); Ty 4. HW; AIB; HE 5. Typed signature on covering letter (T); AAI; Ty 6. T; AAI; HE 7. T; AIB; Ty 8. T; AIB; HE
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Marketing - awareness of macadamia nuts, purchase behaviour
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Church 2004

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Residents of Wright County in Minnesota, US
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only questionnaire 2. Questionnaire + Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) - No reminder 3. Questionnaire + Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) + Reminder
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Colorectal screening
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mean age: 63 years; Mainly females; 49 % of participants belonging to group 2 was inadvertently delivered the 1st reminder

Clark 2001

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	All consultants listed on the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists database (UK)
Comparisons	1. Simple plastic ballpoint pen sent with questionnaire. 2. No pen
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Views on gynaecological endoscopy
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	1 reminder was sent to all non-responders 3 months after initial mailing

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Clark TJ 2001

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	All gynaecologists identified from the British Society of Gynaecological Endoscopy database of members
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire and covering letter printed on standard quality white paper 2. Questionnaire and covering letter printed on high quality white paper
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Hysteroscopy
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Clarke 1998

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Study survivors resident in 3 health authority areas	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 extra questions on current sources of income included 2. Extra questions not included 3. Extra questionnaire on cognitive functioning included 4. Extra questionnaire not included 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Whitehall study	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mean age: 77 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Clausen 1947

Methods	Random allocation: systematic division	
Data	Non-respondents to an earlier survey	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impersonal salutation; Handwritten signature; Franked outward envelope 2. Impersonal salutation; Facsimile signature; Franked outward envelope 3. Personal salutation; Facsimile signature; Franked outward envelope 4. Personal salutation; Handwritten signature; Franked outward envelope 5. Personal salutation; Handwritten signature; Air mail and special delivery outward envelope 	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Health: National Service Life Insurance (NSLI)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Clausen 1947 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate
-------------------------	----	----------------

Claycomb 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Marketing executives and managers representing a geographic cross section of the US	
Comparisons	Intervals between the original and 2 rounds of follow-up mailings: 1. 3 days 2. 6 days 3. 9 days 4. 12 days 5. 15 days 6. 18 days 7. 21 days 8. 24 days 9. 27 days 10. 30 days 11. 33 days 12. 36 days 13. 39 days 14. 42 days 15. 45 days 16. 48 days 17. 51 days 18. 54 days 19. 57 days 20. 60 days	
Outcomes	Response after 3 mailings	
Topic	Non-health: Companies customer relation practices	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Dates of initial mailings randomised to prevent seasonal biases	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Cleopas 2006

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Adults discharged from teaching hospital system in Geneva	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2-original response format (yes/no) 2. 3-point similarity format (applies completely/in part/not at all) 3. 5-point intensity format (completely true to completely false) 4. 5-point frequency format (all the time to never). 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Patient based outcome measure (Nottingham Health Profile)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate.

Cobanoglu 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Managers who are members of the American Management Association (AMA)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luggage tag (LT) 2. Prize draw for a personal digital assistant (PDA) 3. Prize draw for both LT + PDA 4. Control. 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	Adequate

Cockayne 2005

Methods	Random allocation
Data	Community dwelling women aged over 70 years living in the York and Cumbria area
Comparisons	1. Offer of study results 2. Control
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Calcium and Vitamin D supplementation for fracture prevention
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Independent researchers from the York Trials Unit randomised the eligible women. Administration of the questionnaire was not blind to group allocation Age: Above 70 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	Adequate.

Collins 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Members of the RAND adolescent / young adult panel study drawn from schools across the US
Comparisons	1. \$20 cash with mailing 2. \$20 cash promised on return of questionnaire 3. \$25 cash promised on return of questionnaire
Outcomes	Response within approximately 4 months
Topic	Health: Substance use, problem behavior, predictors of risk behavior, attitudes and beliefs
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Corcoran 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Masters level social workers	
Comparisons	1. First class stamped return envelope 2. Reply permit return envelope Follow-up postcard sent to all subjects 3 to 4 weeks after original mailing	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	-	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Cox 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of a south-western city listed in the metropolitan telephone directory (US)	
Comparisons	1. Personalised cover letter; Follow-up postcard after 3 days 2. Personalised cover letter; No follow-up postcard 3. No personalised cover letter; Follow-up postcard after 3 days 4. No personalised cover letter; No follow-up postcard	
Outcomes	Response within 16 days	
Topic	Non-health: Finance - appraise consumer evaluations of financial institutions	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Crittenden 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Alumni members of a National Business School	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. White questionnaire 2. Yellow questionnaire 3. Questionnaire using Letter quality printer 4. Questionnaire using Dot-matrix printer 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non health: Education	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	2 x 2 Factorial design	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Cycyota 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Businesses form the state sales and use of license records in the Southwestern region of US	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. US \$1 bill 2. No incentive 3. Advance notice 4. No advance notice 5. Personalised salutation 6. No personalised salutation 7. Telephone follow up 8. No telephone follow up 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Employment	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	2 X 2 X 2 X 2 X 2 fully crossed factorial design; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		

Cycyota 2002 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Deehan 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	GPs who did not respond to 2 mailings of a questionnaire (UK)	
Comparisons	Third mailing: 1. No incentive 2. £5 charity donation 3. £10 charity donation 4. £5 payment 5. £10 payment Fourth mailing to non responders in control group of third mailing: 1. £5 payment 2. £10 payment	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Information on clinical work with alcohol misusing patients	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Del Valle 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of the American Association of Neurologists who did not respond to 2 earlier mailings	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent by certified mail with return receipt request postcard 2. Questionnaire sent by first class mail	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	-	

Del Valle 1997 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Delnevo 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using a statistical software package	
Data	New Jersey Internists, general practitioners, family physicians, paediatricians, and obstetrician and gynaecologists	
Comparisons	1. Up-front \$25 gift card 2. Promised \$25 gift card	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Smoking cessation - attitudes and practice	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	The investigators were not blinded to the treatment allocation - confirmed by the author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Denton 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Graduates from the Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction at a large university in the south-west (US)	
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. Newsletter 3. \$0.25 4. \$0.25 and newsletter	

Denton 1988 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Education	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Denton 1991

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Experiments 1 and 2: Graduates from the Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction at a large university in the south-west (US)	
Comparisons	Experiment 1: 1. No incentive 2. Newsletter 3. \$0.25 4. \$0.25 and newsletter Experiment 2: 1. No incentive 2. \$0.25 3. \$0.50 4. \$1 5. Raffle	
Outcomes	Experiment 2 : Response within 2 months	
Topic	Non-health : Classroom teachers pedagogical knowledge and skills	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Deutskens 2004a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation in SPSS	
Data	Participants of the multi-client attitude and usage study in the Netherlands	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 Euros voucher for an online book and CD store 2. 5 Euros voucher for an online book and CD store 3. Lotteries to win vouchers worth 25 Euros 4. Lotteries to win vouchers worth 50 Euros 5. Charity donation of 500 Euros to either World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Amnesty International, or a Cancer Association 6. Short version of the questionnaire 7. Long version of the questionnaire 8. Visual presentation of response categories 9. Textual presentation of response categories 10. Early follow up (after 1 week) 11. Late follow up (after 2 weeks) 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non health: Marketing	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	3 X 2 X 2 X 2 Factorial design. Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author Age: Mostly 35-49; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Deutskens 2004b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation in SPSS	
Data	University students	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lottery to win 1 out of 10 vouchers of 25 Euros 2. Lottery to win 1 out of 5 vouchers of 50 Euros 3. Lottery to win a DVD Player 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Education	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online	

Deutskens 2004b (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	Adequate

Dillman 1974a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A group of Washington State University alumni	
Comparisons	1. Personalised cover letter 2. Non- personalised cover letter	
Outcomes	Response after 4 mailings	
Topic	Non-health: Feelings and concerns about Washington State University	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained to be random through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dillman 1974b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A systematic sample of people listed in the phone directories of Washington state, USA	
Comparisons	1. No pre-contact 2. Telephone pre-contact	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Feelings and concerns about Washington State University	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Dillman 1974b (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained to be random through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dillman 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Housing units identified by the census bureaus address control file	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1990 short form (control) questionnaire 2. Booklet 3. Micro form 4. Micro form requesting SSN 5. Roster form 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Census	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dillman 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	National probability sample of households in the USA	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control group 2. Benefit appeal on envelope and insert; Strong confidentiality assurance 3. Benefit appeal on envelope and insert; Standard confidentiality assurance 4. Mandatory appeal on envelope and insert; Strong confidentiality assurance 5. Mandatory appeal on envelope and insert; Standard confidentiality assurance 6. Mandatory appeal on envelope only; No confidentiality assurance 	

Dillman 1996 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Census	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	D - Not used

Dirmaier 2007

Methods	Random allocation: using computer assisted algorithm	
Data	Patients admitted for Psychotherapeutic treatment	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire 3. 5 German Mark bill 4. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Mental Health outcome and treatment research	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly 40-59; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dodd 1987

Methods	Random allocation: using a table of random numbers	
Data	Women employed full-time in various civil servant positions at a university (US)	

Dodd 1987 (Continued)

Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hand-signed, professor status, female author 2. Hand-signed, student status, female author 3. Hand-signed, professor status, male author 4. Hand-signed, student status, male author 5. Photocopied signature, professor status, female author 6. Photocopied signature, student status, female author 7. Photocopied signature, professor status, male author 8. Photocopied signature, student status, male author 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Allocation concealment not described; Mean age: 42 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 1980a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in the Cincinnati telephone directory (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire with low threat follow up 2. Questionnaire with low-moderate follow up 3. Questionnaire with low-moderate follow up (different to above) 4. Questionnaire with moderate follow up 5. Questionnaire with follow up with moderate appeal 6. Questionnaire with prepaid incentive of 25 cents in follow up 7. Personally asked to compare the relative noxiousness of the threat of appeals sent to groups 1-4 Non-respondents to the initial mailings were followed-up	
Outcomes	Response within 31 days.	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards questionnaire, socio- demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Dommeyer 1980a (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 1980b

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Individuals listed in the Cincinnati telephone directory (US)
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire with ID number typed on lower right-hand corner of last page 2. As above, with words: 'Please do not remove identifying code number' typed to next to the ID number
Outcomes	Response within 13 days
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards questionnaire, socio-demographics
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Dommeyer 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Undergraduate business students (US)
Comparisons	1. Interesting questionnaire; No summary of results offered 2. Interesting questionnaire; Results summary offered 3. Uninteresting questionnaire; No summary of results offered 4. Uninteresting questionnaire; Results summary offered
Outcomes	-
Topic	Non-health: Finance - Tax survey; Mind Inventory Catalogue
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Dommeyer 1985 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 1987

Methods	Random allocation using alternation	
Data	Telephone owners in Cincinnati	
Comparisons	1. Negative appeal mention of follow up 2. Usual mail 3. Prepaid incentive of 25 cent each	
Outcomes	Response to be received by 28th June	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes and familiarity towards mail; Education, Employment	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Dommeyer 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in the Chicago and Phoenix telephone directory	
Comparisons	Different postscripts used on letter depending on intervention: 1. No incentive 2. 25 cent coin 3. 25 cent cheque 4. 25 cent money order 5. Early bird - get a share in an incentive (\$25) if send questionnaire back quickly 6. Sweep stake (entered into sweepstake to win \$25 if return questionnaire by deadline) All participants sent cover letter and questionnaire in window envelope	
Outcomes	-	

Dommeyer 1988 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Product tampering and Morality Conscience Guilt Scale	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 1989

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Personal computer owners, manufacturers and retailers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover letter stressed importance of response and emphasised that respondents' names would never be placed on the questionnaire (control group) 2. Second paragraph offered respondents a summary of the results 3. Standard cover letter. Offer of a copy of the results made in a separate 'lift' letter 	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Knowledge and attitudes towards computer counterfeiting	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 1991

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Californian residents who were entitled to a refund	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaser printed on envelope 2. No teaser on envelope 	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	

Dommeyer 1991 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Finance - Awareness and attitudes towards insurance refunds	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed in a telephone directory (Los Angeles, USA)	
Comparisons	1. Photograph of an 'attractive' researcher printed on cover letter 2. No photo printed on cover letter	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards music censorship and warning stickers on music albums	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dommeyer 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using randomised incomplete block design	
Data	Undergraduate business major students at California State University	
Comparisons	1. Grade incentive 2. In-class Demonstration of the web survey 3. Early grade feedback 4. Control	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Dommeyer 2004 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Education	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Donaldson 1999

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians randomly selected from a list of US physicians actively caring for at least 1 transplant patient	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$5 check with initial mailing; No follow-up call 2. \$5 check with initial mailing; Follow-up call to non-responders 4 weeks after initial mailing 3. No incentive; No follow-up call 4. No incentive; Follow-up call to non-responders 4 weeks after initial mailing 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 47 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Doob 1971a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in a phone book (Toronto and Ontario, Canada)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No reactance (letter written normally); No incentive 2. No reactance; Dime incentive 3. Reactance (request written to make participants feel an attempt was being made to limit their freedom); No money 	

Doob 1971a (Continued)

	4. Reactance; Dime incentive	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Health: Knowledge that smoking causes cancer	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Doob 1971b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in a phone book (Toronto and Ontario, Canada)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No reactance (letter written normally); No incentive 2. No reactance; Dime incentive 3. Reactance (request written to make participants feel an attempt was being made to limit their freedom); No money 4. Reactance; Dime incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Health: Knowledge that smoking causes cancer	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Doob 1971c

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in a phone book (Toronto and Ontario, Canada)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No reactance (letter written normally); No incentive 2. No reactance; 20 cents incentive 3. Reactance (request written to make participants feel an attempt was being made to limit their freedom); No money 4. Reactance; 20 cents incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Health: Knowledge that smoking causes cancer	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Doob 1973

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in a telephone directory (Canada)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 20 cents incentive 2. 5 cents incentive 3. No incentive <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University sponsor 2. Industrial sponsor 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Automobile ownership, duration spend on watching TV	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Doob 1973 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Doody 2003a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	US radiologist technologists who had not responded to 2 earlier mailings of a questionnaire	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. US first class mail; No incentive 2. US first class mail; \$1 bill 3. US first class mail; \$2 bill 4. US first class mail; \$2 check 5. US first class mail; \$5 check 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	All subjects received a pre-notification letter; Age: Mostly 40-49 years; Mainly females	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Doody 2003b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	US radiologist technologists who had not responded to 2 earlier mailings of a questionnaire	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Federal express; No incentive 2. Federal express; \$1 bill 3. Federal express; \$2 bill 4. Federal express; \$2 check 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly 40-49 years; Mainly females	

Doody 2003b (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dorman 1997

Methods	Random allocation: using an allocation code generated by an adaptive randomisation algorithm
Data	Patients who had been entered into the International stroke trial between 2 March 1993 and 31 May 1995
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire incorporating the EuroQol 2. Questionnaire incorporating the SF-36 Questionnaires were identical in all respects other than the nature of the HRQoL instrument. EuroQol has 7 questions, SF-36 has 36. Both had same number of pages, but the first questionnaire had fewer questions Reminders sent to non-responders after 2 weeks
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health : SF-36, Euro QoL
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	The randomisation algorithm used aimed to balance the 2 groups for age, sex, stroke syndrome and the time from stroke onset to follow up

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Downes-Le Guin 2002

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation
Data	IT managers in US businesses
Comparisons	1. Unconditional Amazon gift certificate (\$15) 2. Unconditional Amazon gift certificate (\$25) 3. Conditional Amazon gift certificate (\$15) 4. Conditional Amazon gift certificate (\$25)
Outcomes	Response period not specified

Downes-Le Guin 2002 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Marketing	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Drummond 2008

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	Primary care physicians working in Ireland	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-contact via mail 2. No pre-contact 3. Questionnaire order: Version 1, demographics first 4. Questionnaire order: Version 2, topic specific questions first (Prostate-specific antigen testing) 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Views and practices about prostate-specific testing (PSA)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Duffy 2001

Methods	Random allocation: Twin numbered 01 in each pair received single stamp, the other received the intervention	
Data	Twins who are volunteer members of the Australian NHMRC Twin Registry	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single stamp on enclosed return envelope 2. Multiple stamps (3-5) on enclosed return envelope 	

Duffy 2001 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Asthma, Psoriasis	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Duhan 1990

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Industrial marketing executives	
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification 2. No prior notification	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Dunn 2003

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	Patients aged 30-59 years with back pain in the UK	
Comparisons	1. Traditional questionnaire - Generic questionnaires first followed by disease-specific ones 2. Chronological questionnaire - Individual questions arranged in sections according to the period of time that they ask about	

Dunn 2003 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Patient-base outcome measures - Chronic pain grade, SF-36, Hospital & Anxiety Scale, Roland-Morris Disability Questionnaire	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Me an age: 45 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Eaker 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Men and women living in Sweden in 1995	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preliminary notification (PN); Long questionnaire (LQ); Mention of telephone contact (MTC) 2. PN; Short questionnaire (SQ); MTC 3. PN; LQ; No MTC 4. PN; SQ; No MTC 5. No PN; LQ; MTC 6. No PN; SQ; No MTC 7. No PN; LQ; No MTC 8. No PN; SQ; No MTC Reminders sent to all after 1 week	
Outcomes	Response within 75 days	
Topic	Health: Medical history, physical activity, eating and drinking habits, reproductive history	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly above 45 years; Equal male and females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Easton 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Paediatricians listed in the American Academy of Paediatrics Directory	
Comparisons	1. Information booklet 2. \$1 incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Counselling about sun protection	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Edwards 2001

Methods	Random allocation: central randomisation	
Data	Head injured adults in the CRASH trial (UK)	
Comparisons	1. 1-page questionnaire 2. 3- page questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response within 3 months	
Topic	Health: Disability after traumatic brain injury	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Elkind 1986

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Psychologists with APA membership	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plain covering envelope with rubber-stamped return address 2. University-printed envelope 3. Postage-stamped 4. Business reply 	
Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Response rate at 6 weeks 2. Response rate after 12 weeks 	
Topic	Health: Patients' violence and harassment	
Mode of Administration	Postal: first class mail	
Notes	Method confirmed by the author; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Enger 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	College graduates	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2-page questionnaire; Stamped return envelope 2. 1-page questionnaire; Stamped return envelope 3. 1-page questionnaire designed as a self-mailer 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	-	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Erdogan 2002

Methods	Random allocation: systematic assignment	
Data	Advertising agency managers who had not responded to a questionnaire mailed 2 weeks previous	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Original replacement follow-up mailing: A colour department-headed cover letter, original questionnaire plus self addressed, first class stamped return envelope 2. Photocopy replacement follow-up mailing: A colour department-headed cover letter, photocopied questionnaire plus self addressed, first class stamped return envelope 3. Post card: Colour departmental follow up postcard only 4. Letter: Colour department headed follow up letter only 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Etter 1996

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	French-speaking patients at a medical practice in the suburbs of Geneva who had recently consulted a physician and who lived in Geneva at the time of data collection	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University letterhead; Cover letter signed by the researchers; Business reply envelope addressed to the University of Geneva 2. Medical Practice letterhead; Cover letter signed by the director of the medical practice; Business reply envelope addressed to the practice Packages sent to non-respondents every 10 days up to a maximum of 4 times Reminder postcards sent 2 days after first and second mailings	
Outcomes	Response within 45 days	
Topic	Health: Patient satisfaction	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		

Etter 1996 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Etter 1998a

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Students, faculty, administrative and technical staff of a university (Geneva, Switzerland)	
Comparisons	1. Sent saliva vial; Offered participation in lottery; Pen incentive 2. Saliva vial; Pen incentive 3. Saliva vial; Offered participation in lottery 4. Saliva vial 5. Offered participation in lottery; Pen incentive 6. Pen incentive 7. Offered participation in lottery 8. None Best response intervention was sent as follow up	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Health status using SF-36, smoking habits, self-efficacy	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mean age: 28.5 years; Mainly females	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Etter 1998b

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Residents of Geneva	
Comparisons	1. Professional layout; Prior feedback letter 2. Professional layout; No prior feedback letter 3. Standard layout; Prior feedback letter 4. Standard layout; Prior feedback letter	
Outcomes	-	

Etter 1998b (Continued)

Topic	Health: Use of health services, satisfaction with medical care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mean age: 32 years; Equal male and females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Etter 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of various health insurance plans aged 19-45 (Geneva, Switzerland)	
Comparisons	1. Light green paper questionnaire 2. White paper questionnaire 5 follow-up reminder questionnaires were used	
Outcomes	Response within 50 days	
Topic	Health: Health status, health related life styles, use of medical services, satisfaction with medical care, socio-demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 19-45 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Etzel 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Random sample of bank credit card holders on a list provided by a bank, USA	
Comparisons	1. No follow up 2. Follow-up without duplicate questionnaire and return envelope sent 5 days after initial mailing 3. Follow-up with duplicates sent 5 days after initial mailing	

Etzel 1974 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 17 days	
Topic	Non-health: Finance - Credit care usage	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Evans 2004

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Men diagnosed with Prostate cancer	
Comparisons	1. Unconditional 30 minutes prepaid phone card 2. Conditional 30 minutes prepaid phone card	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Dietary supplementation use in cancer patients	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Falthzik 1971

Methods	Random allocation: odd numbered firms received closed question, even numbered firms received open-ended question	
Data	Personnel departments of 200 firms listed in Fortune magazine's list of the 500 largest firms in the US	
Comparisons	1. Closed question 2. Open-ended question	

Falthzik 1971 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Characteristics while hiring college graduates	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Random allocation unclear	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Faria 1990

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Homeowners residing in a medium sized US city on the 'city property owners' listing	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Telephone pre-contact 1-3 days before questionnaire mailing 2. Letter pre-notification sent 2 days before questionnaire mailing 3. No pre-contact 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Faria 1992

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Individuals listed on the company mailing list of a major manufacturer	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University sponsor; No promised contribution to charity 2. University sponsor; Promised contribution to a specified charity 3. University sponsor; Promised contribution to 1 of 3 charities selected by respondent 	

Faria 1992 (Continued)

	4. Commercial sponsor; No promised contribution to charity 5. Commercial sponsor; Promised contribution to charity 6. Commercial sponsor; Promised contribution to 1 of 3 charities selected by respondent	
Outcomes	Response within 23 days	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Faria 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Patients with acute stroke	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire with stamped return envelope 2. Questionnaire with free post return envelope	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Feild 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Full-time teaching faculty members of a large southeastern university (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signed by male investigator; Sent to male subject 2. Signed by male investigator; Sent to female subject 3. Signed by female investigator; Sent to male subject 4. Signed by female investigator; Sent to female subject 5. Signed by both male and female investigators; Sent to male subject 6. Signed by both male and female investigators; Sent to female subject 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Short form of the attitudes towards women scale	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Equal male and females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ferrell 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Practitioners in managerial or administrative capacities listed in the American Marketing Association roster	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire sent to home address 2. Questionnaire sent to work address 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Marketing terms used by organisations, description of jobs, and their firm	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Finn 1983

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Heads of households in the trading area of certain financial institutions. The target area was a middle to high income section of the city and included all age groups and family sizes	
Comparisons	1. Return envelope with standard first class stamp and typed return address 2. Pre-printed business reply envelope	
Outcomes	Response within 29 days	
Topic	Non-health: Finance - Usage of financial institutions, attitudes about local banks, savings and loan associations	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Finsen 2006

Methods	Random allocation: alphabetical order	
Data	Norwegian residents aged between 40 and 65 years	
Comparisons	1. Unconditional; 1 scratch lottery worth 20 Norwegian Kroner (NOK) 2. Unconditional; 2 scratch lotteries each worth 20 Norwegian Kroner 3. Conditional; 2 scratch lotteries each worth 20 Norwegian Kroner on reply within one week 4. Unconditional; 50 NOK 5. Control	
Outcomes	Response rate at 6 week	
Topic	Health: History of surgeries	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 51.4 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Fiset 1994

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Dentists insured by a major malpractice carrier in 2 western states (US)
Comparisons	Experiment 1: 1. \$5 incentive 2. \$10 incentive Follow-up with postcard after 1 week Experiment 2: 1. \$5 incentive 2. \$10 incentive Follow-up with postcard after 1 week Questionnaire package sent to non-responders again at 3 and 7 weeks
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Dentist relationship of dental malpractice claims to decisions about clinical practice
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mean age: 37-41.4 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Ford 1967a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Residents of Chenoa
Comparisons	1. Advance letter 2. No advance letter
Outcomes	Response within 30 days
Topic	Non-health: Consumer shopping survey
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Ford 1967a (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Ford 1967b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Residents of Beardstown
Comparisons	1. Advance letter 2. No advance letter
Outcomes	Response within 30 days
Topic	Non-health: Consumer shopping survey
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ford 1968

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Households
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire consisted of 1 sheet, printed on both sides which when folded had four 8.5 x 11" pages of questions 2. Questionnaire mimeographed on 1 side only and stapled so had four pages of 8.5 x 14" All participants were sent an advance letter 12 days before the questionnaire was sent
Outcomes	Response within 23 days
Topic	Non-health: Consumer shopping survey
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Ford 1968 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Foushee 1990

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation in SAS
Data	Tour operators in Europe, South America, and Japan
Comparisons	1. Early follow up with post card (3 weeks) 2. Late follow up with post card (6 weeks)
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Potential for attracting and accommodating foreign visitors to national park
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate.

Freise 2001

Methods	Random allocation: using dice
Data	Last 1400 discharged patients of the University hospital of Cologne on 14/02/2000
Comparisons	1. 12 page questionnaire 2. 8 page questionnaire 3. 4 page questionnaire
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Cologne patient questionnaire
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: Above 18 years

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Freise 2001 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate
-------------------------	----	----------------

Friedman 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Travel agents who subscribed to a travel magazine	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Author had 'Hispanic' name 2. Author had 'Jewish' name 3. Ethnicity of author not identifiable 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Ethnic identification	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Friedman 1979

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in telephone directories of 2 suburban areas in the greater New York Metropolitan area	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Black sponsor signature; 25 cents incentive 2. Black sponsor signature; No incentive 3. White sponsor signature; 25 cents incentive 4. White sponsor signature; No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards the Negroes Scale	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Friedman 1979 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Furse 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Microwave oven owners listed in a major manufacturer's warranty registration records
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No personal or charity incentive offered 2. Charity incentive (promise of \$1 to charity of respondent's choice for returned questionnaire) 3. 50 cents enclosed with questionnaire 4. \$1 enclosed with questionnaire 5. 50 cents enclosed with questionnaire and charity incentive (promise of \$1 to charity of respondent's choice for returned questionnaire) 6. \$1 enclosed with questionnaire and charity incentive (promise of \$1 to charity of respondent's choice for returned questionnaire)
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Furst 1979

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	Secretaries of school principals
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-notification 2. No pre-notification
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI)
Mode of Administration	Postal

Furst 1979 (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author. Informed that allocation concealment was poor	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Futrell 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Salesmen from a national hospital supply company	
Comparisons	1. Instruction to return the questionnaire unsigned 2. Asked to sign the questionnaire 2 follow-up letters sent 10 days apart 2 weeks after questionnaire sent	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Salesman's attitudes towards their job, evaluation of job performance by supervisors	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Futrell 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Grocery store managers	
Comparisons	1. Allowed to remain anonymous 2. Required to sign questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Job attitudes	

Futrell 1978 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Futrell 1981

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Farmers and ranchers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire and letter 2. Questionnaire and letter; Non-respondents after 2 weeks sent letter and questionnaire 3. Questionnaire and letter; Non-respondents after 2 weeks sent letter only 4. Questionnaire and letter; Non-respondents after 2 and 4 weeks sent letter and questionnaire 5. Questionnaire and letter; Non-respondents after 2 and 4 weeks sent letter only 6. Questionnaire and letter; Non-respondents after 2, 4 and 6 weeks sent letter and questionnaire 7. Questionnaire and letter; Non-respondents after 2, 4 and 6 weeks sent letter only 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Finance - Perceptions of agricultural producers regarding financial lending institutions	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Futrell 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Industrial accountants	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No statement assuring anonymity; Asked to return questionnaire the same day it was received 2. No statement assuring anonymity; Asked to return questionnaire at their leisure 3. Statement assuring anonymity; Asked to return questionnaire the same day it was received 4. Statement assuring anonymity; Asked to return questionnaire at their leisure 	

Futrell 1982 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Role conflict, role clarity, job tension, job satisfaction	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gajraj 1990

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Customers of a major public utility, comprising households in south-western Ontario	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. \$0.50 included 3. Promise of \$0.50 on return of completed questionnaire 4. Pen included 5. Promise of pen on return of completed questionnaire 6. Inclusion in share of winning from 5 Super Lotto lottery tickets 7. Promise of inclusion in share of 5 Super Lotto lottery tickets on return of completed questionnaire All sent same questionnaire, mailing envelope, computer printed label and return envelope. Cover letters varied only in stating amount of incentive	
Outcomes	Response within 25 days	
Topic	Non-health: General area of energy conservation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author. Informed that allocation concealment was adequate	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Gaski 2004a

Methods	Random allocation: using coin toss
Data	US “Mass-market” dealers of the Gillette company’s paper mate division
Comparisons	1. Dissertation referencing in the cover letter 2. No dissertation referencing in the cover letter
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Behavioural relations between manufacturer and its distributor
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors’ judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Gaski 2004b

Methods	Random allocation: using coin toss
Data	Wholesalers serving stationery/ office supply and school supply stores
Comparisons	1. Dissertation referencing in the cover letter 2. No dissertation referencing in the cover letter
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Behavioural relations between manufacturer and its distributor
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors’ judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Gattellari 2001

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	All active fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)	
Comparisons	1. Promise of a \$A10 donation to RACS for every returned questionnaire 2. No offer of donation	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Need for evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for the management of colorectal cancer	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Gattellari 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using block randomisation	
Data	Men from general practice surgeries in Sydney, Australia	
Comparisons	1. Mention of deadline to return the questionnaire within 1 week 2. No mention of deadline	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Prostate cancer screening	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Gendall 1996

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	New Zealanders aged 18 and above, selected from the New Zealand electoral rolls	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover with simple graphic design in black letters 2. Cover with complex design in black and red letters 3. Cover with different complex design in black and red letters 4. Inclusion of a picture or a photo 5. Without a picture or a photo 	
Outcomes	Response rate at 12 weeks	
Topic	Health: Demography - Family and changing gender roles	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Gendall 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals on the electoral roll (New Zealand)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control 2. High quality foil-wrapped tea bag included 3. \$1 coin included 2 follow up s sent 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Role of government, attitudes to work orientations	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gendall 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	New Zealanders aged 18 and above, selected from the New Zealand electoral rolls	
Comparisons	1. Personalised cover letter 2. Non-personalised cover letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Environmental issues, demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gendall 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	New Zealanders aged 18 and above, selected from the New Zealand electoral rolls	
Comparisons	1. Cover design - Circle 2. Cover design - Blocks 3. Cover design - No graphics	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Demographics, disability issues, families and friends, experiences of funerals	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gendall 2005c

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	New Zealanders aged 18 and above, selected from the New Zealand electoral rolls	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two 45-cent postage stamp 2. Foil-wrapped dilmah tea bag 3. Small foil-wrapped gold coin with a 20 cent denomination 4. Large foil-wrapped gold coin with either a 50 cent or \$2 denomination 5. No incentives 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Citizenship in New Land	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gibson 1999a

Methods	Random allocation: randomisation sequence generated using random number function on SAS	
Data	Medicaid subjects from families that included at least 1 member who had been enrolled continuously in the respective programme from July-Dec 1993	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medicaid; No incentive 2. Medicaid; \$1 incentive 3. Medicaid; \$2 incentive 4. Basic Health Plan; No incentive 5. Basic Health Plan; \$1 6. Basic Health Plan; \$2 <p>Non-respondents after second mailing were randomised to receive third mailing by certified mail or by 2-day priority mail</p>	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Access and use of health services, demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. No information on allocation concealment provided	

Gibson 1999a (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gibson 1999b

Methods	Random allocation: randomisation sequence generated using random number function on SAS	
Data	BHP subjects from all families that included at least 1 member who had been enrolled continuously in the respective programme from July-Dec 1993	
Comparisons	1. Medicaid; No incentive 2. Medicaid; \$1 incentive 3. Medicaid; \$2 incentive 4. Basic Health Plan; No incentive 5. Basic Health Plan; \$1 6. Basic Health Plan; \$2 Non-respondents after second mailing were randomised to receive third mailing by certified mail or by 2-day priority mail	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Access to health services, use of services, satisfaction with services, demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. No information on allocation concealment provided	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gibson 1999c

Methods	Random allocation: randomisation sequence generated using random number function on SAS	
Data	Non-responding Medicaid subjects from families that included at least 1 member who had been enrolled continuously in the respective programme from July-Dec 1993	
Comparisons	1. Certified mail 2. 2-day priority mail	

Gibson 1999c (Continued)

Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Access and use of health services, demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. No information on allocation concealment provided	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Giles 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Faculty members	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Combination format (CombF); Satisfaction items first (S1st); 2 demographic items (DI) 2. CombF; S1st; 4DI 3. CombF; S1st; 6DI 4. CombF; S1st; 8DI 5. CombF; S1st; 10DI 6. CombF; Demographic items first (D1st); 2DI 7. CombF; D1st; 4DI 8. CombF; D1st; 6DI 9. CombF; D1st; 8DI 10. CombF; D1st; 10DI 11. Categorical Format (CategF); S1st; 2DI 12. CategF; S1st; 4DI 13. CategF; S1st; 6DI 14. CategF; S1st; 8DI 15. CategF; S1st; 10DI 16. CategF; D1st; 2DI 17. CategF; D1st; 4DI 18. CategF; D1st; 6DI 19. CategF; D1st; 8DI 20. CategF; D1st; 10DI <p>No follow up s used</p>	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Job satisfaction	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Giles 1978 (Continued)

Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gillpatrick 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Engineers identified from the subscriber list of a major trade journal	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$1 incentive 2. No incentive 3. Pre-contact 4. No pre-contact 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Market perceptions about CAD workstations	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gitelson 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Spectators at the Pennsylvania Farm Show who had not responded to 3 previous mailings of the questionnaire	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-personalised questionnaire; Regular post 2. Personalised questionnaire; Regular post 3. Personalised questionnaire; Certified post 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Economic impact of the farm show	

Gitelson 1992 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Glisan 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Farmers from 6 geographical regions	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incentive - monetary 2. Incentive - results promised 3. Incentive - control 4. Colour - tan 5. Colour - blue 6. Colour - white 7. Stamp - commemorative 8. Stamp - regular 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Farm operations and costs	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Godwin 1979

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals in 60 countries	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. \$25 	

Godwin 1979 (Continued)

	3. \$50 Participants were requested to return the questionnaire within 3 weeks. After 2 weeks a single follow-up letter with a copy of the questionnaire was sent to all respondents	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Family planning programmes	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Goldstein 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Subscribers to a travel magazine	
Comparisons	1. Postcard format first wave; Postcard format second wave 2. Form first wave; Form second wave 3. Postcard format first wave; Form second wave 4. Form first wave; Postcard format second wave	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Goodstadt 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Readers of Addictions Magazine	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25 cent incentive 2. Free book incentive 3. Promise of free book 4. No incentive 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Reading habits, magazine function served, the range and depth of subjects covered, overall design	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Green 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Teachers chosen from the Wyoming State Department of Education list of educators	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalised cover letter 2. Non-personalised cover letter 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Courses taken in tests and measurement, attitudes towards standardised and classroom testing, interest in topics for in service training	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Green 1989

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	In-service teachers from the states of Wyoming and Nebraska	
Comparisons	1. Offer of a summary of results vs none 2. Personalisation vs No personalisation	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Application of research methods and findings to classroom teaching	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Green 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Randomly selected US social workers	
Comparisons	1. Demographic items placed at the beginning of the questionnaire 2. Demographic items placed at the end of the questionnaire	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Attitudes and beliefs about roles of family interaction and biological factors in mental illness	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 44.5 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Greer 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Senior sales executives (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University sponsor; White questionnaire 2. University sponsor; Yellow questionnaire 3. University sponsor; Pink questionnaire 4. University sponsor; Green questionnaire 5. Commercial research sponsor; White questionnaire 6. Commercial research sponsor; Yellow questionnaire 7. Commercial research sponsor; Pink questionnaire 8. Commercial research sponsor; Green questionnaire 9. Academic honour society sponsor; White questionnaire 10. Academic honour society sponsor; Yellow questionnaire 11. Academic honour society sponsor; Pink questionnaire 12. Academic honour society sponsor; Green questionnaire 13. No sponsor (PO Box); White questionnaire 14. No sponsor (PO Box); Yellow questionnaire 15. No sponsor (PO Box); Pink questionnaire 16. No sponsor (PO Box); Green questionnaire <p>Follow up sent after 3 weeks</p>	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Company's programme for sales people	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Griffith 1999

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	General medical internists in 5 Canadian provinces	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open-ended questionnaire format 2. Close-ended questionnaire format 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Career satisfaction	

Griffith 1999 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 51.9 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Groeneman 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People listed in the telephone directories of Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Winnipeg, Canada selected using 'distinctive Jewish name sampling'	
Comparisons	1. \$1 bill enclosed 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Travel experience and attitudes towards future trips	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Groves 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Therapeutic recreation co-ordinators in the US	
Comparisons	1. Stamped addressed return envelope included 2. Self-adhering return address label (no envelope or postage) included	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	-	

Groves 2000 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gueguen 2003a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	University students.	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attractive photo in the e-mail 2. Medium attractive photo in the e-mail 3. No photo in the e-mail 4. Male signature 5. Female signature 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Dietary habits	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: E-mail	
Notes	Equal males and females; Language of publication is French	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Gueguen 2003b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	Sample of individuals with e-mail addresses ending in ".fr" picked up randomly from the Internet using a specialised software	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attractive photo in the e-mail 2. Medium attractive photo in the e-mail 3. Less attractive photo in the e-mail 	

Gueguen 2003b (Continued)

	4. No photo in the e-mail 5. Male signature 6. Female signature	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Dietary habits	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: E-mail	
Notes	Language of publication is French	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Gullahorn 1959

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Former Fulbright & Smith-Mundt grantees who had not responded to earlier mailing of the questionnaire	
Comparisons	1. Follow-up mailings by special delivery 2. Follow-up mailings by standard mail	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Bibliography of works emanating from Fulbright and Smith-Mundt awards	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gullahorn 1963

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Former Fulbright and Smith-Mundt grantees	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire printed on green paper, sent by first class mail, with business reply return envelope 2. Green paper; first class, stamped return envelope 3. Green paper, third class mail, business reply return envelope 4. Green paper, third class mail, return envelope stamped 5. White paper, first class mail, business reply return envelope 6. White paper, first class, return envelope stamped 7. White paper, third class mail, business reply return envelope 8. White paper, third class mail, return envelope stamped 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	-	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Gupta 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Medical practitioners	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Telephone prompt by medical researcher 2. Telephone prompt by an experienced non-medical research assistant 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Views about clinical practice guidelines	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Gupta 1997 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Göritz 2004a

Methods	Random allocation: using computerised random number generation
Data	Panellists from the German commercial online access panel
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 7 X 100 (700) German Mark (DM) money lottery 2. 14 X 50 (700) DM money lottery 3. 5 X 100 (500) DM money lottery 4. 10 X 50 (500) DM money lottery 5. 3 X 100 (300) DM money lottery 6. 6 X 50 (300) DM money lottery 7. 1 X 100 (100) DM money lottery 8. 2 X 50 (100) DM money lottery 9. 8 Bonus Point (BP) (1 BP is worth 50 DM) 10. 6 BP 11. 4 BP 12. 3 BP 13. Gift lottery (3 watches/5 CD-jackets/5 alarm clocks/25 key-ring torches)
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Personal Internet usage
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Göritz 2004b

Methods	Random allocation: using computerised random number generation
Data	Panellists from the German commercial online access panel
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 X 90 (180) German Mark (DM) 2. 6 X 30 DM money lottery 3. 1 X 90 DM money lottery 4. 3 X 30 DM money lottery

Göritz 2004b (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of media contents	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Hackler 1973

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Mothers of ninth or tenth grade students living in 1 neighbourhood of Edmonton	
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. \$1 bill incentive After 11 days, the no incentive group received \$1 and the incentive group received a follow-up phone call	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Community cohesiveness	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Halpern 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	General internists and family practitioners randomly selected from the American Medical Association's master file of physicians	

Halpern 2002 (Continued)

Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$10, peppermint candy and large outgoing envelope 2. \$10, no peppermint candy, large outgoing envelope 3. \$10, peppermint candy, small outgoing envelope 4. \$10, no peppermint candy, small outgoing envelope 5. \$5, peppermint candy and large outgoing envelope 6. \$5, no peppermint candy, large outgoing envelope 7. \$5, peppermint candy, small outgoing envelope 8. \$5, no peppermint candy, small outgoing envelope 	
Outcomes	Response within 11 weeks	
Topic	Health: Views about comparative merits of placebo controlled versus active controlled trials of anti-hypertensive drugs	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hancock 1940

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed on the personal tax records of the county assessors	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire and cover letter 2. As above with 25 cents incentive 3. As above with promise of 25 cents on return of questionnaire 4. Personal interview 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	-	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Hancock 1940 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Hansen 1980

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in the telephone directory (Columbus, Ohio)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No pre-contact; Short form (SF) 2. No pre-contact; Long form (LF) 3. Yes/no foot in the door; SF 4. Yes/no foot in the door; LF 5. Probe foot in the door; SF 6. Probe foot in the door; LF 	
Outcomes	Response within 35 days	
Topic	Non-health: Consumer's attitudes towards recent new car purchases. CHECK	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hansen RA 1980

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Safety engineers employed by firms that require employees to wear safety hardhats	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25 cent incentive 2. Pen incentive 3. Control group 	
Outcomes	Response within 38 days	
Topic	Non-health: Product evaluation and information	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Hansen RA 1980 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Harris 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A randomly selected sample of respondents	
Comparisons	1. Business reply return envelope enclosed 2. Stamped reply envelope enclosed	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Harrison 2002

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Adults selected from a Health Authority Register (North West England)	
Comparisons	1. Reply envelope with first class stamp 2. Pre-paid business-franked reply envelope	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Health questionnaire	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly 18-45 years; Equal male and females	

Harrison 2002 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Harrison 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	Patients referred to a community based exercise referral scheme	
Comparisons	1. Pre-warning letter 2.No pre-warning letter	
Outcomes	Response rate at 6 weeks	
Topic	Health: Quality of services offered at the community based referral scheme	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Harvey 1986

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	A random sample of people living in the West Midlands, UK, listed on the electoral register	
Comparisons	1. Reply envelope with first class stamp 2. Reply envelope with second class stamp	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Interest in fine art	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	

Harvey 1986 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Hawkins 1979

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Eugene residences listed in the Eugene-Springfield telephone director
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Department store sponsor; Standard 2. Department store sponsor; Disclosure 3. Research firm sponsor; Standard 4. Research firm sponsor; Disclosure 5. University sponsor, Standard 6. University sponsor, Disclosure
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Women's attitudes to shopping, demographics
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Heaton 1965

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Individuals living in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area who had purchased a new 1959 Chevrolet within the previous 12-16 weeks
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preliminary letter 2. No preliminary letter
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks
Topic	Non-health: Information on automobile ownership, shopping behaviour

Heaton 1965 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Heerwegh 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: using SAS RANUNI function	
Data	1st year students at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium	
Comparisons	1. Personalised salutations 2. Non-personalised salutations	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Adolescents attitudes towards marriage and divorce	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Age: 17-20 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate.

Heerwegh 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: using SAS RANUNI function	
Data	1st year students at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium	
Comparisons	1. Personalised salutations 2. Non-personalised salutations	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Adolescents attitudes towards marriage and divorce	

Heerwegh 2005b (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Heerwegh 2006

Methods	Random allocation: using SAS RANUNI function	
Data	Freshmen at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium	
Comparisons	1. Personalised salutations 2. Non-personalised salutations	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards immigrants and asylum seekers	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate.

Hendrick 1972

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in the city directory (Akron, Ohio)	
Comparisons	1. 1-page questionnaire; Solicitor ingratiate (SI); Respondent ingratiate (RI) 2. 1-page questionnaire, SI; Respondent no ingratiate (RNI) 3. 1-page questionnaire; Solicitor no ingratiate (SNI); RI 4. 1-page questionnaire; SNI; RNI 5. 7-page questionnaire; SI; RI 6. 7-page questionnaire; SI; RNI 7. 7-page questionnaire; SNI; RI	

Hendrick 1972 (Continued)

	8. 7-page questionnaire; SNI; RNI	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Repression - sensitisation personality scale	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hendriks 2001

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	784 consecutively discharged patients from 8 randomly chosen hospital wards at the Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10-step evaluation scale (E10) 2. 5-step evaluation, tick box scale (E5-B) 3. 5-step evaluation, circle answer scale (E5-W) 4. 5-step satisfaction, tick box scale (S5-B) 5. 5-step satisfaction, circle answer scale (S5-W). 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Satisfaction with hospital care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Henley 1976

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Residents of Fort Worth, Texas
Comparisons	1. 1 by 4-inch slip of paper saying 'Please return by April 7th' stapled to the questionnaire 2. No deadline slip
Outcomes	Response within 14 days
Topic	Non-health: Civil issues
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Henley 1974

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Members of the National Forensic League
Comparisons	1. Outer-envelope (OE) commemorative Inner-envelope (IE) commemorative 2. OE commemorative; IE regular 3. OE commemorative; IE metered 4. OE regular; IE commemorative 5. OE regular; IE regular 6. OE regular; IE metered 7. OE metered; IE commemorative 8. OE metered; IE regular 9. OE metered; IE metered
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Hensley 1974 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Hewett 1974

Methods	Random allocation: coin toss
Data	Individuals listed in a telephone directory
Comparisons	1. Hand-stamped outgoing envelope; Hand-stamped return envelope 2. Hand-stamped outgoing envelope; First class postal permit business reply envelope
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Hoffman 1998

Methods	Random allocation: using terminal digit of study number or house number
Data	Individuals who had previously participated in a campaign to collect blood for a specimen bank
Comparisons	Study 1: 1. Short questionnaire 2. Long questionnaire Study 2: 1. No incentive 2. Newspaper article 3. Pencil 4. Pencil and newspaper article Study 3: 1. Postcard reminder 2. Second questionnaire and letter.
Outcomes	-

Hoffman 1998 (Continued)

Topic	Health: Family history of Cancer, reproductive history, medical and Vitamin use, history of medical conditions and surgery	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hopkins 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Professional school and public librarians	
Comparisons	1. \$1 incentive 2. No incentive Non-responders followed-up after 1 month	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes and practices having a book in Spanish in the library	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hornik 1981

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in a telephone directory (Chicago, US)	
Comparisons	1. Given time cue of 20 mins 2. Given time cue of 40 mins 3. Not given time cue	

Hornik 1981 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes to TV advertising	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hornik 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified.	
Data	Individuals listed in a telephone directory (Chicago, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ingratiation appeal made in Pre-notification telephone call (IA) - Male telephone pre-notified to Male respondent (M/M) 2. IA - M/F 3. IA - F/M 4. IA - F/F 5. Polite imperative (PI) - M/M 6. PI - M/F 7. PI - F/M 8. PI - F/F 9. Rhetorical question (RQ) - M/M 10. RQ - M/F 11. RQ - F/M 12. RQ - F/F 13. Statement (S) - M/M 14. S - M/F 15. S - F/M 16. S - F/F 17. No pre-notification. 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: People's attitudes to television and advertising	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		

Hornik 1982 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Horowitz 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Faculty members of the University of Maryland (US)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Status of researcher 'professor' (P); Ink Signature (I); Reproduction photocopied (R-P) 2. Graduate Student (GS); I; R-P 3. P; Non-Ink (N-I); R-P 4. GS; N-I; R-P 5. P; I; Reproduction mimeographed (R-M) 6. GS; I; R-M 7. P; N-I; R-M 8. GS; N-I; R-M 9. P; I; R-T 10. GS; I; R-T
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: College professors Questionnaire
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Houston 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	New car buyers in Scott County, Iowa (US)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalised letter and questionnaire; Ball-point pen incentive 2. Personalised letter and questionnaire; No incentive 3. Non-personalised; Ball-point pen incentive 4. Non-personalised; No incentive
Outcomes	-

Houston 1975 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Sources of information used by the respondent in purchasing their new car	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Houston 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Households listed in a telephone directory (Madison)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University Sponsor, Social Utility Appeal 2. Commercial Sponsor, Social Utility Appeal 3. University Sponsor, Help the Sponsor Appeal 4. Commercial Sponsor, Help the Sponsor Appeal 5. University Sponsor, Egoistic Appeal 6. Commercial Sponsor, Egoistic Appeal 7. University Sponsor, Combined Appeal 8. Commercial Sponsor, Combined Appeal 	
Outcomes	Response within 1 month	
Topic	Non-health: Tap consumer images and behaviour with respect to 5 Madison-area shopping	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hubbard 1988a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of a major Midwestern metropolitan area	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. Promise of \$1 donation to charity of respondent's choice 3. 25 cents cash enclosed 4. \$1 cash enclosed 5. Opportunity to win \$200 cash prize 	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Satisfaction with banking and financial services	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hubbard 1988b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of a major Midwestern metropolitan area	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control 2. Pre-paid 25 cent incentive 3. Pre-paid \$1 incentive 4. Opportunity to win cash prize of \$50 5. Opportunity to win cash prize of \$100 6. Opportunity to win cash prize of \$150 7. Opportunity to win cash prize of \$200 8. Opportunity to win cash prize of \$50 	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Satisfaction with banking and financial services	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		

Hubbard 1988b (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Huck 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students living in residence halls at the university of Tennessee	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First mailing with 25 cents incentive 2. Second mailing (to non-respondents) with 25 cents incentive 3. Third mailing (to non-respondents) with 25 cents incentive 4. First, second and third mailings without 25 cents incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Rokeach Dogmatism scale	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Hyett 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residential telephone subscribers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Double-sided questionnaire 2. Single-sided questionnaire After 2 weeks all non-responders received another questionnaire. 1 week later all those who still had not responded were followed up by telephone	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Hyett 1977 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Iglesias 2000

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Women aged 70 years and over
Comparisons	1. 4-page questionnaire 2. 5-page questionnaire 3. 7-page questionnaire
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Clinical questionnaire, EuroEoL, SF-12
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: Above 70 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Iglesias 2001

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Women aged 70 years or over selected from 2 general practices in North Yorkshire
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire with an individual item format 2. Questionnaire with a stem & leaf format
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: SF12
Mode of Administration	Postal.
Notes	Age: Above 70 years; Mainly females

Iglesias 2001 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Jacobs 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Public school teachers (Indiana, US)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short questionnaire; Optical scan form 2. Short questionnaire; Instructed to respond directly on questionnaire 3. Long questionnaire; Optical scan form 4. Long questionnaire; Instructed to respond directly on questionnaire Postcard follow up after 2 weeks
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes and opinions concerning discipline in the public schools
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jacoby 1990

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Individuals from 10 parliamentary areas (ISSMC questionnaires) Individuals from the electoral register (FPC questionnaires)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long questionnaire; Sent by ISSMC 2. Long questionnaire; Sent by FPC 3. Short questionnaire; Sent by ISSMC 4. Short questionnaire; Sent by FPC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire included sensitive question; Sent by ISSMC 2. Questionnaire did not include sensitive question; Sent by ISSMC 3. Questionnaire included sensitive question; Sent by FPC

Jacoby 1990 (Continued)

	4. Questionnaire did not include sensitive question; Sent by FPC	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

James 1990a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Cable television subscribers (Fairfax County, Virginia, US)	
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. \$0.25 3. \$50 4. \$1 5. \$2 3 follow-up reminders sent without further monetary incentive at 3 week intervals	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Personal information.	
Mode of Administration	Postal.	
Notes	Author contacted: On the third follow up , participants were randomised to receive the questionnaire by first class or certified mailing but no data given for results	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

James 1990b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Cable television subscribers who had failed to respond to 2 previous follow up attempts
Comparisons	1. Reminder by certified mail 2. Reminder by first class mail
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Personal information
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

James 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Members of a national trade association of owners of construction subcontracting companies who were not currently enrolled in the association's health insurance programme
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. \$1 cash 3. \$5 cash 4. \$5 cheque 5. \$10 cheque 6. \$20 cheque 7. \$40 cheque 8. Promise of \$50 1-page questionnaire, cover letter and business reply envelope. Reminders sent to non respondents at 3-week intervals
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Health insurance
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

James 1992 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jamtvedt 2008

Methods	Random allocation: block randomisation by computer generated table	
Data	Norwegian Physiotherapists from private practice	
Comparisons	1. Dark chocolate 2. Control Group	
Outcomes	Response period within 9 months	
Topic	Health: Treatment provided to 1 patient with osteoarthritis of knee through 12 treatment sessions	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Randomisation was generated by Doris Tove Kristoffersen, who is not involved with any other aspect of the trial	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Jenkinson 2003

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Recently discharged patients from 2 English inner city NHS Trusts	
Comparisons	1. 4-page questionnaire 2. 12-page questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Picker Patient Experience Questionnaire	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Jenkinson 2003 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jensen 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Female graduates from the doctoral program in education from a private west-coast university (US)	
Comparisons	1. Open-ended questions first; Closed questions next; Demographic questions last 2. Open; Demographic; Closed 3. Closed; Open; Demographic 4. Closed; Demographic; Open 5. Demographic; Open; Closed 6. Demographic; Closed; Open Reminders sent at 6 and 12 weeks. Some graduates were living out of the country at the time of the study. They were sent postal vouchers and an envelope instead of a stamped envelope on the initial mailing and first follow up. On the second follow up, US citizens received a telephone call while overseas received another postal mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Graduate school experiences	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 31-65; Mainly females	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jepson 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel	
Data	US Primary care physician members of the American Medical Association	
Comparisons	1. Word count - 849 2. Word count - 1145 3. Word count - 1163 4. Word count - 1164 5. Word count - 1215 6. Word count - 1216	

Jepson 2005a (Continued)

	7. Word count - 1234 8. Word count - 1423 9. Word count - 1424 10. Word count - 1447 11. Word count - 1449 12. Word count - 1461 13. Word count - 1462 14. Word count - 1494 15. Word count - 1496 16. Word count - 1519 17. Word count - 1520 18. Word count - 1560 19. Word count - 1561 20. Word count - 1703 21. Word count - 1706 22. Word count - 1737 23. Word count - 1744 24. Word count - 1756 25. Word count - 1776 26. Word count - 1785 27. Word count - 1788 28. Word count - 1807 29. Word count - 1855 30. Word count - 1867	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards cost quality trade-offs in clinical practice	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Short length: From word count 849 - 1234; Long length: From word count 1423 - 1867; Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Jepson 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel
Data	US Primary care physician members of the American Medical Association

Jepson 2005b (Continued)

Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Word count - 564 2. Word count - 574 3. Word count - 649 4. Word count - 703 5. Word count - 711 6. Word count - 715 7. Word count - 719 8. Word count - 730 9. Word count - 749 10. Word count - 753 11. Word count - 754 12. Word count - 762 13. Word count - 782 14. Word count - 849 15. Word count - 905 16. Word count - 988 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards cost quality trade-offs in clinical practice	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Short length: From word count 564 to 730; Long length: From word count 749 to 905; Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Jobber 1983

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Textile companies listed in the Kompass-Directory of UK Companies and 'Times Top 500'	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prior letter; White questionnaire 2. Prior letter; Blue questionnaire 3. No prior letter; White questionnaire 4. No prior letter; Blue questionnaire 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Information about the marketing strategies employed by the company	

Jobber 1983 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jobber 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Senior marketing executives	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover letter contained offer of a free copy of results as the final paragraph of the body of the letter 2. Same cover letter but offer made in typed postscript 3. Same cover letter but offer made in hand-written postscript 4. Cover letter with no offer 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Explore the design and extent of implementation of marketing information system	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jobber 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Building society chief executives	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 20 pence incentive; No booklet 2. 20 pence incentive; Booklet explaining survey included 3. No incentive; No booklet 4. No incentive; Booklet explaining survey included 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Jobber 1988 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Ascertain management practices, and contextual and structural characteristics of societies	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Number of subjects allocated to each intervention group ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jobber 1989

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Industrial goods companies	
Comparisons	1. Short questionnaire; 1-sided printing 2. Short questionnaire; 2-sided printing 3. Long questionnaire; 1-sided printing 4. Long questionnaire; 2-sided printing The long questionnaire comprised 2 different versions of a short questionnaire. The 2 versions were allocated randomly between treatments	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Selling approach and orientations used by the sample firms, evaluate the sale persons, size of firm, industry category, number of sales persons employed	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jobber D 1985

Methods	Random allocation: systematic random sampling	
Data	Quality control managers of textile companies randomly selected from a directory of UK companies	
Comparisons	1. No pre-notification 2. Telephone pre-notification	
Outcomes	Response prior to second wave of the experiment	
Topic	Non-health: Quality management systems used by UK textile companies	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Johansson 1997a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Norwegian citizens aged 16-79 years	
Comparisons	1. No reward offered 2. Reward offered 1 reminder sent after 4 weeks	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Quantitative Food Frequency Questionnaire (QFFQ)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 42-47	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Johansson 1997b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Norwegian citizens aged 16-79 years	
Comparisons	1. No reward offered 2. Reward offered 1 reminder sent after 4 weeks	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Quantitative Food Frequency Questionnaire (QFFQ)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 42-47	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Johansson 1997c

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Norwegian citizens aged 16-79 years who had not responded to a questionnaire	
Comparisons	1. Follow up by telephone 2. Follow up by post	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Quantitative Food Frequency Questionnaire (QFFQ)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 42-47	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

John 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Cosmetologists aged 22 to 36 years
Comparisons	1. \$1 incentive in first mailing 2. \$1 incentive in second mailing 3. No incentive 2- page questionnaire, cover letter, survey fact sheet and stamped addressed envelope. Reminder postcard sent 1 week after first mailing
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Screening questions - recent health problems, reproductive history; outcome of the most recent pregnancy
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: 22-36; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Joinson 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel
Data	Students at the Open University, UK
Comparisons	1. Salutation - 'Dear Student' 2. Salutation - 'Dear Open University Student' 3. Salutation - 'Dear Forename' (e.g. Dear John) 4. Salutation - 'Dear Forename Surname' (e.g. Dear John Doe)
Outcomes	Response within 14 days
Topic	Non-health: Volunteering to become a member of a survey panel (PRESTO)
Mode of Administration	Electronic: E-mail
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Joinson 2005a (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate
-------------------------	-----	--------------

Joinson 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel	
Data	Students at the Open University, UK	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Salutation - 'Dear Student' 2. Salutation - 'Dear Open University Student' 3. Salutation - 'Dear Forename' (e.g. Dear John) 4. Salutation - 'Dear Forename Surname' (e.g. Dear John Doe) 	
Outcomes	Response within 14 days	
Topic	Non-health: Inviting the existing panel members to exit the panel	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: E-mail	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Joinson 2005c

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel	
Data	Students at the Open University, UK	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Salutation - 'Dear Student' 2. Salutation - 'Dear Forename' (e.g. Dear John) 3. Salutation - 'Dear Forename Surname' (e.g. Dear John Doe) 4. High Power - "From Professor (name), Pro-Vice chancellor, (Strategy, planning and partnerships), The OU 5. Neutral Power - "From (name), (Strategy, planning and partnerships), The OU 	
Outcomes	Response within 14 days	
Topic	Non-health: Inviting the panel members to complete the survey	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	

Joinson 2005c (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Joinson 2007a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel	
Data	Members of an online student panel at the Open University, UK	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High Power - "From Professor (name), Pro-Vice chancellor, (Strategy, planning and partnerships), The OU 2. Neutral Power - "From (name), (Strategy, planning and partnerships), The OU 3. Salutation - 'Dear Forename' (e.g. Dear John) 4. Salutation - 'Dear Presto panel member' 	
Outcomes	Response within 14 days	
Topic	Non-health: Socio-economic status	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mean age: 41.8 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Joinson 2007b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel	
Data	Members of an online student panel at the Open University, UK	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalised URL (Unique URL with identifier encoded in the link) 2. Authentication required (URL requires log-on to access the survey) 	
Outcomes	Response within 14 days	

Joinson 2007b (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Part-time student costs and fees	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Mean age: 43.6 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Jones 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals who had planned group conventions and/or meetings	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Science appeal (SA); Commemorative stamp (CS); J&L sponsor (J&L) 2. SA; CS; University sponsor (US) 3. SA; CS; Government sponsor (GS) 4. SA; Regular stamp (RS); J&L 5. SA; RS; US 6. SA; RS; GS 7. SA; Business reply envelope (BR); J&L 8. SA; BR; US 9. SA; BR; GS 10. User appeal (UA); CS; J&L 11. UA; CS; US 12. UA; CS; GS 13. UA; RS; J&L 14. UA; RS; US 15. UA; RS; GS 16. UA; BR; J&L 17. UA; BR; US 18. UA; BR; GS 19. Resort park appeal (RA); CS; J&L 20. RA; CS; US 21. RA; CS; GS 22. RA; RS; J&L 23. RA; RS; US 24. RA; RS; GS 25. RA; BR; J&L 26. RA; BR; US 27. RA; BR; GA 	
Outcomes	Response within 6 weeks	

Jones 1978 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Characteristics of the group, respondent attitudes towards meeting facilities, demographic factors	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Jones 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Adult patients admitted for treatment between 14/09/98 and 12/12/98	
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. \$2 3. \$5 4. SF-36 5. SF-12 6. MH-5 7. MH-1	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health status survey	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Junghans 2005

Methods	Random allocation: using minimisation software
Data	2 general practices in England
Comparisons	1. Opt-in (asked to actively signal willingness to participate in research) 2. Opt-out (contacted repeatedly unless they signalled unwillingness to participate)
Outcomes	Response period within 2 weeks
Topic	Health: Patients with angina
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	The identity of the trial was kept in a sealed envelope and was known only to the research assistant

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Kahle 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Psychiatrists and clinical psychologists
Comparisons	Experiment 1: 1. Dillman's 3-wave mailing design 2. As (1) except first 2 waves received non-profit bulk rate permit number printed where stamp had been 3. As (2) except pre-printed labels used to address envelopes rather than addresses typed individually on envelopes Experiment 2: As experiment 1 but in final wave questionnaire sent by: 1. Certified mail 2. First class mail
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Involuntary civil commitments
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Kahle 1978 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Kalafatis 1995

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation	
Data	Danish participants in a non-price-based promotion that utilised an American sporting theme	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentives 2. Unconditional 5% value of coupon 3. Unconditional 10% value of coupon 4. Unconditional 15% value of coupon 5. Conditional 5% value of coupon 6. Conditional 10% value of coupon 7. Conditional 15% value of coupon 8. Free gift 9. No free gift. 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Sports - promotional offers, viewing patterns of sports programmes, shopping habits of sports goods and perceptions of different sports	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kalantar 1999

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Residents of Western Sydney, Australia	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long questionnaire (7 pages) 2. Short questionnaire (1 page) 3. Scratch lottery worth \$1 to win up to \$2500 4. No lottery 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Bowel function and faecal incontinence	

Kalantar 1999 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Kaplan 1970a

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Residents of Boston and Brockton, Massachusetts, USA	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire 3. Impersonal letter (no inside address and the salutation is 'Dear Madam') 4. Personal letter (with complete address and the salutation is 'Dear Mrs. name') 5. Stamped return envelope 6. Franked return envelope 7. Non-specific signer 8. Jewish signer 9. Irish signer 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Reproductive history and the use of oral contraceptives	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 20-70 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Kaplan 1970b

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Residents of Boston and Brockton, Massachusetts, USA	
Comparisons	1. Irish signer 2. Irish, Professor signer 3. Non-specific signer	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Reproductive history and the use of oral contraceptives	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 20-70 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Kaplowitz 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Residential and agricultural landowners in the Sycamore creek watershed, USA	
Comparisons	1. Survey instrument - Colour 2. Survey instrument - Black and White	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Homeowner preferences for watershed management practices	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Kasprzyk 2001

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Sample of the general internists listed on the American Medical Association files who spend time on direct patient care, deal with STD diagnosis and have a listed mailing address	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First class mailing; No incentive 2. First class mailing; \$15 cash 3. First class mailing; \$25 cash 4. FedEx mailing; No incentive 5. FedEx mailing; \$15 cash 6. FedEx mailing; \$25 cash 	
Outcomes	Response after final reminder mailing, 8 weeks after initial survey	
Topic	Health: Physician and practice characteristics, STD diagnosis, treatment and control practice, opinions about STD reporting requirements and partner notification	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kawash 1971

Methods	Random allocation: using table of random numbers	
Data	Faculty members of University of Illinois	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal signature 2. Mimeographed facsimile 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards audiovisual instructional materials	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Kawash 1971 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate
-------------------------	-----	--------------

Keeter 2001

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Attorneys, clinical social workers, college and university faculty, staff and students, employees and employers in business organisations and a sample of physicians
Comparisons	1. White questionnaire 2. Pink questionnaire 3. Green questionnaire
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Purchase of major medical equipments Non-health: Housing market, parking and ridesharing, workload, distribution of time, attitudes
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Results of 7 different studies all examining the same intervention over a 14- month period

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kenyon 2005

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Mothers of the MRC ORACLE Trial that evaluated the use of antibiotics to improve neonatal outcome after preterm labour/preterm rupture of the membrane
Comparisons	1. £5 voucher 2. No voucher
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Child's health and development
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Kenyon 2005 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Keown 1985a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Japanese business executives	
Comparisons	1. \$1 incentive 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards business risk	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Keown 1985b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Business executives (Hong Kong)	
Comparisons	1. \$1 incentive 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards business risk	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Keown 1985b (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Kephart 1958

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Women who had passed their Pennsylvania State Nursing Board exams	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular stamp; No preview or follow up 2. Preview sent 1 week prior to questionnaire 3. Follow up (duplicate questionnaire, letter and return envelope) 4. Preview and follow up 5. Air mail stamp 6. Special delivery mail 7. Incentive of a penny 8. Incentive of a nickel 9. Incentive of a dime 10. Incentive of a quarter 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards nursing profession	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly females	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kerin 1976

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Corporate presidents from 'Fortune 500' firms	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual cover letter; Altruistic appeal; Stamp on return envelope 2. Individual; Altruistic; No stamp 3. individual; Egoistic appeal; Stamp 4. individual; Egoistic; No stamp 5. Form cover letter; Altruistic; Stamp 6. Form cover letter; Altruistic; No stamp 7. Form; Egoistic; Stamp 8. Form; Egoistic; No stamp 	

Kerin 1976 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Product recall practices	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kerin 1981

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Senior marketing executives	
Comparisons	1. Offered results 2. Not offered results	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Interaction between sales and advertising functions in the design and execution of promotion strategy	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kernan 1971

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of Cincinnati	
Comparisons	1. Personalised address; First class 2. Personalised address; Bulk rate 3. Occupant address; First class	

Kernan 1971 (Continued)

	4. Occupant address; Bulk rate	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Community's general interest in new sports stadium	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kindra 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Households listed in a telephone directory (Montreal, Canada)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-contact; Lottery incentive 2. No pre-contact; Lottery incentive 3. Pre-contact; No lottery incentive 4. No pre-contact; No lottery incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Elicit consumer response to product advertising	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

King 1978

Methods	Random allocation: systematic sampling procedure with random start
Data	Registered bank holding companies
Comparisons	1. Cover letter most personalised 2. Cover letter least personalised
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Koloski 2001

Methods	Random allocation: random block procedure
Data	People aged 18 years and above listed on the 1996 Local Government electoral role, Penrith, Australia
Comparisons	1. Short (28 page) questionnaire; Lottery card included 2. Short questionnaire; No lottery card 3. Long questionnaire (32 pages); Lottery card included 4. Long questionnaire; No lottery card
Outcomes	Response after 8 phases of follow up
Topic	Health: Questions on common health problems especially on stomach and bowel, Delusions Symptoms States Inventory, SF-12
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: 41.9-46.6 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Koo 1995

Methods	Random allocation: random function in Microsoft Excel programme
Data	Girls recruited by volunteers from the Canadian Cancer Society
Comparisons	1. Real signature on cover letter 2. Printed signature
Outcomes	Response within 105 days
Topic	Health: Dietary and life style determinants of the onset of menarche
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Allocation was not concealed; Age: 7.5-14.9 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Koo 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Girls recruited by volunteers from the Canadian Cancer Society who had not responded in a previous study
Comparisons	1. Regular reminder letter 2. Reminder letter with telephone reminder indicated 3. Reminder letter with telephone interview indicated
Outcomes	Response within 16 days (prior to telephone interview)
Topic	Health: Dietary and life style determinants of the onset of menarche
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: 8.7-16.2 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kropf 2005

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of the Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) in Maryland	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$5 incentive 2. No incentive 3. Cover letter - Norms of co-operation (answering the survey would help many other people) 4. Cover letter - Norms of self-interest (cooperation would help the survey respondent himself or herself) 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health care and other current issues	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kurth 1987

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Employees of the Maricopa Community Colleges with e-mail accounts	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Type-written; Sensitive question 2. Type-written; No sensitive question 	
Outcomes	Response within 30 days	
Topic	Non-health: Supervisory management	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kuskowska-Wolk 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Women aged 40-70 years from 2 medium-sized towns in Uppsala Health Care Region invited for mam-mography over the period 13 October 1986 to 20 March 1987	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing order of food frequencies; No column on portion sizes; No extra page of questions 2. Decreasing order of food frequencies; No column on portion sizes; No extra page of questions 3. Increasing order of food frequencies; Column on portion sizes; No extra page of questions 4. Decreasing order of food frequencies; Column on portion sizes; No extra page of questions 5. Increasing order of food frequencies; No column on portion sizes; Extra page of questions 6. Decreasing order of food frequencies; No column on portion sizes; Extra page of questions 7. Increasing order of food frequencies; Column on portion sizes; Extra page of questions 8. Decreasing order of food frequencies; Column on portion sizes; Extra page of questions 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Food Frequency Questionnaire	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 54.9-55.6 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Kypri 2003

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Tertiary students at the University of Otago	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ball-point pen worth \$0.50 2. Pen + Cookie voucher worth \$1 3. Pen + Lunch voucher worth \$5 4. Pen + Lunch voucher worth \$5 on completion of the survey. 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Alcohol use	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web survey	
Notes	Age: 16-29 years; Mainly females	

Kypri 2003 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

La Garce 1995

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Goodyear tyre and rubber dealers
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standard questionnaire printed in black and white 2. Standard questionnaire printed in blue and yellow 3. User-friendly format questionnaire printed in black and white 4. User-friendly format questionnaire printed in blue and yellow
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Industry
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Labaree 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	400 people recently discharged from hospital
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Postal questionnaire, no follow up 2. Postal questionnaire with follow up
Outcomes	Response within 2 months
Topic	Health: Patient Satisfaction
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Labarere 2000 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Labrecque 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Service customers of a marina
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Owner's signature (OS); Personalised (P); Commemorative stamp (CS) 2. Service manager's signature (SMS); P; CS 3. OS; Not personalised (NP); CS 4. SMS; NP; CS 5. OS; P; No CS 6. SMS; P; No CS 7. OS; NP; No CS 8. SMS; NP; No CS
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks
Topic	Non-health: Reaction of customers to the performance of its service department
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Lavelle 2008

Methods	Random allocation: using SPSS
Data	Patients attending breast clinics in Greater Manchester between 1/10/2002 - 31/7/2003
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First class stamp on addressed reply envelope 2. Pre-paid addressed reply envelope
Outcomes	Response period not specified

Lavelle 2008 (Continued)

Topic	Health: Functional health status - ELPHS ADL; Generic health status - SF-12; Health related quality of life - EORTC QLQ-C30	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Leece 2006a

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Surgeon members of the Orthopaedic Trauma Association	
Comparisons	1. Standard cover letter 2. Test cover letter (more personal)	
Outcomes	Response period is 6 weeks	
Topic	Health: Preferences in the treatment of femoral neck fractures	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Leece 2006b

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Surgeon members of the Orthopaedic Trauma Association	
Comparisons	1. Standard cover letter 2. Test cover letter (more personal)	
Outcomes	Response period is 6 weeks	

Leece 2006b (Continued)

Topic	Health: Preferences in the treatment of femoral neck fractures	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: E-mail	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Leigh Brown 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Patients who had already responded a questionnaire about hospital attendance	
Comparisons	1. Aware of monthly prize draw offering £25 gift voucher 2. Unaware of monthly prize draw offering £25 gift voucher	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health status, satisfaction with orthopaedic referral	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Leung 2002

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Physicians randomly selected from the full and limited registration lists of the Hong Kong medical council	
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. \$10 cash 3. \$20 cash 4. \$40 cash 5. Entry into \$1000 lottery	

Leung 2002 (Continued)

	6. Entry into \$2000 lottery 7. Entry into \$4000 lottery	
Outcomes	Response within 30 days	
Topic	Health: Nature of practice, remuneration, clinical and administrative task	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Leung 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Physicians randomly selected from the full and limited registration lists of the Hong Kong medical council	
Comparisons	1. Prepayment HK\$ 20 2. Post-payment HK\$ 20	
Outcomes	Response within 60 days	
Topic	Health: Computerisation of clinical and administrative tasks	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Linsky 1965

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Nurses	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics of cover letter: personalised (P); social utility appeal (SU); explanation of place and importance of respondent in study (RP); an appeal to help researchers of study (HR) 2. Not P; SU; RP; HR 3. P; Not SU; RP; HR 4. Not P; Not SU; RP; HR 5. P; SU; Not RP; HR 6. Not P; SU; Not RP; HR 7. P; SU; RP; Not HR 8. Not P; SU; RP; Not HR 9. P; Not SU; Not RP; HR 10. Not P; Not SU; Not RP; HR 11. P; Not SU; RP; Not HR 12. Not P; Not SU; RP; Not HR 13. P; SU; Not RP; Not HR 14. Not P; SU, Not RP; Not HR 15. P; Not SU; Not RP; Not HR 16. Not P; Not SU; Not RP; Not HR 	
Outcomes	Response within 3 weeks	
Topic	Health: Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Little 1990

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation
Data	Respondents to a national magazine clip ad promotion
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25-cent 2. Pan-scrapper 3. Control
Outcomes	Response period not specified

Little 1990 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Perceptions of the product and follow-up service to competing products	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

London 1990a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Electronics design engineers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standard cover letter 2. As (1) but also told would be entered into a prize draw for 3 calculators if responded 3. As (2) but also told that all respondents would receive a special gift from the sponsor 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Potential customers needs, firm usage, sources of transformers and inductors	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

London 1990b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Electronics design engineers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. \$1 incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

London 1990b (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Potential customers needs, firm usage, sources of transformers and inductors	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Lorenzi 1988

Methods	Random allocation: methods not specified	
Data	Business executives, state legislators, and director of chambers of commerce from the Midwestern United States	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unconditional \$1 payoff 2. Conditional \$2 payoff 3. Lottery to win \$50, \$30, or \$20 4. No incentives 	
Outcomes	Response within 14 days	
Topic	Non-health: Finance - Financial investment scenario, behavioural self-description measure of propensity for risk in personal and business investments	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 49.7 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Lund 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Norwegian women aged 34-49 years	

Lund 1998 (Continued)

Comparisons	1. Questionnaire entitled 'Women Lifestyle & Health'; 4 pages 2. Questionnaire entitled "Women & Cancer"; 2 pages 3. Questionnaire entitled "Women & Cancer"; 4 pages 4. Questionnaire entitled "Women & Cancer"; 6 pages 5. Questionnaire entitled "Oral Contraceptives & Cancer"; 2 pages	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Diet, sunbathing habits, occupational exposure, pharmaceutical drugs	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Maheux 1989a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians who had failed to respond to a previous questionnaire (Quebec, UK)	
Comparisons	1. Follow-up letter with hand-written postscript 2. Follow-up letter with no postscript	
Outcomes	Response within 6 months	
Topic	Health: Support for patient care issues	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Maheux 1989b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Physicians who had failed to respond to 2 mailings of a questionnaire (Quebec, UK)
Comparisons	1. Personalised mail out package 2. Non-personalised mail out package
Outcomes	Response within 6 months
Topic	Health: Support for patient care issues
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mallen 2008

Methods	Random allocation: computer generated
Data	Patients aged 50 and over from the Central Cheshire general practices who consulted their GP for non-inflammatory musculoskeletal pain between September 2006 - April 2007
Comparisons	1. Small font size - Arial 12 2. Large font size - Arial 16 3. Thin paper - 80g 4. Thick paper - 100g
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Prognosis of older people with joint pain in general practice
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Mann 2005

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Registered voters in Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania	
Comparisons	1. Advance letter 2. No advance letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Voting behaviour	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Marcus 2007

Methods	Random allocation: Using random number generation in SPSS	
Data	Owners of personal website	
Comparisons	1. High topic salience - Motives and personality of personal website owners 2. Low topic salience - Psychological aspects of Internet usage 3. Long survey - 359 items, 30-60 minutes for completion 4. Short survey - 91 items, 10-20 minutes for completion 5. Lottery to win 2 Internet book store vouchers of 25 euro each 6. No lottery 7. Personalised feedback of the results (individual profile of the results) 8. Generalised (study results) or no Feedback	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Internet competence	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Marcus 2007 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate
-------------------------	-----	--------------

Marrett 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Residents with histologically confirmed renal cell carcinoma (Ontario, US)
Comparisons	1. Lottery ticket incentive 2. No incentive
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: History of urinary tract infection, use of analgesic and diuretic medication, demographics
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Allocation was not concealed from the person sending out the letters; Age: 25-69 years

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Marsh 1999

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Parents of children aged 3-12 months from general practices involved in a cluster randomised trial in Nottingham, UK who had responded to a previous questionnaire
Comparisons	1. Promise of a £2 voucher for a local children's store on return of the questionnaire (Postal) 2. No incentive (Postal)
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Near miss and minor injuries
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Marsh 1999 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate
-------------------------	----	----------------

Martin 1970

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified.	
Data	Individuals listed in a telephone directory (Washington, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalised letter (PL); Appeal to importance (AI); Commemorative Stamp (CS); Easy questionnaire (EQ) first 2. PL; AI; CS; EQ not first 3. PL; AI; Business reply frank (BRF) instead of CS 4. PL; AI; BRF; EQ not first 5. PL; No AI; CS; EQ first 6. PL; No AI; CS; EQ not first 7. PL; No AI; BRF; EQ first 8. PL; No AI; BRF; EQ not first 9. Letter not personalised (NPL); AI; CS; EQ first 10. NPL; AI; CS; EQ not first 11. NPL; AI; BRF; EQ first 12. NPL; AI; BRF; EQ not first 13. NPL; No AI; CS; EQ first 14. NPL; No AI; CS; EQ not first 15. NPL; No AI; BRF; EQ first 16. NPL; No AI; BRF; EQ not first 	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Public and judicial attitudes toward various aspects of the legal machinery	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Martin 1989

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	University students	

Martin 1989 (Continued)

Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-notification (PN); Follow up (FU); Personalised (PS); Stamped reply envelope (SRE) 2. PN; No FU; PS; SRE 3. PN; FU; No PS; SRE 4. PN; No FU; No PS; SRE 5. PN; FU; PS; Business reply envelope (BRE) 6. PN; No FU; PS; BRE 7. PN; FU; No PS; BRE 8. PN; No FU; No PS; BRE 9. No PN; FU; PS; SRE 10. No PN; No FU; PS; SRE 11. No PN; FU; No PS; SRE 12. No PN; No FU; No PS; SRE 13. No PN; FU; PS; BRE 14. No PN; No FU; PS; BRE 15. No PN; FU; No PS; BRE 16. No PN; No FU; No PS; BRE 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Information on the perceived attributes of the university	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 30 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Martin 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Participants of a large international amateur bowling tournament	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High-interest questionnaire 2. Low-interest questionnaire 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Interpersonal relationships with other customers in service environment	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Martin 1994 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Martinson 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Adolescents aged 14-17 years in the Minneapolis/St Paul metropolitan area
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$2 included with questionnaire 2. \$15 promised on completion and return of questionnaire 3. Promise of entry into 10 drawings for 10 \$200 cash prizes on completion and return of questionnaire 4. No incentive
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards smoking, behavioural health related items
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Reminder and second questionnaire sent to non-responders 1 week and 3 weeks after initial mailing, respectively; Age: 14-17 years; Equal male and females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mason 1961

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Teachers
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long form; Name and address on form 2. Long form; Code number on form 3. Short form; Name and address on form 4. Short form; Code number on form
Outcomes	-
Topic	Not specified

Mason 1961 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Matteson 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of a national organisation	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Semi-personalised letter; White questionnaire 2. Semi-personalised letter; Pink questionnaire 3. Form letter; White questionnaire 4. Form letter; Pink questionnaire 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Significant contribution of literature in their field	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McCull 2003a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Adults with angina from 62 family practices in Northeast England	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Version 1: Condition-specific questionnaires (Seattle Angina Questionnaire) first, followed by generic questionnaires (SF-36 & EQ-5D) 2. Version 2: Generic questionnaires first, followed by condition-specific questionnaires 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

McColl 2003a (Continued)

Topic	Health: Patient-based outcome measures	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Reminder and second questionnaire sent to non-responders 3 weeks and 6 weeks after initial mailing, respectively; Mean age: 69.1 years; mainly male	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McColl 2003b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Adults with asthma from 62 family practices in Northeast England	
Comparisons	1. Version 1: Condition-specific questionnaires (Newcastle Asthma Symptoms Questionnaire & Asthma Quality of Life Questionnaire) first, followed by generic questionnaires (SF-36 & EQ-5D) 2. Version 2: Generic questionnaires first, followed by condition-specific questionnaires	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Patient-based outcome measures	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Reminder and second questionnaire sent to non-responders 3 weeks and 6 weeks after initial mailing, respectively; Mean age: 48.6 years; mainly female	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McConochie 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Males aged 18-34	
Comparisons	1. 50 cents incentive 2. \$2 incentive 3. \$5 incentive	

McConochie 1985 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 1 week	
Topic	Non-health: Measurement of radio listening	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 18-34 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McCoy 2007

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Institute of Public Relations (IPR) members in Northern Ireland	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hand written address 2. Computer-printed address 3. Brown envelope 4. White envelope 	
Outcomes	Deadline for return provided	
Topic	Non-health: Practices and attitudes towards public relations evaluation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

McDaniel 1980

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Major-appliances purchasers	

McDaniel 1980 (Continued)

Comparisons	1. 25-cent incentive 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Product warranty questionnaire	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McDaniel 1981

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Major-appliances purchasers in Midwestern US	
Comparisons	1. Anonymous (no name requested and no name given) 2. Non-anonymous (name requested and given at the beginning of questionnaire)	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Major appliances warranties and warranty performance	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McKee 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of a national non-profit professional organisation	

McKee 1992 (Continued)

Comparisons	1. Coded 2. Not coded In coded group, only non-respondents received follow up . In non-coded group, all received follow up	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Programme of the organisation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McKenzie-McHarg 2005

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Members and fellows of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in the UK	
Comparisons	1. Hand-written signature in the cover letter 2. Scanned and printed signature in the cover letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Surgical techniques used in caesarean section operation in the UK	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McKillip 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Underclass men of a large rural Midwestern university (US)	
Comparisons	1. Utility cover letter appeal 2. Value expression appeal 3. Knowledge appeal	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Evaluation activities for an alcohol education project	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McLaren 2000a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	700 Victorian general practitioners selected from a database held by Australasian Medical Publishing Company	
Comparisons	1. Telephone pre-notification 2. Postcard pre-notification	
Outcomes	Response within 8 weeks	
Topic	Health: Management of early pregnancy, bleeding and miscarriage, referral, diagnostic methods	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Equal male and females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

McLaren 2000b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	700 Victorian general practitioners selected from a database held by Australasian Medical Publishing Company
Comparisons	1. Promise of entry into a prize draw for a holiday on response 2. No incentive
Outcomes	Response within 8 weeks
Topic	Health: Management of early pregnancy, bleeding and miscarriage, referral, diagnostic methods
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Equal male and females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Meadows 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	600 diabetes patients aged 18 years or over selected from the patient register of a hospital outpatient diabetes centre in North England
Comparisons	1. High frequency response alternatives; Horizontal orientation of response options 2. Medium frequency response alternatives; Horizontal orientation of response options 3. High frequency response alternatives; Vertical orientation of response options
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Diabetes health profile
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	The high frequency response alternatives are: Most days, Once a Week, Once a Month, Less Often, Never The medium frequency response alternatives are: Once a Week or More Often, Once a Month, About Every Few Months, Less Often, Never Mean age: 52.2 years

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Meadows 2000 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Miller 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Full-time professors at doctorate granting or comprehensive universities	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incentive (decaffeinated coffee bag) 2. No incentive 3. Cover letter appeal: 'Your input into this matter is very important in determining what faculty consider scholarship to be'. 4. Cover letter appeal: 'It is important to ascertain what faculty consider scholarship to be, in order to develop models of scholarship and further knowledge' Follow up at 3 and 6 weeks after initial mailing	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Faculty attitudes about the personal importance of scholarly activities, institutional importance of scholarly activities, attitudes about faculty workload	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mizes 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians specialising in allergy randomly selected from all physicians listed under allergy or allergy/immunology in the telephone directory yellow pages of major metropolitan areas across the US	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive; Answer postcard 2. \$1 cheque; Answer postcard 3. \$5 cheque; Answer postcard 4. \$1 cheque; Answer cheque 5. \$5 cheque; Answer cheque 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Incidence, treatment, and the success of treatment of rhinitis melicamentosa	

Mizes 1984 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation confirmed through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mond 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation in SPSS	
Data	Australian capital territory residents	
Comparisons	1. Short questionnaire (8 pages long) 2. Long questionnaire (14 pages long)	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Measures of general psychological distress, disability, quality of life, eating disorders, exercise behaviours, healthcare utilization etc	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Morrison 2003

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation in SPSS	
Data	Local residents	
Comparisons	1. Study feedback information booklet 2. No information booklet	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Socio-demographics, travel behaviour, risk perception, attitudes to the local area and health	

Morrison 2003 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mortagy 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Persons listed in electoral registers (Southampton and New Forest, UK)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offered lottery ticket 2. Not offered lottery ticket Reminder sent to non-respondents after 4 weeks	
Outcomes		
Topic	Health: Respiratory symptoms such as breathlessness, wheezing, cough, phlegm, hyperirritability of the bronchi; family illness; smoking habits; drug treatment	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Moses 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Consultants identified from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) database	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prize draw incentive to win a personal digital assistant 2. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Moses 2004 (Continued)

Topic	Health: Current practice for the laparoscopic diagnosis and treatment of women with pelvic pain due to endometriosis	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Moss 1991

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of the National Council for Educational Measurement	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Typed salutation; Metered return envelope 2. Typed salutation; Non-metered return envelope 3. Hand-written salutation; Metered return envelope 4. Hand-written salutation; Non-metered return envelope 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Respondents belief about the frequency and credibility of criticisms of standardized test	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mullen 1987

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Non-federal office-based members of the American Academy	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blue and white sticker incentive only 2. Withdrawal provision only 3. Incentive and withdrawal provision 	

Mullen 1987 (Continued)

	4. No treatment Non-respondents followed-up 3 times	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Counselling adult patients about smoking, weight, exercise, and stress, interest in continuing education	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Mullner 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Community hospitals registered with the AHA (US)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire in booklet form (QBF); Most salient and relevant question first (SRF); Cover letter personal in tone (CLP); Results promised (RP) 2. QBF; SRF; CLP; No RP 3. QBF; SRF; Cover letter impersonal in tone (CLI); RP 4. QBF; SRF; CLI; No RP 5. QBF; Salient and relevant questions last (SRL); CLP; RP 6. QBF; SRL; CLP; No RP 7. QBF; SRL; CLI; RP 8. QBF; SRL; CLI; No RP 9. Questionnaire in 2-sided form style (QF); SRF; CLP; RP 10. QF; SRF; CLP; No RP 11. QF; SRF; CLI; RP 12. QF; SRF; CLI; No RP 13. QF; SRL; CLP; RP 14. QF; SRL; CLP; No RP 15. QF; SRL; CLI; RP 16. QF; SRL; CLI; No RP
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Corporate planning, risk management programmes, expenditures for hospital supplies, admitting privileges of physicians, programmes of special services for the elderly
Mode of Administration	Postal

Mullner 1982 (Continued)

Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Murawski 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Veterans aged 60-65	
Comparisons	1. Duke questionnaire 2. SF-36 questionnaire 3. SIP questionnaire Follow ups sent 1 and 4 weeks	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Health related quality of life (HRQoL)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 60-65 years	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Murphy 1991

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	International freight forwarders (US)	
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification postcard 2. No pre-notification postcard Follow up sent after 3 weeks	
Outcomes	Response within 62 days	
Topic	Non-health: US industrial firm check	

Murphy 1991 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 45-48 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Myers 1969

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Households listed in a street order telephone directory (Los Angeles, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-contact letter 2. Questionnaire only 3. Questionnaire then follow-up letter 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Reaction of public to various promotion efforts by the bank to establish the image of the bank	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nagata 1995

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Male owners of telephones (Gitu City, Japan)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1-page; Cigarette smoking and drinking 2. 2 pages; Cigarette smoking and drinking; Medical history 3. 2 pages; Cigarette smoking and drinking; Family history 4. 2 pages; Cigarette smoking and drinking; Family history; Consanguineous marriage 5. 3 pages; Cigarette smoking and drinking; Medical history; Family history; Consanguineous marriage 6. 2 pages; Cigarette smoking and drinking; Medical history; Family history; Consanguineous marriage 	

Nagata 1995 (Continued)

	Follow up in group 1 only	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Medical history, family history, smoking, drinking	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Mostly 46-65 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nakai 1997

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	People aged 40-64	
Comparisons	1. Short questionnaire (4 pages) 2. Long questionnaire (8 pages)	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Health status, health related practice, smoking status	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 40-64 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Napoles-Springer 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	African American or White, who were at least 50 years old, and had once visited the primary care practices of an academic health centre during the previous year	

Napoles-Springer 2004 (Continued)

Comparisons	1. Advance notice letter 2. No advance letter	
Outcomes	Response period within 2 weeks	
Topic	Health: Patient satisfaction in adult ambulatory care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Nederhof 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	All members of the general population of a medium-sized Dutch town	
Comparisons	1. Telephone pre-notification 2. Mail pre-notification	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nederhof 1983a

Methods	Random allocation: Using alternation	
Data	Group of members of the general public in Leyden, Netherlands	
Comparisons	1. Computer-printed address label 2. Hand-written address label 3. Ball-point pen worth \$ 0.35 4. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards suicide	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nederhof 1983b

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Group of members of the general public in Leyden, Netherlands	
Comparisons	1. Computer-printed address label 2. Hand-written address label	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes about females social roles and vegetarianism	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nederhof 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Biotechnologists living in the Netherlands
Comparisons	1. Graphic illustration on cover of questionnaire largely in white 2. Graphic illustration on cover of questionnaire largely in black
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Development in Biotechnology in the Netherlands
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Neider 1981a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	A sample of training and development directors who were members of the American Association for Training and Development
Comparisons	1. Hand addressed outgoing envelope 2. Typed outgoing envelope 3. Computer generated label on outgoing envelope
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified.
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Neider 1981b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	A sample of Class I and II common carriers
Comparisons	1. Hand addressed outgoing envelope 2. Typed outgoing envelope 3. Computer generated label on outgoing envelope
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nevin 1975a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Residents of university halls (US)
Comparisons	1. Given deadline of 5 days 2. Given deadline of 7 days 3. Given deadline of 9 days 4. No deadline given
Outcomes	-
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes about residence halls
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nevin 1975b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Non-responders to earlier survey of university hall residents
Comparisons	1. Follow-up letter with casual approach 2. Follow-up letter with veiled threat
Outcomes	Response within 18 days
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes about residence halls
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Newby 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation.
Data	Businesses listed in Perth, Western Australia
Comparisons	1. Monetary incentive worth A\$20 2. Pre-notification by telephone 3. Control
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes and expectations of the self-employed
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Newland 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed in electoral register (Southampton, UK)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First class stamp on outgoing envelope; First class stamp on return envelope; White envelopes 2. Second class stamp on outgoing envelope; Second class envelope on return; White envelope 3. Second class frank on outgoing envelope; Second class business reply return envelope; White envelopes. 4. First class stamp on outgoing envelope; First class stamp on return envelope; Brown envelopes 5. Second class stamp on outgoing envelope; Second class envelope on return; Brown envelope 6. Second class frank on outgoing envelope; Second class business reply return envelope; Brown envelopes Follow up at 2 and 16 weeks including another copy of the questionnaire	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Details of headache and accompanying symptoms, general health, demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nichols 1966

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	College students who had returned a similar questionnaire 1 year previously	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow-up postcard after 3 days; Further follow-up mailings 2. Not sent postcard after 3 days; Further follow-up mailings 	
Outcomes	Response within 120 days	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Nichols 1988

Methods	Random allocation: alternation.	
Data	Individuals listed on the electoral roll (Southampton, UK)	
Comparisons	1. Information booklet sent 5 weeks before questionnaire 2. No information booklet sent	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Nutritional health education leaflet	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Ogborne 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Health and social service professionals who had not responded to an earlier mailing	
Comparisons	1. Second questionnaires sent 2. Telephoned by a research assistant	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Evaluation of innovative addiction assessment/referral programme	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Olivarius 1995

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	GPs and specialists or consultants (Nordic countries)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire received on a Friday (GPs) 2. Questionnaire received on a Monday (GPs) 3. Questionnaire received on a Friday (Specialists) 4. Questionnaire received on a Monday (Specialists) Follow ups sent after 14 and 28 days	
Outcomes	Response within 60 days	
Topic	Health: Importance of GPs, treatment of general diseases	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Osborne 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	General practitioners	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Received pre-contact telephone call from non-medical research assistant 2. No pre-contact 	
Outcomes	Response within 60 days	
Topic	Health: Views about pathological test ordering	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Paolillo 1984

Methods	Random allocation: systematic division	
Data	A sample of professionals from the Midwestern US	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control group 2. \$1 enclosed with questionnaire 3. \$2 promised on return of questionnaire 4. Entry into a lottery for a cash prize promised on return of questionnaire 	
Outcomes	Response within 6 weeks	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Parasuraman 1981

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Commercial marketing research firms (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brief cover letter 2. Detailed cover letter 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Aspects of marketing research	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Parkes 2000a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Adults aged 20-74 years who are cases or controls in a Canadian case-control study of cancer
Comparisons	1. Enclosure of brochure with questionnaire which expands on the information provided in the covering letter about the survey 2. No brochure
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Tobacco exposure, diet, physical activity, use of medications, reproductive history
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	A reminder postcard, a reminder letter and second copy of the questionnaire and a follow-up phone call were made 1-2,4 and 6 weeks after the initial mailing, respectively, to non-responders Age: 20-74 year

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Parkes 2000b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Adults aged 20-74 years who are controls in a Canadian case-control study of cancer
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. \$2 sent with questionnaire 3. \$5 sent with questionnaire
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Tobacco exposure, diet, physical activity, use of medications, reproductive history
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	A reminder postcard, a reminder letter and second copy of the questionnaire and a follow-up phone call were made 1-2,4 and 6 weeks after the initial mailing, respectively, to non-responders Age: 20-74 years

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Parkes 2000b (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Parsons 1972a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Alumni from a Masters in Business Administration Program at a private university	
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification 2. No pre-notification	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Correlation between political opinions and religious belief	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Allocation concealment ascertained through contact with author	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Parsons 1972b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Leaders of 2 religious sects (US)	
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification 2. No pre-notification	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Correlation between political opinions and religious belief	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Allocation concealment ascertained through contact with author	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Parsons 1972b (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate
-------------------------	-----	--------------

Paul 2005

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	Pharmacists in NSW, Australia who had sold Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or Bupropion in the last month
Comparisons	1. Gift voucher worth A\$20 2. No voucher
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Smoking cessation
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Pearson 2003

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel
Data	Alumni at Stanford University
Comparisons	1. Salutation - Generic (Dear Stanford Alumni) 2. Salutation - Familiar personalisation (Dear James) 3. Salutation - Familiar personalisation without the dear (James) 4. Salutation - Formal personalised (Dear Mr. Bond)
Outcomes	Response within 27 days
Topic	Non-health: Stanford University's logos, image, and branding
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Age: Mostly 30-49 years; Mainly males

Risk of bias

Pearson 2003 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Peck 1981

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Men and women who had been high school juniors in spring 1973 (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepaid \$3 incentive 2. Promised \$3 incentive 3. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 5 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Career plans, labour market, post high school educational experience	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Perneger 1993

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Young adults enrolled in various insurance plans (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. Reminder card 3. Money offer 4. Both incentives Follow up with the incentive found to be best after 14 days	
Outcomes	Response within 80 days	
Topic	Health: Health status, risk taking behaviours, utilisation of health services, satisfaction with health care, socio-demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Perneger 1993 (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Age: Mostly 26-30 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Perry 1974

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Respondents to a previous questionnaire	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent in pre-paid franked envelope 2. Questionnaire sent in hand-stamped envelope	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Peters 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People aged 35 and over registered with a general practice (Bristol, UK)	
Comparisons	1. Telephone number requested 2. Telephone number not requested	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Information about chronic conditions, socio-demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Peters 1998 (Continued)

Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Peterson 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Individuals listed in a telephone directory
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University source (U); Outgoing envelope (OE) metered; Return envelope (RE) stamped; Follow-up postcard (FUP); Address (A) typed 2. U; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; FUP; A-typed 3. Business source (B); OE-metered; RE-stamped; FUP; A-typed 4. B; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; FUP; A-typed 5. U; OE-metered; RE-stamped; FUP; A-label 6. U; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; FUP; A-label 7. B; OE-metered; RE-stamped; FUP; A-typed 8. B; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; FUP; A-label 9. U; OE-metered; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-typed 10. U; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-typed 11. B; OE-metered; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-typed 12. B; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-typed 13. U; OE-metered; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-label 14. U; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-label 15. B; OE-metered; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-label 16. B; OE-stamped; RE-stamped; No FUP; A-label 17. U; OE-metered; RE-Business reply (reply); FUP, typed 18. U; OE-stamped; RE-reply; FUP; A-typed 19. B; OE-metered; RE-reply; FUP; A-typed 20. B; OE-stamped; RE-reply; FUP; A-typed 21. U; OE-metered; RE-reply; FUP; A-label 22. U; OE-stamped; RE-reply; FUP; A-label 23. B; OE-metered; RE-reply; FUP; A-label 24. B; OE-stamped; RE-reply; FUP; A-label 25. U; OE-metered; RE-reply; No FUP; typed 26. U; OE-stamped; RE-reply; No FUP; A-typed 27. B; OE-metered; RE-reply; No FUP; A-typed 28. B; OE-stamped; RE-reply; No FUP; A-typed 29. U; OE-metered; RE-reply; No FUP; A-label 30. U; OE-stamped; RE-reply; No FUP; A-label 31. B; OE-metered; RE-reply; No FUP; A-label 32. B; OE-stamped; RE-reply; No FUP; A-label

Peterson 1975 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 30 days	
Topic	Non-health: Banking and financial attitudes	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Phillips 1951

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Graduates of Fisk University in the classes of 1924 and 1939	
Comparisons	1. Follow up by first class mail 2. Follow up by special delivery mail	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Pirotta 1999

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	General practitioners	
Comparisons	1. Sent primer postcard 5 days before questionnaire 2. Not sent primer postcard before questionnaire	

Pirotta 1999 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 60 days	
Topic	Health: Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: additional unpublished data provided was slightly different to published report, author data included	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Poe 1988

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Relatives of people who had died and who's death certificates had been filed in September and October 1984	
Comparisons	1. 'Don't know' boxes included 2. 'Don't know' boxes not included	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health care in the last year of life, health practices, socio-economics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Porter 2003a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SAS	
Data	Non-applicant high school students	
Comparisons	1. Control 2. \$ 50 gift voucher for Amazon.com	

Porter 2003a (Continued)

	3. \$ 100 gift voucher for Amazon.com 4. \$ 150 gift voucher for Amazon.com 5. \$ 200 gift voucher for Amazon.com.	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Application to college	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Porter 2003b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SAS	
Data	Non-applicant high school students	
Comparisons	1. Salutations impersonal (e.g. Dear Student) 2. Salutations personal (e.g. Dear Jane) 3. Title of signatory, high (Director) 4. Title of signatory, low (Administrative assistant) 5. Sponsorship, low-profile office (Office of Institutional Research) 6. Sponsorship, high-profile office (Office of Admission) 7. Source of e-mail address, office (e.g. surveyresearch@institution.edu) 8. Source of e-mail address, person (e.g. jsmith@institution.edu)	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Perceptions of the college and the reasons for not applying	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Porter 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SAS	
Data	High school seniors who did not apply to the college	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subject-line - Blank 2. Subject-line - Survey 3. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University 4. Subject-line - Request for Assistance 5. Subject-line - Survey, Request for Assistance 6. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University, Request for Assistance 7. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University, Survey 8. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University, Request for Assistance, Survey 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health : Perceptions of the school	
Mode of Administration	Electronic : Online survey	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Porter 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SAS	
Data	Undergraduates currently enrolled at the institution	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subject-line - Blank 2. Subject-line - Survey 3. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University 4. Subject-line - Request for Assistance 5. Subject-line - Survey, Request for Assistance 6. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University, Request for Assistance 7. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University, Survey 8. Subject-line - Liberal Arts University, Request for Assistance, Survey 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Abilities on various capabilities and types of knowledge	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	

Porter 2005b (Continued)

Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Porter S 2003b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SAS	
Data	Non-applicant high school students	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selective statement in the e-mail invitation 2. No selective statement in the e-mail invitation 3. Mention of General deadline in at least 1 e-mail 4. Mention of specific deadline in e-mail 3 5. Mention of specific deadline in e-mails 2 and 3 6. Mention of specific deadline in e-mails 1,2, and 3 7. No general deadline 8. No specific deadline 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Perceptions of the college and the reasons for not applying	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Pourjalali 1994

Methods	Random allocation: random number table	
Data	Students who had participated in an investment game	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigator perceived to be African-American (AA); Male Investigator (MI); Informal letter (IL); Easier questions first (E1) 2. AA; MI; IL Harder questions first (H1) 	

Pourjalali 1994 (Continued)

	3. AA; Female investigator (FI); IL; E1 4. AA; FI; IL; H1 5. AA; MI; Formal letter (FL); E1 6. AA; MI; FL; H1 7. AA; FI; FL; E1 8. AA; FI; FL; H1 9. Investigator perceived to beCaucasian (Ca); MI; IL; E1 10. Ca; MI; IL; H1 11. Ca; FI; IL; E1 12. Ca; FI; IL; H1 13. Ca; MI; FL; E1 14. Ca; MI; FL; H1 15. Ca; FI; FL; E1 16. Ca; FI; FL; H1 17. Investigator perceived to be Hispanic (Hi); MI; IL; E1 18. Hi; MI; IL; H1 19. Hi; FI; IL; E1 20. Hi; FI; IL; H1 21. Hi; MI; FL; E1 22. Hi; MI; FL; H1 23. Hi; FI; FL; E1 24. Hi; FI; FL; H1 25. Investigator perceived to be 'Foreign/Alien' (Fo); MI; IL; E1 26. Fo; MI; IL; H1 27. Fo; FI; IL; E1 28. Fo; FI; IL; H1 29. Fo; MI; FL; E1 30. Fo; MI; FL; H1 31. Fo; FI; FL; E1 32. Fo; FI; FL; H1	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: AT&T investment game	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Equal male and females	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Powers 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	High school juniors	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback offered; Long questionnaire 2. Feedback offered; Short questionnaire 3. No feedback offered; Long questionnaire 4. No feedback, Short questionnaire 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Students reaction to the test administration and/or to the preparatory materials of SAT	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Pressley 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Marketing research directors	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dime incentive included 2. No incentive 3. Cartoons 4. No cartoons 5. Yellow questionnaire 6. Blue questionnaire 7. Green questionnaire 8. White questionnaire Factorial design. Follow up sent to non-respondents after 3 weeks	
Outcomes	Response within 6 weeks.	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Pressley 1977 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Pressley 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Executives employed by organisations located throughout the US
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Postscript; Deadline 2. No postscript; Deadline 3. Postscript; No deadline 4. No postscript; No deadline
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Pressley 1985

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Executives at VP-level in firms employing more than 500 (US)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mailed on Friday 2. Mailed on Monday 3. Coding hand-written in black ink 4. Coding in invisible ink 5. Coding was typed room number 6. Telephone pre-notification without incentive 7. Postcard pre-notification with \$0.10 incentive 8. Sent in window envelope 9. Sent in regular envelope

Pressley 1985 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 2 weeks	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Price 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A random sample of African-American women from a Midwestern university minority alumni membership list	
Comparisons	1. Race specific stamp on return envelope 2. General stamp on return envelope	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Cervical cancer	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Price 2003

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Public health educators and University professors in Health Education who did not respond to the second mailing	

Price 2003 (Continued)

Comparisons	1. Signed postcard 2. Unsigned postcard	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health education skills	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Pucel 1971

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Graduates (Minnesota, US)	
Comparisons	1. Control 2. Pencil incentive 3. Coffee incentive 4. Green questionnaire 5. Pre-notification letter 6. Pencil; Green questionnaire 7. Pencil; Pre-notification letter 8. Pencil; Green questionnaire; Pre-notification letter 9. Coffee incentive; Green questionnaire 10. Coffee incentive; Pre-notification letter 11. Coffee incentive; Green questionnaire; Pre-notification letter	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Criteria in counselling applicants to post high school vocational technical schools	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Pucel 1971 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Puffer 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generation in SPSS
Data	Women who returned the risk factor questionnaire for Osteoporotic fracture
Comparisons	1. Single booklet - 3 sections stapled together 2. Multiple booklet 3. Single-sided 4. Double-sided
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Patient-based outcome measures concerned with Quality of Life (SF36, EQ5D)
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Renfroe 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Participants of the AVID trial, USA
Comparisons	1. Mailed out by overnight express (OE); Certificate of appreciation included (CA); Mailed early (E); Signature of Principal Investigator on cover letter (PI) 2. OE; CA; E; Signature of Study Coordinator on cover letter (SC) 3. OE; CA; Mailed late (L); PI 4. OE; CA; L; SC 5. OE; No CA; E; PI 6. OE; No CA; E; SC 7. OE; No CA; L; PI 8. OE; No CA; L; SC 9. Mailed out by regular mail (RM); CA; E; PI 10. RM; CA; E; SC 11. RM; CA; L; PI 12. RM; CA; L; SC 13. RM; No CA; E; PI

Renfroe 2002 (Continued)

	14. RM; No CA; E; SC 15. RM; No CA; L; PI 16. RM; No CA; L; SC	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Patient satisfaction	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 63; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Riesenberg 2006

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Designated Institutional Official (DIO)	
Comparisons	1. Priority stamps worth \$3.85 2. First-class stamps worth \$0.60	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Employment - Demographics, identification of roles and responsibilities, competencies, training and experience required by the DIO	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rikard-Bell 2000

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	Dentists practising within the central Sydney area, Australia in 1997
Comparisons	1. Advance telephone prompt 2. Advance letter prompt
Outcomes	Response within 65 days
Topic	Health: Not specified
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Rimm 1990

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation
Data	Male health professionals who had not responded to a previous questionnaire
Comparisons	1. Certified mail 2. United parcel service 3. Window envelope with personal return address 4. Typed address 5. Hand-written address 6. Window envelope with computer printed address Factorial design
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Medical history, current diet and lifestyle habits
Mode of Administration	Postal.
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Age: 40-75; Mainly males

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Rimm 1990 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate
-------------------------	-----	--------------

Roberts 1978

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	General practitioners who were members of the American Dental Association	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalised; Social appeal; Deadline 2. Personalised; Social appeal; No deadline 3. Personalised; No social appeal; Deadline 4. Personalised; No social appeal; No deadline 5. Not personalised; Social appeal; Deadline 6. Not personalised, Social appeal; No deadline 7. Not personalised, No social appeal; Deadline 8. Not personalised, No social appeal; No deadline 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Informed that allocation concealment was adequate	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Roberts 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Adults listed on a family health services authority register who had not responded to a previous questionnaire	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First reminder was another copy of questionnaire 2. First reminder was a postcard 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health and lifestyle	

Roberts 1993 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 16-70 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roberts 1994

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Nurses (Auckland, New Zealand)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brown re-usable envelope out; Brown re-usable envelope return 2. Brown re-usable envelope out; White non-reusable envelope return 3. White non-reusable envelope out; Brown re-usable envelope return 4. White non-reusable envelope out; White non-reusable envelope return Reminders sent using the same envelope combination as initially allocated	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Prevalence of back pain	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 37.5 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roberts 2000

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	1000 English women aged 40 to 65 years	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Entry into lottery for prize draw of £50 on response 2. Direct payment of £5 on response 3. Entry into lottery and direct payment of £5 on response 4. No incentive 	

Roberts 2000 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 3 months	
Topic	Health: Menopause services	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roberts 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	General practices in the North and West Birmingham area	
Comparisons	1. Lottery to win high street shopping voucher worth £100 2. Control	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Prevalence of IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) using SF36, Rome II criteria	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 48 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Robertson 1978

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A systematic sample of Denver area residents listed in the Metropolitan area phone directory	
Comparisons	1. Control; No incentive 2. Promise of \$1 cash on return of questionnaire 3. Promise of \$1 donation to charity on return of questionnaire	

Robertson 1978 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Robertson 2005

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Australian general practitioners and medical specialists	
Comparisons	1. \$ AU 2 scratch lottery ticket 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Heath: Exploring new drug use by GPs and Medical specialists	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Rolnick 1989

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Women with sexually transmitted diseases	
Comparisons	1. Detailed questionnaire 2. Modified questionnaire	

Rolnick 1989 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 2 months	
Topic	Health: Gynaecological issues	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 18-28 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Romney 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Community educators	
Comparisons	1. Open-ended format 2. Closed-ended format	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Community educational needs assessment instrument	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ronckers 2004

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Dutch patients treated for ENT condition between 1945 and 1981	
Comparisons	1. Short questionnaire (8 pages) 2. Long questionnaire (12 pages) 3. Standard consent form 4. Multi-option consent form (choices with regard to participation in 3 phases of the overall study)	

Ronckers 2004 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Female reproductive history, occupational exposures, and diet	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roscoe 1975

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Random sample of telephone customers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long questionnaire; Postcard reminder follow up 2. Long questionnaire; Telephone reminder follow up 3. Short questionnaire; Postcard reminder follow up 4. Short questionnaire; Telephone reminder follow up 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Telephone behaviours, housing, mobility, demographics, socioeconomic characteristics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rose 2007a

Methods	Random allocation: using random numbers chart	
Data	Employees of a large international retailer in the US	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$1 bill 2. No incentive 	

Rose 2007a (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period within 10 days	
Topic	Non-health: Related to marketing skills, management, and leadership qualities	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Surveys with incentives enclosed were identified by a one-inch-long, one-fourth-inch-wide yellow highlighter mark within a half inch of both edges of the lower left corner of the back side of the survey. Also one-fourth inch of the non highlighted corner at the bottom of the survey was cut off	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rose 2007b

Methods	Random allocation: using random numbers chart	
Data	Employees of a large health care organisation in the US	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low novelty - Plain bill 2. High Novelty - Bill with small star sticker or Sacagawea gold dollar coin 3. A penny bill 4. A quarter bill 5. A dollar bill 6. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response within 21 days	
Topic	Non-health: Training needs	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Surveys with incentives enclosed bears a one-inch-long, one-fourth-inch-wide highlighted mark within a half inch of both edges of the lower left corner of the back side of the survey. Packets with pennies had orange marks, packets with quarters had yellow marks, packets with paper dollars had blue marks, and packets with sacagawea dollars had green highlighter marks. In addition, one-fourth inch of the non highlighted corner at the bottom of the survey was cut off	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rosoff 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: random block procedure
Data	Childhood cancer survivors
Comparisons	1. Unconditional \$10 bill 2. Conditional \$10 bill
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Health-related behaviours among childhood cancer survivors and their parents
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rosoff 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: random block procedure
Data	Childhood cancer survivors
Comparisons	1. Unconditional \$10 bill 2. Conditional \$10 bill
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Health-related behaviours among childhood cancer survivors and their parents
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rosoff 2005c

Methods	Random allocation: random block procedure
Data	Parents of childhood cancer survivors
Comparisons	1. Unconditional \$10 bill 2. Conditional \$10 bill
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Health-related behaviours among childhood cancer survivors and their parents
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Students studying Wealth Accumulation Planning
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing
Outcomes	-
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Financial Services: Environment and Professions	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990c

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Estate and Gift Tax Planning	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990d

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Wealth Accumulation Planning	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990e

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Economics	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990f

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Pensions and Other Retirement Plans	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990g

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Advanced Estate Planning	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990h

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Financial Statement Analysis	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990i

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Group Benefits and Social Insurance	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990j

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Planning for Business Owners and Professionals	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes		
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990k

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Financial Statement Analysis	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990l

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Financial and Estate Planning	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990m

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Financial and Estate planning	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Roszkowski 1990n

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students studying Group Benefits and Social Insurance	
Comparisons	1. Long questionnaire 2. Short questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents of first mailing	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Evaluation of the financial courses	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rucker 1979a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students	
Comparisons	1. Standard questionnaire 2. Matrix questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents after 10 days	
Outcomes	Response within 2 months	
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes towards purchasing clothes	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rucker 1979b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Students	
Comparisons	1. Standard questionnaire 2. Matrix questionnaire Follow up sent to non-respondents after 10 days	
Outcomes	Response within 1 month	
Topic	Non-health: Clothing attitudes	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Rucker 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Graduates	
Comparisons	1. Textiles student sponsor; No photo of person on cover letter 2. Textiles student sponsor; Casually dressed person on cover letter 3. Textiles student sponsor; Formal dressed person on cover letter 4. Textiles professor sponsor; No photo of person on cover letter 5. Textiles professor sponsor; Casually dressed person on cover letter 6. Textiles professor sponsor; Formal dressed person on cover letter 7. Animal science student sponsor; No photo of person on cover letter 8. Animal science student sponsor; Casually dressed person on cover letter 9. Animal science student sponsor; Formal dressed person on cover letter 10. Animal science professor sponsor; No photo of person on cover letter 11. Animal science professor sponsor; Casually dressed person on cover letter 12. Animal science professor sponsor; Formal dressed person on cover letter Postcard reminder and second questionnaire sent to non -respondents at approximately bi-monthly intervals	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Furniture opinion	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Rucker 1984 (Continued)

Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Russell 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Chiropractors registered with the College of Chiropractors of Alberta	
Comparisons	1. Unconditional \$5 bill 2. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Immunisation beliefs and behaviours of Chiropractors	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ryu 2006

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	Detroit Area Study (DAS) 2001	
Comparisons	1. Cash (\$5 bill) 2. In-kind (set of passes to regional parks, or metro parks)	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Quality of life in the Metropolitan Detroit Area	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	

Ryu 2006 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Saal 2005

Methods	Random allocation: using alternation	
Data	In-patients admitted for elective surgery at the St. Gallen Cantonal Hospital	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent 1 week after discharge 2. Questionnaire sent 5 weeks after discharge 3. Questionnaire sent 9 weeks after discharge	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Patients assessment of anaesthesia care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Survey was conducted by an independent organisation - The picker Institute	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Salim Silva 2002

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	2 female Australian samples. Sample A - current office workers at a university. Sample B - Patients seen by a consultant in rehab medicine	
Comparisons	1. Telephone reminder 2. No telephone reminder	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Musculoskeletal symptoms, health service utilisation, tobacco and alcohol consumption, social support, occupational history and job satisfaction, general health, socio-demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Salim Silva 2002 (Continued)

Notes	Age: Mostly above 45 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Sallis 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians who had not responded to a previous questionnaire (Monterey County)	
Comparisons	1. No incentive 2. Pencil incentive printed with an attractive design	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Salvesen 1992

Methods	Random allocation: using a table of random numbers	
Data	Mothers who had not responded to a previous questionnaire	
Comparisons	1. Newspaper article with description of the study 2. No article sent with the questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response within 30 days	
Topic	Health: Child's health - hearing, vision	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Salvesen 1992 (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Allocation was not concealed; Mainly females	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Sang-Wook 2005

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SAS	
Data	Korean-Vietnam Veterans	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaires sent via Recorded Delivery 2. Questionnaires sent via Standard Delivery 3. Stamped Return Envelope 4. Franked Return Envelope 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Veterans socio-economic and health status, medical check-up	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Sauerland 2002

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	All members of the association of German surgeons	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hernia and Pain Questionnaires sent together in 1 letter 2. Hernia Questionnaire sent first, pain questionnaire sent 4 weeks later 3. Pain Questionnaire sent first, hernia questionnaire sent 4 weeks later 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Perioperative pain management, Surgical technique in incisional hernia repair	

Sauerland 2002 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Schmidt 2005

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in SPSS	
Data	Product Development and Management Association (PDMA) members	
Comparisons	1. Certified mail on outward mailing 2. First-class mail on outward mailing	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Development of new products by various organisations	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Schweitzer 1995

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	University staff employed for at least 6 years (Pennsylvania, US)	
Comparisons	1. Non-form fillers; Paid in advance 2. Non-form fillers; Paid on completion 3. Form-fillers; Paid in advance 4. Non-form fillers; Paid on completion Reminder sent to non-respondents after 4 weeks	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours regarding the selection of employee health benefits	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 45-48 years	

Schweitzer 1995 (Continued)

<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Scott 1957

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Women aged 60 years and over from poll tax exemption lists for Travis County, Texas, USA, 1954
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preliminary letter received on Monday, questionnaire received on Tuesday 2. Preliminary letter received on Monday, questionnaire received on Friday 3. No preliminary letter, questionnaire received on Wednesday 4. No preliminary letter, questionnaire received on Saturday
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Occupational history, present income/pension payment
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: above 60 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

See Tai 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Patients who had not responded to a questionnaire (London, UK)
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire reminder 2. Telephone reminder
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: to evaluate the use of structural computerised prompts in their management using Asthma Symptoms Questionnaire & Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (for patients with Asthma), and Well-being Questionnaire and Diabetes Treatment Questionnaire (for patients with Diabetics)

See Tai 1997 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: Telephone group - 47.5 years; Recorded delivery group - 40 years	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Shackleton 1980

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Partially sighted school leavers aged between 17 and 20 years who had left schools for the visually handicapped during the previous academic year	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. £1 offered; previous examination 2. No incentive; previous examination 3. £1 offered; no examination 4. No incentive; no examination 	
Outcomes	Response within 42 days	
Topic	Non-health: Occupational experience during 1st year after leaving the school	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Age: 17-20 years	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Shah 2001

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Patients aged 65 to 74 years in an inner London practice who had consulted within the last 2 years	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of questions on income; inclusion of consent form 2. Inclusion of questions on income; no consent form 3. No questions on income; inclusion of consent form 4. No questions on income; no consent form 	

Shah 2001 (Continued)

Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Physical and mental health, social circumstances, social support, living arrangements, income	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 65-74 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Shahar 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals who had declined to participate in a previous study	
Comparisons	1. Additional letter with first mailing requesting an explanation for not participating 2. No letter	
Outcomes	Response within 14 weeks	
Topic	Health: General health, physical activity, smoking habits, list of chronic disease, demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Sharp 2006

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Participants from the TOMBOLA (Trial Of Management of Borderline and Other Low-grade Abnormal smears) trial	
Comparisons	1. Pen 2. No pen 3. First class dispatch	

Sharp 2006 (Continued)

	4. Second class dispatch 5. Freepost (business reply) envelope 6. Postage stamp envelope	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Psychosocial impact of having a low-grade abnormal cervical smear and its subsequent management	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Shaw 2001

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	HealthSystem Minnesota enrollees aged 20-80 years	
Comparisons	1. \$5 included in survey package 2. \$2 included in survey package	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Digestive Health Status instrument (DHS I), SF-36, HADS, Comorbidity checklist, health care utilisation	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 20-80 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Sheikh 1982

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	400 people who had completed an assessment course at an employment rehabilitation centre in London 1973-1974	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire including sensitive question on earnings 2. Same questionnaire as (1) without the sensitive question on earnings	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Employment	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 39 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Shin 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Faculty members in universities and 4 year colleges in the United States	
Comparisons	1. Personalised (P); anonymous (A); professional appeal (Prof); university sponsored (U) questionnaire 2. P; A; Prof; Private research institute sponsored (PR) 3. P; A; personal appeal (Pers); U 4. P; A; Pers; PR 5. P; Nonanonymous (NA); Prof; U 6. P; NA; Prof; PR 7. P; NA; Pers; U 8. P; NA; Pers; PR 9. Not Personalised (Not P); A; Prof; U 10. Not P; A; Prof; PR 11. Not P; A; Pers; U 12. Not P; A; Pers; PR 13. Not P; NA; Prof; U 14. Not P; NA; Prof; PR 15. Not P; NA; Pers; U 16. Not P; NA; Pers; PR	
Outcomes	Response within 7 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Student evaluation of faculty instruction	

Shin 1992 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Shiono 1991

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians (US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-notification letter; Stamp on return envelope 2. Pre-notification letter; Return envelope franked 3. No pre-notification letter; Stamp on return envelope 4. No pre-notification letter; Return envelope franked 	
Outcomes		
Topic	Health: Pregnancy among resident physicians	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Simon 1967a

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Readers of an magazine published by a national industrial company	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal letter 2. Form letter 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards a hospital insurance plan	

Simon 1967a (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: unable to provide further details on randomisation	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Simon 1967b

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Readers of an magazine published by a national industrial company	
Comparisons	1. Personal letter 2. Form letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards a hospital insurance plan	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: unable to provide further details on randomisation	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Simon 1967c

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Subscribers to a hospital insurance plan	
Comparisons	1. Personal letter 2. Form letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes towards a hospital insurance plan	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Simon 1967c (Continued)

Notes	Author contacted: unable to provide further details on randomisation	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Skinner 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Marketing professors, Canada	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. \$1 pre-paid incentive 3. \$1 promised incentive; Respondent identified 4. \$1 promised incentive; Respondent not identified 5. \$1 promised to charity 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Needs of Canadian instructors regarding an introductory marketing text	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Sletto 1940

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Former university students	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10-page questionnaire; Altruistic appeal in cover letter 2. 10-page questionnaire; Cover letter requesting help 3. 10-page questionnaire; Cover letter challenging participants to respond 4. 25-page questionnaire; Altruistic appeal in cover letter 5. 25-page questionnaire; Cover letter requesting help 6. 25-page questionnaire; Cover letter challenging participants to respond 7. 35-page questionnaire (10 and 25-page questionnaires); Altruistic appeal in cover letter 	

Sletto 1940 (Continued)

	8. 35-page questionnaire (10 and 25-page questionnaires); Cover letter requesting help 9. 35-page questionnaire (10 and 25-page questionnaires); Cover letter challenging participants to respond	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Vocational activities, needs, interest, socio-civic activities	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Sloan 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Doctors of patients with cancer	
Comparisons	1. University letterhead (UL); MD signatory (MD); Hand-written note (HN) 2. Cancer agency letterhead (CL); MD; HN 3. UL; PhD signatory (PhD), HN 4. CL; PhD; HN 5. UL; MD; No HN 6. CL; MD; No HN 7. UL; PhD, No HN 8. CL; PhD, No HN NB: this was a letter requesting doctors to give consent for patients to be contacted and sent questionnaires	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Smith 1985

Methods	Random allocation: sequential sampling
Data	Patients aged 40-59 years registered with an urban general practice, UK
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent by General Practitioner 2. Questionnaire sent by a Doctor from the research unit
Outcomes	Response within 9 weeks
Topic	Health: Aggression scale, Social desirability scale, Fear survey schedule II, Situations evoking social anxiety scale, Social evaluative anxiety scale
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Spry 1989a

Methods	Random allocation: using a table of random numbers
Data	Residences listed in the Haines Directory (San Diego, US)
Comparisons	1. Telephone pre-notification; Lottery entry offer 2. Telephone pre-notification; No lottery offer 3. Postcard pre-notification; Lottery entry offer 4. Postcard pre-notification; No lottery offer 5. No pre-notification; Lottery entry offer 6. No pre-notification; No lottery offer
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Health and physical activity habits
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Randomisation not concealed; Mainly males

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Spry 1989a (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate
-------------------------	----	----------------

Spry 1989b

Methods	Random allocation: using a table of random numbers	
Data	Residences listed in the Haines Directory (San Diego, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short questionnaire; Lottery 2. Short questionnaire; No lottery 3. Long questionnaire; Lottery 4. Long questionnaire; No lottery 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health and physical activity habits	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Randomisation not concealed; Mainly males	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Spry 1989c

Methods	Random allocation: using a table of random numbers	
Data	Residences listed in the Haines Directory who had not responded to a questionnaire (San Diego, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promise of \$5 when respond 2. Promise of \$1 when respond 3. \$1 bill enclosed 4. No incentive 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health and physical activity habits	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Spry 1989c (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author. Randomisation not concealed; Mainly males	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Stafford 1966

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	University students (Houston, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-notification letter sent 2. Pre-notification telephone call made 3. No pre-notification contact 	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Non-health: Collegiate clothing market	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
Risk of bias		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Stapulonis 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Members form the Welfare-to-Work evaluation site at Chicago	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conditional \$20 check 2. Conditional point-of-sale cards worth \$20 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Employment	

Stapulonis 2004 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Electronic: Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Stem 1984a

Methods	Random allocation: using random number table	
Data	Students	
Comparisons	1. Randomised response model 2. Direct questions	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non -health: Cheating behaviours during exams	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Stem 1984b

Methods	Random allocation: using random number table	
Data	Automobile sales license holders	
Comparisons	1. Randomised response model 2. Direct questions	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Automobile selling practices	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Stevens 1975

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Graduates from a southern university (US)	
Comparisons	1. Pre-coded questionnaire 2. Questionnaire not pre-coded	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Job hunting experience	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Streiff 2001

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Randomly selected members of the American Society of Hematology	
Comparisons	1. Business reply envelope 2. Stamped return envelope	
Outcomes	Response within 3 months	
Topic	Health: Diagnosis and treatment of polycythaemia Vera	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Subar 2001

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	900 control participants from 3 centres in the prostate, lung, colorectal and ovarian cancer screening trial
Comparisons	1. Diet history questionnaire - 36 pages 2. Food frequency questionnaire - 16 pages
Outcomes	-
Topic	Health: Food frequency questionnaire, Diet history questionnaire
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Age: 55-74 years

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Sutton 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Business customers who had taken advantage of an earlier rebate programme
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification postcard; Prior telephone call 2. Pre-notification postcard; No prior telephone call 3. No pre-notification postcard; No prior telephone call 4. No pre-notification postcard; No prior telephone call
Outcomes	Response period within 43 days
Topic	Non-health: Customer reaction to energy rebate programme
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Author contacted: reported adequate allocation concealment

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Svoboda 2001

Methods	Random allocation: central randomisation	
Data	Head injured adults in the CRASH trial (Czech Republic)	
Comparisons	1. 1-page questionnaire 2. 3- page questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response within 3 months	
Topic	Health: Disability after traumatic brain injury	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Swan 1980

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals who had not responded to an earlier questionnaire	
Comparisons	1. Follow-up letter only 2. Follow-up letter and questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Perception of educational needs for the real estate profession, sale management practices, business planning, information about respondents firm	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Szirony 2002

Methods	Random allocation: using random table of numbers
Data	Faculty members from the top 100 graduate degree granting institutions in Nursing
Comparisons	1. Cover letter signed by a graduate student 2. Cover letter signed by a faculty member
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Publication, authorship, reporting of research results, funding, demographics
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	Inadequate

Tamayo-Sarver 2004

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in STATA
Data	Practicing Physicians with American College of Emergency Physicians membership
Comparisons	1. \$2 bill 2. Lottery to win \$250
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Diagnosis and treatment plan; practice environment
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Tambor 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Physicians (US)
Comparisons	1. Continuing medical education credits 2. No credits
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Genetic knowledge, psychometric scales, demographics
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mainly males

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Taylor 1998

Methods	Random allocation: stratified random sampling method
Data	Young people in the Youth Cohort Study 8 sample, England
Comparisons	1. Preliminary notice letter 2. No preliminary notification
Outcomes	Response within approximately 2 months
Topic	Non-health: Attitudes and behaviour while transition from secondary school to labour market / tertiary education system
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mean age: 16.5 years; Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Taylor 2006

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Participants registered in general practices in Aberdeen	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire printed in black ink 2. Questionnaire printed in green ink 3. Questionnaire sent in white envelope 4. Questionnaire sent in brown envelope 	
Outcomes	Response period within 6 months	
Topic	Health: Screening questions for Parkinsonism; EuroQuol EQ5D	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Teisl 2005

Methods	Random allocation: using random number generated in Excel	
Data	US residents	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$1 cash 2. \$2 cash 3. Phone card worth \$2 4. Phone card worth \$5 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: General perception of food and food processing, knowledge, and attitudes towards genetically modified foods	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Temple-Smith 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	General practitioners	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-contact by GP researcher 2. Pre-contact by non-medical researcher (older woman) 3. Pre-contact by non-medical researcher (younger woman) 4. Pre-contact by non-medical researcher (younger man) 	
Outcomes	Response within 8 weeks	
Topic	Health: Knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, and practice (KABP) in relation to Sexually Transmitted Diseases	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: Above 65 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Thistlethwaite 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	People aged 65 years and over from 7 counties in a Midwestern state of the USA	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No offer of results (NO); Altruistic appeal (A); No demographic omission (No D) 2. NO; A; Demographic Omission (D) 3. NO; Egoistic Appeal (E); No D 4. NO; E; D 5. Offer of results (O); A; No D 6. O; A; D 7. O; E; No D 8. O; E; D 	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Characteristics most desired in retirement centre, leisure time activities	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author; Age: Above 65 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		

Thistlethwaite 1993 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Thomson 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Practising GPs in Lothian, Scotland	
Comparisons	1. Lottery to win 6 bottles of champagne 2. Lottery to win 1 bottle of champagne	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: GPs opinions on toe nail surgery services offered by Podiatrists and Surgeons	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	Adequate

Tjerbo 2005

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Medical practitioners in Norway	
Comparisons	1. Unconditional scratch lottery 2. Conditional lottery to win a holiday trip worth 8,000 Norwegian Kronner 3. Control	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Relationship between primary care and secondary care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Language of publication is Norwegian	

Risk of bias

Tjerbo 2005 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Trussell 2004a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Households in the designated market area in the US who agreed to participate in the mail survey during the screening telephone survey	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentives 2. One \$1 bill 3. Two \$1 bills 4. Three \$1 bills 5. Four \$1 bills 6. Five \$1 bills 7. Six \$1 bills 8. Seven \$1 bills 9. Eight \$1 bills 10. Ten \$1 bills. 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Television viewing	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Larger incentive: From one \$1 bill to five \$1 bills; Smaller incentive: From six one \$1 bills to ten \$1 bills	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Trussell 2004b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Households in the designated market area in the US who were unable to contact during the screening telephone survey	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentives 2. One \$1 bill 3. Two \$1 bills 4. Three \$1 bills 	

Trussell 2004b (Continued)

	5. Four \$1 bills 6. Five \$1 bills 7. Six \$1 bills 8. Seven \$1 bills 9. Eight \$1 bills 10. Ten \$1 bills	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Television viewing	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Larger incentive : From one \$1 bill to five \$1 bills; Smaller incentive: From six one \$1 bills to ten \$1 bills	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Trussell 2004c

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Households in the designated market area in the US who refused to participate in the mail survey during the screening telephone survey
Comparisons	1. No incentives 2. One \$1 bill 3. Two \$1 bills 4. Three \$1 bills 5. Four \$1 bills 6. Five \$1 bills 7. Six \$1 bills 8. Seven \$1 bills 9. Eight \$1 bills 10. Ten \$1 bills
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Television viewing
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Larger incentive : From one \$1 bill to five \$1 bills; Smaller incentive: From six one \$1 bills to ten \$1 bills
<i>Risk of bias</i>	

Trussell 2004c (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Tullar 1979

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Large manufacturing firms	
Comparisons	1. No follow up; No incentive 2. No follow up; 10 cents incentive 3. Follow up; No incentive 4. No follow up; 10 cents incentive	
Outcomes	Response within 8 weeks	
Topic	Non-health: Time for development of new product	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Tullar 2004

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Medicare recipients who underwent total hip replacement in 1995	
Comparisons	1. Hand-written addresses in the envelope of all outgoing mails 2. Computer-printed addresses in the envelope of all outgoing mails 3. Hand stamped envelopes 4. Institutionally metered postage	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: pain, functional status, satisfaction, complication, general health	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Tullar 2004 (Continued)

Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Tuten 2004

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Unemployed Croatians	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentives 2. Offer of study results 3. Lottery of 1000 Kuna with immediate notification of the results 4. Lottery of 1000 Kuna with delayed (after 1 month) notification of the results 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Psychosocial consequences of unemployment	
Mode of Administration	Electronic: Online survey	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ulrich 2005

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Nurse practitioners and physician assistants practising in primary care in the US	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No incentive 2. Unconditional \$5 prepaid token incentive 3. Conditional lottery to win one of ten \$100 prize draw 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Ethical concerns in the course of practice	

Ulrich 2005 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Urban 1993

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians providing primary care	
Comparisons	1. Return envelope with first class stamp 2. Business reply return envelope	
Outcomes	Response within 6 weeks	
Topic	Health: Attitudes, beliefs, and practices regarding regular breast cancer screening	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 50-75 years; Mainly females	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

VanGeest 2001

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Physicians randomly selected from the American Medical Association's master file of all physicians practising in the US	
Comparisons	1. \$5 cash incentive 2. \$10 cash incentive 3. \$20 cash incentive	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Attitudes and responses in relation to utilisation and review pressure	

VanGeest 2001 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Veiga 1974

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Randomly selected managers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stamped return envelope 2. Business reply return envelope 3. Internal mail return 	
Outcomes	Response within 4 weeks	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Virtanen 2007a

Methods	Random allocation: using split-panel design	
Data	Working-age population living in rural areas in Finland	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SMS reminder 2. Traditional post-card reminder 	
Outcomes	Response period within 28 days	
Topic	Non-health: Information and Computer Technology (ICT) usage	

Virtanen 2007a (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Virtanen 2007b

Methods	Random allocation: using split-panel design	
Data	Welfare and health professionals in Finland	
Comparisons	1. SMS reminder 2. Traditional post-card reminder	
Outcomes	Response period within 28 days	
Topic	Health: Working and welfare conditions of health and social care workers	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Virtanen 2007c

Methods	Random allocation: using split-panel design	
Data	Members of trade union in Finland	
Comparisons	1. SMS reminder 2. Traditional post-card reminder	
Outcomes	Response period within 28 days	
Topic	Non-health: Employment	
Mode of Administration	Postal	

Virtanen 2007c (Continued)

Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Vocino 1977

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Members of the American Society for Public Administration	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Metered envelope 2. Commemorative stamp 3. Deadline 4. No deadline 5. Cover letter by well-known person in the discipline 6. Cover letter by unknown person in the discipline Factorial design	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Vogel 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals treated at an alcohol and drug treatment centre (Norway)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short questionnaire; Lottery (\$70) incentive if respond 2. Short questionnaire; No lottery incentive 3. Long questionnaire; Lottery (\$70) incentive if respond 4. Long questionnaire; No lottery incentive Follow up after 7 months	

Vogel 1992 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Post-discharge alcohol use, health status	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 42.4 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

VonRiesen 1979

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Veterinarians (Texas, US)	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Postcard reminders 8 days after initial mailing 2. Second copy of questionnaire, with cover letter and business reply envelope, 8 days after initial mailing 3. No follow up 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Supplier configuration, reasons for patronage, dollar amounts of annual purchases	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Waisanen 1954

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Equal numbers of families owning and not owning television sets	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Telephone pre-contact 2. No telephone pre-contact 	

Waisanen 1954 (Continued)

Outcomes	Response within 10 days	
Topic	Non-health: Self-rating of personal possession, occupation, television, income, education	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Walker 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	General population controls in a leg ulcer study aged 40-99 years, randomly selected from the electoral roll, Auckland, New Zealand	
Comparisons	1. Glossy brochure enclosed 2. No glossy brochure	
Outcomes	Response by post	
Topic	Health: SF-36, HRQoL (Leg ulcers)	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Age: 40-90 years	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Waltemyer 2005

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I and III assistant softball coaches	
Comparisons	1. Signed cover letter 2. Unsigned cover letter	

Waltemyer 2005 (Continued)

	3. White questionnaire 4. Yellow questionnaire	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ward 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Patients from a metropolitan general practice (Sydney, Australia)	
Comparisons	1. \$1 'scratchy' incentive with questionnaire 2. No incentive Follow up sent at 21 and 30 days	
Outcomes	Response within 30 days	
Topic	Health: SF-36, patient satisfaction, risk factors, chronic diseases	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Ward 1998

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Registered medical practitioners who had at least 1500 consultations per year	
Comparisons	1. Exhaustive pre-contact by telephone (continued until spoke to GP) 2. Gold pen incentive; University of NSW logo attached to questionnaire 3. Pre-contact letter with University of NSW crests Follow-up letter sent after 16 days to non-respondents. Second questionnaire sent after 23 days Telephone prompt from a non-medical research assistant after 39 days	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Cancer screening, personal and family history of cancer, socio- demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Warriner 1996

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Households listed in the Grand River Watershed region of south-western Ontario, Canada	
Comparisons	1. Monetary incentive 2. No monetary incentive 3. Offer to make a charitable donation or lottery 4. No offer Factorial design	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Environmental issues	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Author contacted: allocation was not concealed	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Warriner 1996 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate
-------------------------	----	----------------

Weilbacher 1952

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	University alumni members (Columbia, US)	
Comparisons	1. Personalised letter of transmittal 2. Non personalised letter of transmittal	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Weir 1999

Methods	Random allocation: computer algorithm	
Data	Patients with cerebrovascular disease discharged from hospital	
Comparisons	1. Questionnaire sent via GP 2. Questionnaire sent direct to participants by research group	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Stroke outcomes	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
------	--------------------	-------------

Weir 1999 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Wells 1984

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	University undergraduates
Comparisons	1. University sponsor; Business reply return envelope 2. University sponsor; No return postage 3. IRE sponsor; Business reply return envelope 4. IRE sponsor; No return postage
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Non-health: Attitude measure - degree of satisfaction with the university's contribution to personal development
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Mainly females

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Weltzien 1986

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified
Data	Individuals who had terminated from mental health treatment centres
Comparisons	1. 2 cents incentive with questionnaire 2. No incentive
Outcomes	Response within 4 months
Topic	Health: Consumer Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ)
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Weltzien 1986 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Wensing 1999a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Adult patients who had visited a GP	
Comparisons	1. Postal reminders 2. No reminders sent Reminder questionnaires sent at 3 weeks	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Europep - Patients evaluation of general practice care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Wensing 1999b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Adult patients who had visited a GP	
Comparisons	1. Postal reminders 2. No reminders sent Reminder questionnaires sent at 3 weeks	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Europep - Patients evaluation of general practice care	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Wensing 1999b (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Wensing 2005

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Elderly adults registered with 26 general practitioners in the Netherlands	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simple reminder card 2. Reminder + questionnaire 3. Reminder with request to explain nonparticipation 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health problems, health information sought, and attendance of general practice	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Whitcomb 2004

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	High school students who did not apply to the Liberal Arts College	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. E-mail file format - Text 2. E-mail file format - HTML 3. Background colour - White 4. Background colour - Black 5. Graphical design (Header) - Simple (Institution name only) 6. Graphical design (Header) - Complex (Mimicked University homepage - institutions name, campus photograph, quotation from the University president) 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Perception of the college, reason for not applying	

Whitcomb 2004 (Continued)

Mode of Administration	Electronic: Web-survey	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

White 1997

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	A random sample of marriage and family therapists from a list of all approved supervisors of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalised cover letter; White questionnaire 2. Personalised cover letter; Blue questionnaire 3. Generic cover letter; White questionnaire 4. Generic cover letter; Blue questionnaire 	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Demographics, Marriage and Family Therapist's supervision	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

White 2005a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Participants from the New Hampshire Women for Health (NHWH) study	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of a pen in the second mailing study 2. No pen in the second mailing study 	
Outcomes	Response period within 60 days	

White 2005a (Continued)

Topic	Health: Hormone replacement therapy, breast cancer, health-related quality of life	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

White 2005b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Vanguard participants from the 13 counties of Western Washington State	
Comparisons	1. Inclusion of a pencil in the second mailing study 2. No pencil in the second mailing study	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Vitamins and lifestyle	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Whiteman 2003

Methods	Random allocation: computerised random number generation	
Data	Women in the Baltimore Metropolitan area who reported their history of hot flashes	
Comparisons	1. Introductory postcard mailed 1 week before the questionnaire 2. Scratch-off lottery ticket worth \$1.00 3. \$1 bill 4. No incentives	
Outcomes	Response period within 95 days	

Whiteman 2003 (Continued)

Topic	Health: Risk of hot flashes in midlife women, pregnancy history, hormonal contraceptive use, menstrual history	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Yes	A - Adequate

Whitmore 1976

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals who had purchased a new car	
Comparisons	1. Key ring incentive with questionnaire 2. No incentive Follow up sent at 2 weeks	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Willits 1995

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Residents of Pennsylvania (US)	
Comparisons	1. No pre-amble; General question first 2. No pre-amble; General question last 3. Pre-amble; General first 4. Pre-amble; General last	

Willits 1995 (Continued)

	Follow up sent to non-respondents (postcard and 2 additional mailings including another copy of the questionnaire)	
Outcomes	-	
Topic	Health: Quality of life (QoL) in rural areas, QoL in relation to community spirit, health care services, recreational opportunities, job opportunities, air quality	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Mean age: 42.6 years; Mainly males	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Windsor 1992

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	Individuals listed on electoral registers	
Comparisons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questionnaire included questions on ethnic origin and housing tenure 2. Questionnaire included question on housing tenure only 3. Questionnaire included question on ethnic origin only 4. Neither question included 2 reminders sent	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Health: Health and hospital survey - health and hospital attendance, consultation with GPs, demographics, housing tenure	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Wiseman 1972

Methods	Random allocation: systematic allocation
Data	Residents of a suburban Boston community, USA
Comparisons	1. Telephone pre-notification - mail survey 2. No pre-notification - mail survey
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Birth control devices, legalising abortions, lowering the legal drinking age Non-health: Giving state aid to catholic schools
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Wiseman 1973

Methods	Random allocation: systematic allocation
Data	Residents in a statewide telephone listings, Massachusetts, USA
Comparisons	1. 10 cent incentive (MI); Postcard follow up 3 days after initial mailing (FU); Business reply envelope (BRE); Offer of survey results (OR) 2. MI; No follow up (No FU); BRE; OR 3. MI; FU; BRE; No offer of survey results (No OR) 4. MI; No FU; BRE; No OR 5. MI; FU; Stamped return envelope (SRE); OR 6. MI; No FU; SRE; OR 7. MI; FU; SRE; No OR 8. MI; No FU; SRE; No OR 9. No monetary incentive (NI); FU; BRE; OR 10. NI; No FU; BRE; OR 11. NI; FU; BRE; No OR 12. NI; No FU; BRE; No OR 13. NI; FU; SRE; OR 14. NI; No FU; SRE; OR 15. NI; FU; SRE; No OR 16. NI; No FU; SRE; No OR
Outcomes	Response period not specified

Wiseman 1973 (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Attitudes and opinions about Massachusetts state lottery	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Woodward 1985

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	Household members (South Australia)	
Comparisons	1. Cover letter included offer of chance to win free dinner 2. Cover letter did not include offer Follow up at 1, 3 and 7 weeks	
Outcomes	Response within 10 weeks	
Topic	Health: Respiratory history of the youngest child	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Worthen 1985a

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	School teachers listed on the Education Association Membership roster (Utah, US)	
Comparisons	1. Personalised cover letter 2. Form cover letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Worthen 1985a (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Classroom teachers opinion about what should be taught in educational measurement course	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Worthen 1985b

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	School teachers listed on the Education Association Membership roster (Utah, US) who did not respond to an earlier questionnaire with a personalised letter	
Comparisons	1. Personalised cover letter 2. Form cover letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Classroom teachers opinion about what should be taught in educational measurement course	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Worthen 1985c

Methods	Random allocation: method not specified	
Data	School teachers listed on the Education Association Membership roster (Utah, US) who did not respond to an earlier questionnaire with a standard form letter	
Comparisons	1. Personalised cover letter 2. Form cover letter	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	

Worthen 1985c (Continued)

Topic	Non-health: Classroom teachers opinion about what should be taught in educational measurement course	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Wotruba 1966

Methods	Random allocation: systematic division of a random sample	
Data	Urban household residents	
Comparisons	1. 25 cents sent with questionnaire 2. 50 cents promised on return of questionnaire 3. No incentive	
Outcomes	Response within 6 weeks	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Wright 1984

Methods	Random allocation: alternation	
Data	People listed in the latest telephone directories, New Zealand 1983	
Comparisons	1. Personal salutation (P); Black and white letterhead (BW); White outward envelope (Wh); \$100 cash lottery incentive (Ca) 2. P; BW; Wh; Garden voucher lottery incentive (Ga) 3. P; BW; Brown outward envelope (Br); Ca 4. P; BW; Br; Ga	

Wright 1984 (Continued)

	5. P; Coloured letterhead (Co); Wh; Ca 6. P; Co; Wh; Ga 7. P; Co; Br; Ca 8. P; Co; Br; Ga 9. Impersonal salutation (IP); BW; Wh; Ca 10. IP; BW; Wh; Ga 11. IP; BW; Br; Ca 12. IP; BW; Br; Ga 13. IP; Co; Wh; Ca 14. IP; Co; Wh; Ga 15. IP; Co; Br; Ca 16. IP; Co; Br; Ga	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Non-health: Motivation of gardeners and users of garden products, socio-demographics	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Wright 1995

Methods	Random allocation: systematic sample from list ordered alphabetically	
Data	New Zealand councillors who had participated in another survey 18 months previously	
Comparisons	1. Pre-notification letter sent 2 weeks prior to questionnaire mailing 2. No pre-contact	
Outcomes	Response after 2 follow-up reminders	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	
<i>Risk of bias</i>		
Item	Authors' judgement	Description

Wright 1995 (Continued)

Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear
-------------------------	---------	-------------

Wunder 1988

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Subscribers to a large health maintenance organisation in a major metropolitan area in the Midwestern United States
Comparisons	1. Hand addressed envelope 2. Computer generated address on envelope
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Satisfaction benefit package, characteristics of subscribers
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	Method of allocation ascertained through contact with author

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Wynn 1985

Methods	Random allocation: alternation
Data	Members, past and present, of an exercise and recreational club in a medium-sized south-western city (US)
Comparisons	1. No pre-contact by telephone 2. Telephone pre-contact asking permission to send questionnaire (foot-in-the-door manipulation) 3. Telephone pre-contact asking questions (probe-foot-in-the-door manipulation)
Outcomes	Response period not specified
Topic	Health: Planning of a possible expansion effort for an exercise recreational club
Mode of Administration	Postal
Notes	-

Risk of bias

Wynn 1985 (Continued)

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	No	C - Inadequate

Zusman 1987

Methods	Random allocation: on the basis of study identification number and done without reference to subject characteristics	
Data	Undergraduate transfer students	
Comparisons	1. \$1 incentive sent with first mailing 2. No incentive sent Follow up of non-respondents several weeks after first mailing	
Outcomes	Response period not specified	
Topic	Not specified	
Mode of Administration	Postal	
Notes	-	

Risk of bias

Item	Authors' judgement	Description
Allocation concealment?	Unclear	B - Unclear

Characteristics of excluded studies [ordered by study ID]

Study	Reason for exclusion
Allen 1980	The comparison in this study is biased by the fact that people in the pre-notification group are given the choice of whether to receive the questionnaire or not whereas people in the no pre-notification group are not given this choice
Anderson 1975	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised
Angus 2003	Not a randomised controlled trial.
Armstrong 1975	Review article.

(Continued)

Asch 1994	The comparison in this study is confounded - the author, with reference to the several differences between the 2 mailing strategies, states 'We cannot determine which of these differences underlies our results.'
Ash 1952	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact the author have been unsuccessful
Baron 2001	The comparison in this study is confounded by colour of the questionnaire
Bevis 1948	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised
Biggar 1992	All comparisons in the study are confounded.
Blumberg 1974	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised and the data which would be needed is only referred to not presented. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Blumenfeld 1973	It was not going to be possible to determine whether this study was randomised as the author has died
Brechner 1976	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Brennan 1958	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Brennan 1990	The comparison in this study is confounded.
Cartwright 1968	The comparison of different lengths is confounded by other differences between the two questionnaires
Cartwright 1989	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Contact details of the author is unavailable
Champion 1969	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Childs 2005	The study did not calculate the response for the different order of administration of the questionnaires
Cook 1985	Incentive only given after agreement to participate in a further study, not just for returning the questionnaire
Dillman 1972	No useful experimental data presented.
Dunlap 1950	It is not possible to determine whether this study was testing return rate of a questionnaire. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Eisinger 1974	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact authors have been unsuccessful

(Continued)

Elinson 1950	There is insufficient data presented in this paper to include it. It has also not been possible to determine whether the questionnaire in the experiment is postal. Attempts to contact authors have been unsuccessful
Everett 1997	The comparison in this study is confounded by colour of the questionnaire
Fang 2006	This study did not calculate the response but inspected the correlation between the material incentive and the participants characteristics
Ferriss 1951	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Furse 1981	Authors cannot remember whether the study was randomised.
Gerace 1995	This study examines response rates of a postal request for more information not a questionnaire
Gillespie 1975	The comparison in this study is confounded.
Hansen 2004	Not a randomised controlled trial.
Hare 1998	The comparison in this study is confounded by colour of the questionnaire
Harlow 1993	Examines response rates to telephone interviews not postal questionnaires
Haugejorden 1987	Randomised controlled trial but not of methods to increase response to postal questionnaires
Hawes 1987	Author no longer has original data to be able to provide confirmation of numbers of questionnaires administered and returned
Heads 1966	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Heje 2006	The primary questionnaire was delivered personally to the patient either at the surgery or at home
Helgeson 2002	Author no longer has original data to be able to provide confirmation of numbers of questionnaires administered and returned
Hing 2005	Not a postal questionnaire.
Hinrichs 1975	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Hughes 1989	Author was contacted: the study records have been discarded.
Ives 1990	Author was contacted: confirmed that participants were not randomly allocated
Jiang 2005	Not a randomised controlled trial.

(Continued)

Kerin 1974	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Kerin 1977	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Kerin 1983	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Kimball 1961	It was not possible to confirm that this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Larsson 1970	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Longworth 1953	Author drew six different samples, and tested a different type of intervention on each without a comparison group
Lopez- Cano 2007	Not a randomised controlled trial.
Lund 1988	Comparisons of questionnaires which were mailed are confounded
Marks 1981	Author cannot remember whether the study was randomised.
May 1960	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
McDermott 2003	Incentives were same for all the three questionnaires.
Mehta 1995	Two groups received postal questionnaires, but one group received a combination of methods (monetary incentive, pre-notification and follow-up). Comparisons for combinations of methods have not been created in this review
Nitecki 1975	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Oden 1999	The comparison in this study is confounded by colour of questionnaire
Perneger 2003	The intervention did not include strategies to increase response to a postal or electronic questionnaire
Peytremann-Bridevaux 2006a	The intervention did not include strategies to increase response to a postal or electronic questionnaire
Porter 2004	The data presented in this paper are the same as that presented in an earlier paper Porter 2003
Pottick 1991	This study examines postal methods to improve response to a face to face survey
Robin 1973	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful

(Continued)

Robin 1976	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Roeher 1963	It is not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Rudd 1980	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Salomone 1978	The number of people allocated to each experimental group is not presented and attempts to obtain this information from the authors have been unsuccessful
Senf 1987	Option to refuse postcards were sent to half of all participants prior to sending questionnaire. However, response rates to questionnaires could not be compared because questionnaires were returned anonymously
Shackleton 1982	The data presented in this paper are the same as that presented in an earlier paper by Shackleton (1980)
Shermis 1982	Comparisons of questionnaires which were mailed are confounded
Sheth 1975	The data presented in this paper are from the same study as those presented in an included study by Roscoe and Sheth (1975)
Sirken 1960	Could not confirm random allocation. Author contacted: stated only that "this was not a clinical trial."
Smith 1972	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Smith 1977	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Smith 1987	It was not possible to determine how many participants were allocated to each experimental group and attempts to obtain this information from the authors have been unsuccessful
Snyder 1984	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Suhre 1989	Analyses by means of logit analysis and no useable outcome data were available. Author contacted: no useable data obtained
Sullivan 1995	Comparison groups do not meet 'postal questionnaire' criteria
Sutherland 1996	There are too many differences between the two groups to be able to compare any of these differences without confounding
Tan 1997	Review article.

(Continued)

Trice 1985	Not a postal questionnaire.
Walker 1977	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Ward 1994	All comparisons in the study are confounded.
Watson 1965	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Weiss 1985	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Attempts to contact author have been unsuccessful
Weissenburger 1987	It was not possible to determine whether this study was randomised. Contact details of the author is unavailable
Wildman 1977	The comparison in this study is confounded by paper quality.
Zagumny 1996	Not a postal questionnaire.
Zwisler 2004	Review article.

DATA AND ANALYSES

Comparison 1. Monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	56	61094	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.17 [1.95, 2.41]
2 Final response	94	160004	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.87 [1.73, 2.03]
3 e - Log	1	1102	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.99 [0.74, 1.32]
4 e - Submission	1	1102	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.19 [0.82, 1.75]

Comparison 2. Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	13	12279	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.25 [1.10, 1.41]
2 Final response	37	84043	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.26 [1.14, 1.39]

Comparison 3. Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	4	8650	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.77 [1.17, 2.68]
2 Final response	13	26484	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.62 [1.39, 1.88]
3 e - Login	1	1100	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.66 [0.50, 0.87]
4 e - Submission	2	2856	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.77 [0.48, 1.23]

Comparison 4. Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	44	65687	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.17 [1.08, 1.25]
2 Final response	94	135934	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.15 [1.08, 1.22]
3 e - Login	2	10035	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.32 [1.09, 1.59]
4 e - Submission	6	17493	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.72 [1.09, 2.72]

Comparison 5. Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	3632	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.18 [1.01, 1.39]
2 Final response	7	10730	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.09 [0.97, 1.22]
3 e - Login	1	7322	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.11 [0.91, 1.35]
4 e - Submission	7	31454	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.95 [0.78, 1.15]

Comparison 6. Immediate notification of lottery results vs. delayed notification

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	1	2233	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.37 [1.13, 1.65]

Comparison 7. Higher denominations in monetary lottery incentives vs. lower

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	2	4721	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.00 [0.87, 1.14]

Comparison 8. Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	12	19724	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.00 [1.54, 2.60]
2 Final response	24	27569	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.61 [1.36, 1.89]
3 e - Log	1	736	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.90 [0.64, 1.27]
4 e - Submission	3	1401	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.08 [0.77, 1.50]

Comparison 9. Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	7924	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.20 [1.66, 2.92]
2 Final response	3	7924	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.14 [1.02, 1.28]

Comparison 10. Unconditional and conditional incentives vs. conditional incentives

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	1	1061	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.19 [0.92, 1.54]

Comparison 11. Offer of survey results vs. no offer

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	7	11095	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.01 [0.85, 1.20]
2 Final response	12	15256	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.90 [0.76, 1.07]
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	1	2332	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.36 [1.15, 1.61]

Comparison 12. Shorter vs. longer questionnaire

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	17	21885	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.15 [1.02, 1.30]
2 Final response	56	60119	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.64 [1.43, 1.87]
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	2	7589	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.73 [1.40, 2.13]

Comparison 13. Double postcard vs. one page

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.66 [0.48, 0.91]
2 Final response	1	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.47 [0.34, 0.66]

Comparison 14. More vs. less personalised

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	30	23111	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.22 [1.09, 1.37]
2 Final response	58	60184	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.14 [1.07, 1.22]
3 e - Login	5	24557	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.26 [1.13, 1.40]
4 e - Submission	12	48910	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.24 [1.17, 1.32]

Comparison 15. Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	590	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.08 [0.75, 1.54]
2 Final response	14	15006	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.24 [1.08, 1.41]

Comparison 16. Hand-written address vs. computer-printed

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	1492	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.37 [0.95, 1.98]
2 Final response	7	5091	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.25 [1.08, 1.45]

Comparison 17. Signed vs. unsigned

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	1030	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.34 [0.97, 1.85]

Comparison 18. Identifying feature on return vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	4	3084	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.06 [0.68, 1.64]
2 Final response	8	4134	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.12 [0.82, 1.52]

Comparison 19. Identifying number on return vs. other identifier

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	741	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.00 [0.68, 1.46]
2 Final response	1	741	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.00 [0.68, 1.46]

Comparison 20. Brown vs. white envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	5423	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.44 [0.73, 2.83]
2 Final response	5	8637	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.23 [0.81, 1.87]

Comparison 21. Coloured vs. white questionnaire

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	6	14005	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.99, 1.15]
2 Final response	14	41421	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.04 [0.99, 1.10]

Comparison 22. Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	6064	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.25 [1.03, 1.53]
2 Final response	3	7040	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.16 [0.95, 1.42]

Comparison 23. Coloured vs. black & white letterhead

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	1650	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.99 [0.80, 1.24]
2 Final response	2	2356	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.08 [0.91, 1.28]

Comparison 24. Illustration on cover of q'aire largely in black vs. largely in white

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	320	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.62 [1.04, 2.53]

Comparison 25. Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	1845	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.17 [0.94, 1.45]
2 Final response	3	5681	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.10 [0.99, 1.23]

Comparison 26. Large paper size vs. small

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	2000	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.88 [0.71, 1.09]
2 Final response	2	2145	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.88 [0.56, 1.39]

Comparison 27. Dot matrix print vs. letter quality print

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	176	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.15 [0.63, 2.10]

Comparison 28. Questionnaire printed on high vs. standard quality paper or thick paper vs. thin

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	1039	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.80 [0.60, 1.06]

Comparison 29. Single vs. double-sided questionnaire

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	608	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.34 [0.96, 1.87]
2 Final response	4	4966	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.22 [1.01, 1.47]

Comparison 30. Large font size vs. small

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	650	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.26 [0.87, 1.82]

Comparison 31. Study logo on several items in the mailing package vs. on questionnaire only

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	1000	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.92 [0.72, 1.18]

Comparison 32. Picture of researcher/images vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	384	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.98 [0.61, 1.58]
2 Final response	4	3710	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.76, 1.53]
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	2	720	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	3.05 [1.84, 5.06]

Comparison 33. Attractive vs. less attractive picture

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	2	520	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	3.44 [0.72, 16.49]

Comparison 34. Cartoons included vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	280	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.62, 1.62]

Comparison 35. Matrix vs. standard form

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	316	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.61 [0.32, 1.19]
2 Final response	2	316	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.58 [0.29, 1.16]

Comparison 36. Questions ordered by time period vs. other order

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
2 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
3 Final response	1	259	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.48 [0.84, 2.59]

Comparison 37. Subject line vs. blank

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 e - Login	2	6152	Odds Ratio (M-H, Fixed, 95% CI)	0.84 [0.71, 0.99]
2 e - Submission	2	6152	Odds Ratio (M-H, Fixed, 95% CI)	0.84 [0.71, 1.01]

Comparison 38. "Survey" subject line vs. blank

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 e - Login	2	3845	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.80 [0.67, 0.97]
2 e - Submission	2	3845	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.81 [0.67, 0.97]

Comparison 39. Text vs. HTML file formats

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 e - Submission	1	6090	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.84, 1.19]

Comparison 40. White background vs. black

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 e - Submission	1	6090	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.31 [1.10, 1.56]

Comparison 41. Header vs. no header

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 e - Submission	1	6090	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.13 [0.90, 1.41]

Comparison 42. Simple vs. complex header

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 e - Submission	1	5075	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.23 [1.03, 1.48]

Comparison 43. Textual presentation of response categories vs. visual presentation

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	1	5413	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.19 [1.05, 1.36]

Comparison 44. Stamped vs. franked outward envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	930	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.04 [0.79, 1.37]
2 Final response	6	13964	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.95 [0.88, 1.03]

Comparison 45. First vs. second/third class outward mailing

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	7370	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.12 [1.02, 1.23]
2 Final response	2	8300	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.11 [1.02, 1.21]

Comparison 46. Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	2430	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.91 [0.66, 1.24]
2 Final response	5	5461	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.92 [0.81, 1.06]

Comparison 47. Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	9	15193	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.32 [1.55, 3.46]
2 Final response	15	18931	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.76 [1.43, 2.18]

Comparison 48. Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	15	27234	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.24 [1.12, 1.36]
2 Final response	27	48612	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.24 [1.14, 1.35]

Comparison 49. Priority stamps vs. first-class stamps on return envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	205	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.26 [0.14, 0.46]

Comparison 50. First vs. second class stamp on return envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	800	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.91 [0.69, 1.21]

Comparison 51. Multiple stamps vs. single stamp on return envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	510	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.44 [1.01, 2.04]

Comparison 52. Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	1140	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.16 [0.89, 1.52]
2 Final response	2	1140	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.16 [0.89, 1.52]

Comparison 53. Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	2740	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.23 [0.78, 1.95]
2 Final response	4	4094	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.09 [0.71, 1.68]

Comparison 54. Stamped addressed return envelope vs. address label only included

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	147	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.86 [0.45, 1.65]

Comparison 55. Q'aire mailed in large vs. standard/small envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	1200	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.93 [0.74, 1.17]

Comparison 56. Window vs. regular envelope

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	11781	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.85 [0.68, 1.06]
2 Final response	2	11781	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.96 [0.61, 1.49]

Comparison 57. Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	4213	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.99 [0.87, 1.13]
2 Final response	1	4213	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.93 [0.82, 1.05]

Comparison 58. Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	504	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.83 [0.58, 1.17]
2 Final response	1	504	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.83 [0.58, 1.17]

Comparison 59. Questionnaire received on Monday vs. Friday

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	460	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.64, 1.56]

Comparison 60. Q'aire sent 1-5 weeks vs. 9-14 weeks after hospital discharge

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	2324	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.26 [0.69, 7.37]

Comparison 61. Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	24	49019	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.50 [1.26, 1.78]
2 Final response	47	79651	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.45 [1.29, 1.63]

Comparison 62. Pre-contact by phone vs. mail

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	978	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.40 [1.02, 1.93]
2 Final response	7	3322	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.18 [0.77, 1.80]

Comparison 63. Follow up vs. no follow up

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	10	10738	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.56 [1.22, 2.00]
2 Final response	19	32778	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.35 [1.18, 1.55]

Comparison 64. Postal follow-up including vs. excluding questionnaire

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	6	5261	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.20 [0.89, 1.61]
2 Final response	11	8619	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.46 [1.13, 1.90]

Comparison 65. Follow up by phone vs. mail

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First Response	4	1198	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.67 [0.46, 0.97]
2 Final Response	5	2254	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.86 [0.54, 1.36]

Comparison 66. Telephone reminder vs. no reminder

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	143	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	4.29 [1.70, 10.81]
2 Final response	3	13922	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.29 [0.85, 1.96]

Comparison 67. SMS vs. postcard reminder

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	3	9947	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.49 [1.23, 1.81]

Comparison 68. Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	1608	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.87 [0.50, 1.50]
2 Final response	2	1608	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.97 [0.75, 1.26]

Comparison 69. Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	5	11292	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.98 [0.90, 1.07]
2 Final response	10	21393	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.94 [0.88, 1.00]

Comparison 70. More relevant questions first vs. last

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	5817	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.28 [1.15, 1.42]
2 Final response	1	5817	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.23 [1.10, 1.37]

Comparison 71. Most general question first vs. last

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	3	11435	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.95 [0.83, 1.09]

Comparison 72. Demographic items first vs. last

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	1040	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.06 [0.83, 1.36]
2 Final response	4	3598	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.08 [0.94, 1.25]

Comparison 73. Easier questions first vs. last

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	240	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.80 [0.91, 3.56]
2 Final response	2	3182	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.61 [1.14, 2.26]

Comparison 74. User friendly vs. standard questionnaire

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	3540	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.46 [1.21, 1.75]
2 Final response	1	3540	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.46 [1.21, 1.75]

Comparison 75. More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	2151	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.44 [1.99, 3.01]
2 Final response	3	2711	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.00 [1.32, 3.04]
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Fixed, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	1	2176	Odds Ratio (M-H, Fixed, 95% CI)	1.85 [1.52, 2.26]

Comparison 76. Open-ended vs. closed questions

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	372	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.38 [0.25, 0.59]
2 Final response	3	1764	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.31 [0.09, 1.04]

Comparison 77. Open-ended items first vs. other items first

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	300	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.89 [0.55, 1.44]
2 Final response	1	300	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.26 [0.73, 2.19]

Comparison 78. Closed-ended items first vs. other items first

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	300	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.15 [0.71, 1.86]
2 Final response	1	300	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.93 [0.54, 1.59]

Comparison 79. 'Don't know' boxes included vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	1360	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.03 [0.82, 1.29]

Comparison 80. Circle answer vs. tick box format

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	1125	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.96 [0.74, 1.26]

Comparison 81. Response options listed in increasing vs. decreasing order

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	6783	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.06 [0.94, 1.18]

Comparison 82. High vs. medium frequency response alternatives

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	3882	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.40 [0.58, 3.38]

Comparison 83. 5-step vs. 10-step response scale

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	654	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.78 [0.52, 1.19]

Comparison 84. Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	740	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.80 [0.60, 1.06]
2 Final response	1	740	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.80 [0.60, 1.06]

Comparison 85. Individual item vs. stem & leaf format

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	1500	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.88 [0.70, 1.10]

Comparison 86. Horizontal vs. vertical orientation of response options

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	400	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	3.12 [1.63, 5.96]

Comparison 87. Conventional vs. randomised response technique

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	5830	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.89 [1.69, 2.11]
2 Final response	4	7345	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.52 [0.85, 2.72]

Comparison 88. Factual questions only vs. factual and attitudinal questions

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	1280	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.34 [1.01, 1.77]

Comparison 89. Teaser on envelope vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	190	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	3.08 [1.27, 7.44]
2 Final response	1	190	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	3.08 [1.27, 7.44]

Comparison 90. Questionnaire sent with supplement vs. alone

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	1795	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.86 [0.70, 1.07]

Comparison 91. Extra questionnaire for relatives included vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	4943	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.67 [0.60, 0.76]

Comparison 92. Consent form included vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	414	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.21 [0.81, 1.81]
2 Final response	1	414	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.32 [0.89, 1.95]

Comparison 93. Multi-option vs. standard consent form

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	200	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.91 [0.49, 1.68]

Comparison 94. University sponsor/source vs. other

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	4	5241	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.35 [0.88, 2.08]
2 Final response	14	21628	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.32 [1.13, 1.54]
3 e - Login	2	3845	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.80 [0.67, 0.96]
4 e - Submission	2	3845	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.84 [0.69, 1.01]

Comparison 95. Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	1484	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.06 [0.85, 1.31]
2 Final response	10	5644	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.05 [0.89, 1.23]
3 e - Login	1	17346	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.98 [0.91, 1.06]
4 e - Submission	3	23027	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.05 [0.95, 1.15]

Comparison 96. University printed envelope vs. plain

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	500	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.10 [0.77, 1.57]
2 Final response	1	500	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.88 [0.61, 1.28]

Comparison 97. Pre-contact by medical researcher vs. non medical researcher

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	924	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.01 [0.55, 1.86]

Comparison 98. Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	409	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.49 [1.00, 2.24]
2 Final response	2	1106	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.52 [0.73, 3.15]

Comparison 99. Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.12 [0.79, 1.59]
2 Final response	5	5959	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.90, 1.27]

Comparison 100. Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	204	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.42 [0.76, 2.64]
2 Final response	2	3146	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.07 [0.72, 1.58]
3 e - Login	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
4 e - Submission	2	720	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.55 [0.38, 0.80]

Comparison 101. Assurance of confidentiality vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	25000	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.33 [1.24, 1.42]

Comparison 102. Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	468	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.12 [0.76, 1.65]
2 Final response	1	468	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.12 [0.76, 1.65]
3 e - Login	1	8586	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.41 [1.28, 1.56]
4 e - Submission	1	8586	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.52 [1.36, 1.70]

Comparison 103. Choice to opt-out from study vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	515	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.10 [0.77, 1.56]
2 Final response	4	3555	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.92 [0.66, 1.28]

Comparison 104. Instructions given vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	2000	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.89 [0.74, 1.06]

Comparison 105. Response deadline given vs. no deadline

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	2575	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.25 [0.93, 1.69]
2 Final response	6	5661	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.00 [0.84, 1.19]
3 e - Login	1	8586	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.20 [1.07, 1.35]
4 e - Submission	1	8586	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.18 [1.03, 1.34]

Comparison 106. Mention of obligation to respond vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.61 [1.16, 2.22]
2 Final response	3	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.61 [1.16, 2.22]

Comparison 107. Request for telephone number vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	702	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.65, 1.54]
2 Final response	1	702	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.0 [0.65, 1.54]

Comparison 108. Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	200	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.11 [0.59, 2.07]
2 Final response	1	200	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.13 [0.57, 2.27]

Comparison 109. Mention of follow-up contact vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	5	4553	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.16 [1.02, 1.33]
2 Final response	7	7053	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.02 [0.91, 1.15]

Comparison 110. Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	667	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.97 [0.71, 1.32]
2 Final response	2	1907	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.14 [0.83, 1.57]

Comparison 111. Time estimate for completion given vs. not

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.10 [0.76, 1.58]
2 Final response	1	600	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.10 [0.76, 1.58]

Comparison 112. Detailed vs. brief cover letter

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	500	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.08 [0.74, 1.58]

Comparison 113. Appeal vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	1251	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.06 [0.79, 1.42]
3 e - Login	2	3845	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.85 [0.71, 1.02]
4 e - Submission	2	3844	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.84 [0.70, 1.01]

Comparison 114. Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	100	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.37 [0.14, 0.96]
2 Final response	1	100	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.37 [0.14, 0.96]

Comparison 115. Request for participant signature vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	1	201	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.19 [0.65, 2.18]

Comparison 116. Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	395	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.33 [0.15, 0.74]
2 Final response	1	395	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.63 [0.43, 0.94]

Comparison 117. Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	671	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.09 [1.49, 2.93]
2 Final response	1	671	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	2.09 [1.49, 2.93]

Comparison 118. Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	3	2376	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.20 [0.88, 1.63]
2 Final response	8	10908	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.99 [0.86, 1.13]

Comparison 119. Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	1	1500	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.97 [0.78, 1.21]
2 Final response	9	13175	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.98 [0.82, 1.16]

Comparison 120. Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other

Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	2	1956	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.91 [0.59, 1.40]
2 Final response	10	12731	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	1.09 [0.92, 1.29]

Comparison 121. Anonymous vs. not anonymous

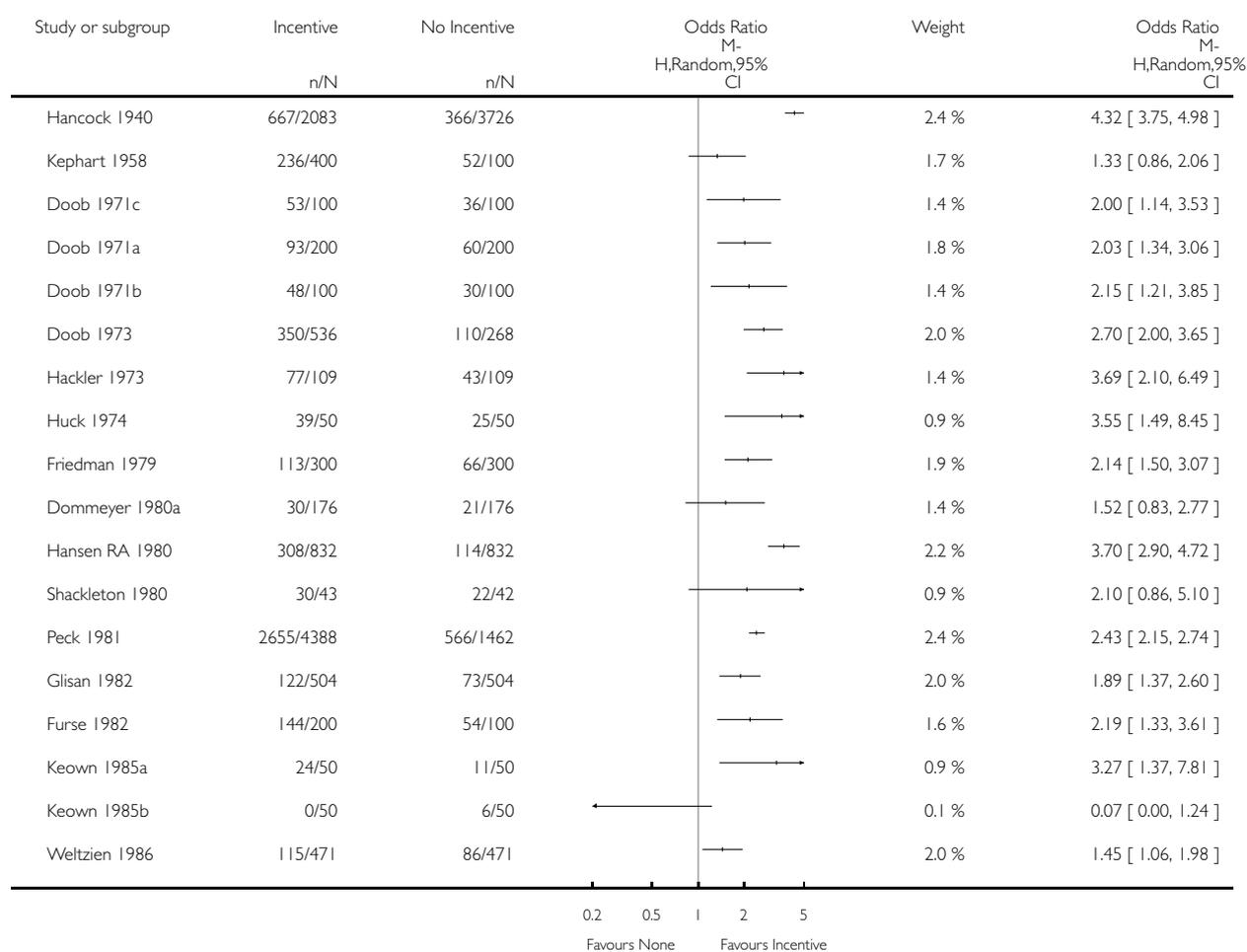
Outcome or subgroup title	No. of studies	No. of participants	Statistical method	Effect size
1 First response	0	0	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.0 [0.0, 0.0]
2 Final response	2	2070	Odds Ratio (M-H, Random, 95% CI)	0.96 [0.66, 1.39]

Analysis 1.1. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 1 First response.

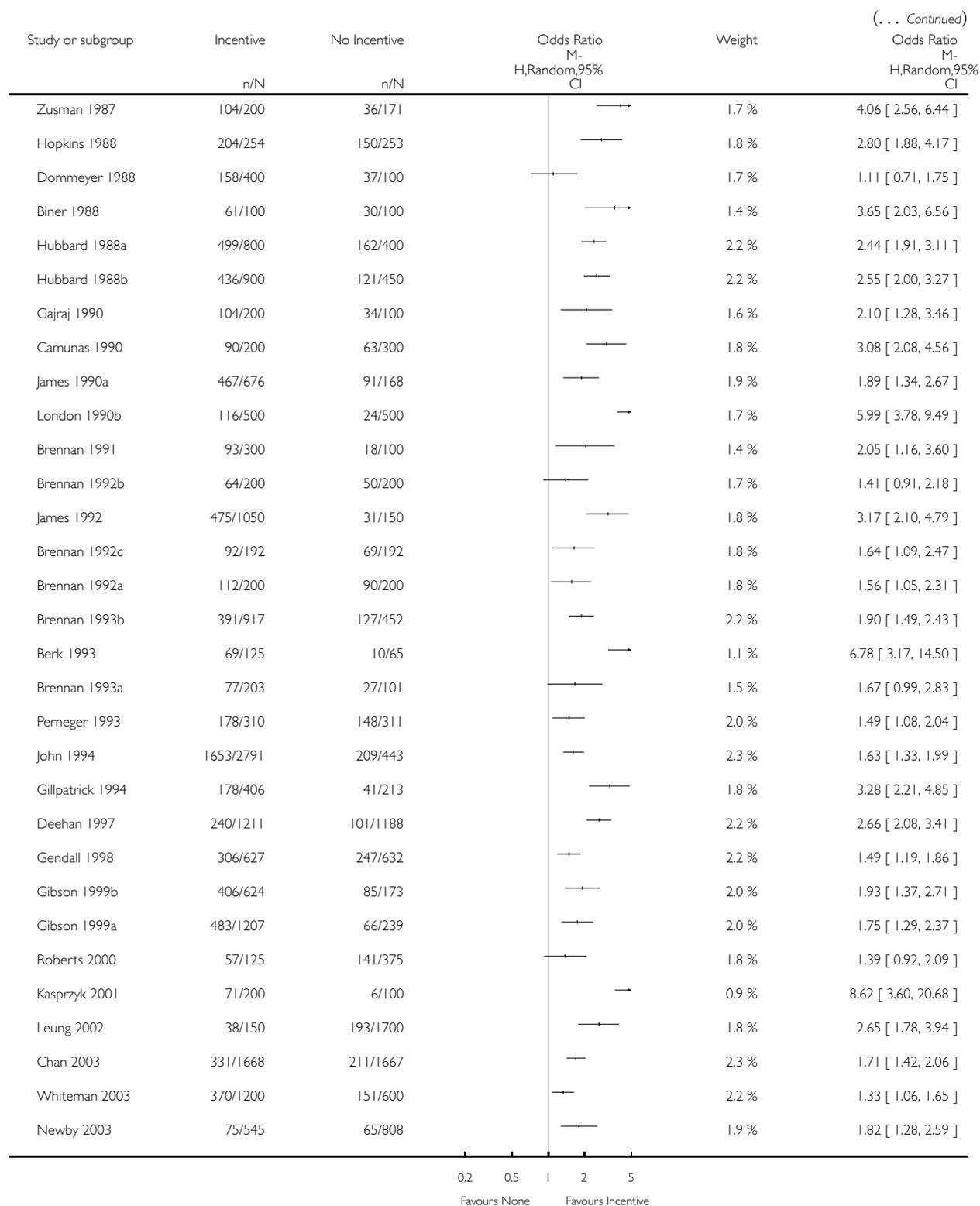
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

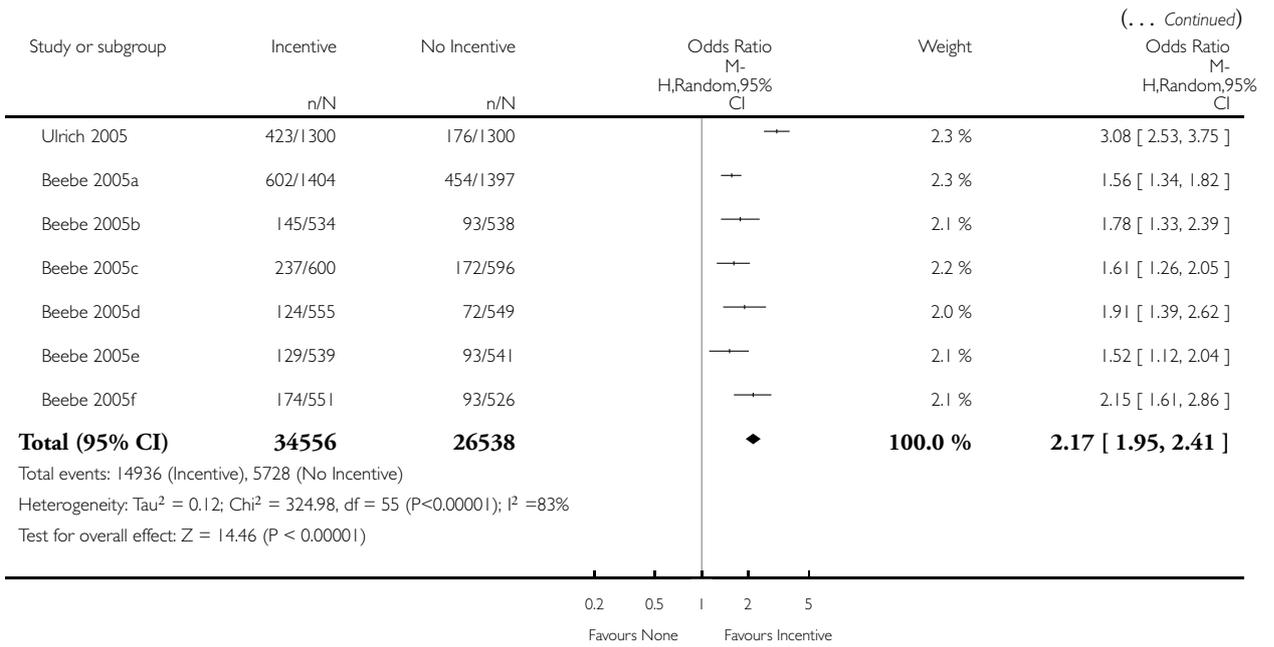
Comparison: 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 1 First response



(Continued ...)



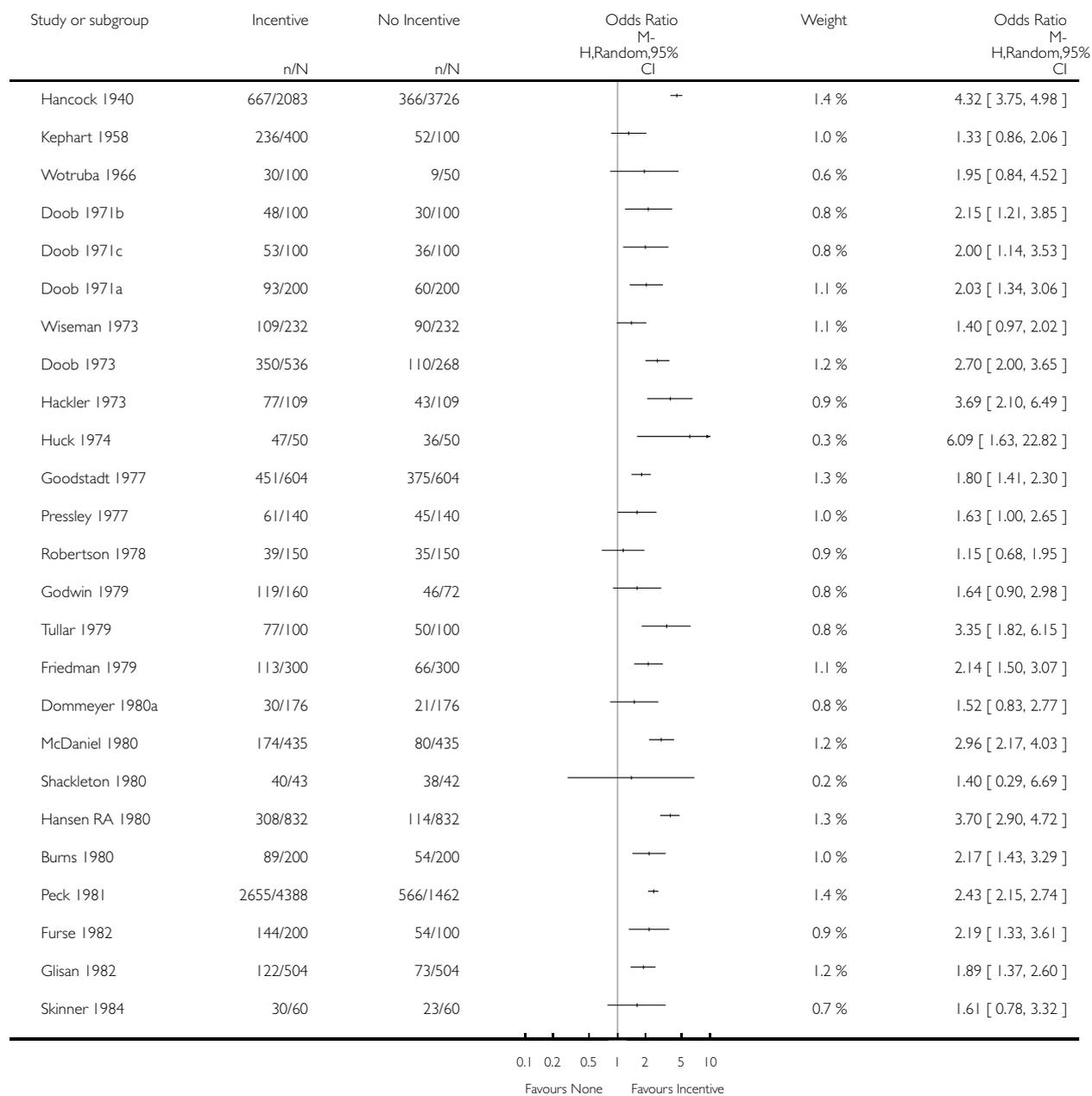


Analysis 1.2. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.

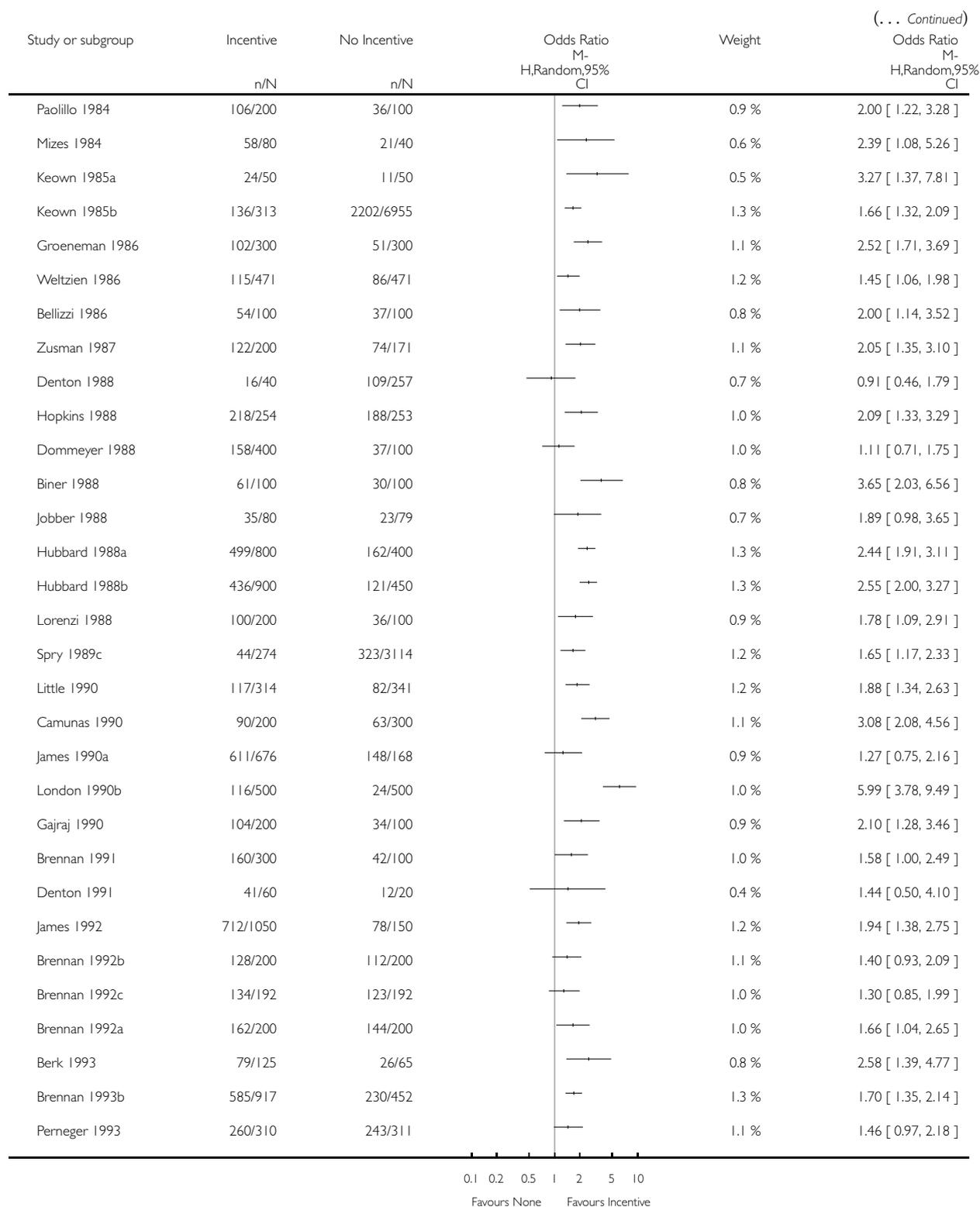
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

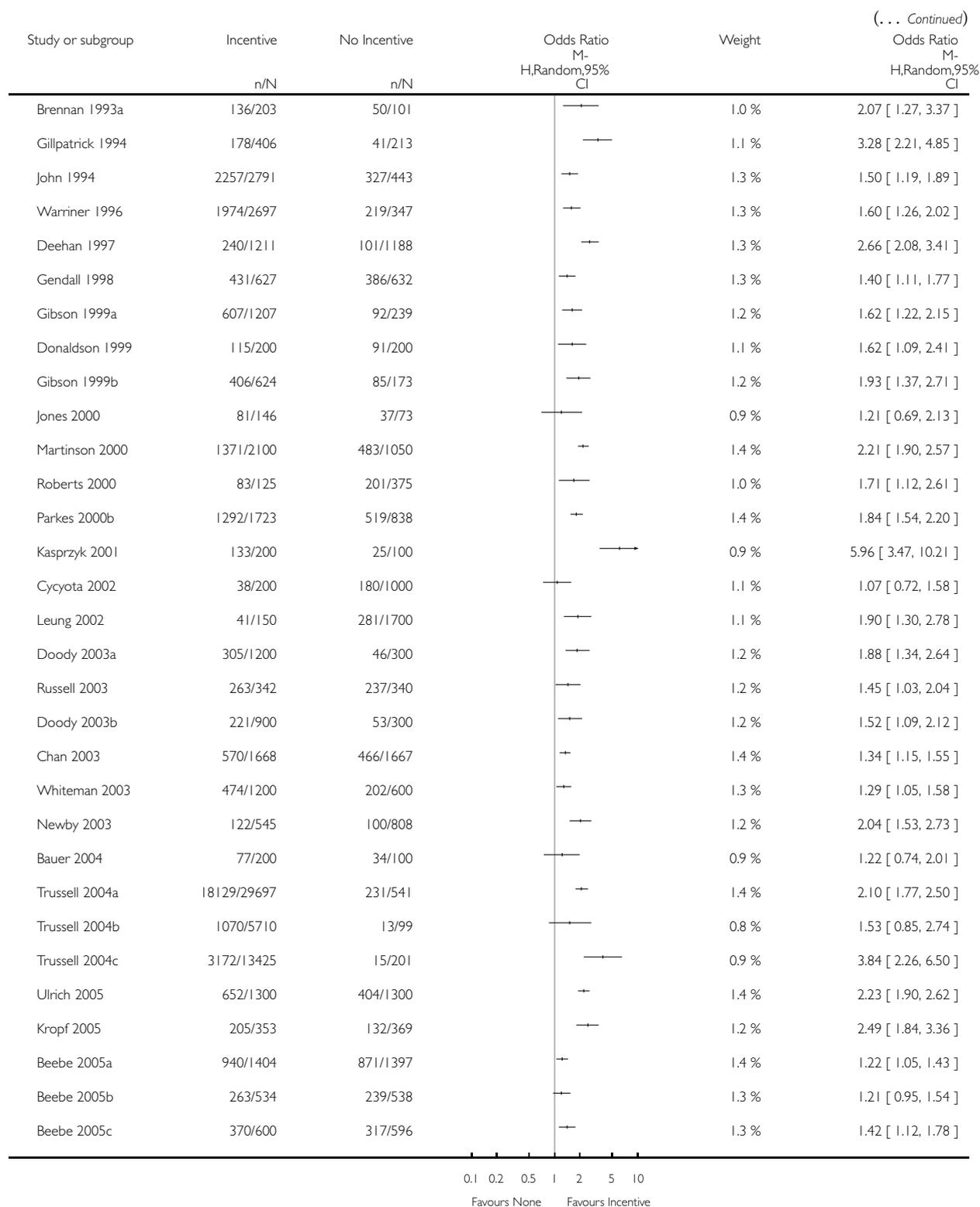
Comparison: 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive

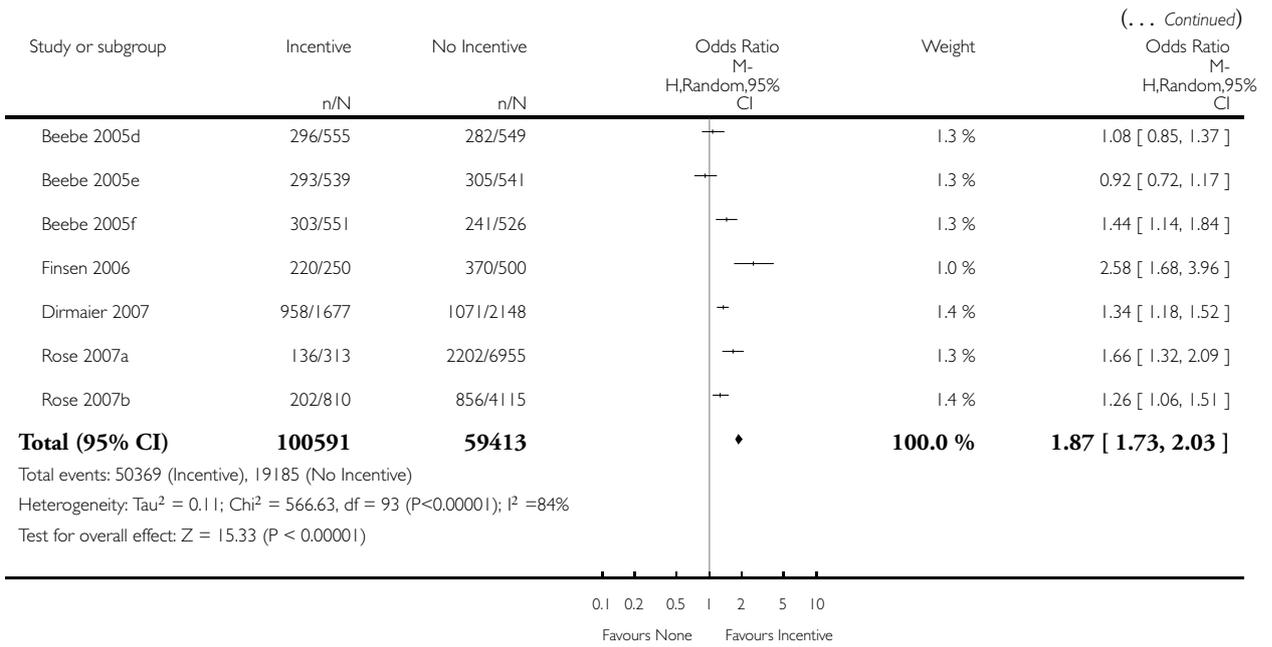
Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued ...)





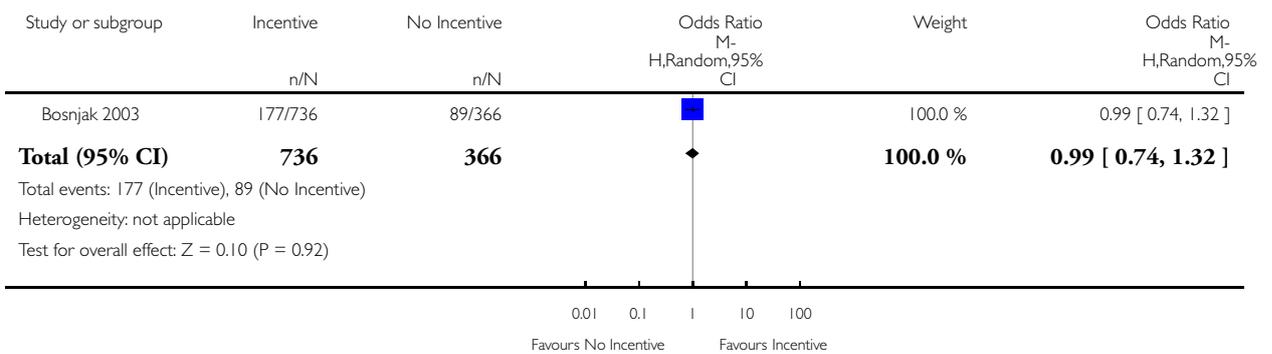


Analysis 1.3. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 3 e - Log.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 3 e - Log

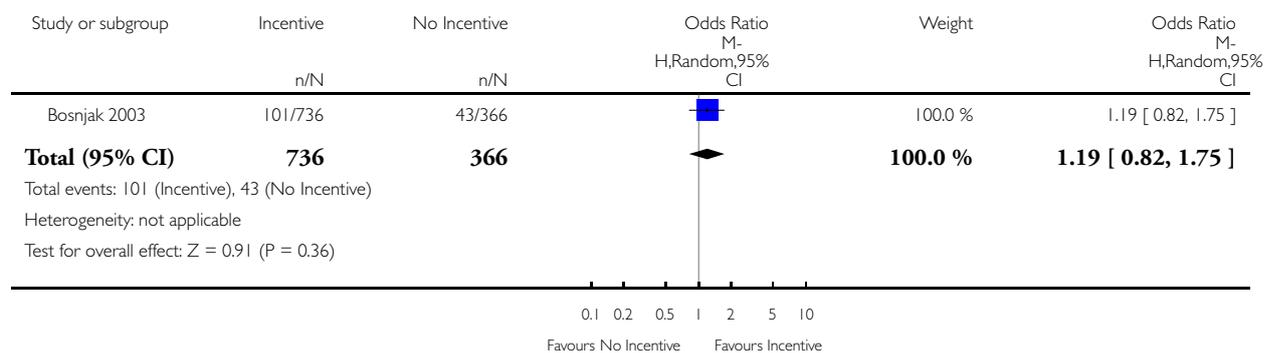


Analysis 1.4. Comparison 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 1 Monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

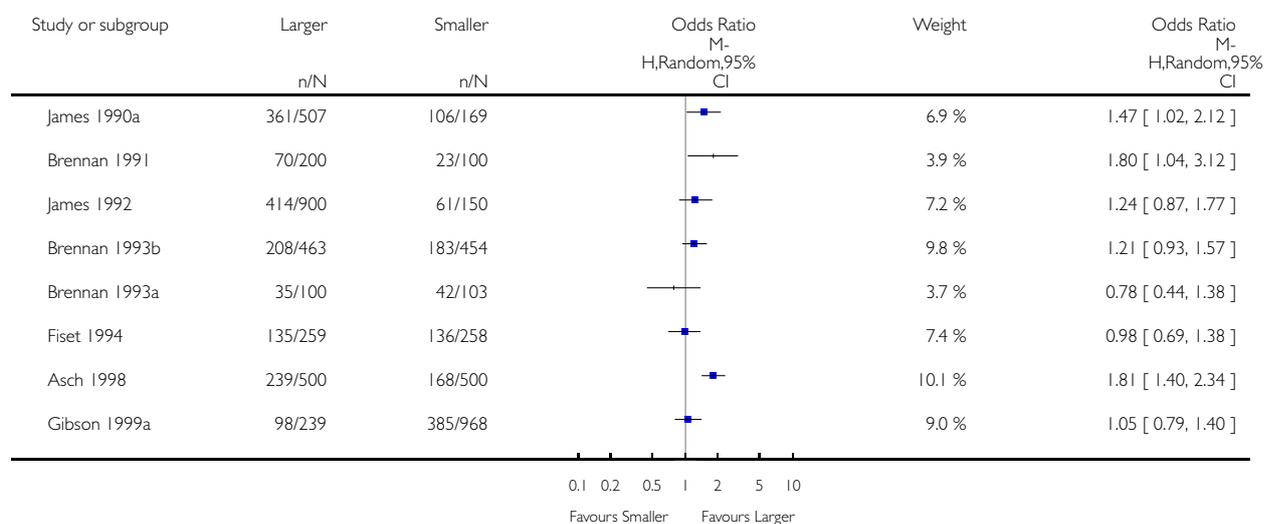


Analysis 2.1. Comparison 2 Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive, Outcome 1 First response.

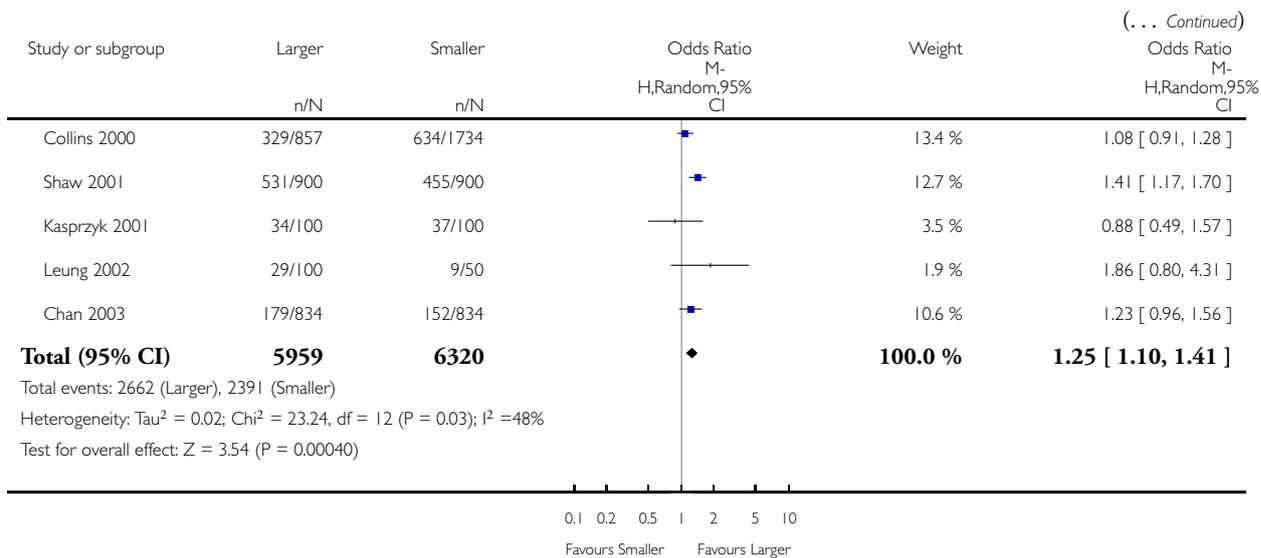
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 2 Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive

Outcome: 1 First response



(Continued . . .)

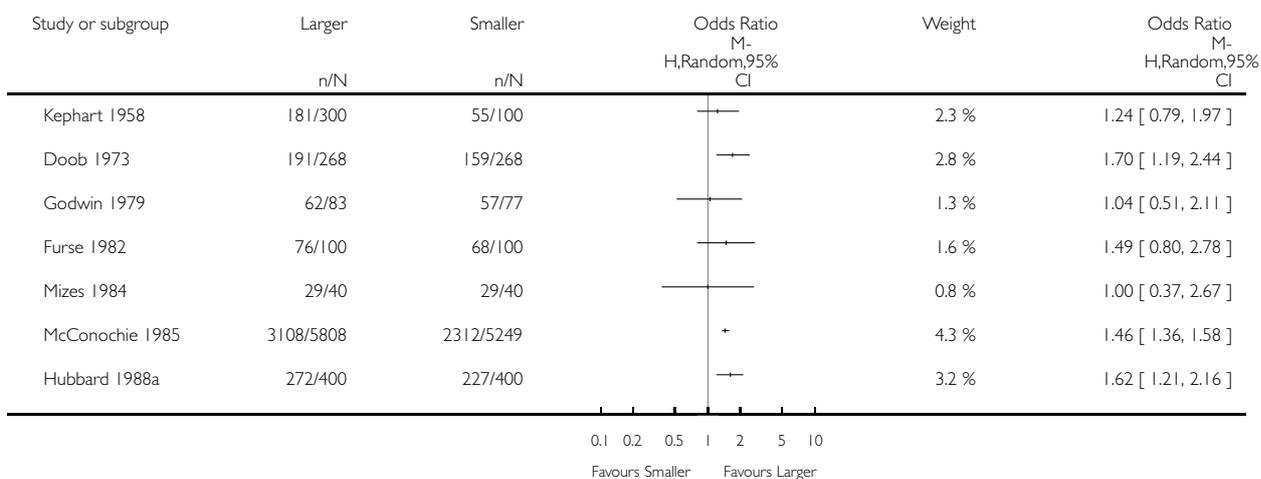


Analysis 2.2. Comparison 2 Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.

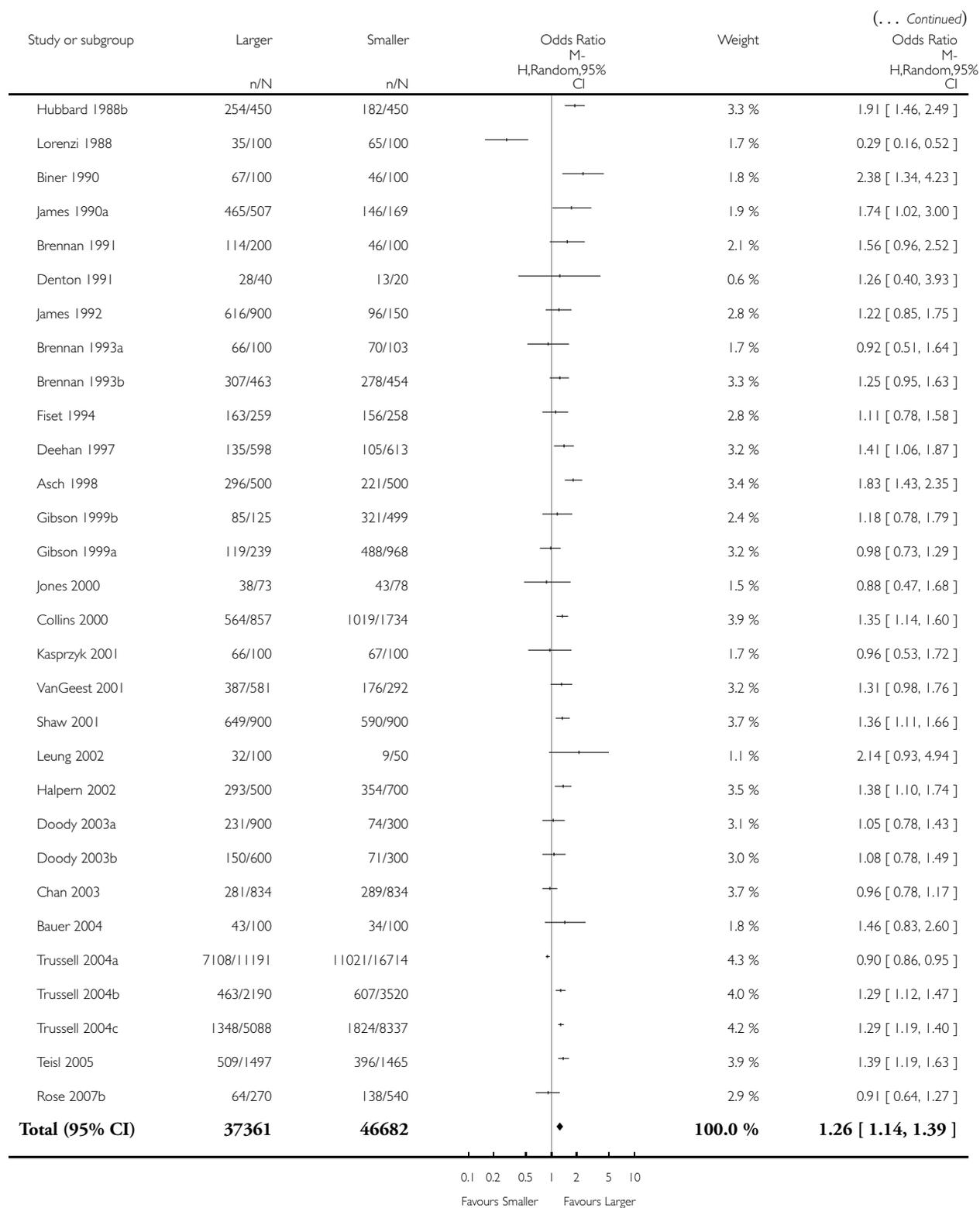
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

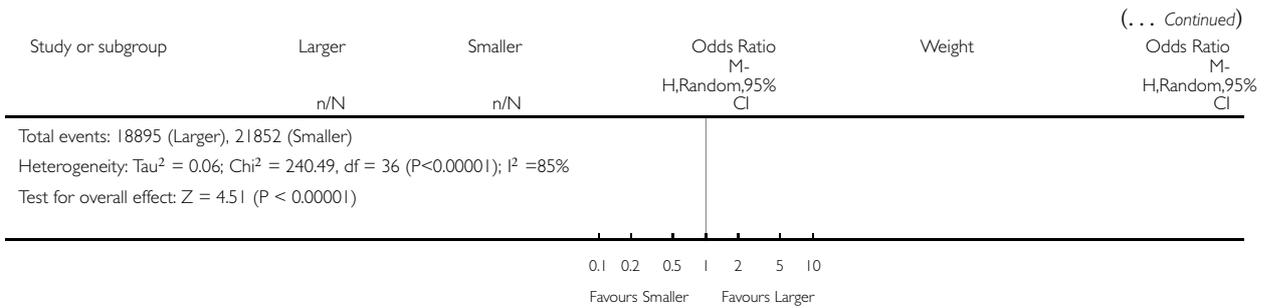
Comparison: 2 Larger vs. smaller monetary incentive

Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued . . .)



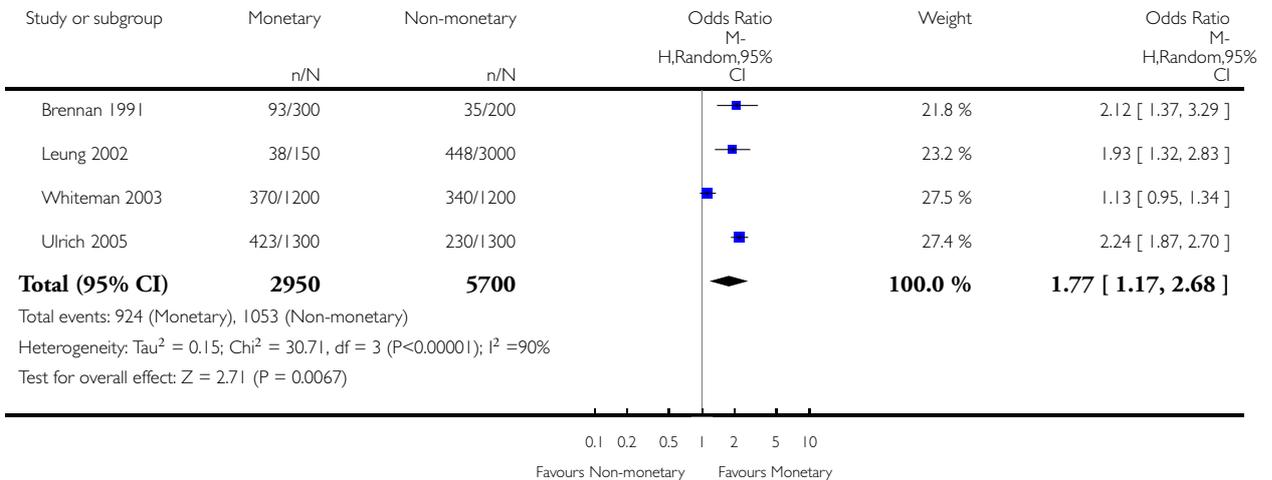


Analysis 3.1. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive

Outcome: 1 First response

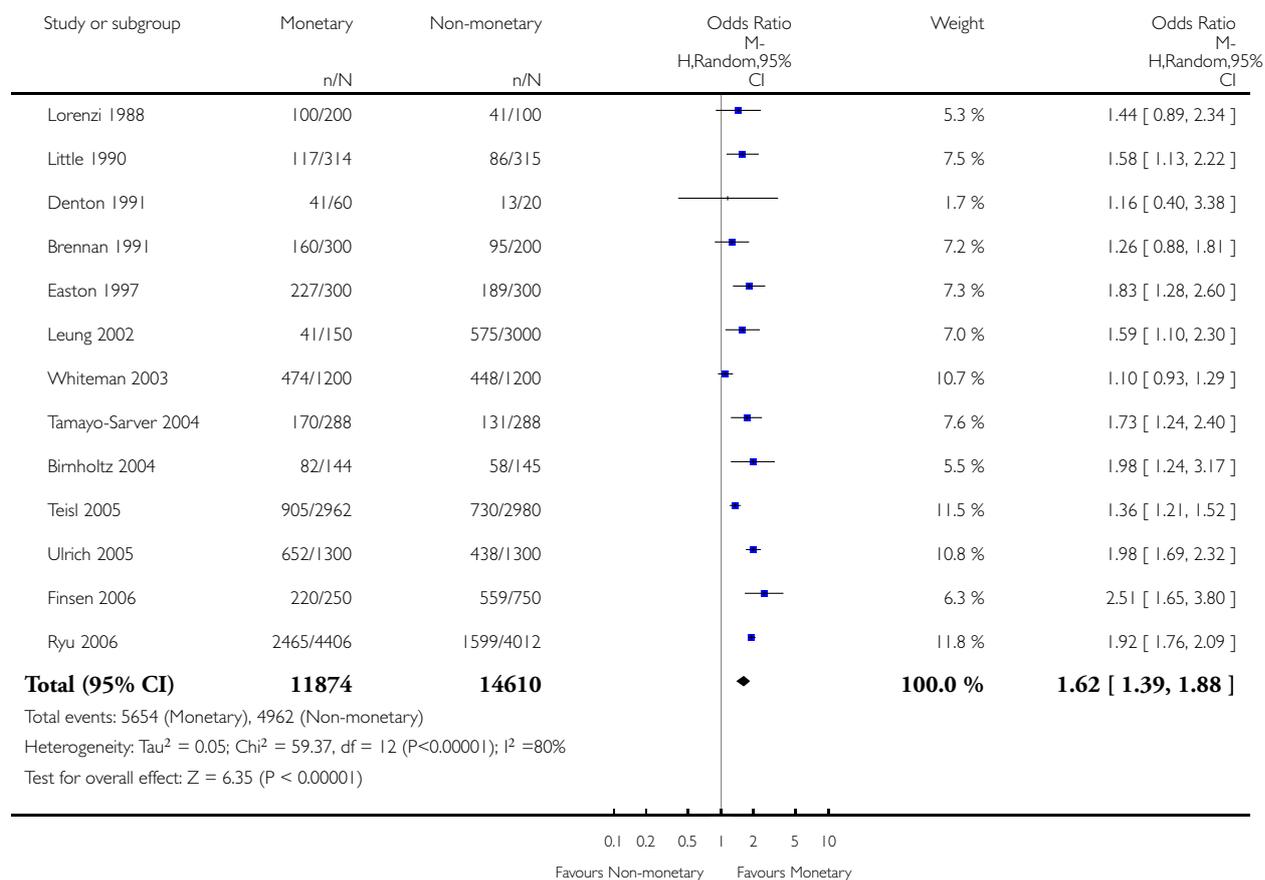


Analysis 3.2. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive

Outcome: 2 Final response

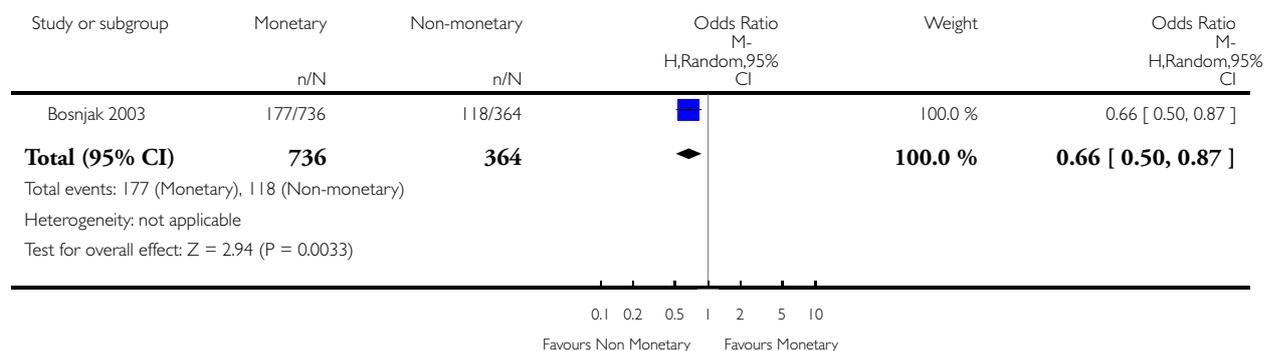


Analysis 3.3. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive

Outcome: 3 e - Login

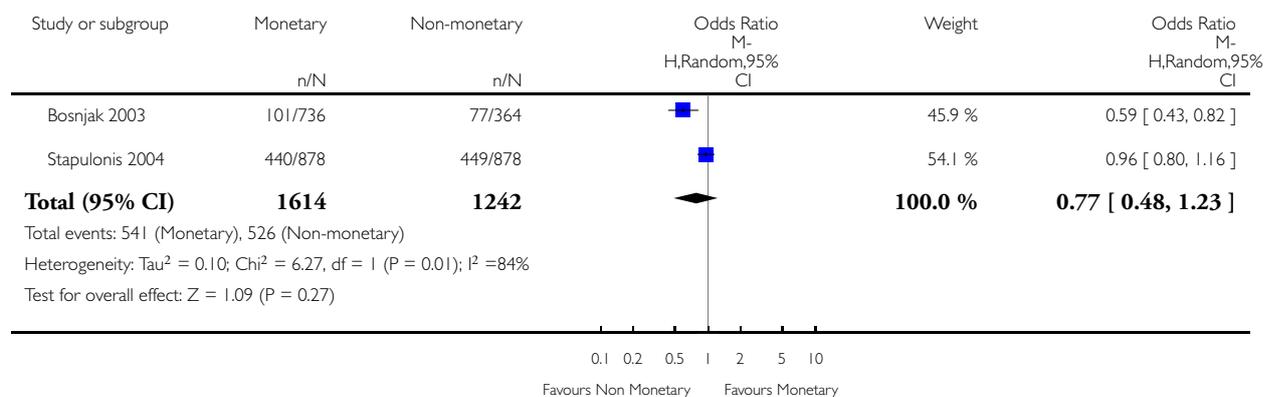


Analysis 3.4. Comparison 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 3 Monetary vs. non-monetary incentive

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

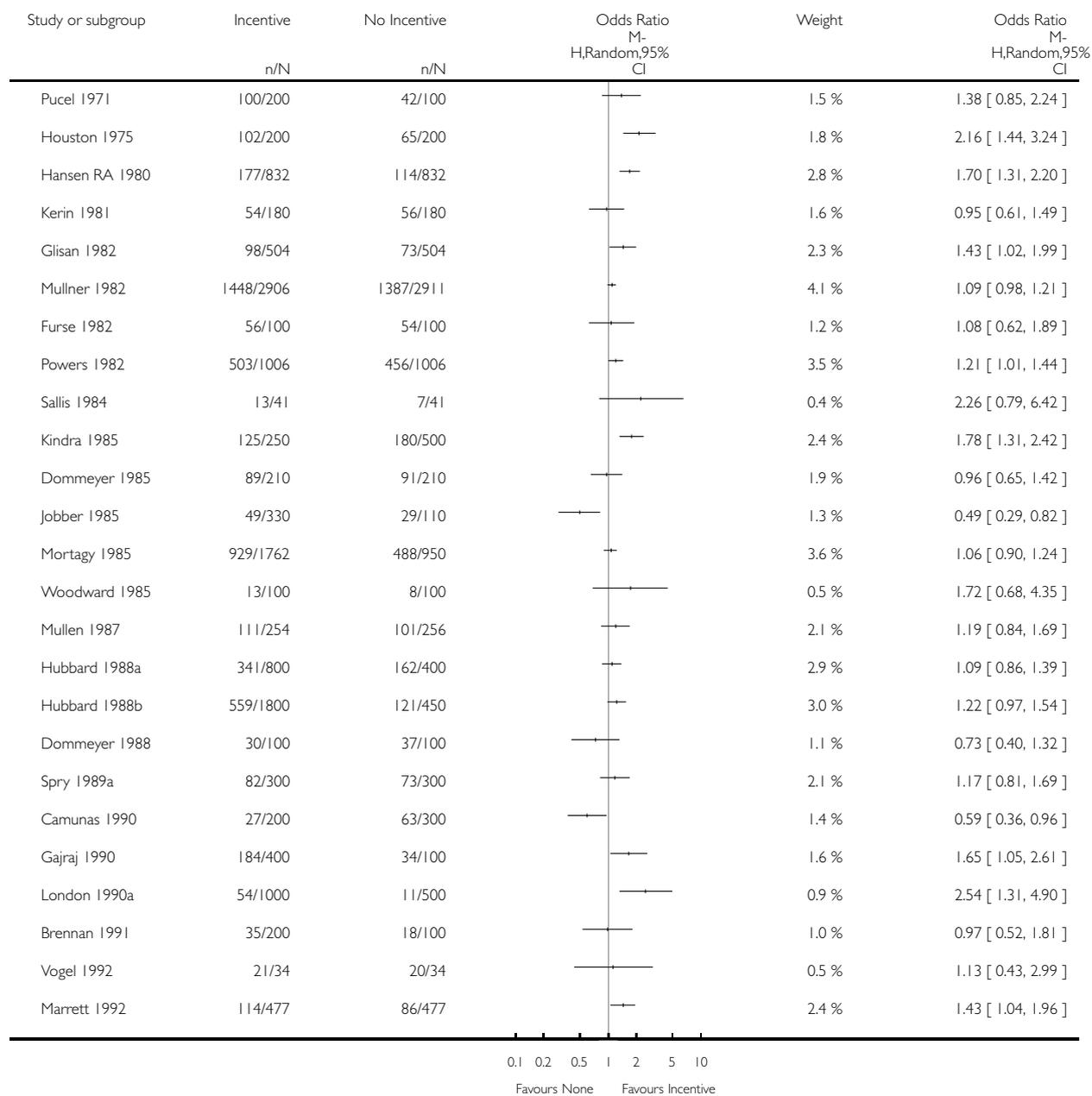


Analysis 4.1. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 1 First response.

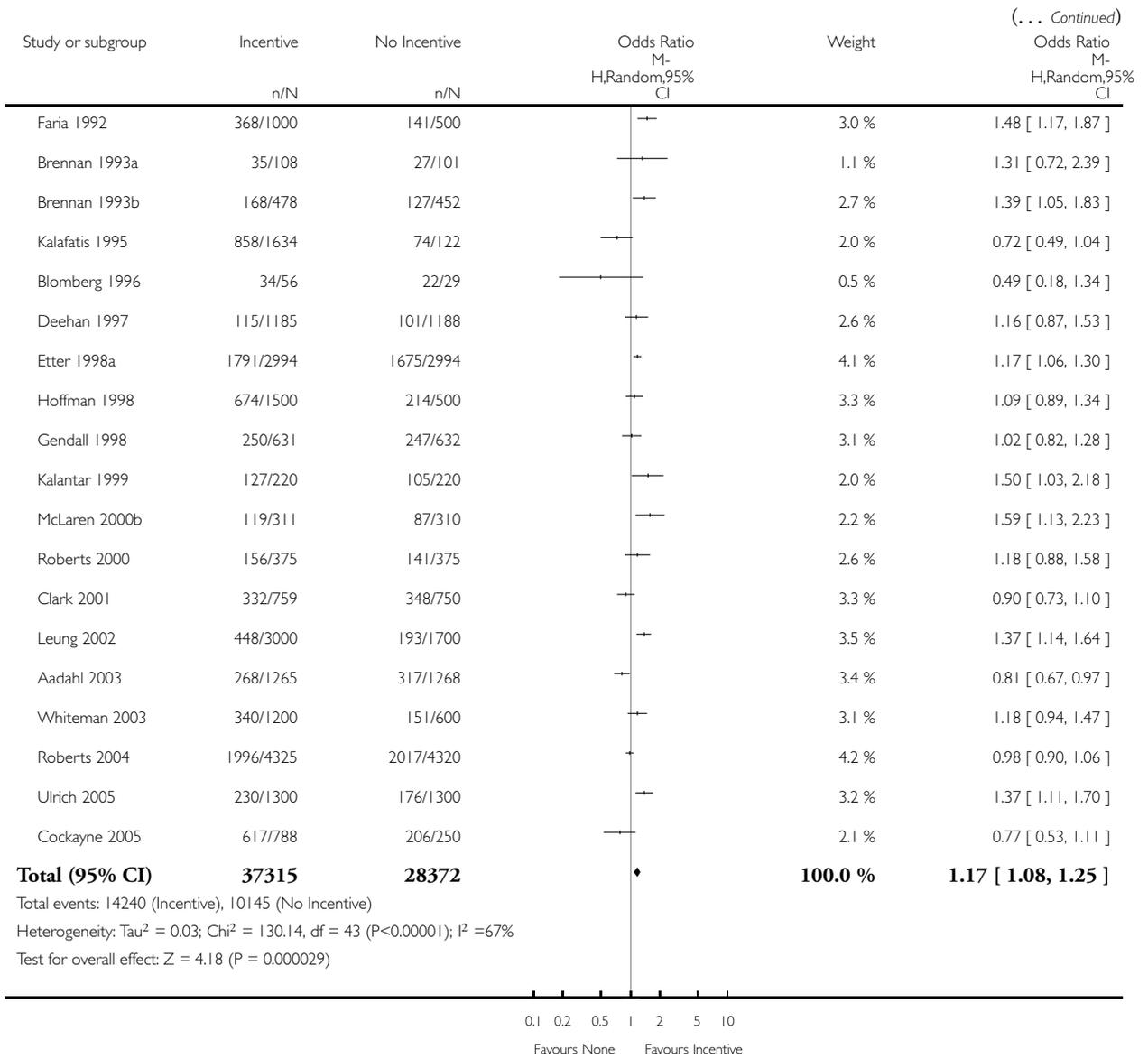
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 1 First response



(Continued ...)

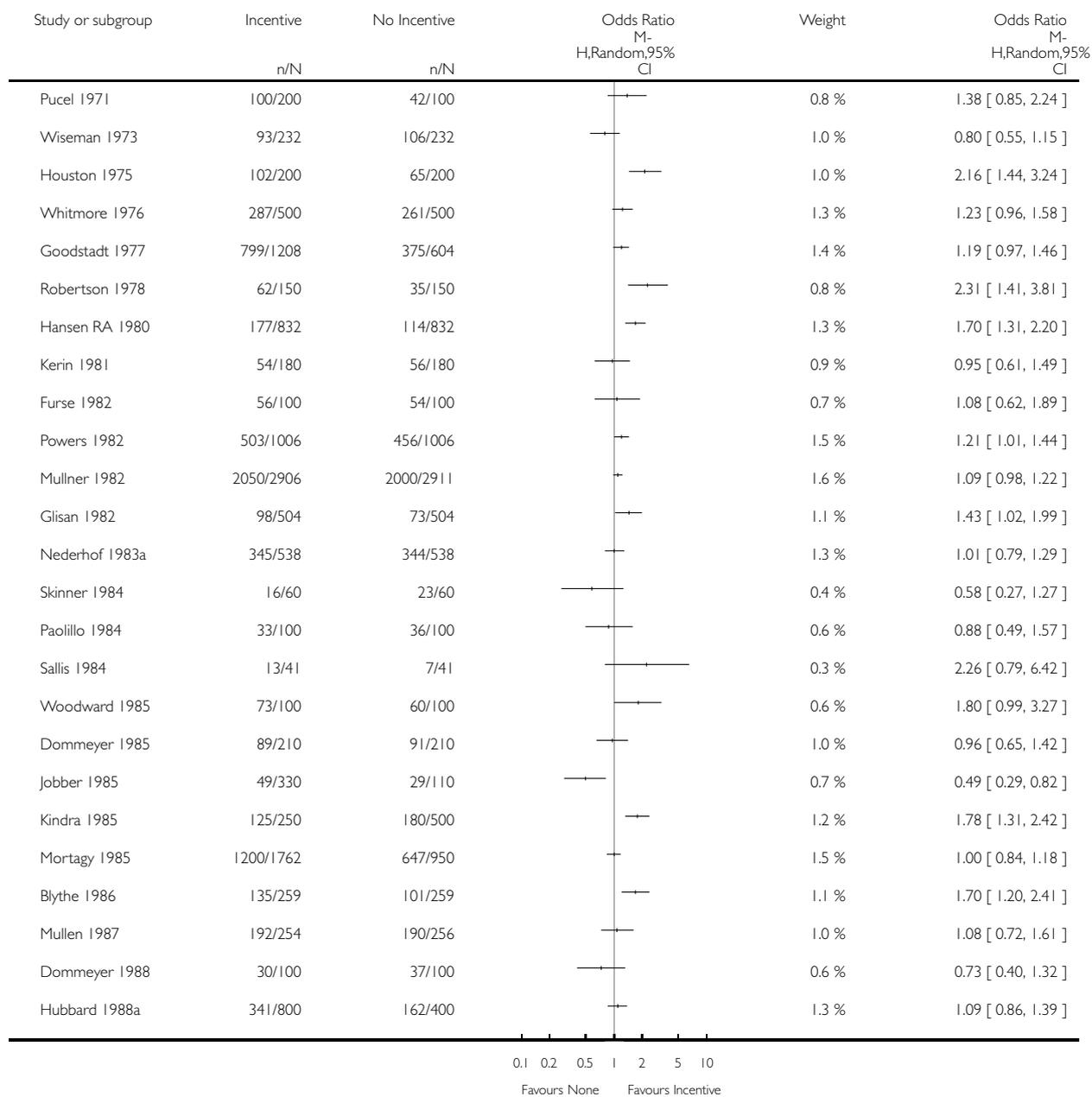


Analysis 4.2. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 2 Final response.

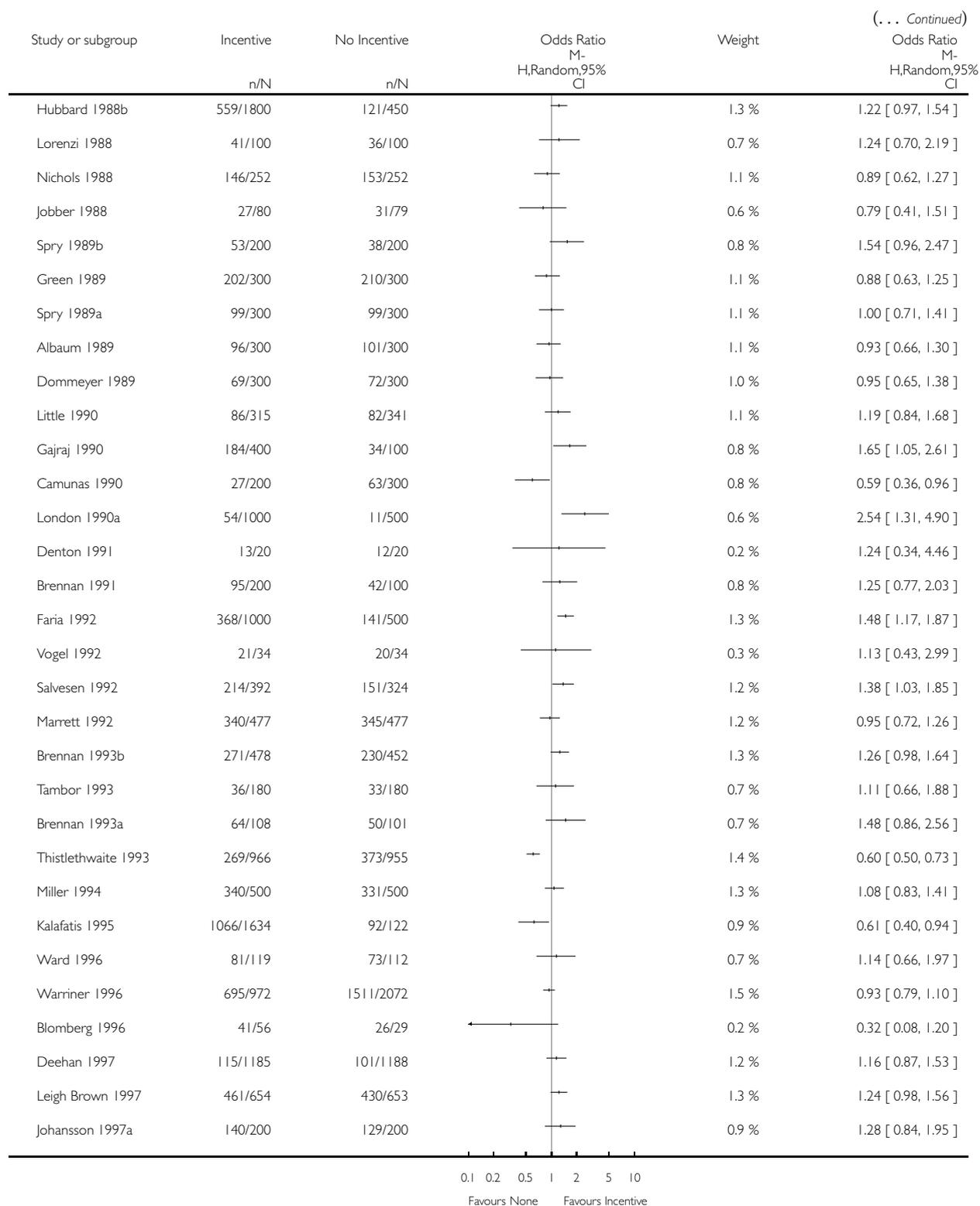
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

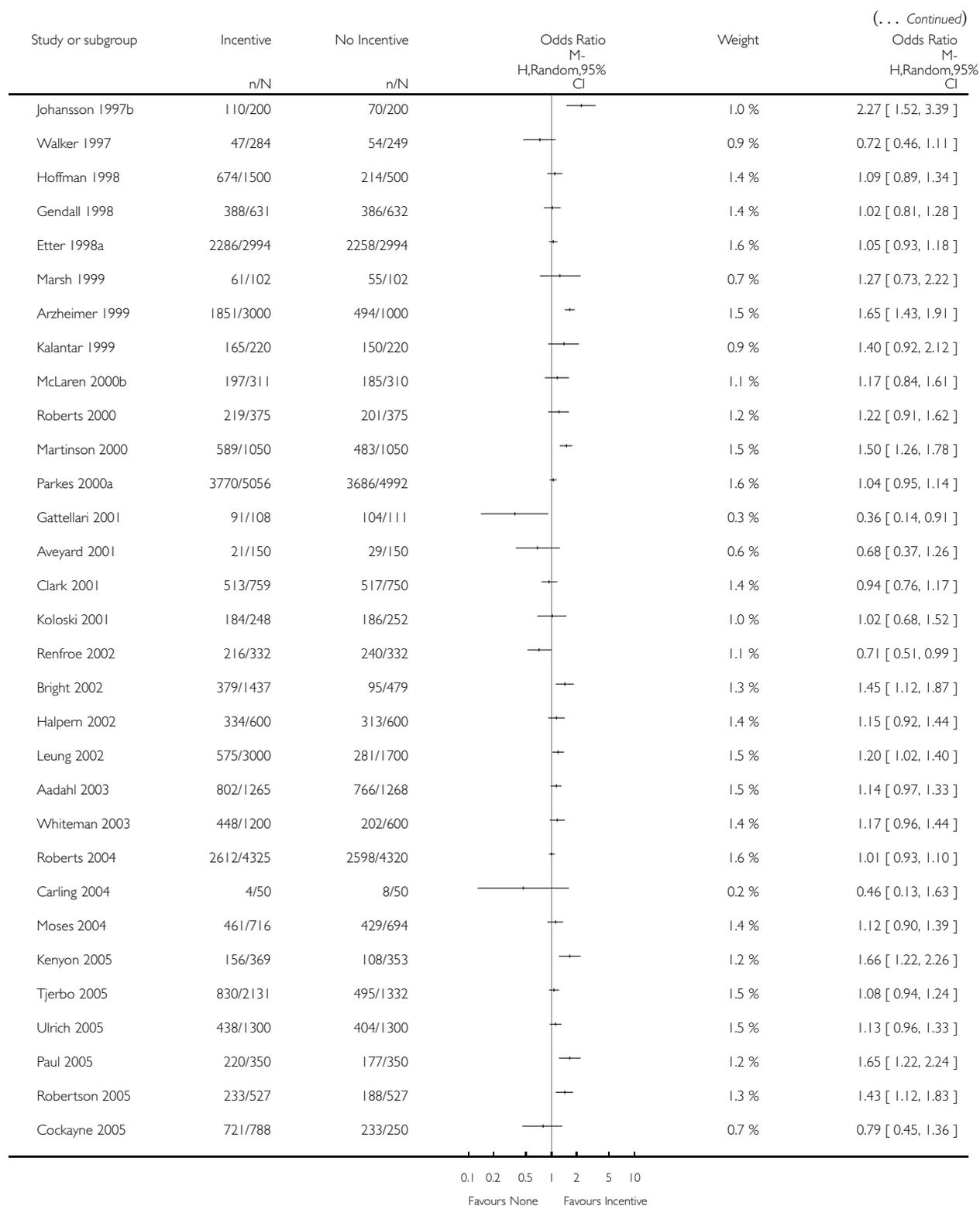
Comparison: 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 2 Final response

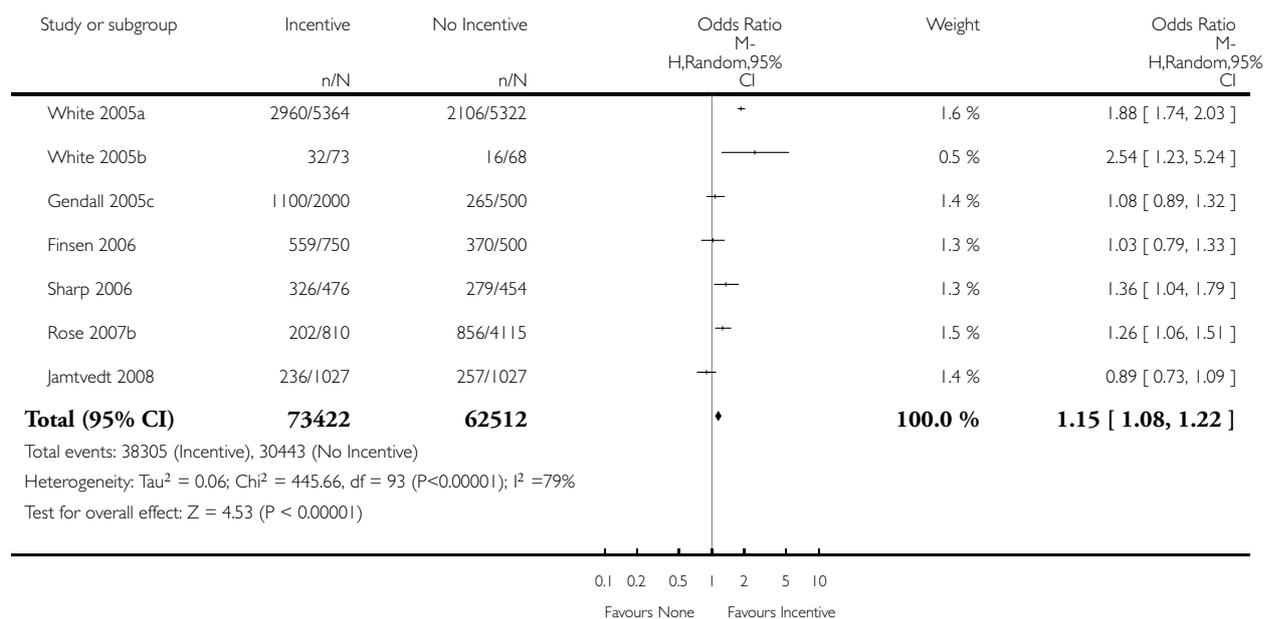


(Continued ...)





(... Continued)

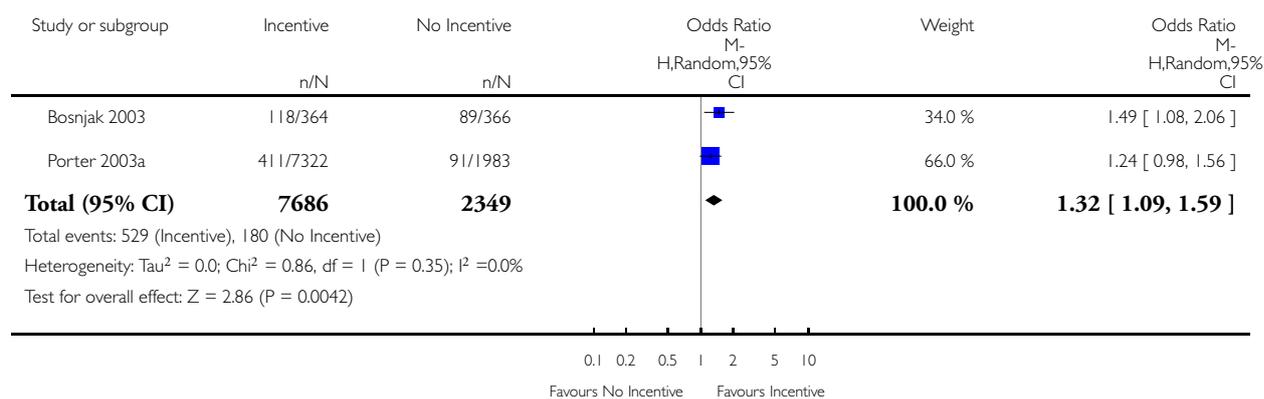


Analysis 4.3. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 3 e - Login

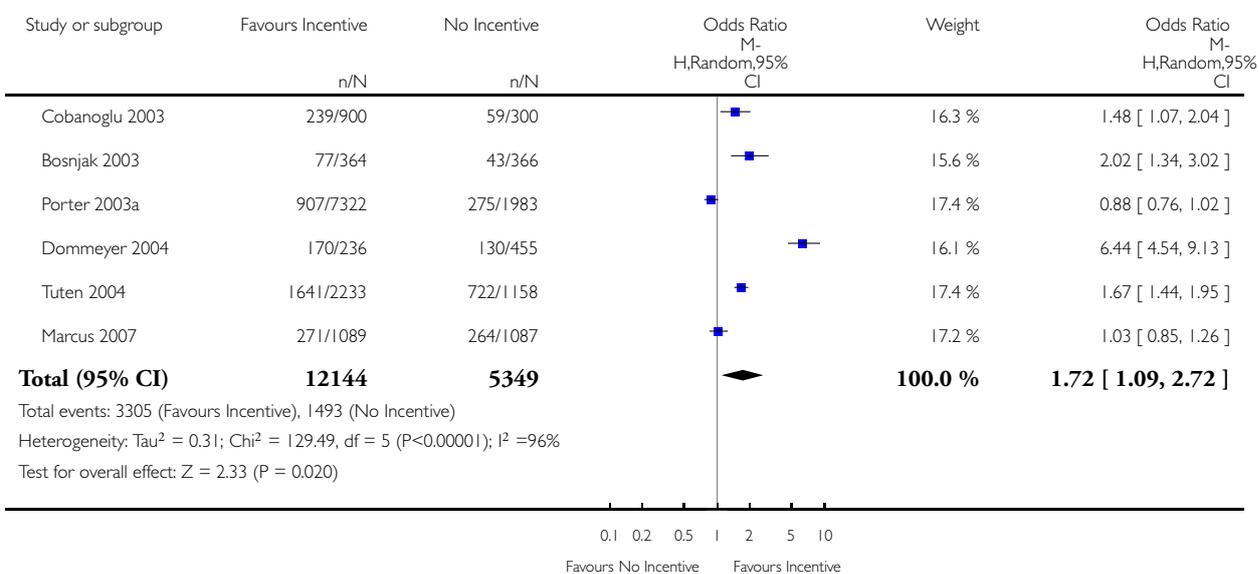


Analysis 4.4. Comparison 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 4 Non-monetary incentive vs. no incentive

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

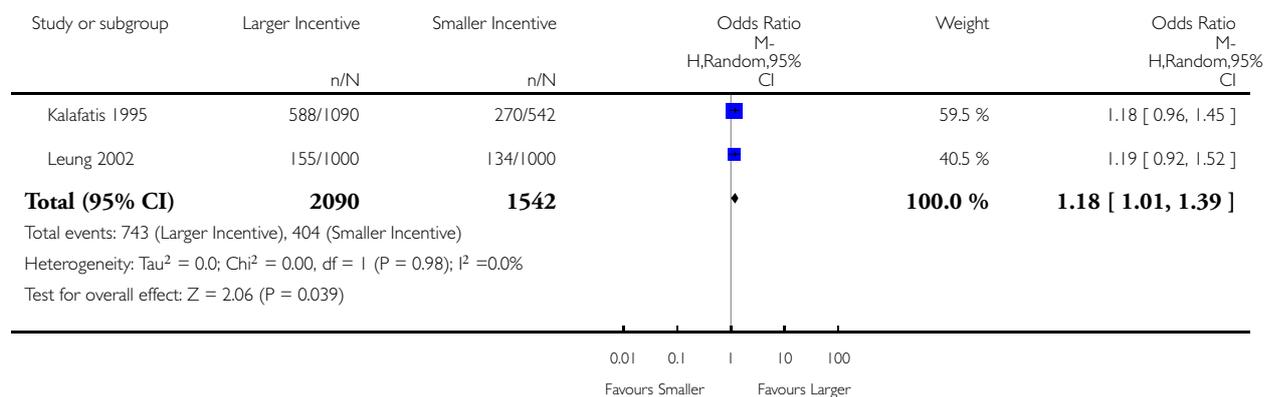


Analysis 5.1. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller

Outcome: 1 First response

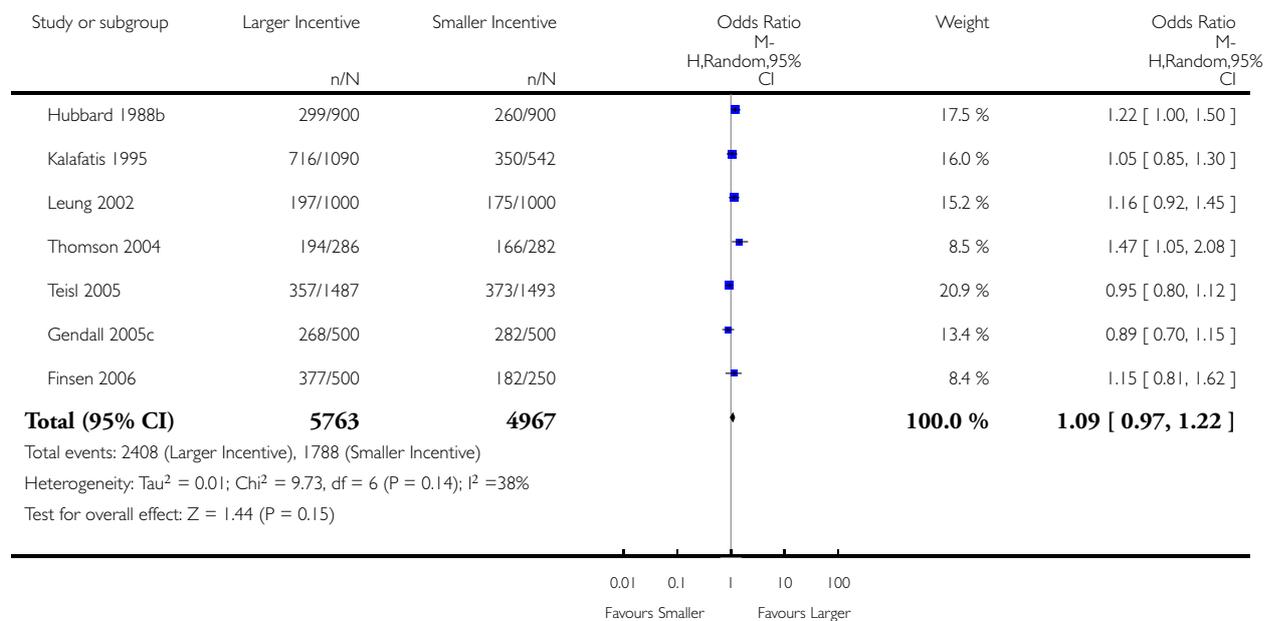


Analysis 5.2. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller

Outcome: 2 Final response

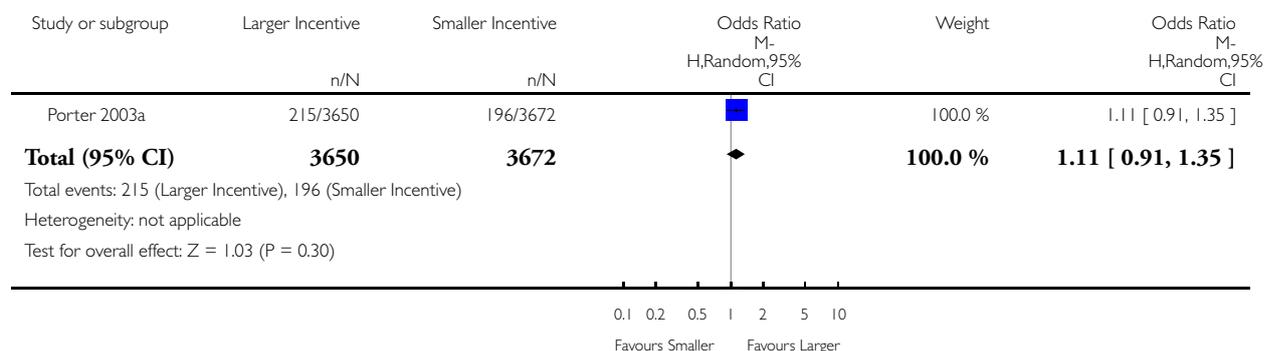


Analysis 5.3. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller

Outcome: 3 e - Login

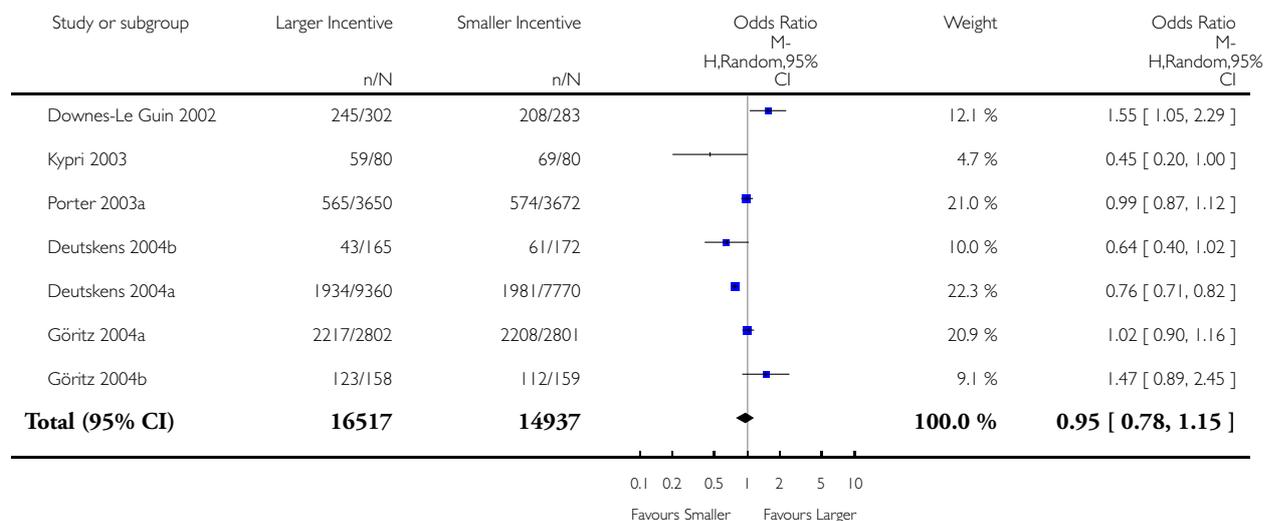


Analysis 5.4. Comparison 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

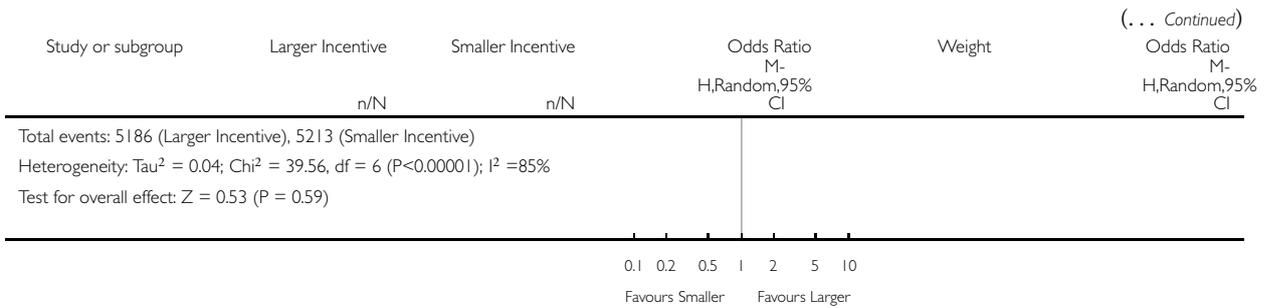
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 5 Larger non-monetary incentive vs. smaller

Outcome: 4 e - Submission



(Continued ...)

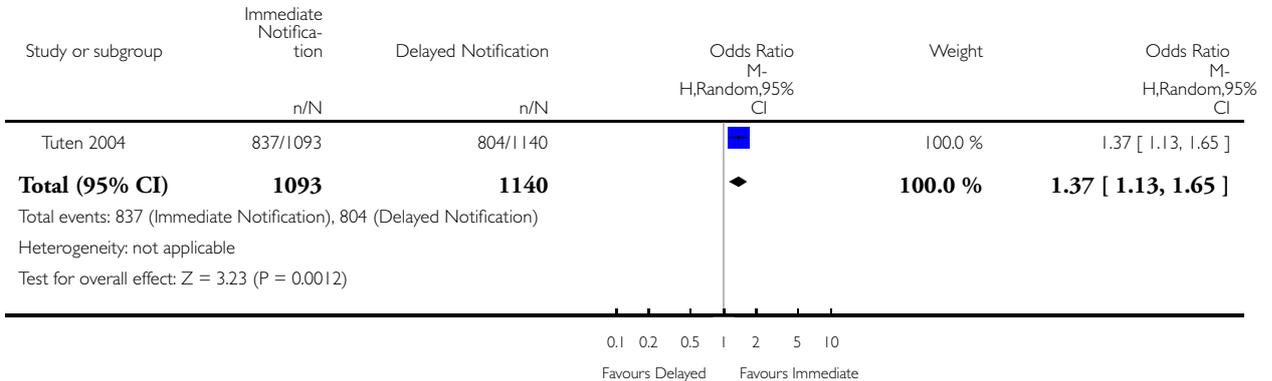


Analysis 6.4. Comparison 6 Immediate notification of lottery results vs. delayed notification, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 6 Immediate notification of lottery results vs. delayed notification

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

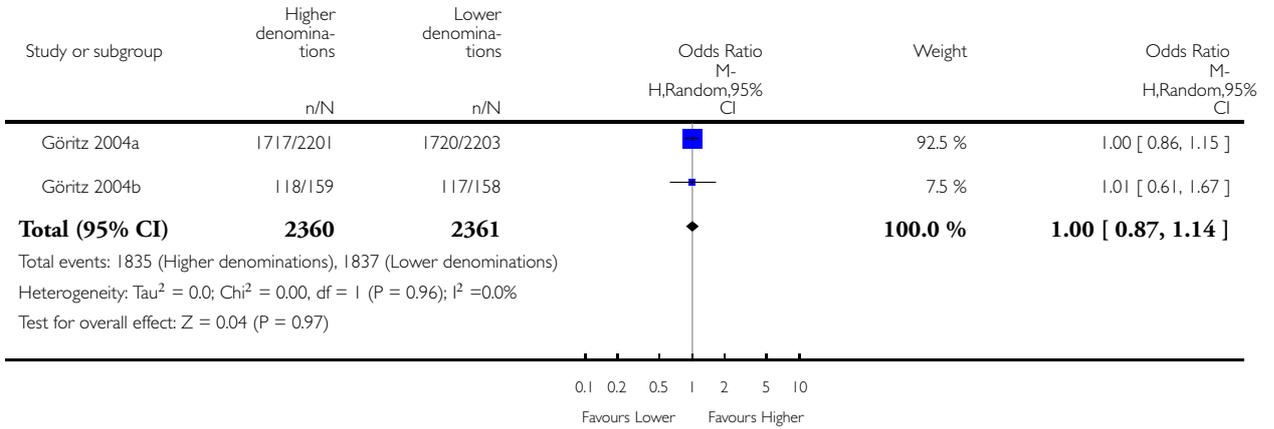


Analysis 7.4. Comparison 7 Higher denominations in monetary lottery incentives vs. lower, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 7 Higher denominations in monetary lottery incentives vs. lower

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

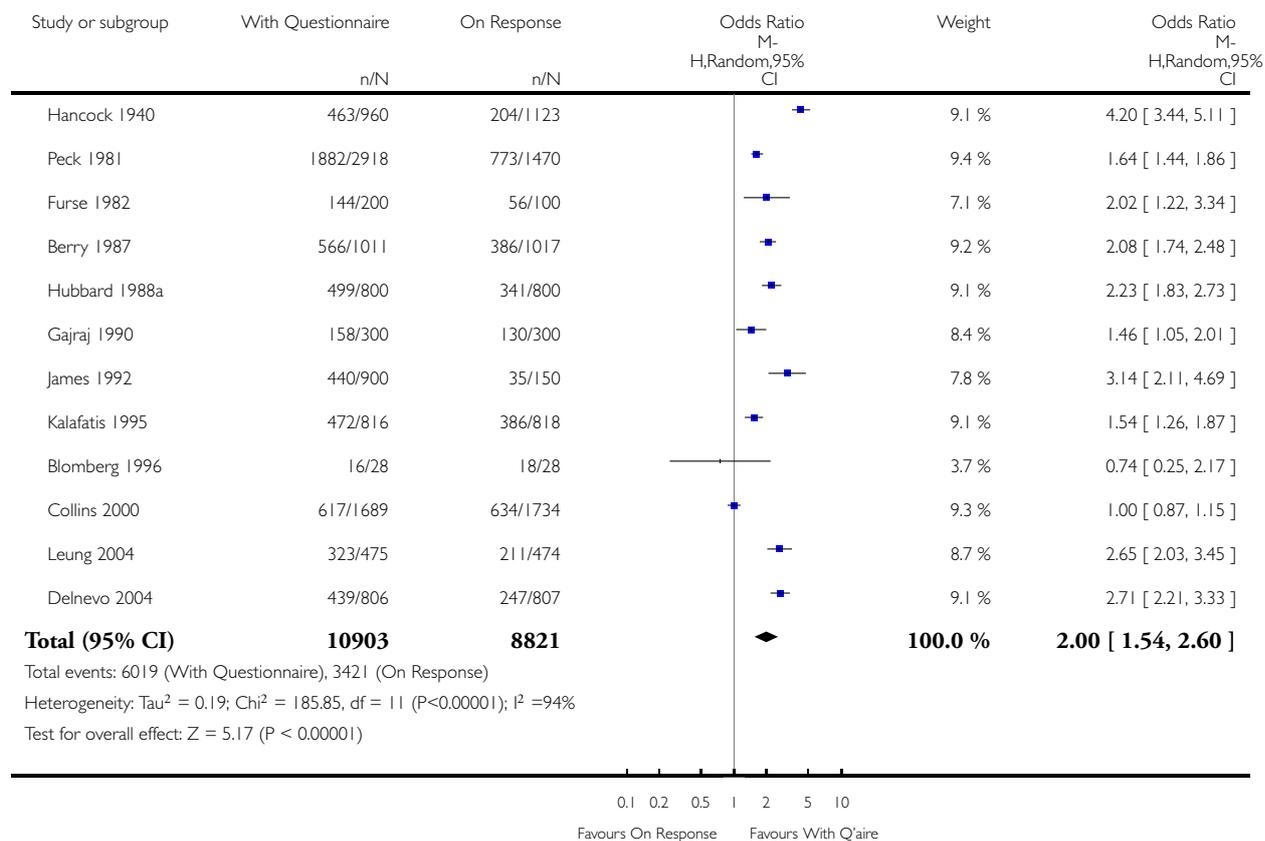


Analysis 8.1. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response

Outcome: 1 First response

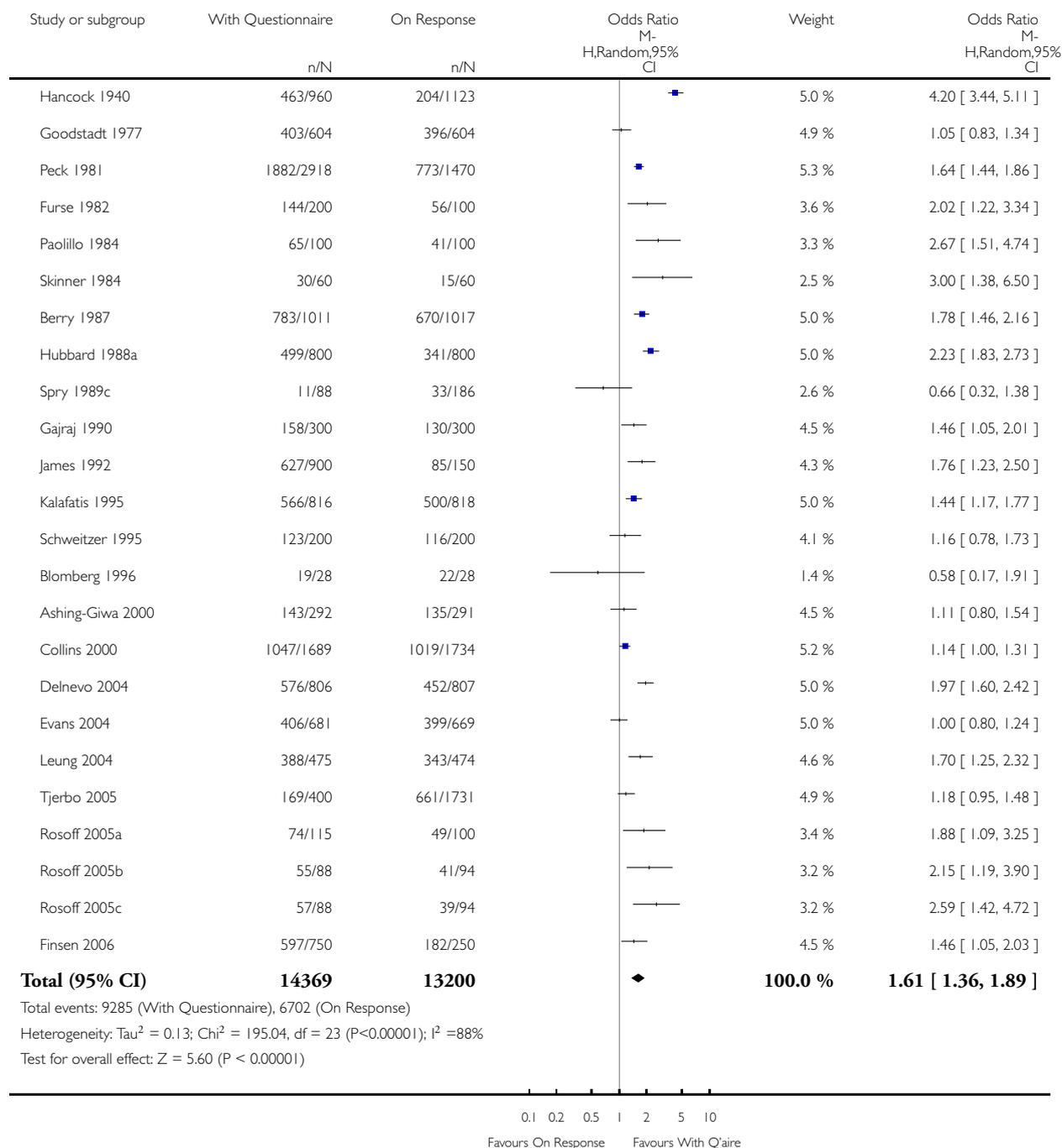


Analysis 8.2. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response

Outcome: 2 Final response

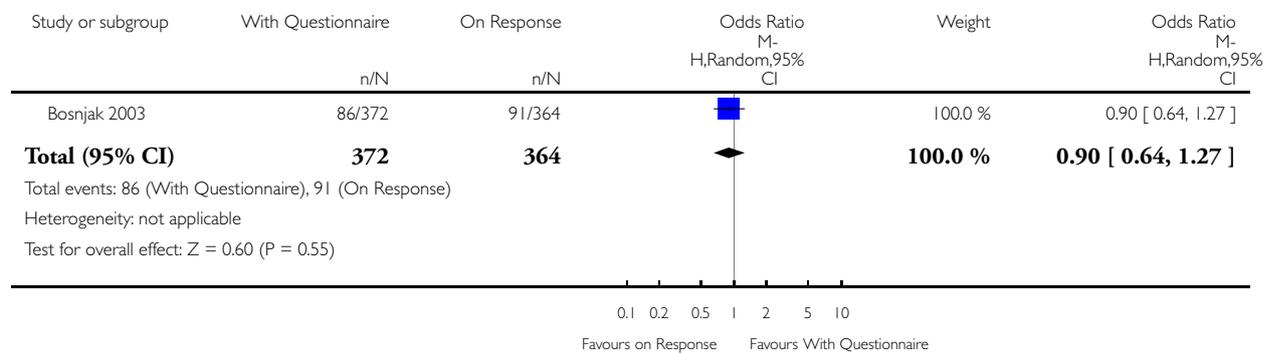


Analysis 8.3. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 3 e - Log.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response

Outcome: 3 e - Log

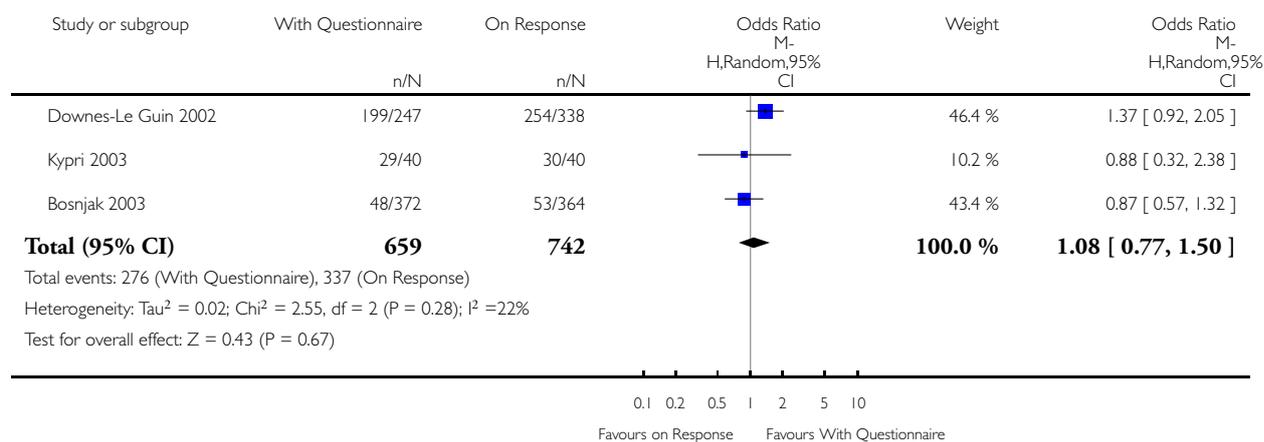


Analysis 8.4. Comparison 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 8 Incentive with questionnaire vs. on response

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

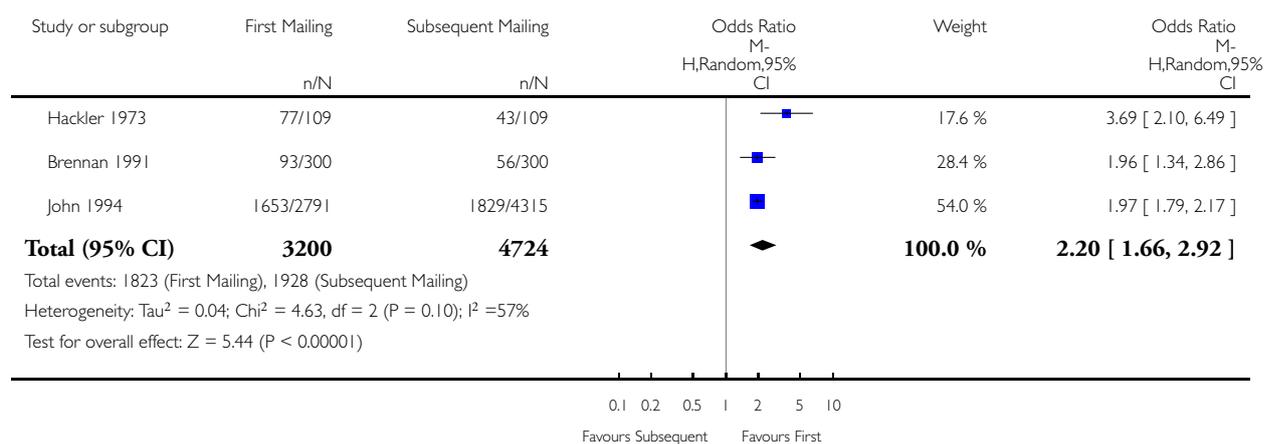


Analysis 9.1. Comparison 9 Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 9 Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing

Outcome: 1 First response

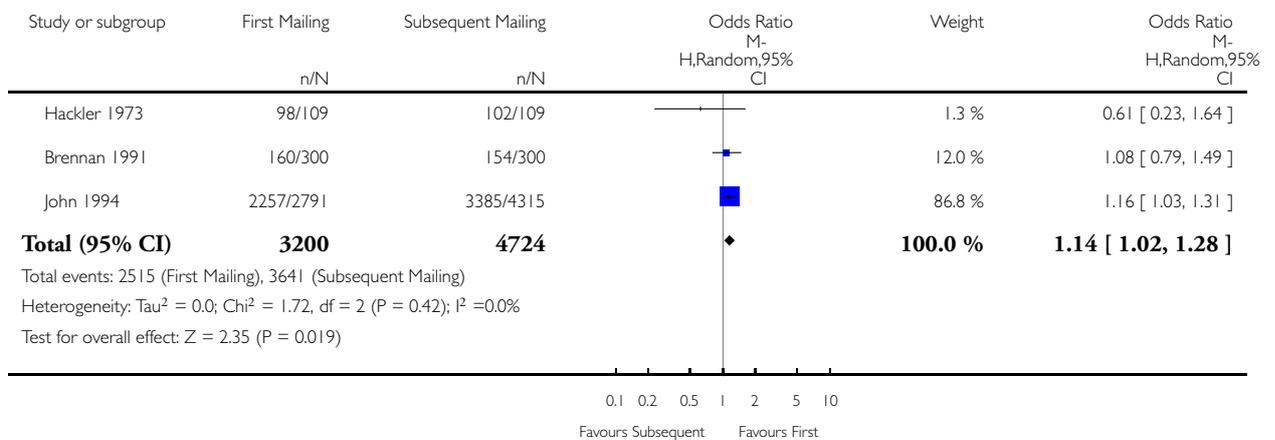


Analysis 9.2. Comparison 9 Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 9 Incentive with first vs. subsequent mailing

Outcome: 2 Final response

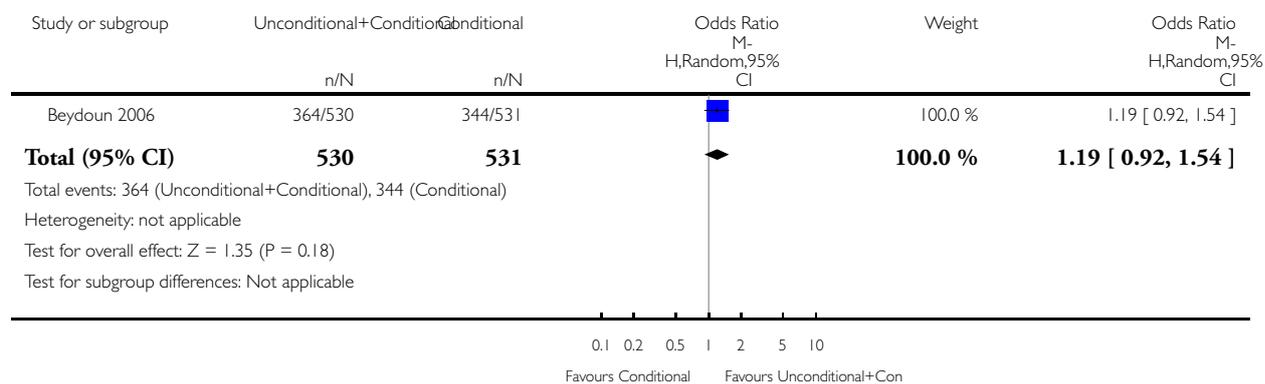


Analysis 10.4. Comparison 10 Unconditional and conditional incentives vs. conditional incentives, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 10 Unconditional and conditional incentives vs. conditional incentives

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

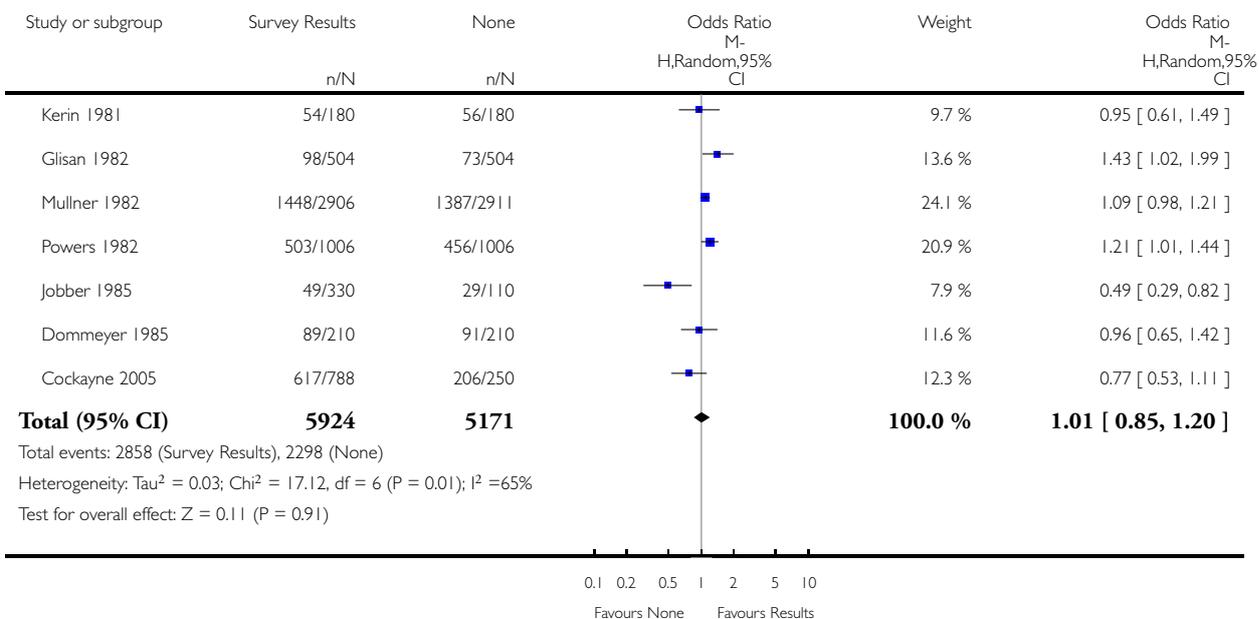


Analysis 11.1. Comparison 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer

Outcome: 1 First response

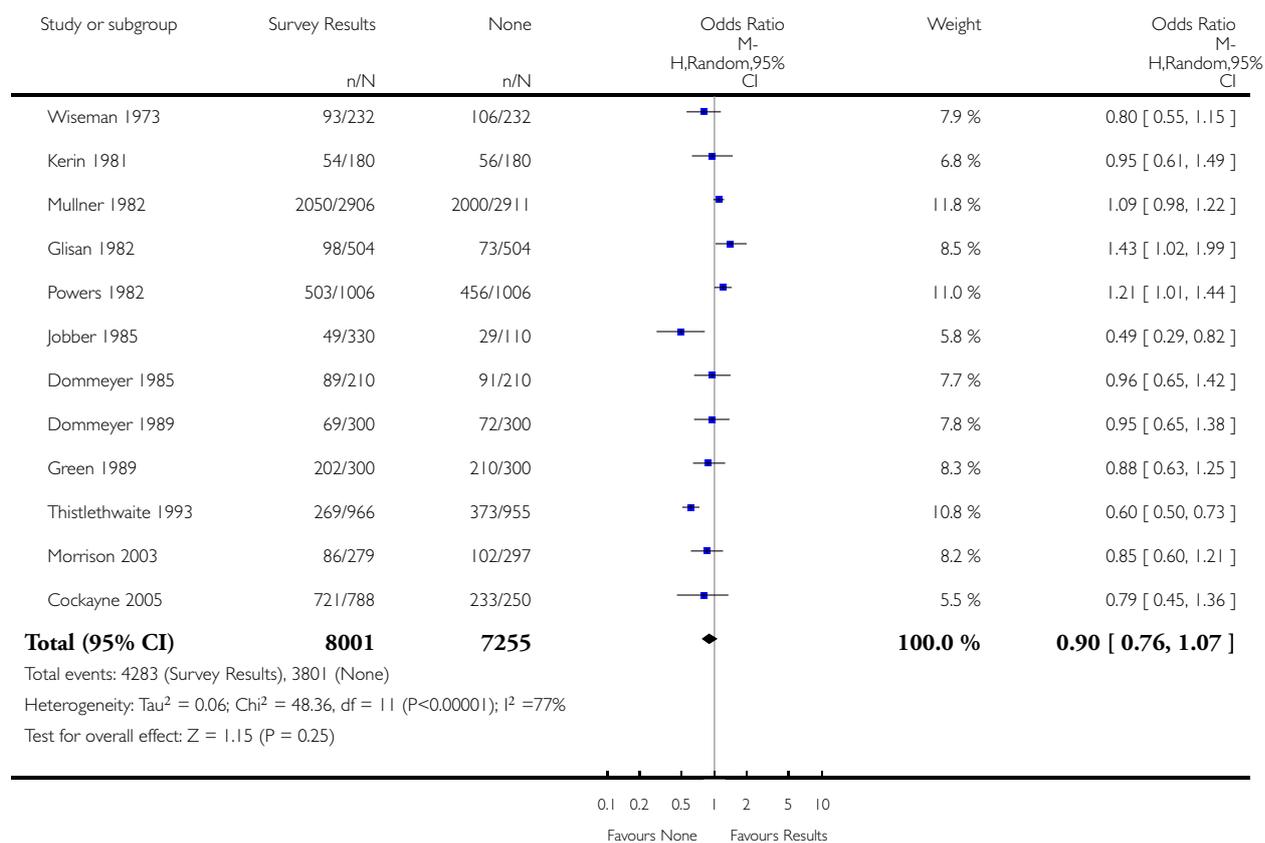


Analysis 11.2. Comparison 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer

Outcome: 2 Final response

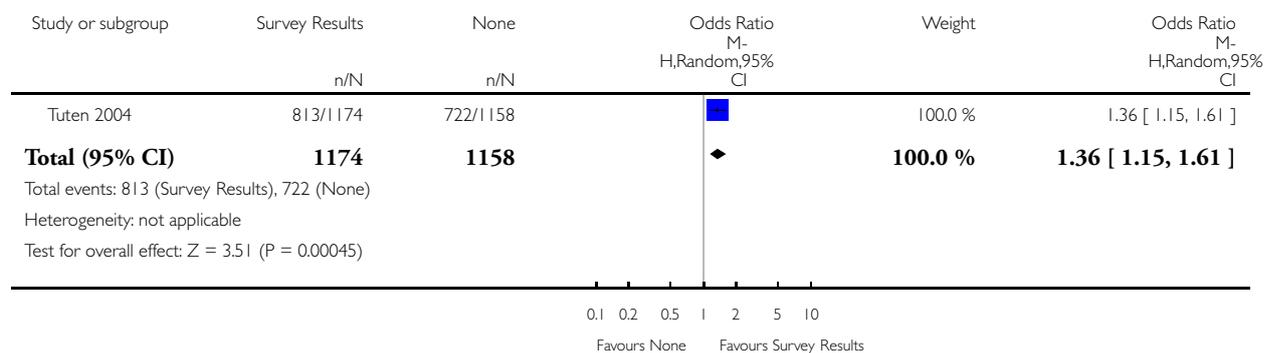


Analysis 11.4. Comparison 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 11 Offer of survey results vs. no offer

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

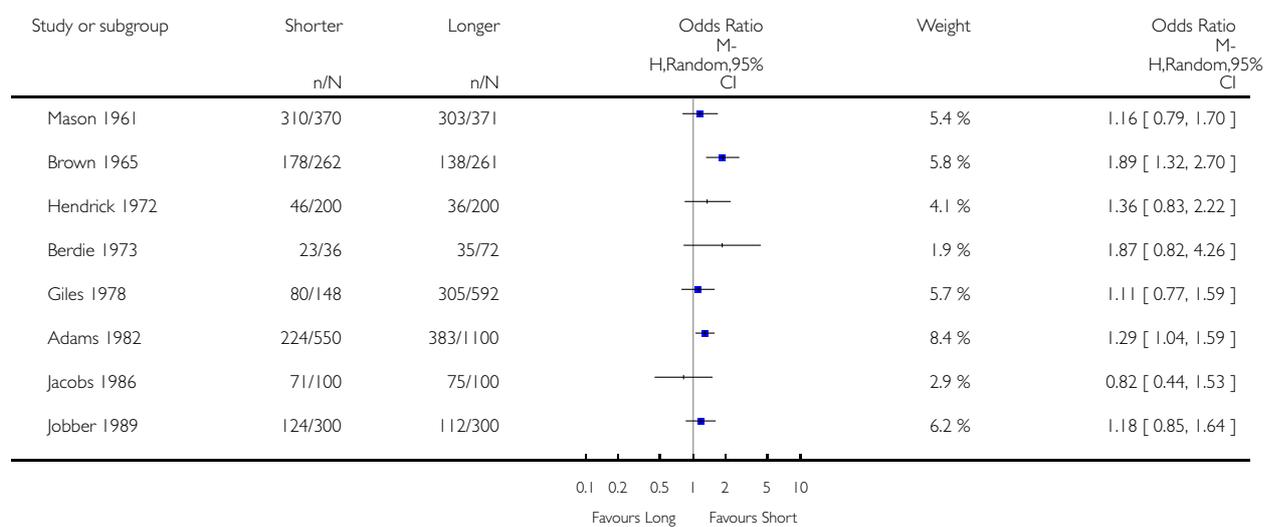


Analysis 12.1. Comparison 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.

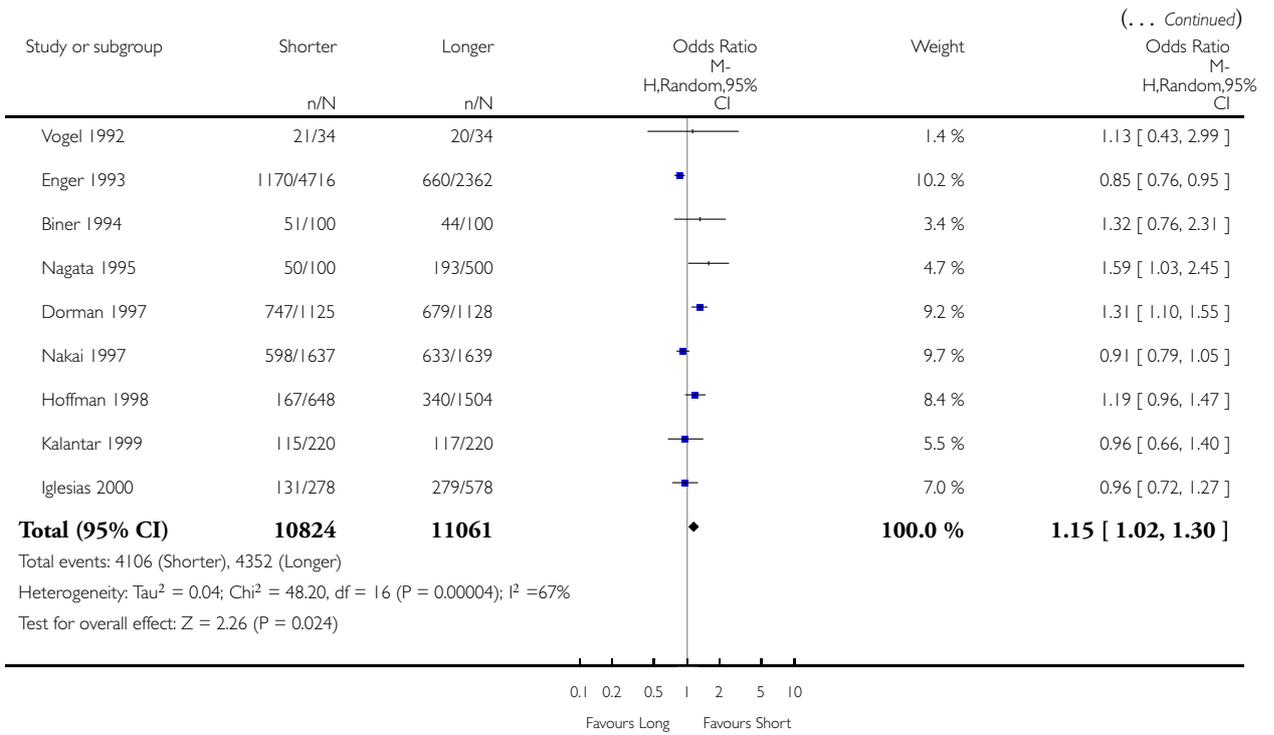
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire

Outcome: 1 First response



(Continued ...)

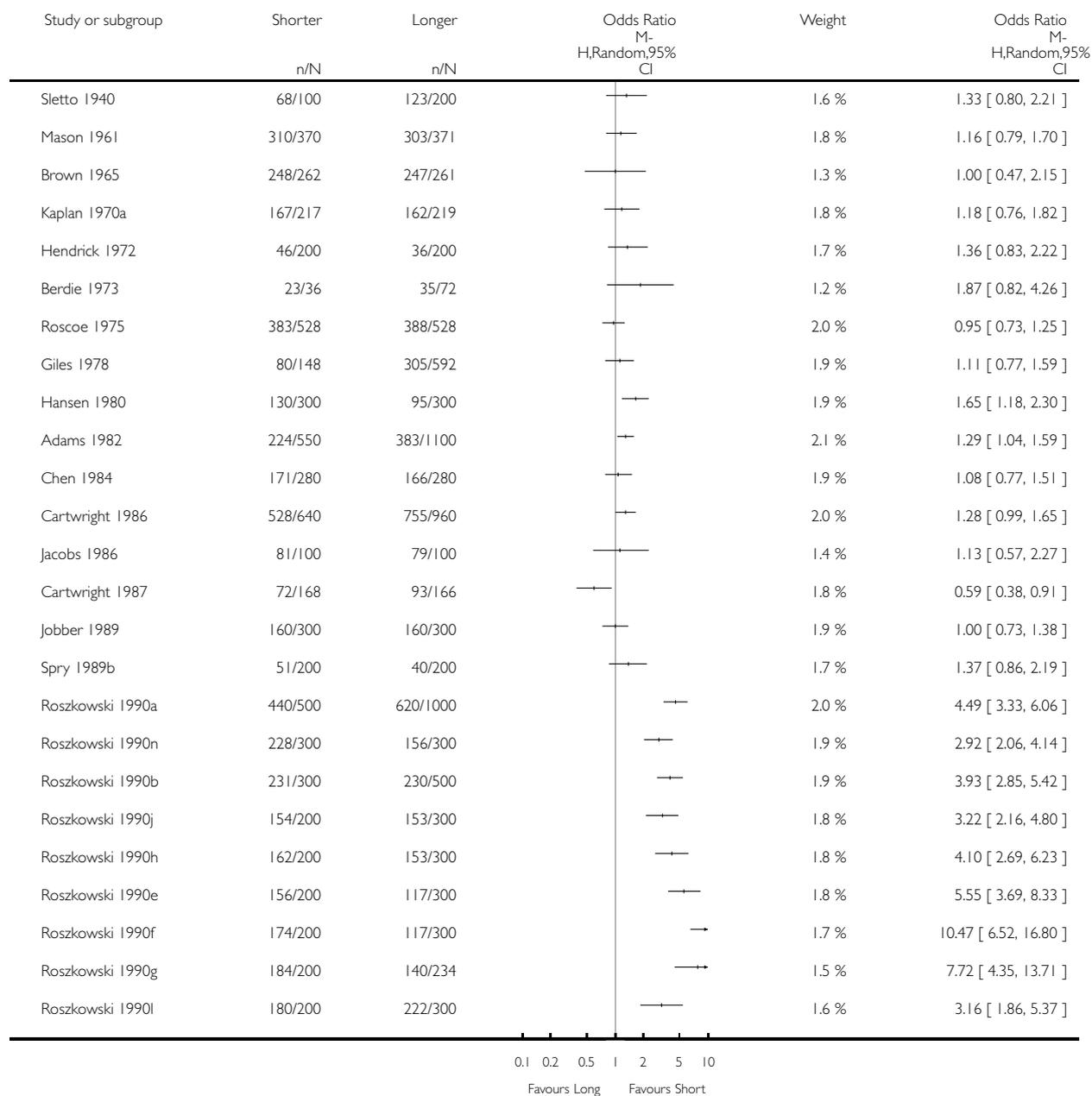


Analysis 12.2. Comparison 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.

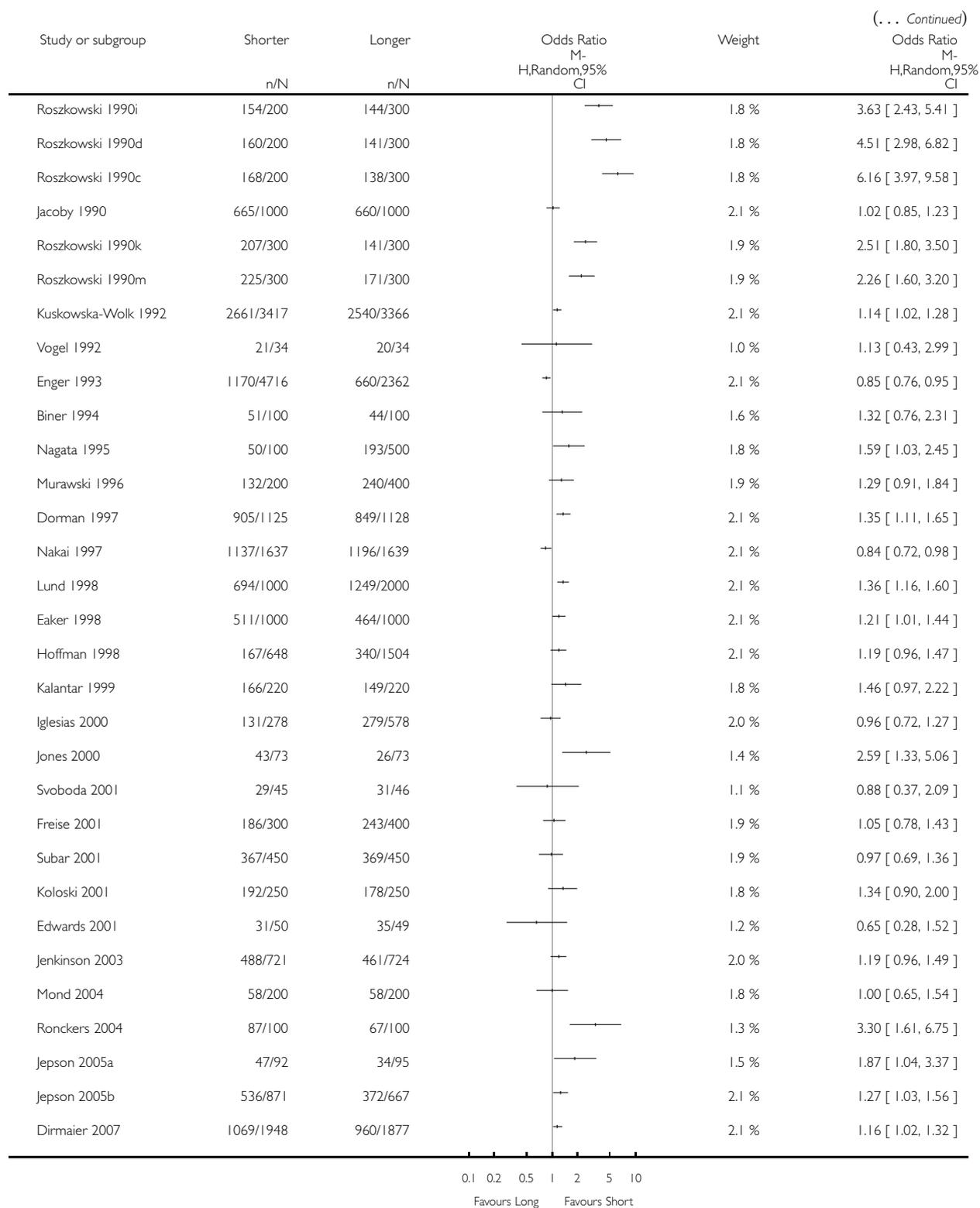
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

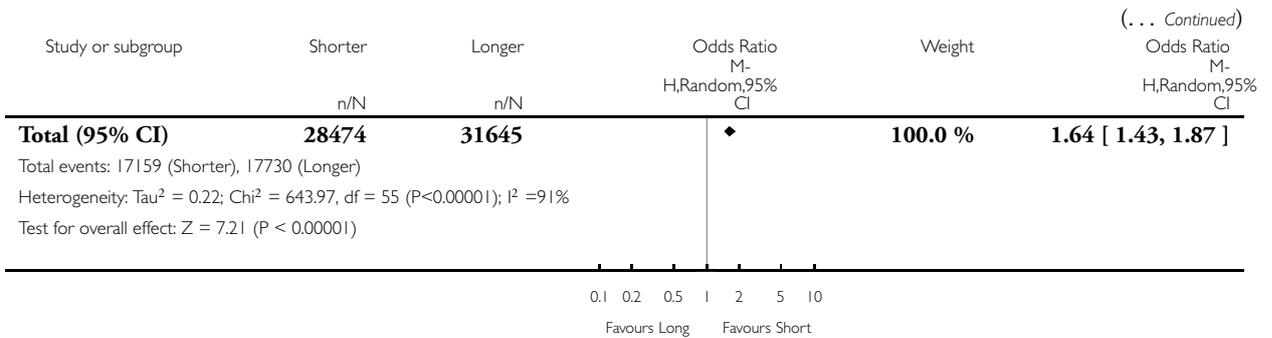
Comparison: 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire

Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued ...)



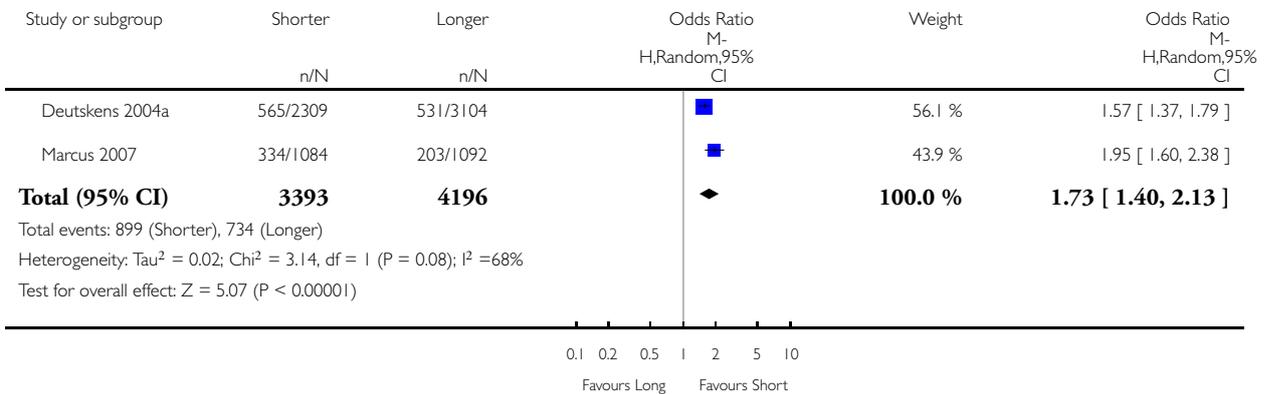


Analysis 12.4. Comparison 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 12 Shorter vs. longer questionnaire

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

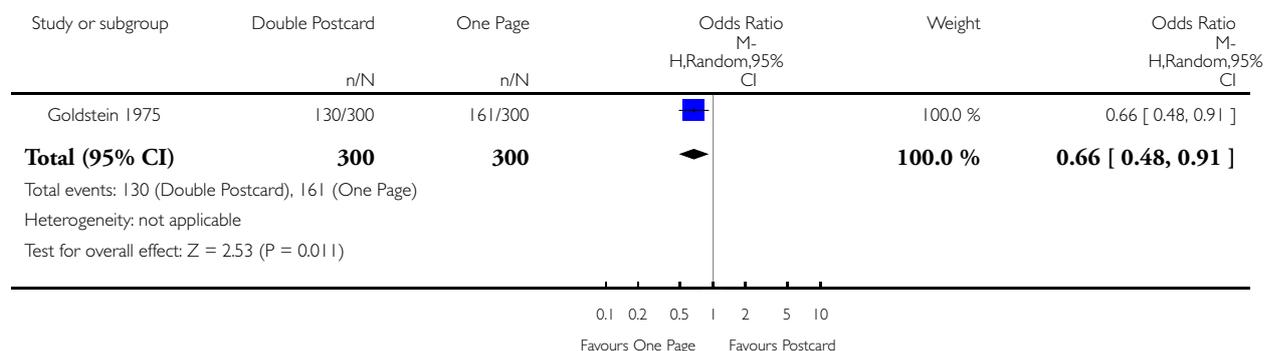


Analysis 13.1. Comparison 13 Double postcard vs. one page, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 13 Double postcard vs. one page

Outcome: 1 First response

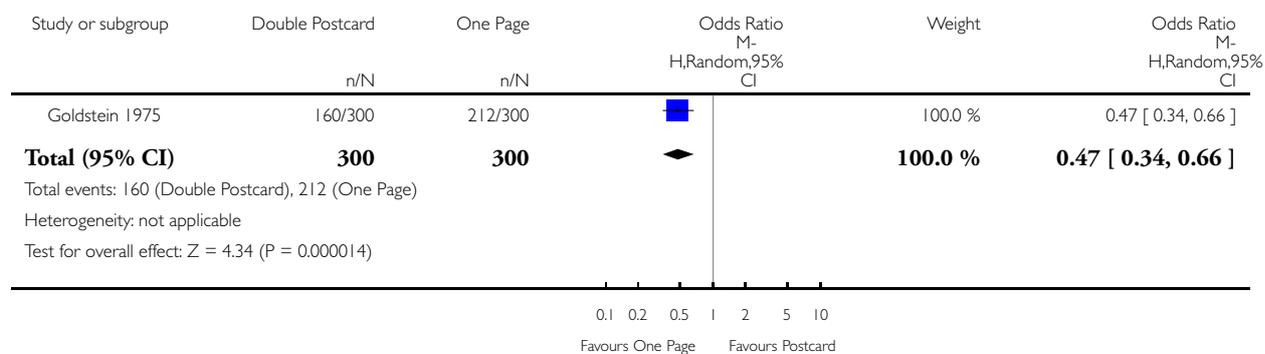


Analysis 13.2. Comparison 13 Double postcard vs. one page, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 13 Double postcard vs. one page

Outcome: 2 Final response

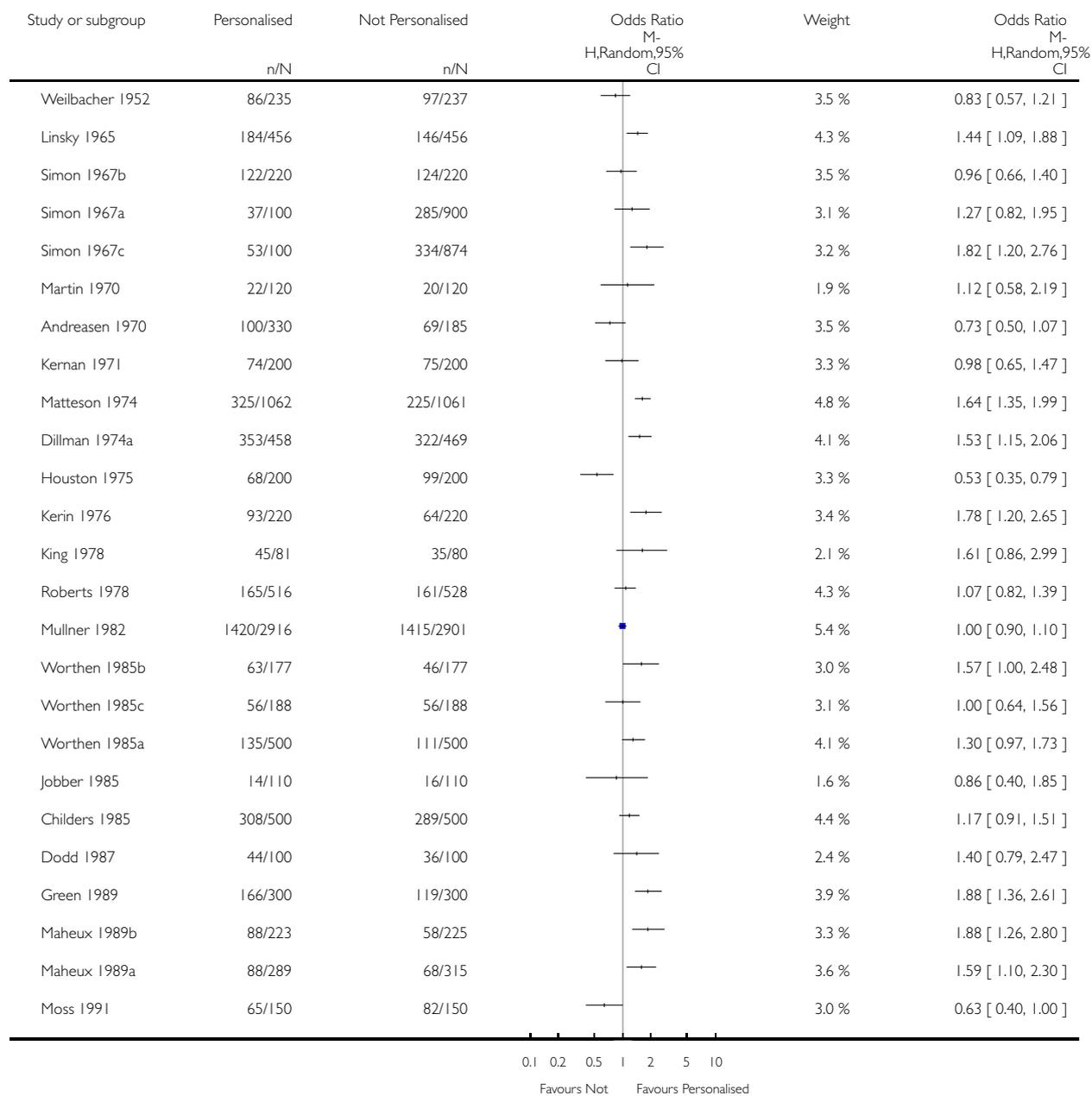


Analysis 14.1. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 1 First response.

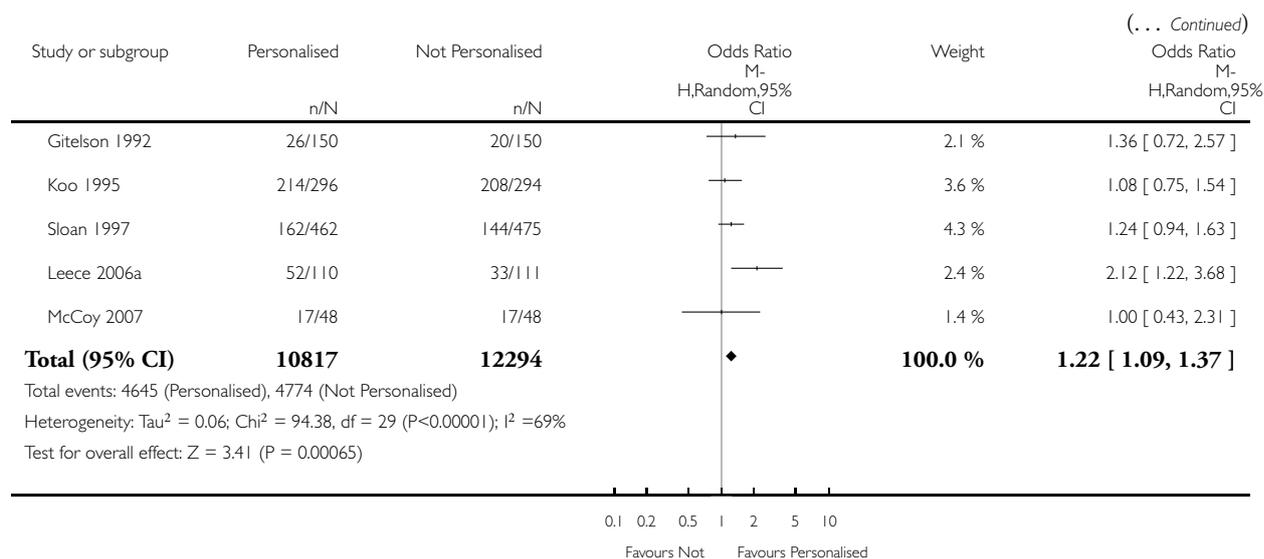
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 14 More vs. less personalised

Outcome: 1 First response



(Continued ...)

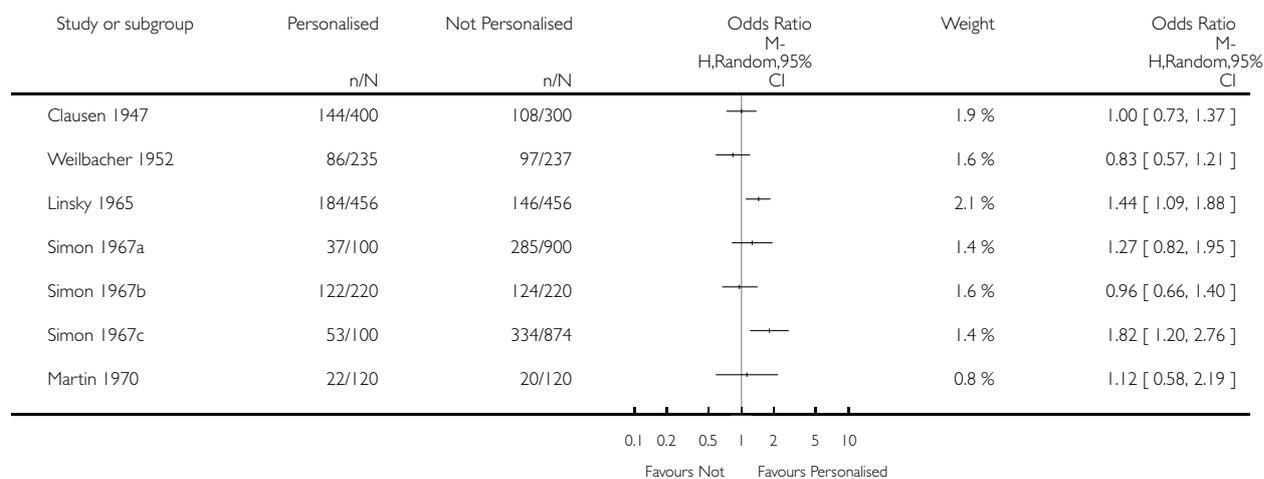


Analysis 14.2. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 2 Final response.

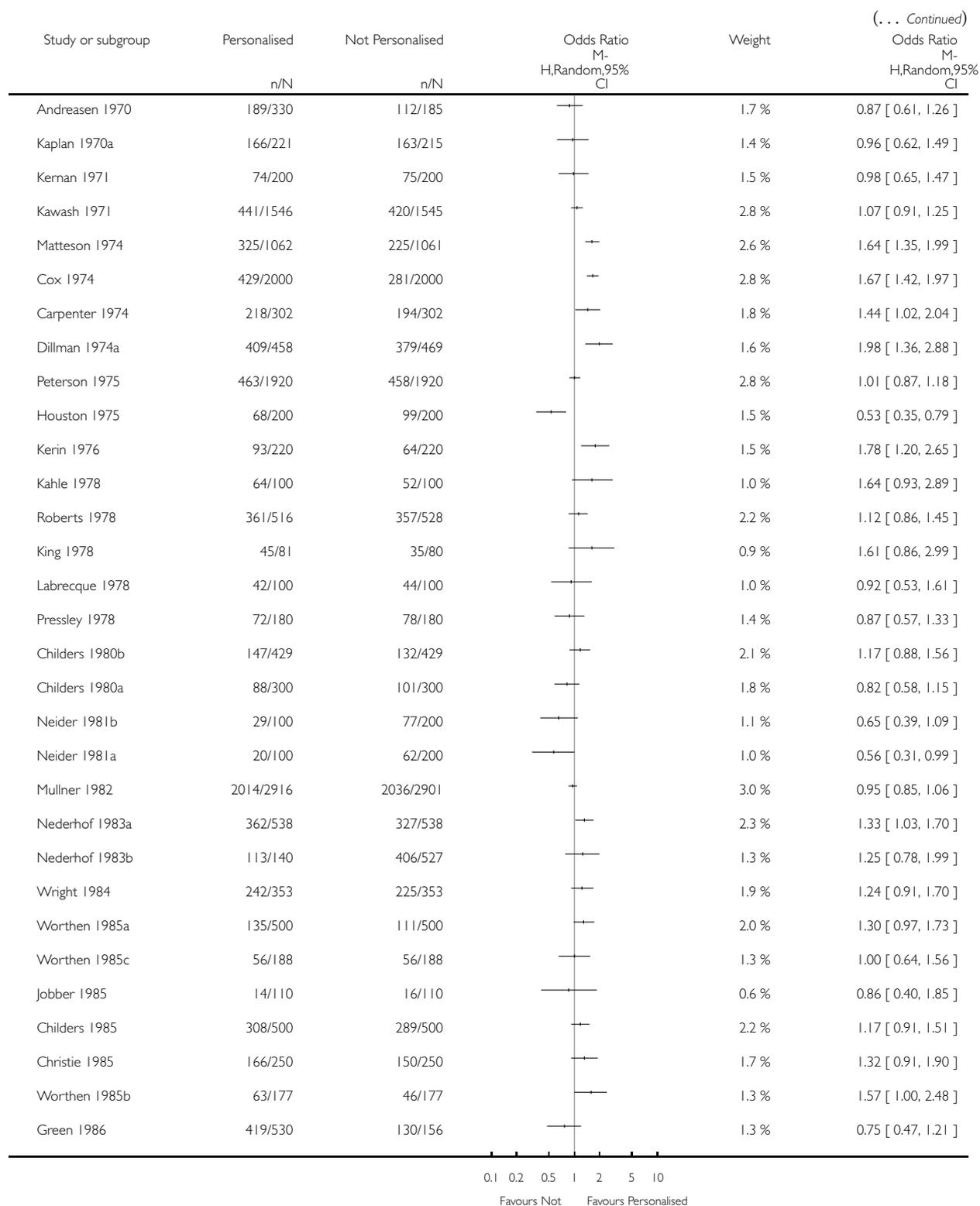
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

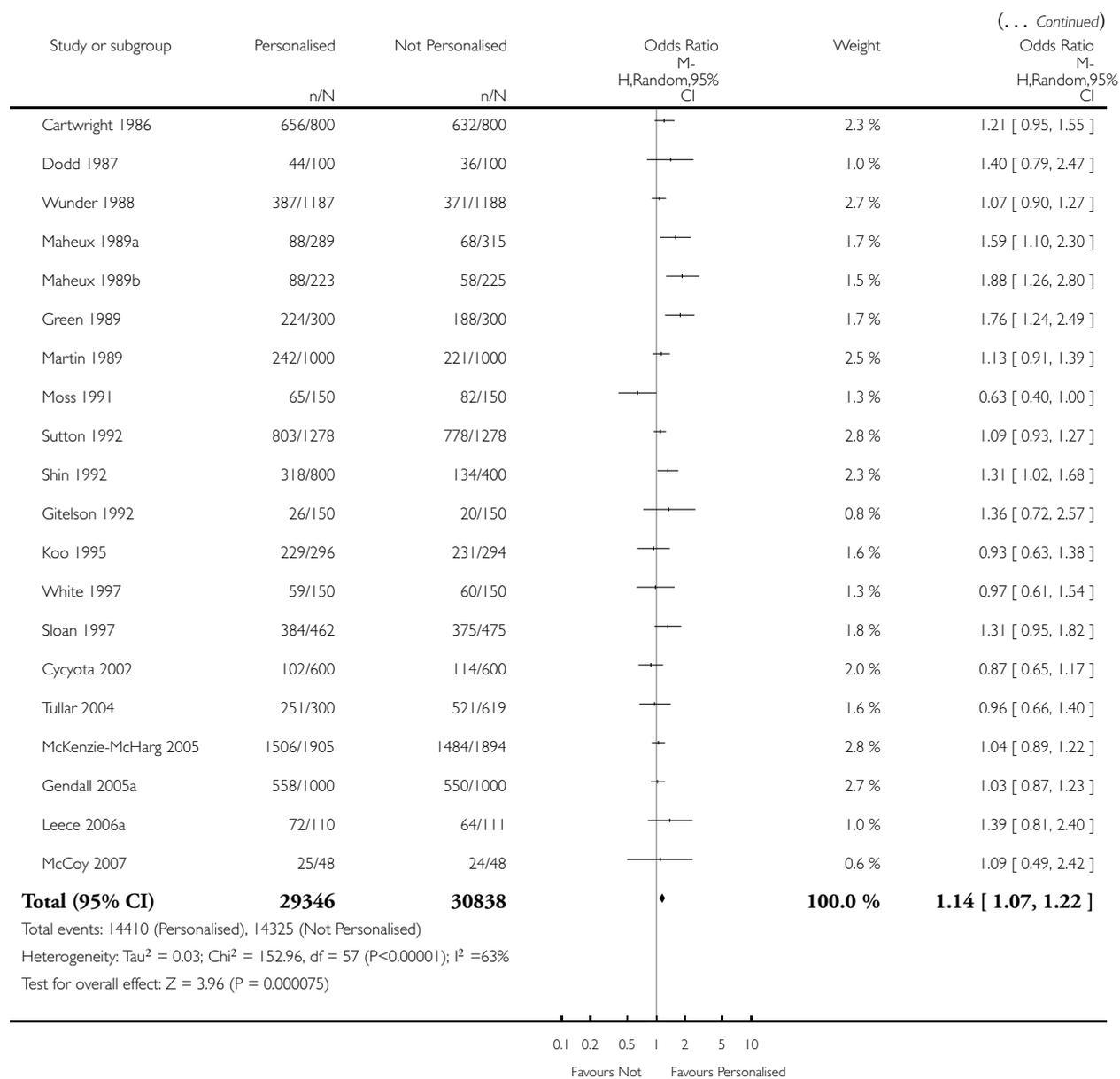
Comparison: 14 More vs. less personalised

Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued . . .)



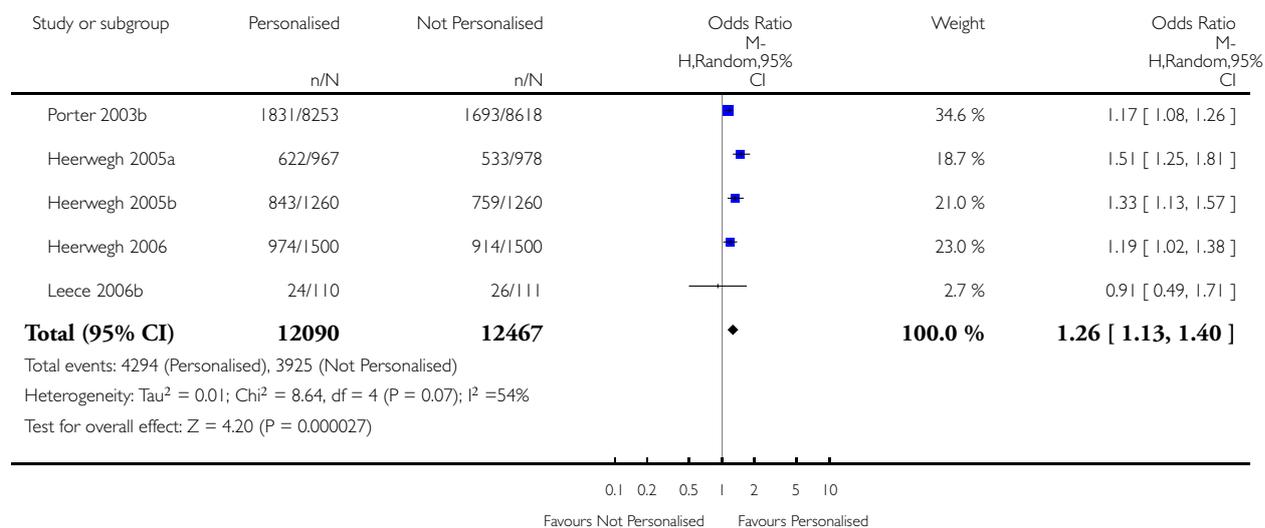


Analysis 14.3. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 14 More vs. less personalised

Outcome: 3 e - Login

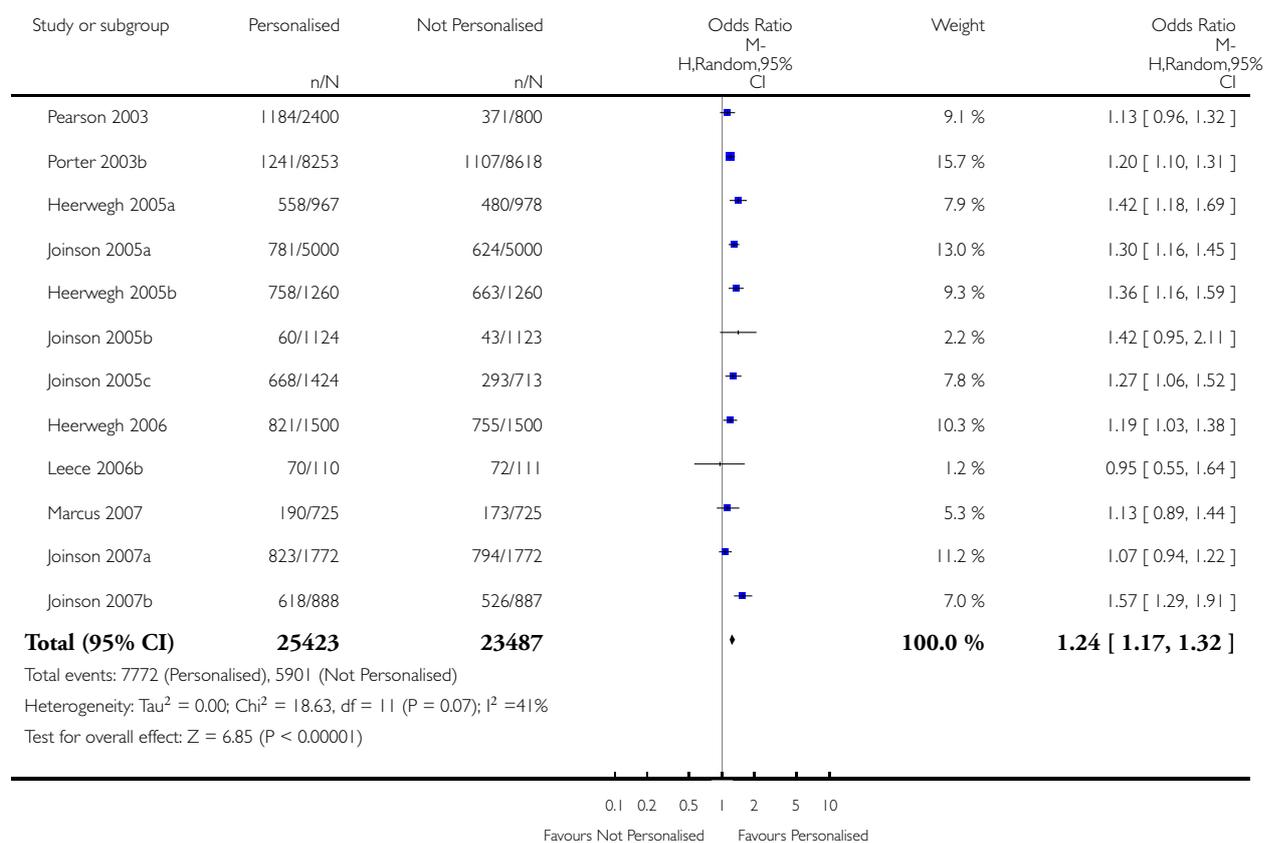


Analysis 14.4. Comparison 14 More vs. less personalised, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 14 More vs. less personalised

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

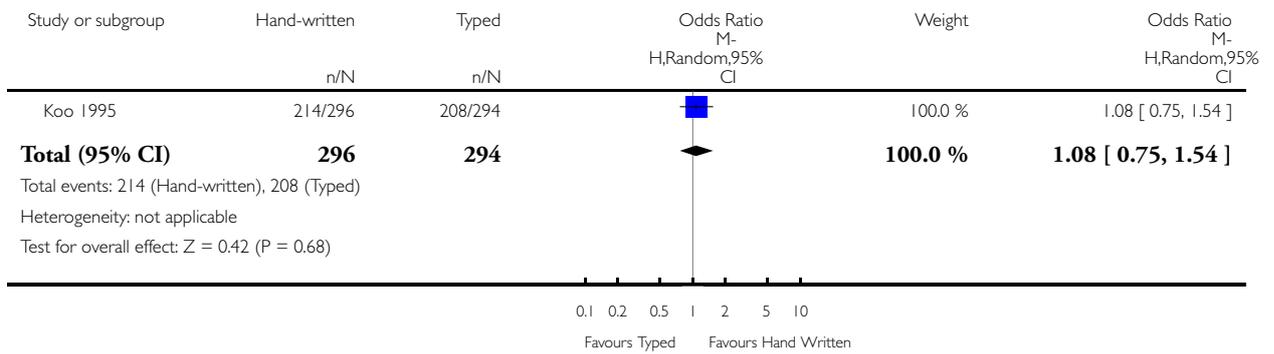


Analysis 15.1. Comparison 15 Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 15 Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter

Outcome: 1 First response

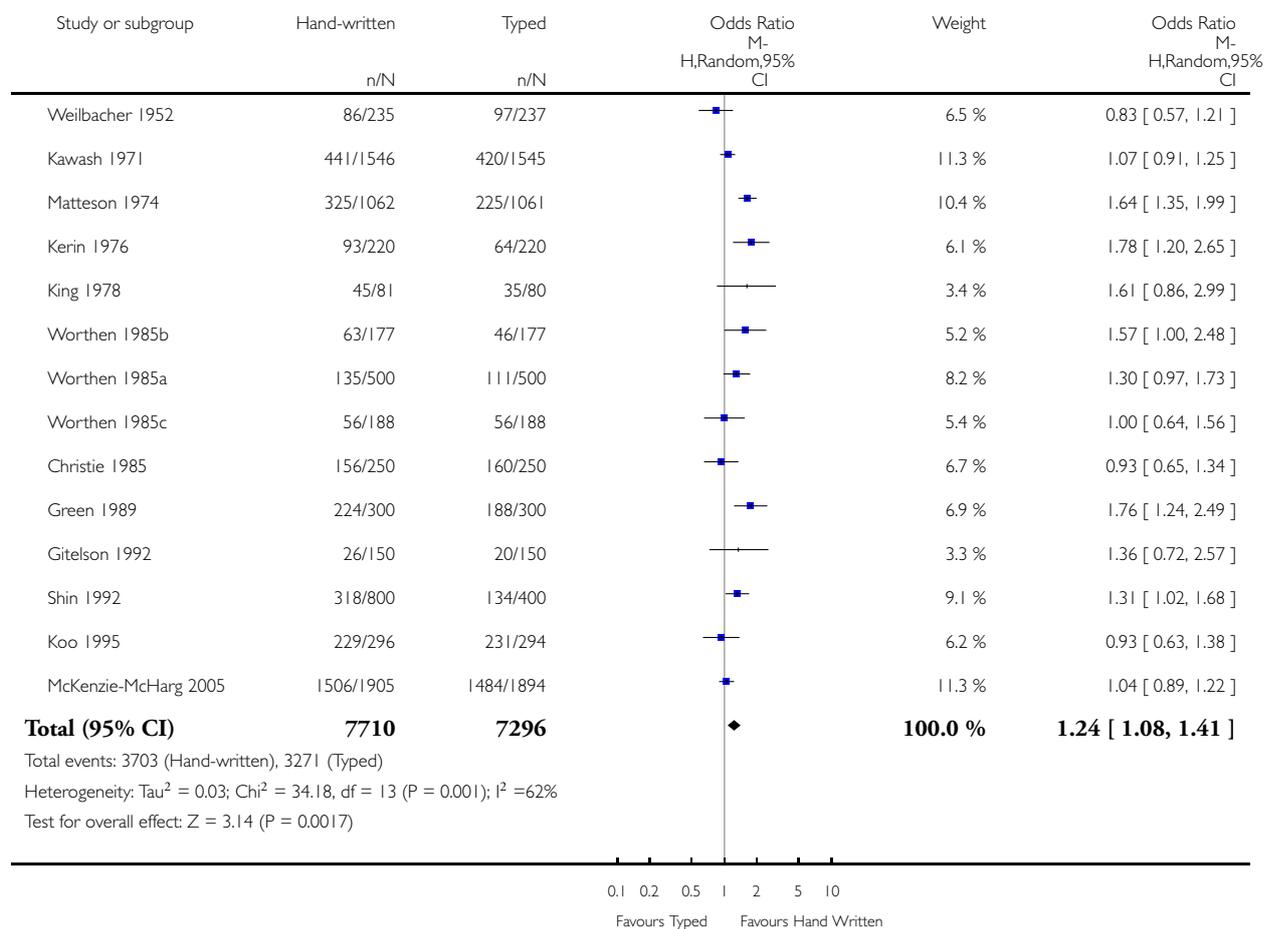


Analysis 15.2. Comparison 15 Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 15 Hand-written vs. typed/facsimile/scanned/printed signature on covering letter

Outcome: 2 Final response

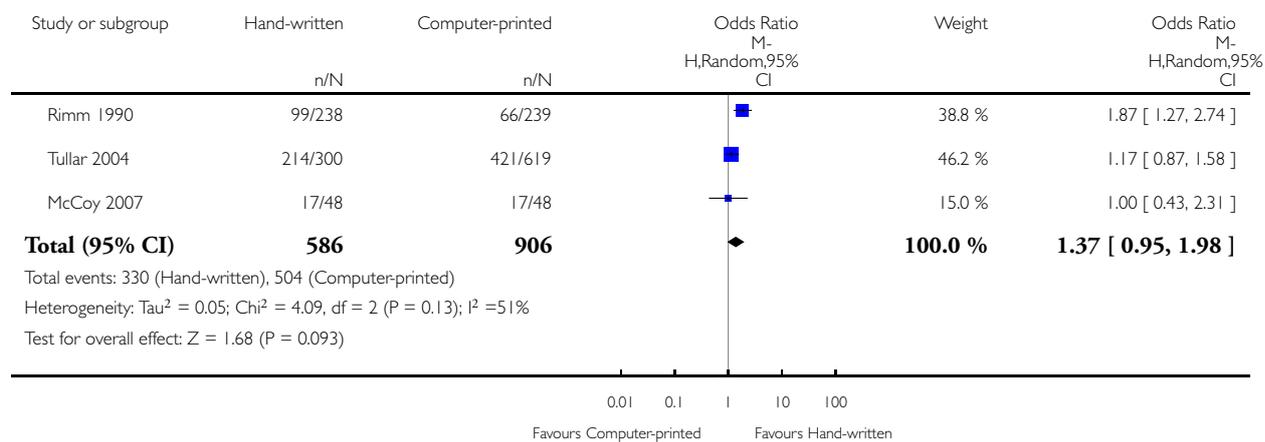


Analysis 16.1. Comparison 16 Hand-written address vs. computer-printed , Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 16 Hand-written address vs. computer-printed

Outcome: 1 First response

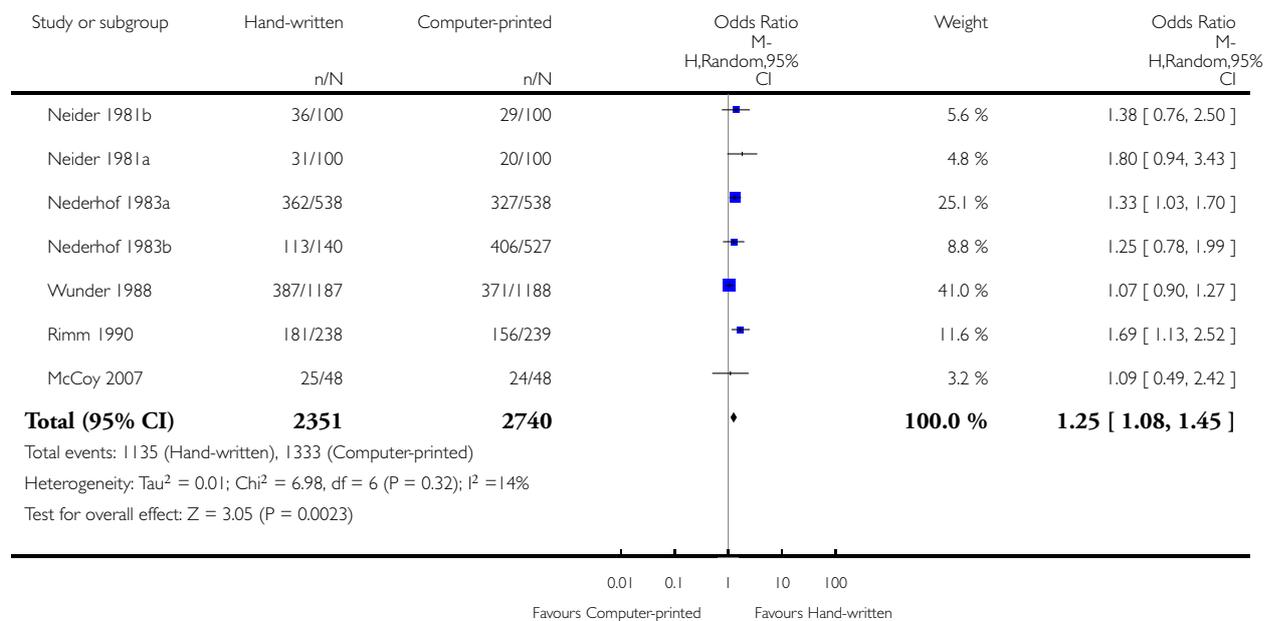


Analysis 16.2. Comparison 16 Hand-written address vs. computer-printed , Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 16 Hand-written address vs. computer-printed

Outcome: 2 Final response

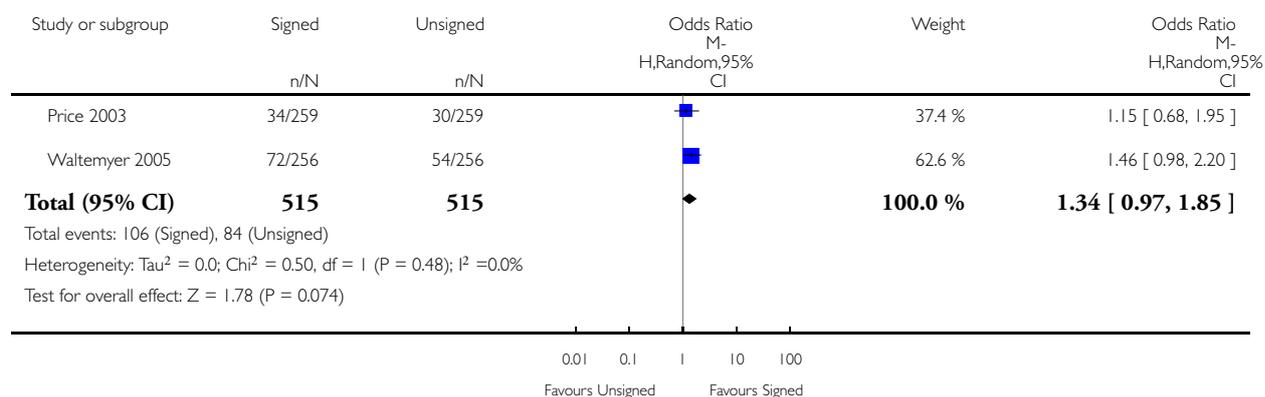


Analysis 17.2. Comparison 17 Signed vs. unsigned, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 17 Signed vs. unsigned

Outcome: 2 Final response

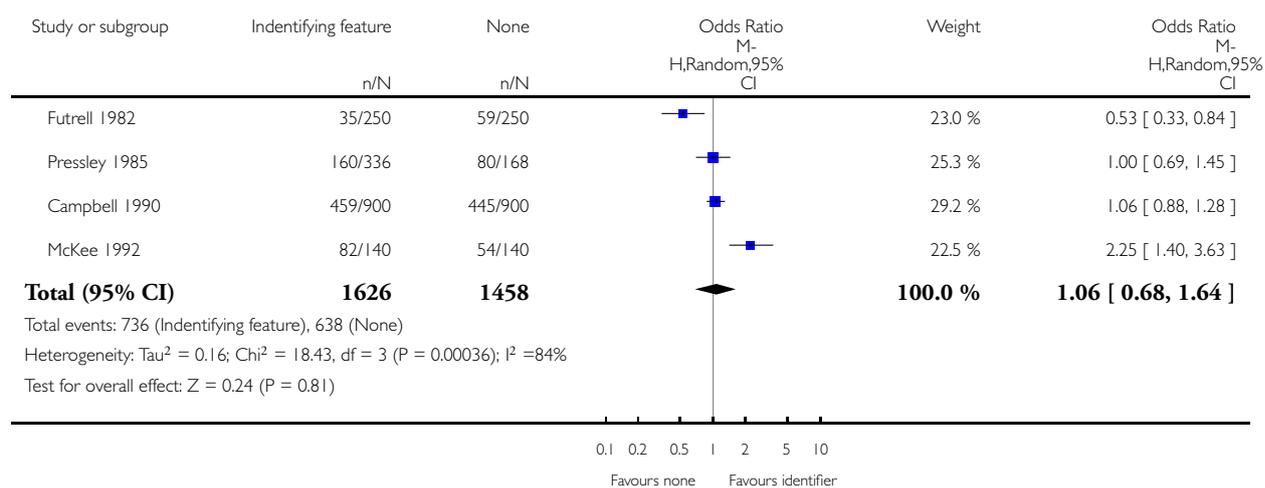


Analysis 18.1. Comparison 18 Identifying feature on return vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 18 Identifying feature on return vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

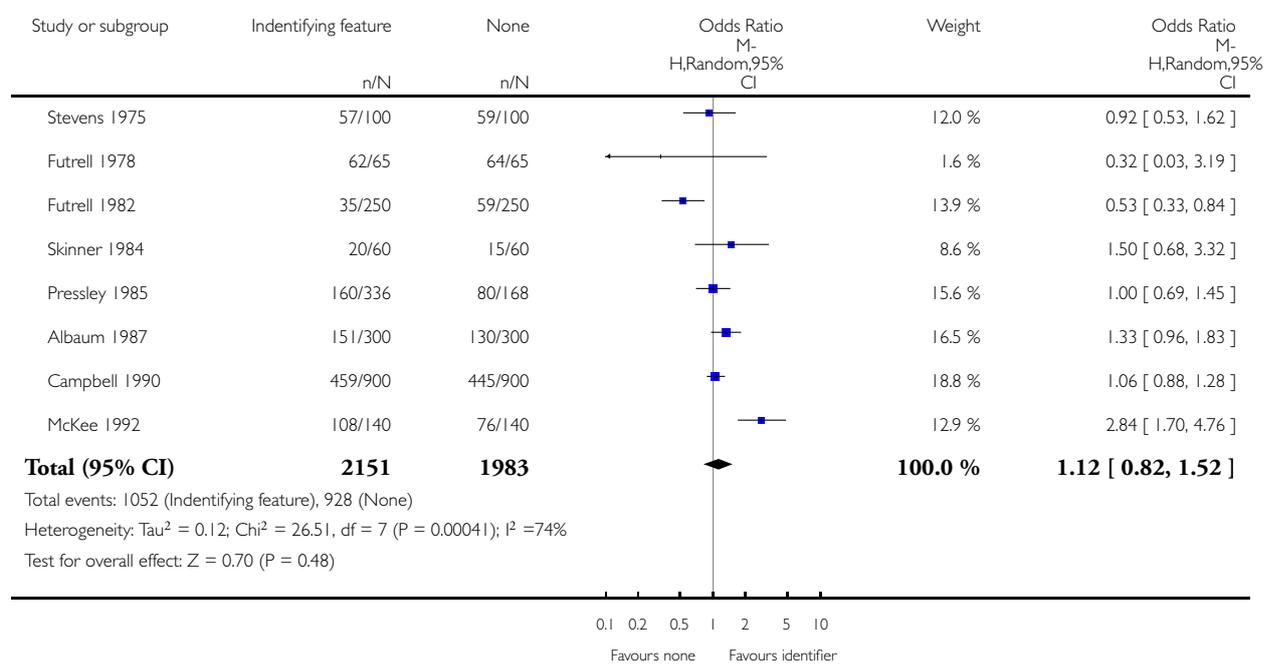


Analysis 18.2. Comparison 18 Identifying feature on return vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 18 Identifying feature on return vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

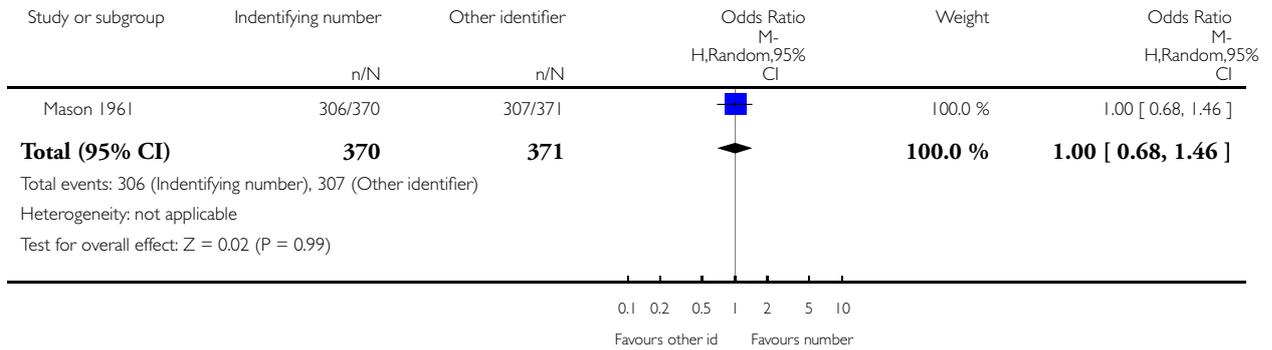


Analysis 19.1. Comparison 19 Identifying number on return vs. other identifier, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 19 Identifying number on return vs. other identifier

Outcome: 1 First response

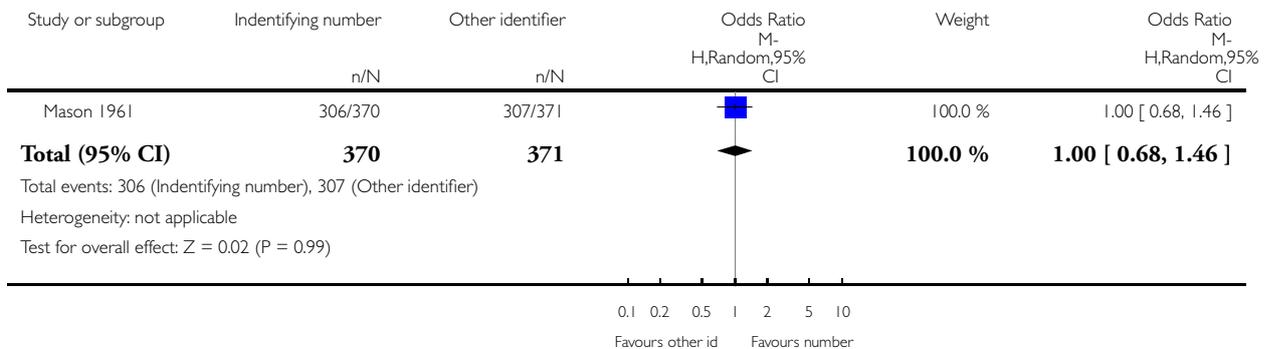


Analysis 19.2. Comparison 19 Identifying number on return vs. other identifier, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 19 Identifying number on return vs. other identifier

Outcome: 2 Final response

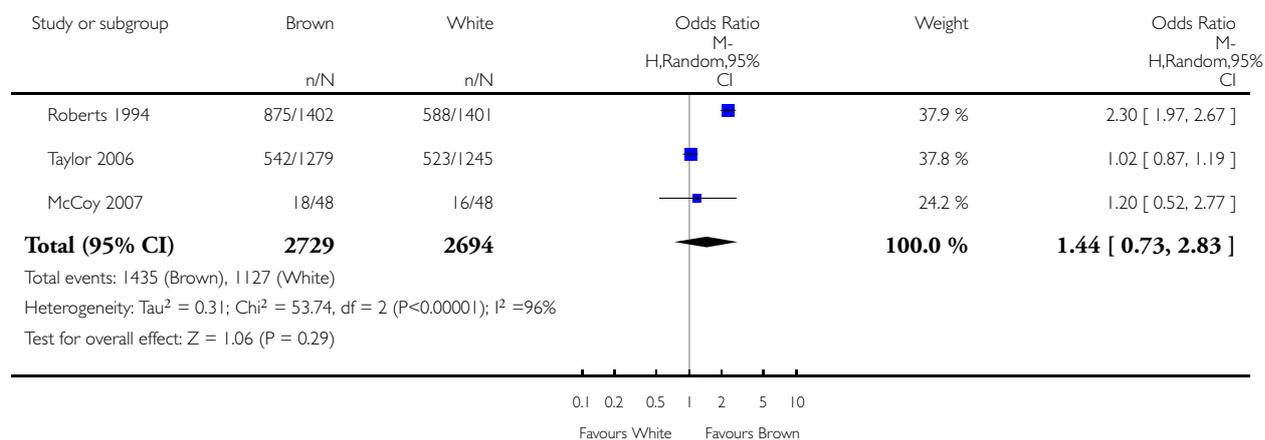


Analysis 20.1. Comparison 20 Brown vs. white envelope, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 20 Brown vs. white envelope

Outcome: 1 First response

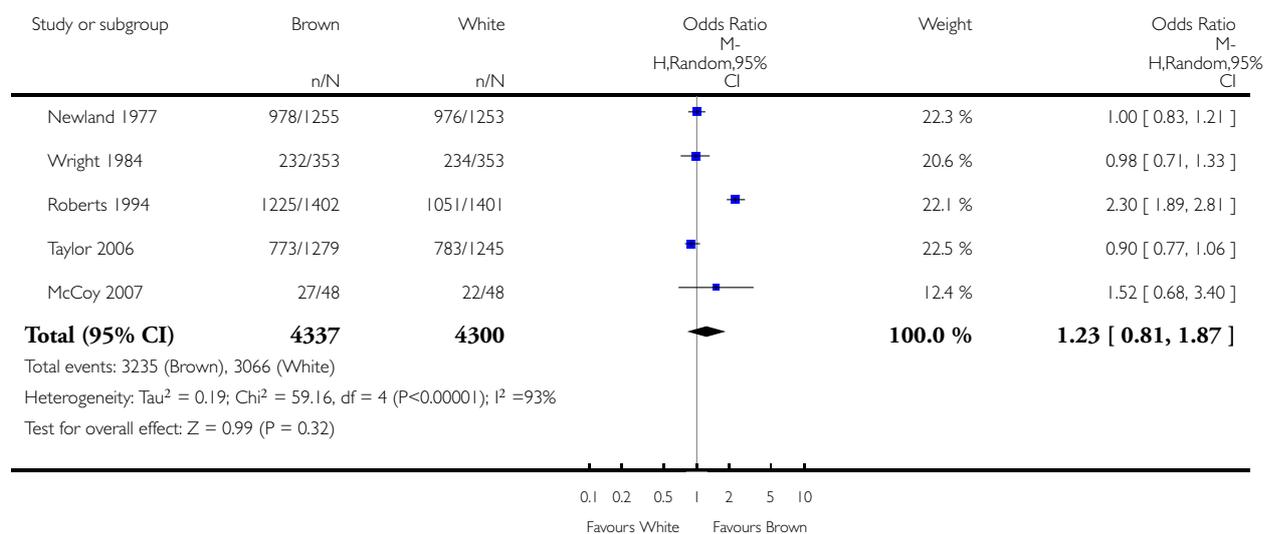


Analysis 20.2. Comparison 20 Brown vs. white envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 20 Brown vs. white envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

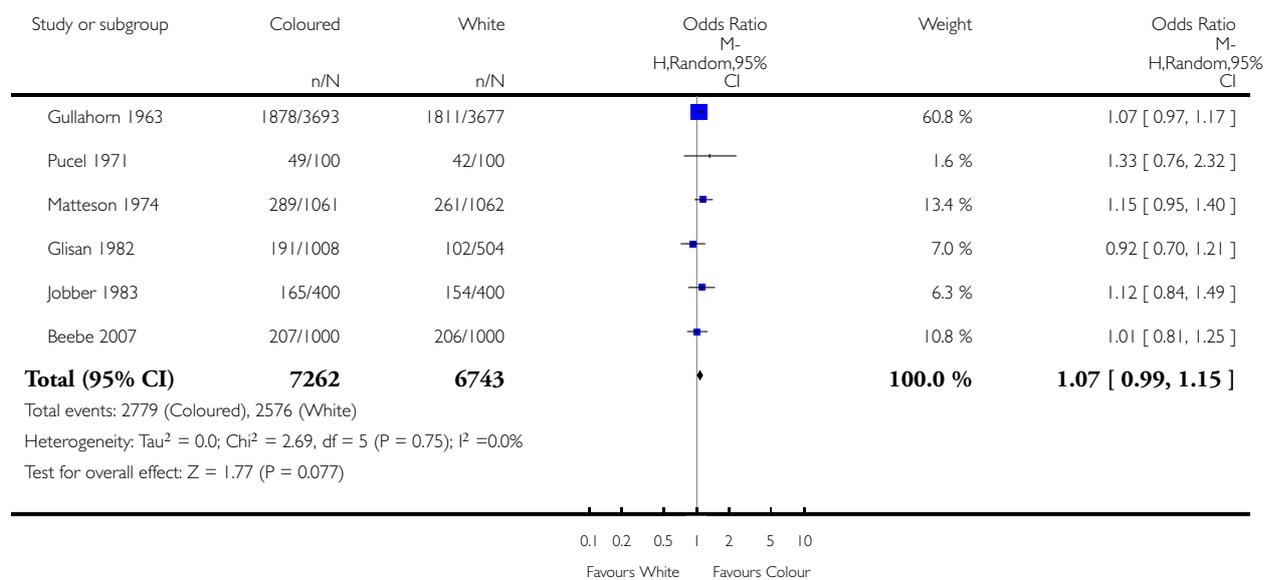


Analysis 21.1. Comparison 21 Coloured vs. white questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 21 Coloured vs. white questionnaire

Outcome: 1 First response

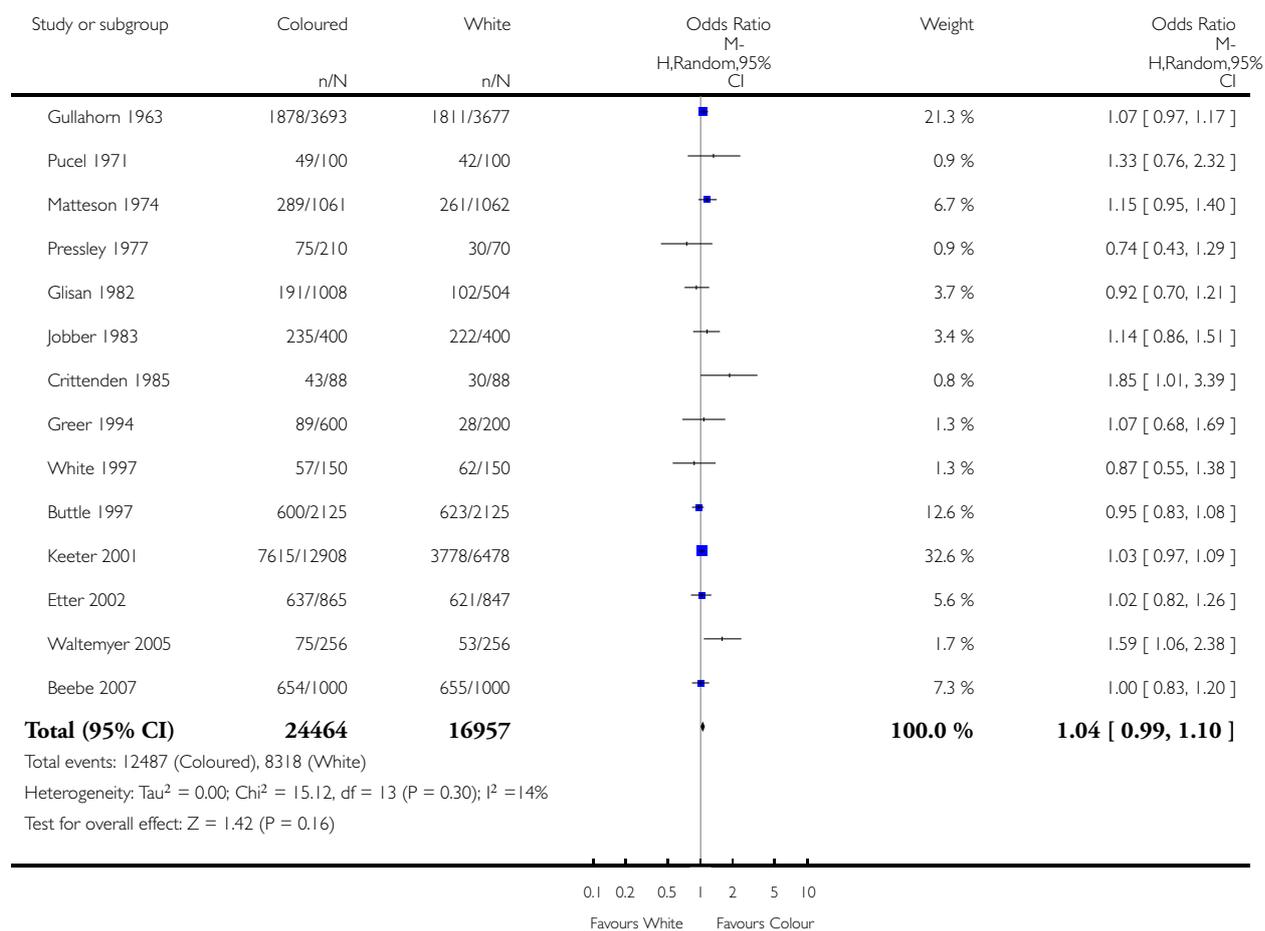


Analysis 21.2. Comparison 21 Coloured vs. white questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 21 Coloured vs. white questionnaire

Outcome: 2 Final response

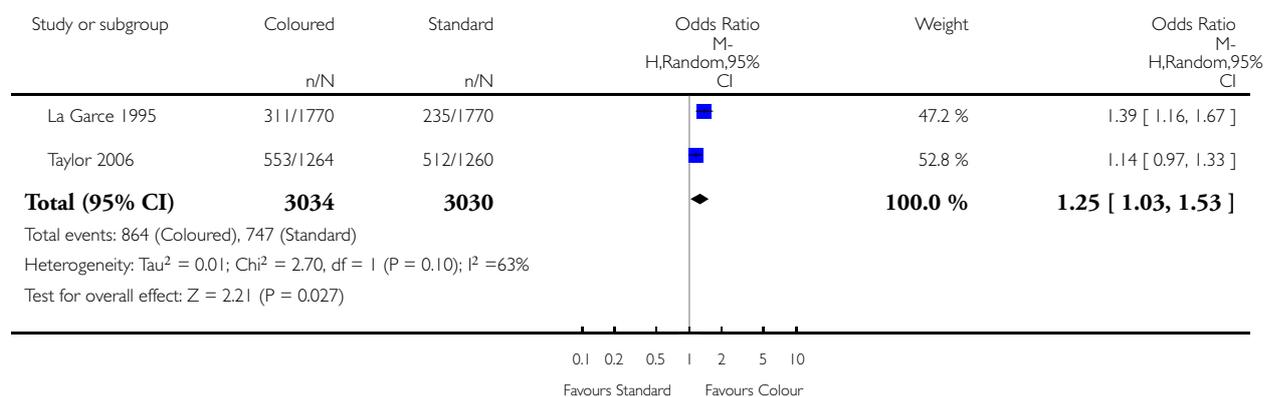


Analysis 22.1. Comparison 22 Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 22 Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink

Outcome: 1 First response

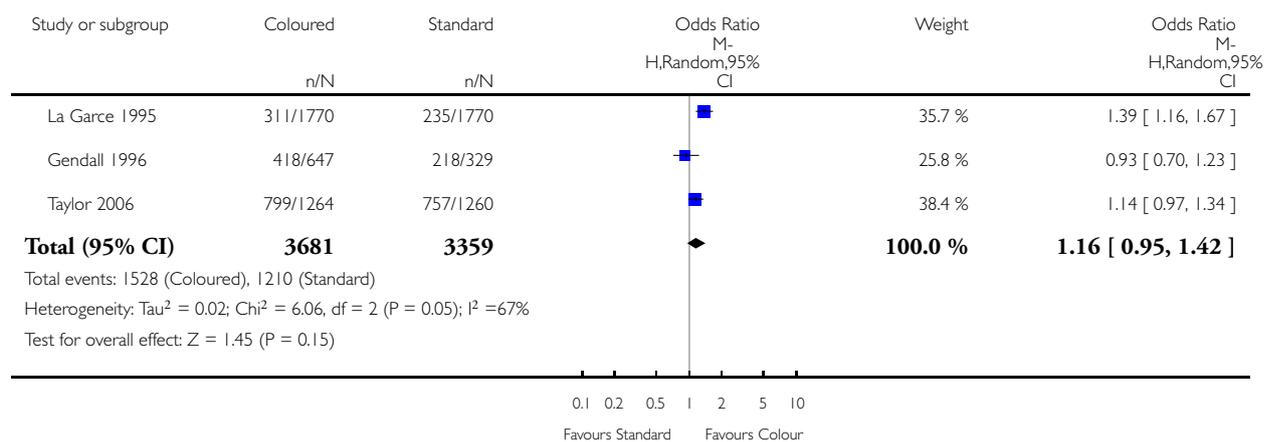


Analysis 22.2. Comparison 22 Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 22 Coloured vs. standard (black/blue) ink

Outcome: 2 Final response

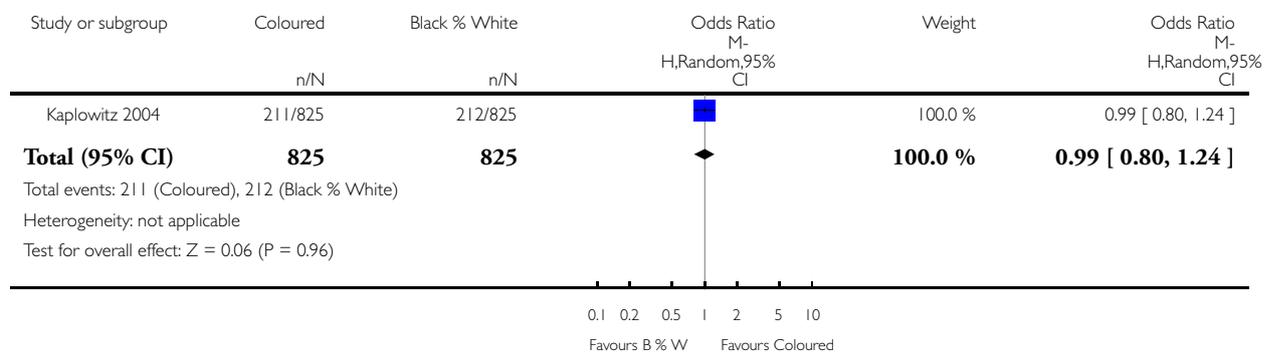


Analysis 23.1. Comparison 23 Coloured vs. black & white letterhead, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 23 Coloured vs. black % white letterhead

Outcome: 1 First response

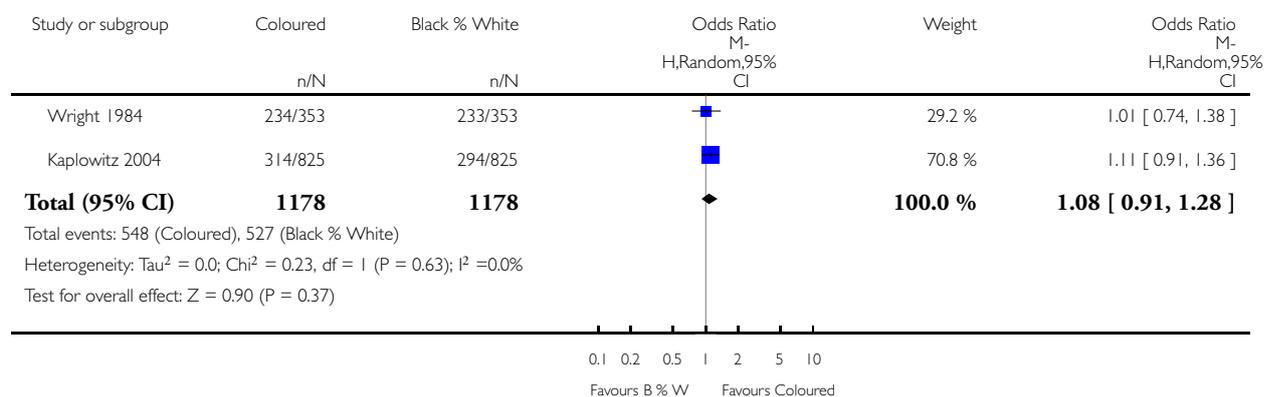


Analysis 23.2. Comparison 23 Coloured vs. black & white letterhead, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 23 Coloured vs. black % white letterhead

Outcome: 2 Final response

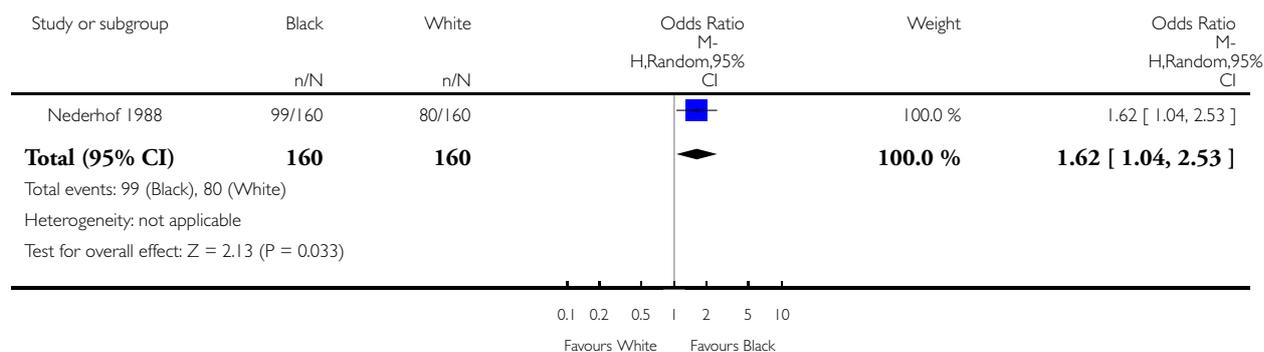


Analysis 24.2. Comparison 24 Illustration on cover of q'aire largely in black vs. largely in white, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 24 Illustration on cover of q'aire largely in black vs. largely in white

Outcome: 2 Final response

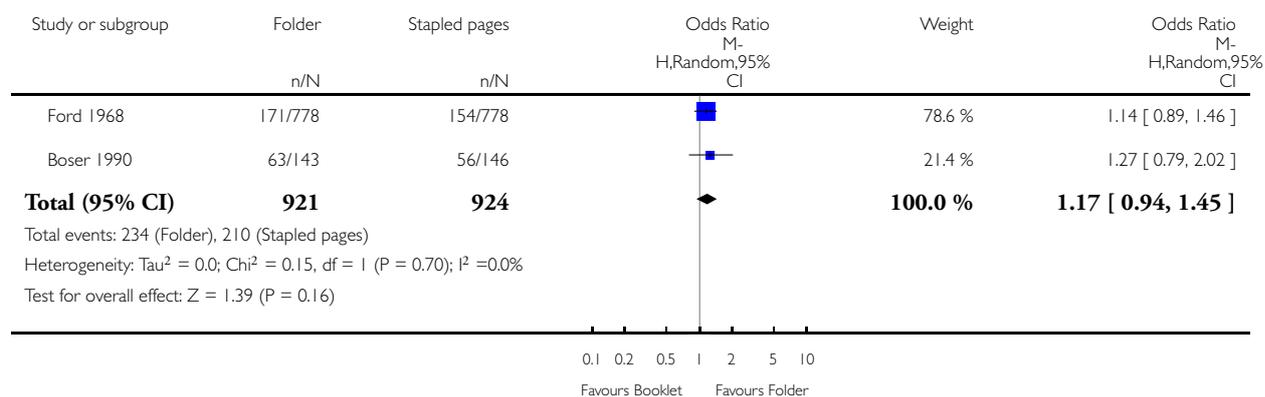


Analysis 25.1. Comparison 25 Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 25 Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages

Outcome: 1 First response

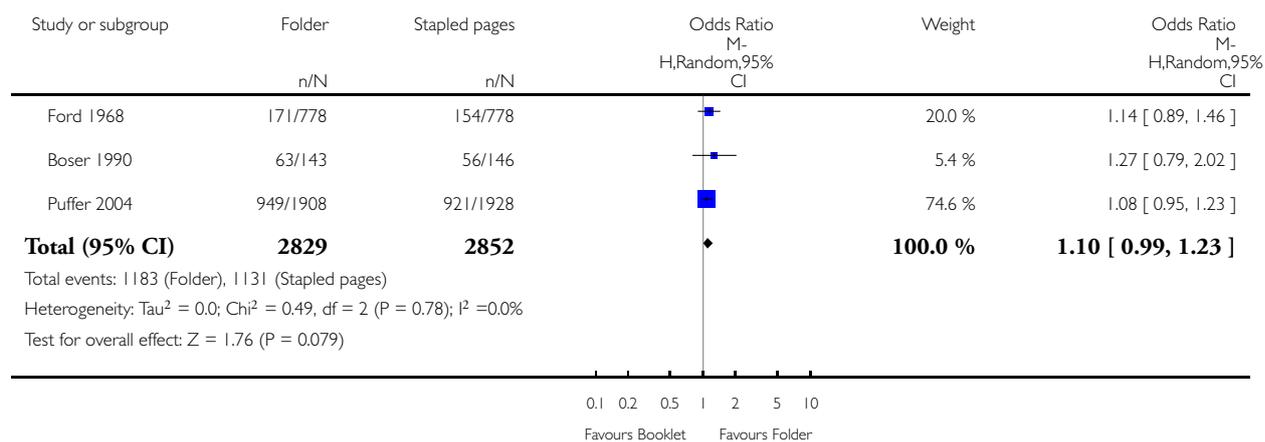


Analysis 25.2. Comparison 25 Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 25 Folder or booklet vs. stapled pages

Outcome: 2 Final response

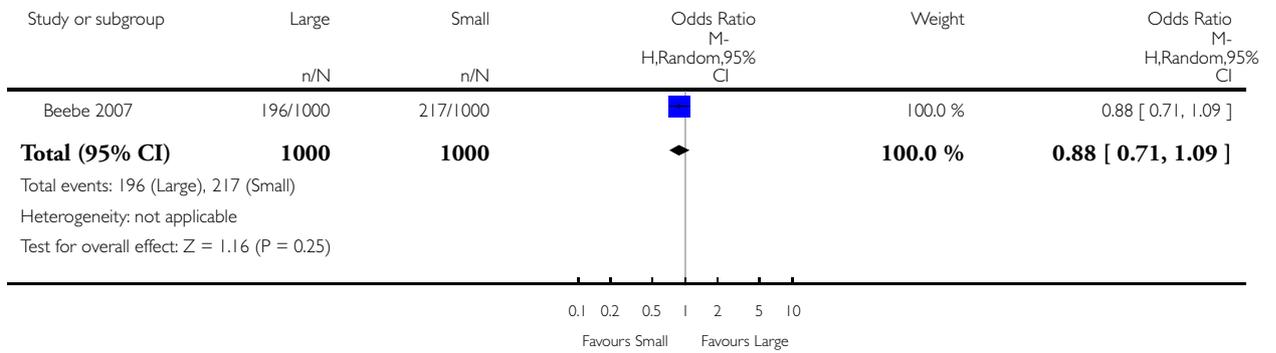


Analysis 26.1. Comparison 26 Large paper size vs. small, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 26 Large paper size vs. small

Outcome: 1 First response

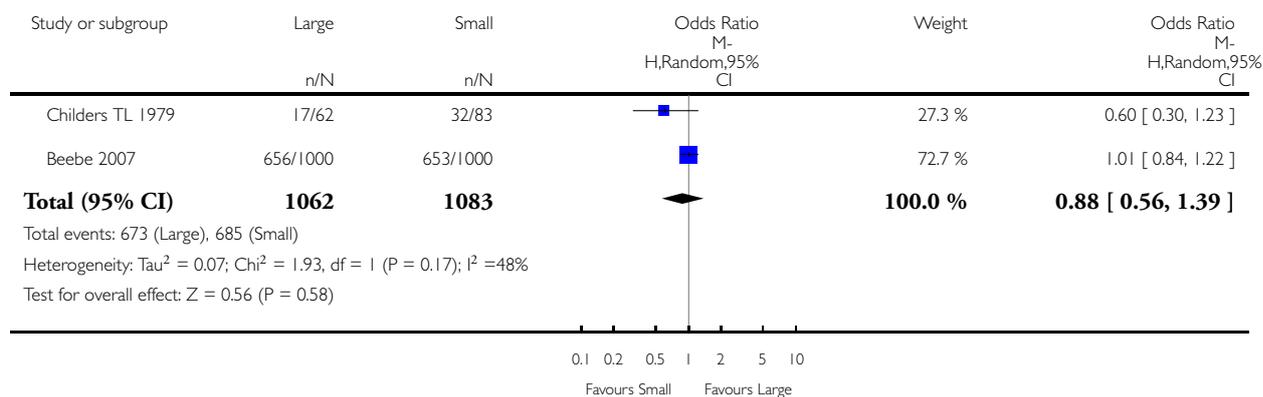


Analysis 26.2. Comparison 26 Large paper size vs. small, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 26 Large paper size vs. small

Outcome: 2 Final response

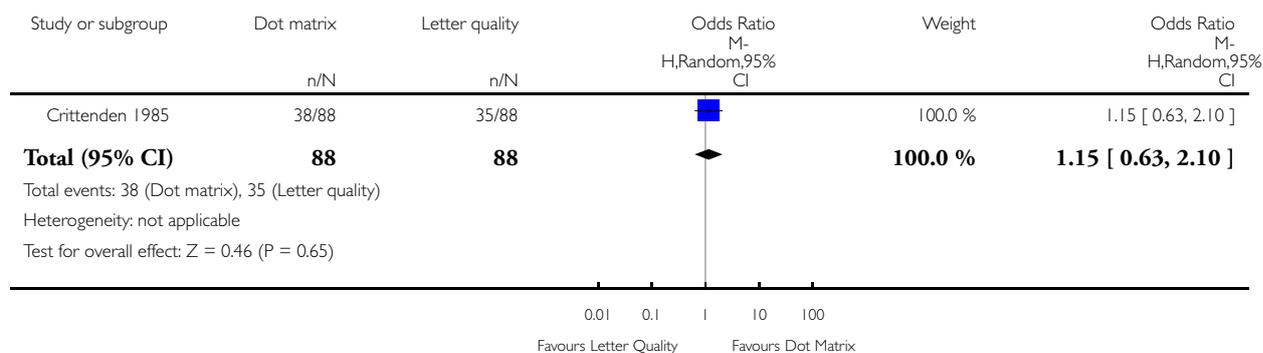


Analysis 27.2. Comparison 27 Dot matrix print vs. letter quality print, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 27 Dot matrix print vs. letter quality print

Outcome: 2 Final response

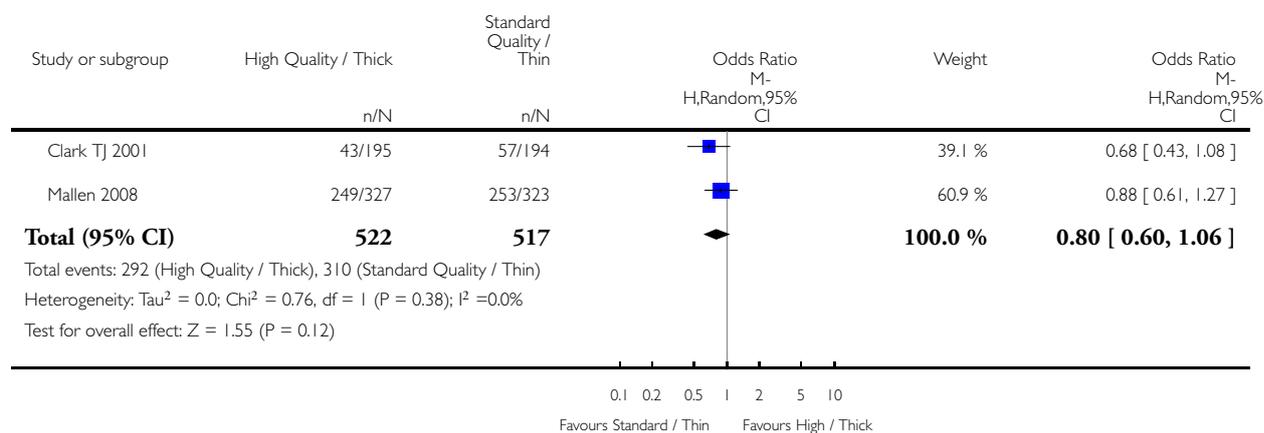


Analysis 28.2. Comparison 28 Questionnaire printed on high vs. standard quality paper or thick paper vs. thin, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 28 Questionnaire printed on high vs. standard quality paper or thick paper vs. thin

Outcome: 2 Final response

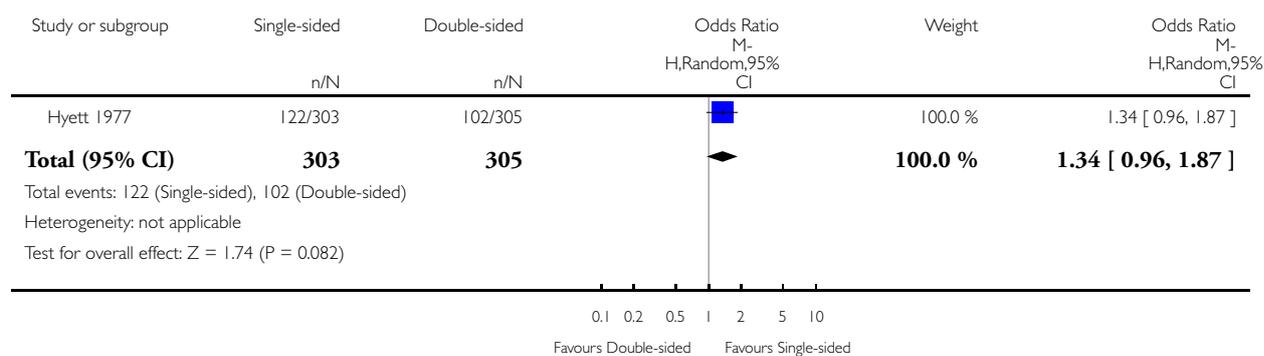


Analysis 29.1. Comparison 29 Single vs. double-sided questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 29 Single vs. double-sided questionnaire

Outcome: 1 First response

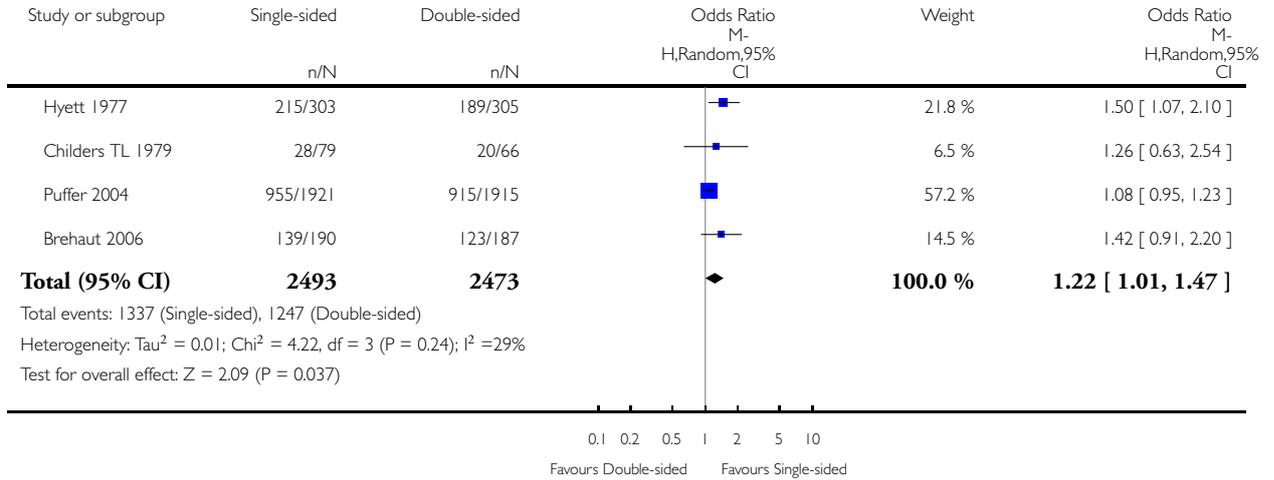


Analysis 29.2. Comparison 29 Single vs. double-sided questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 29 Single vs. double-sided questionnaire

Outcome: 2 Final response

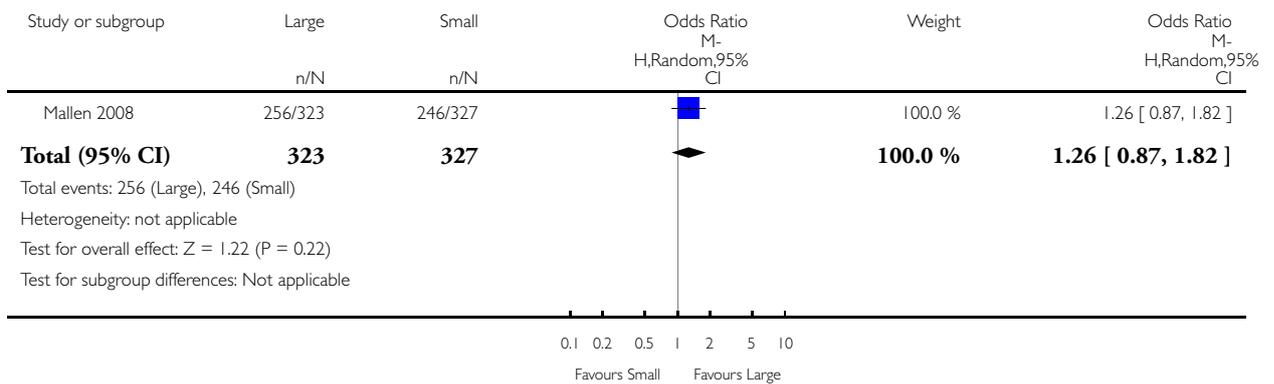


Analysis 30.2. Comparison 30 Large font size vs. small, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 30 Large font size vs. small

Outcome: 2 Final response

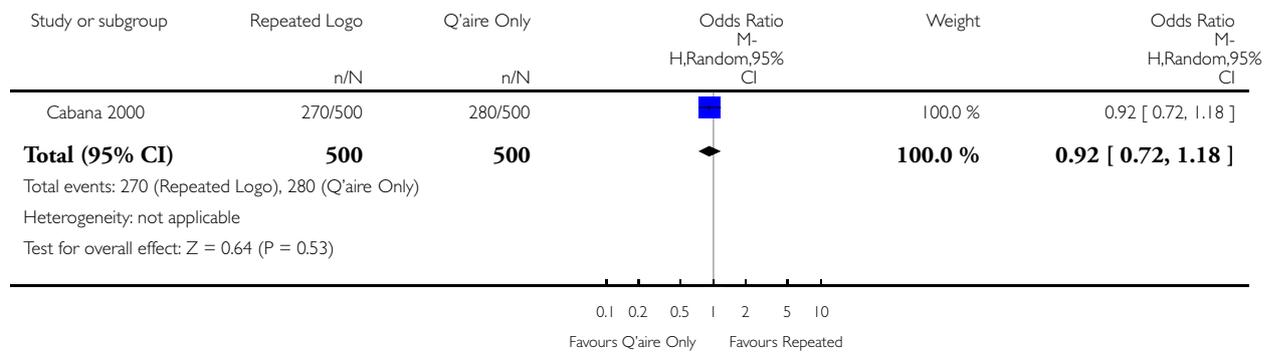


Analysis 31.2. Comparison 31 Study logo on several items in the mailing package vs. on questionnaire only, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 31 Study logo on several items in the mailing package vs. on questionnaire only

Outcome: 2 Final response

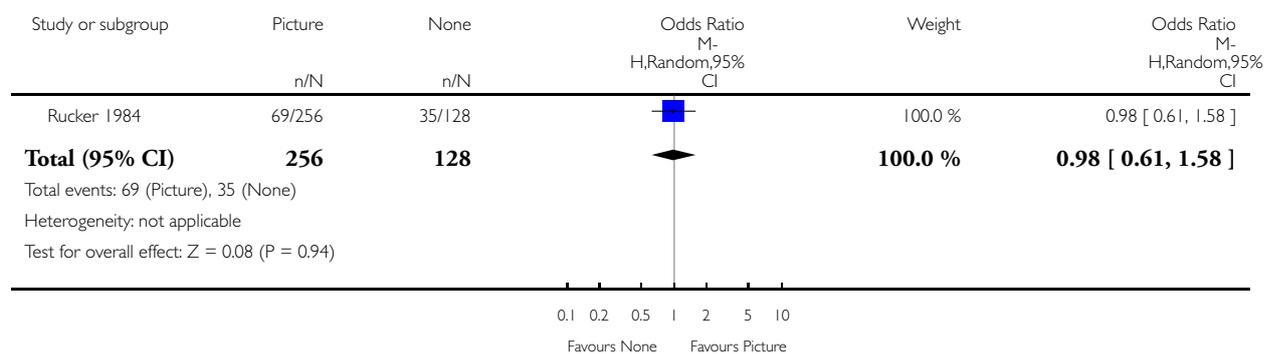


Analysis 32.1. Comparison 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

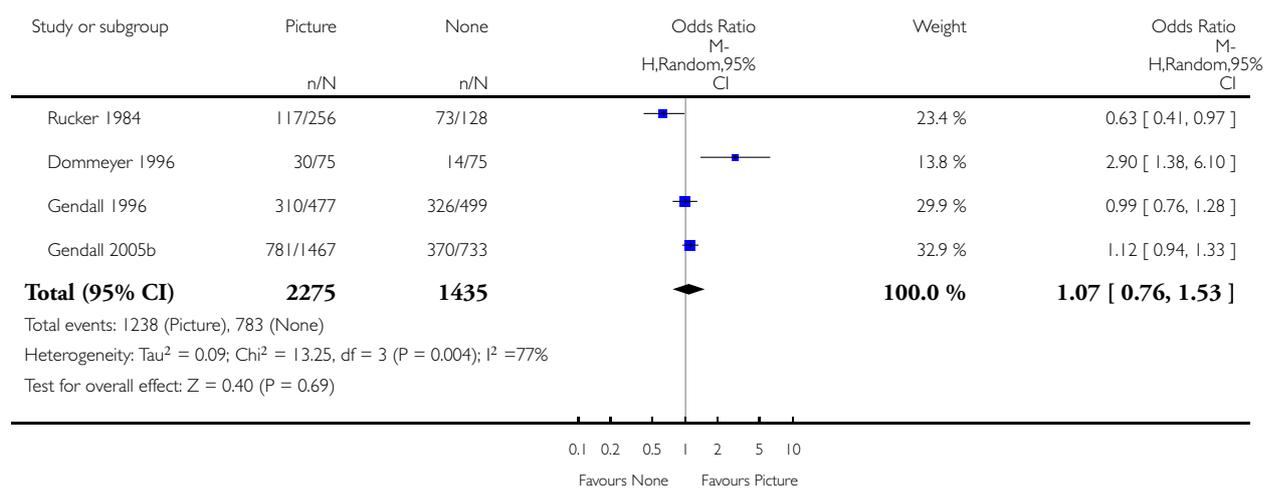


Analysis 32.2. Comparison 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

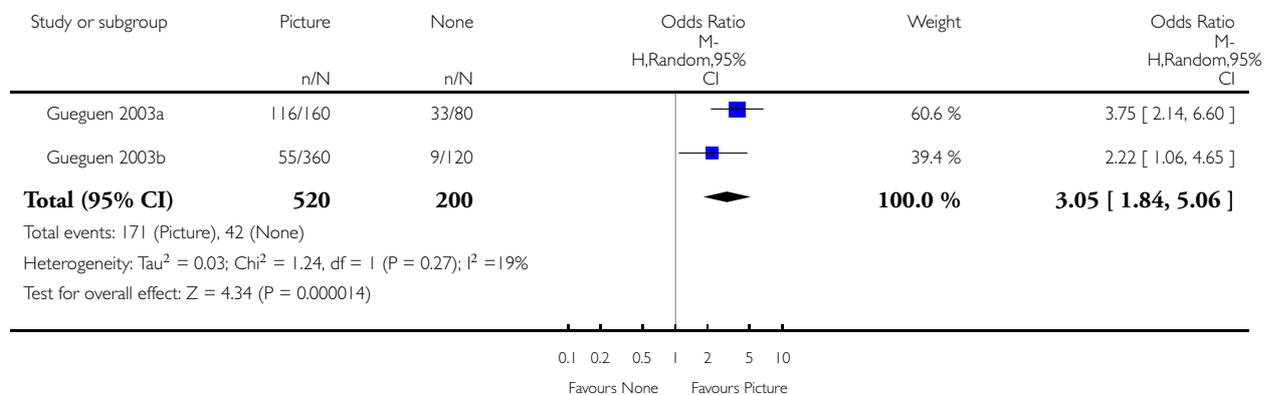


Analysis 32.4. Comparison 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 32 Picture of researcher/images vs. none

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

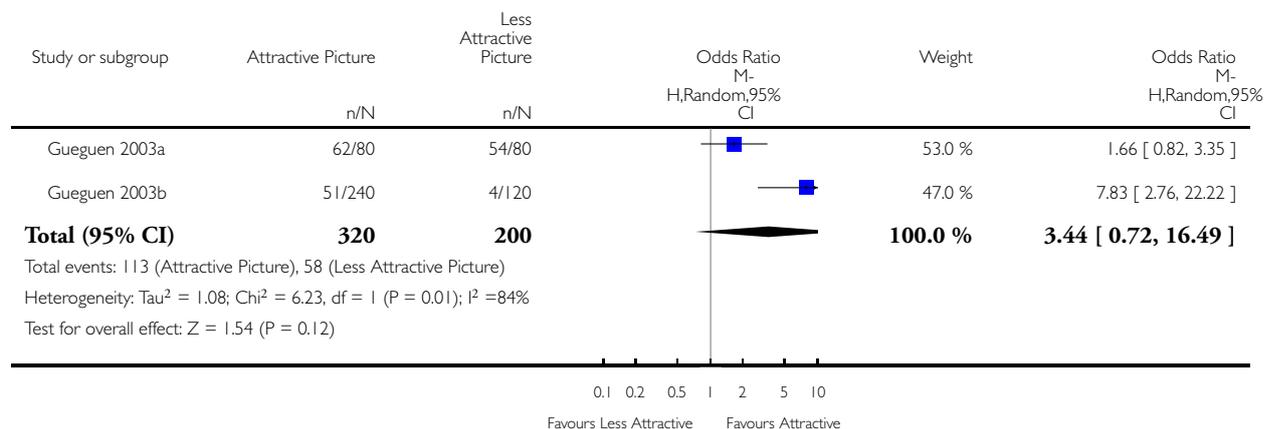


Analysis 33.4. Comparison 33 Attractive vs. less attractive picture, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 33 Attractive vs. less attractive picture

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

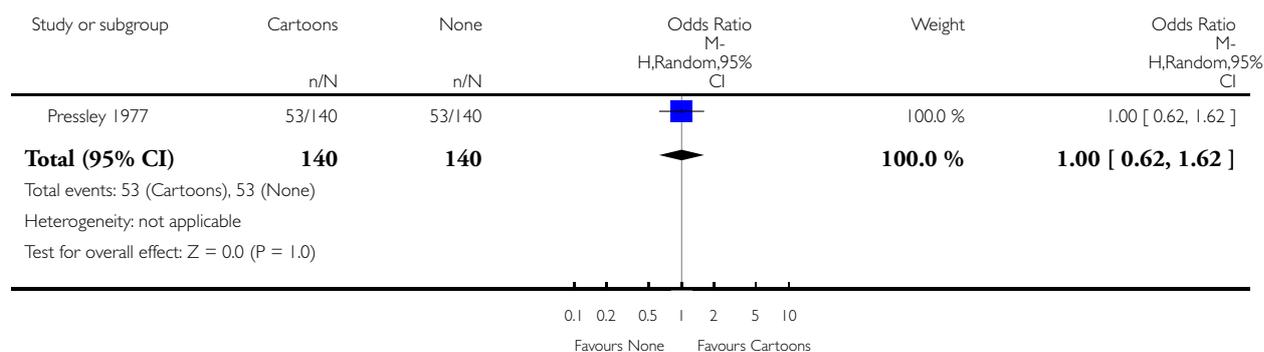


Analysis 34.2. Comparison 34 Cartoons included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 34 Cartoons included vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

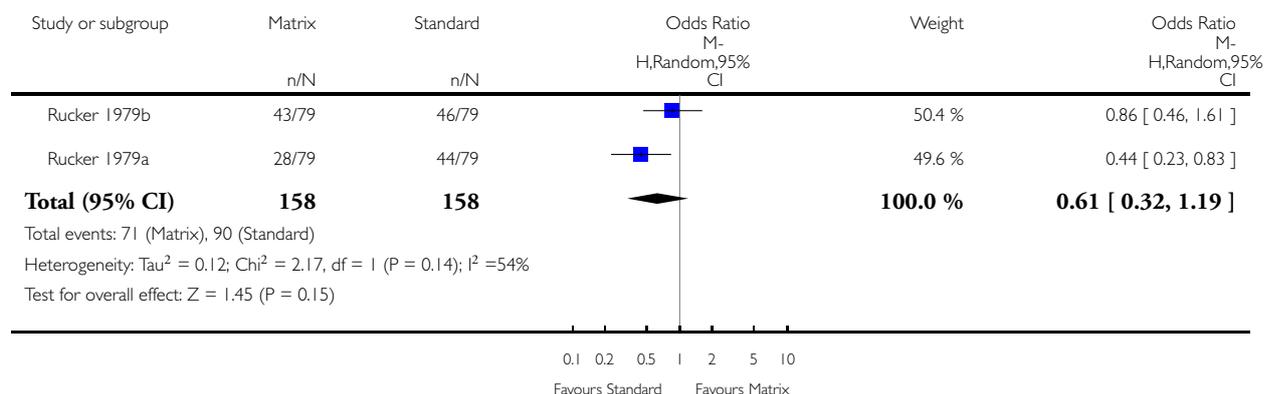


Analysis 35.1. Comparison 35 Matrix vs. standard form, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 35 Matrix vs. standard form

Outcome: 1 First response

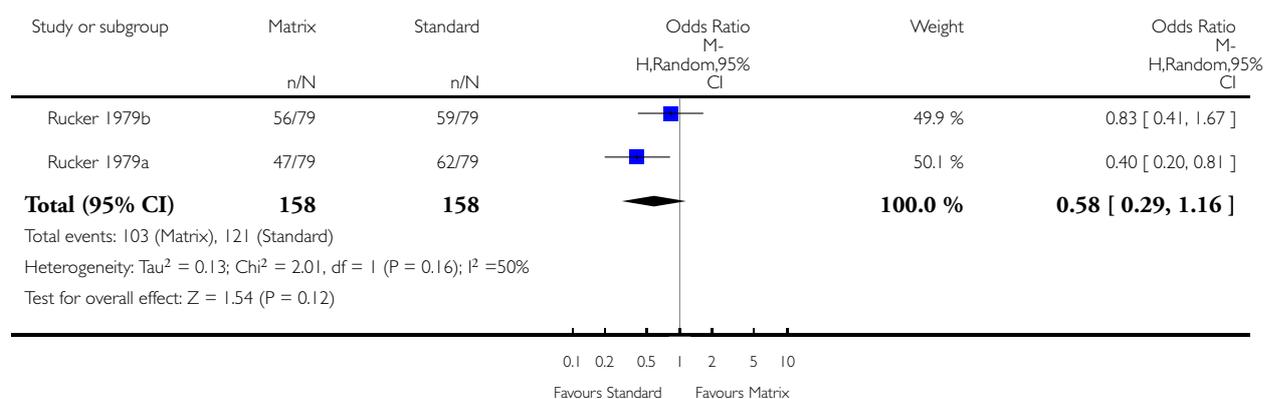


Analysis 35.2. Comparison 35 Matrix vs. standard form, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 35 Matrix vs. standard form

Outcome: 2 Final response

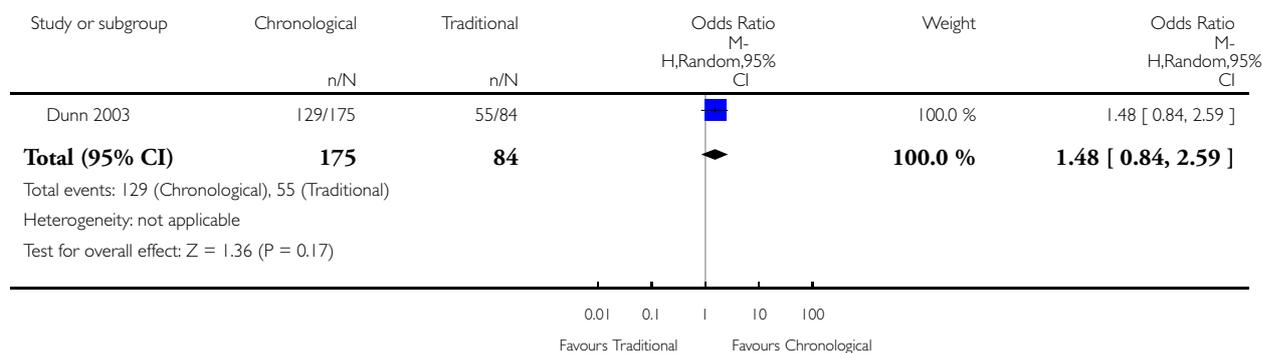


Analysis 36.3. Comparison 36 Questions ordered by time period vs. other order, Outcome 3 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 36 Questions ordered by time period vs. other order

Outcome: 3 Final response

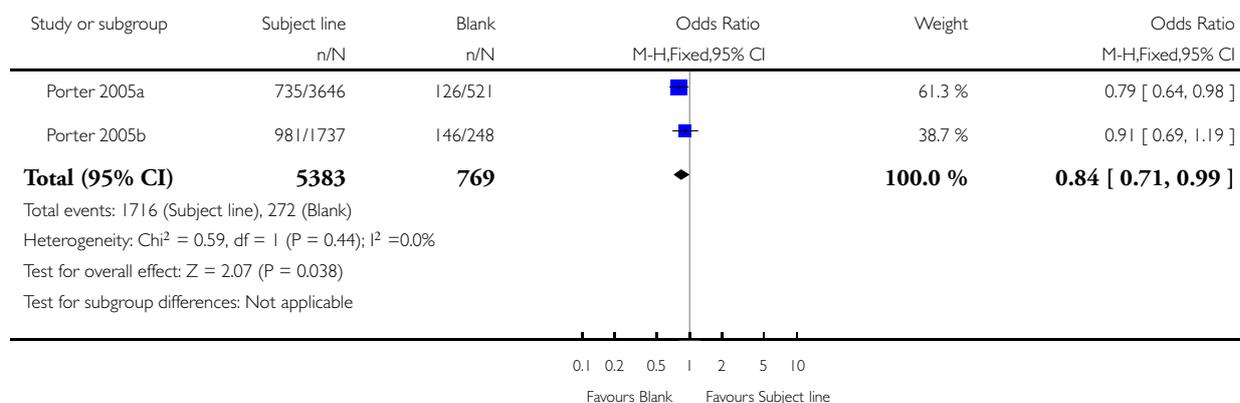


Analysis 37.1. Comparison 37 Subject line vs. blank, Outcome 1 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 37 Subject line vs. blank

Outcome: 1 e - Login

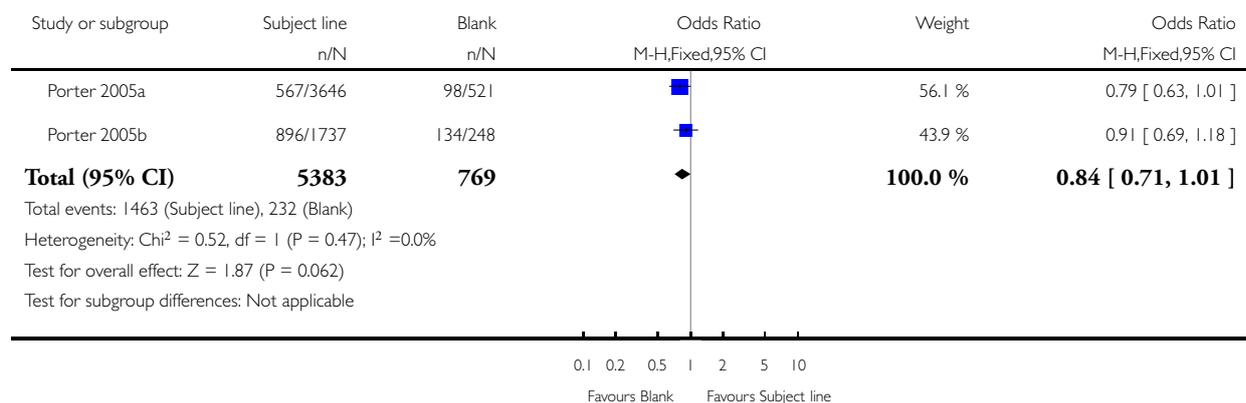


Analysis 37.2. Comparison 37 Subject line vs. blank, Outcome 2 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 37 Subject line vs. blank

Outcome: 2 e - Submission

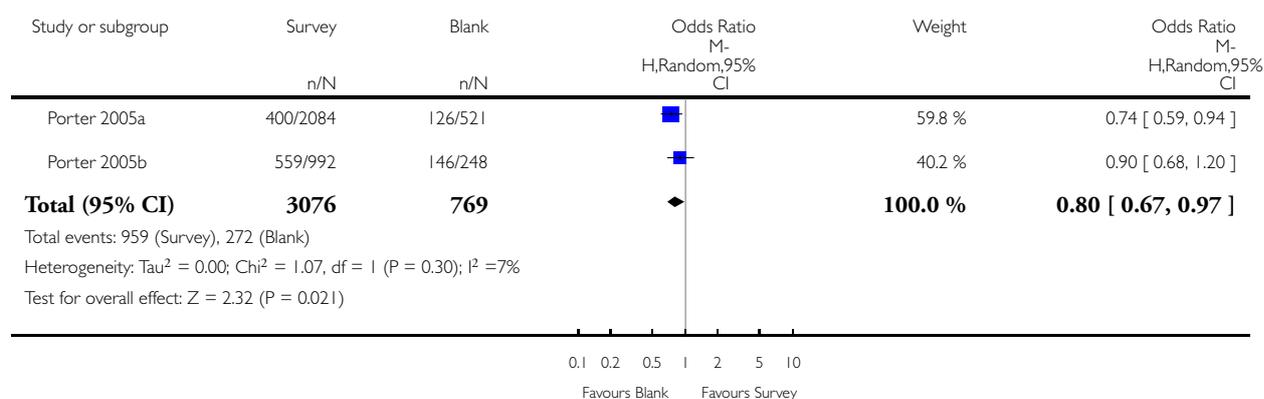


Analysis 38.1. Comparison 38 "Survey" subject line vs. blank, Outcome 1 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 38 "Survey" subject line vs. blank

Outcome: 1 e - Login

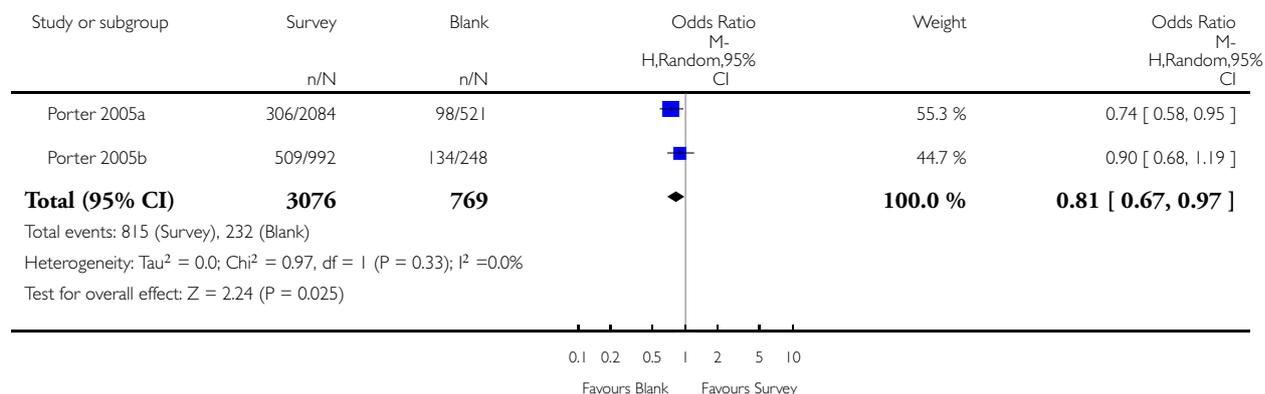


Analysis 38.2. Comparison 38 "Survey" subject line vs. blank, Outcome 2 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 38 "Survey" subject line vs. blank

Outcome: 2 e - Submission

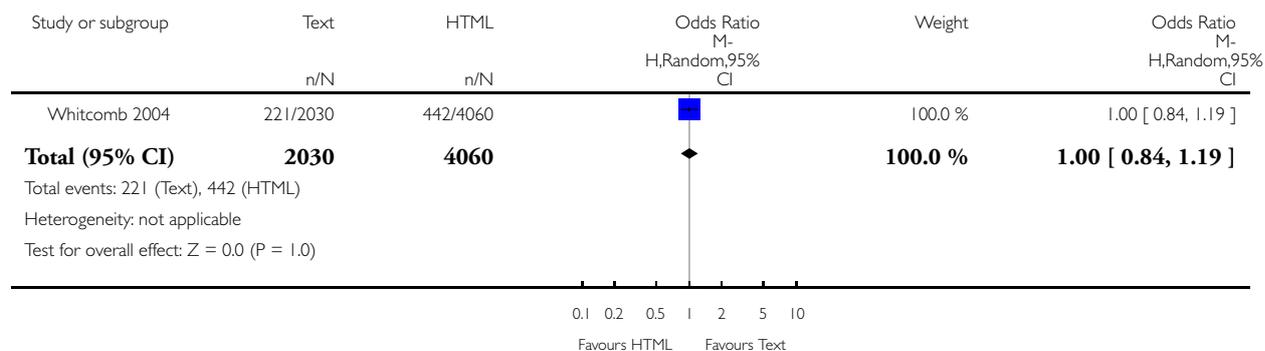


Analysis 39.2. Comparison 39 Text vs. HTML file formats, Outcome 2 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 39 Text vs. HTML file formats

Outcome: 2 e - Submission

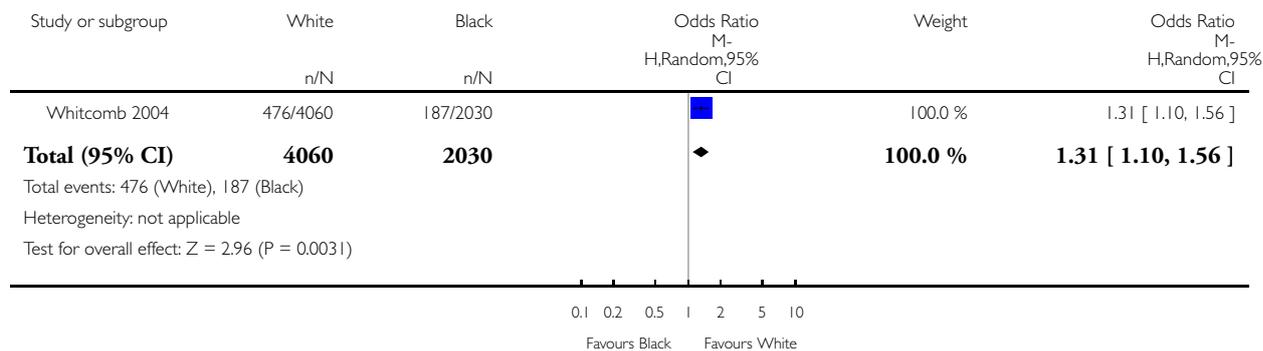


Analysis 40.2. Comparison 40 White background vs. black, Outcome 2 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 40 White background vs. black

Outcome: 2 e - Submission

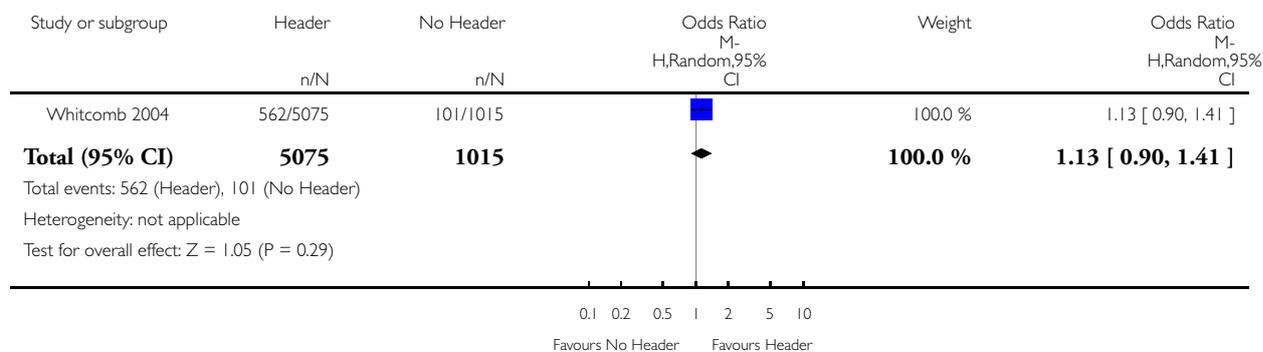


Analysis 41.2. Comparison 41 Header vs. no header, Outcome 2 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 41 Header vs. no header

Outcome: 2 e - Submission

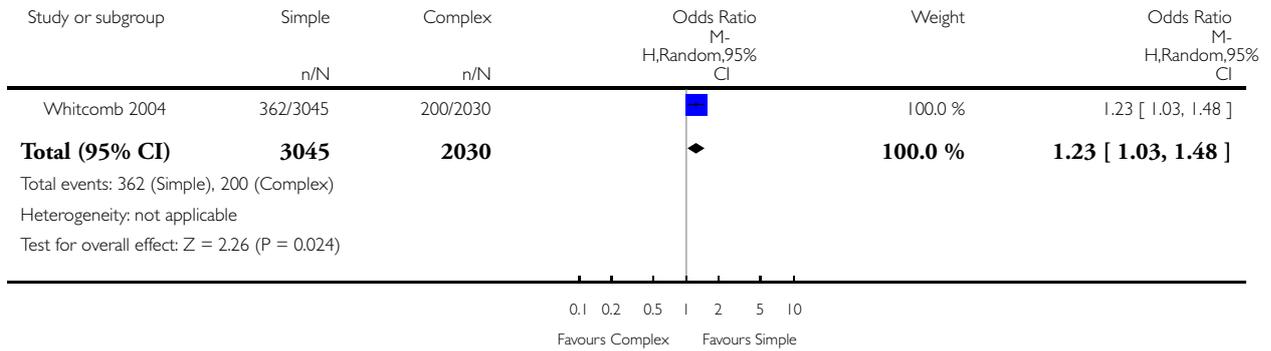


Analysis 42.2. Comparison 42 Simple vs. complex header, Outcome 2 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 42 Simple vs. complex header

Outcome: 2 e - Submission

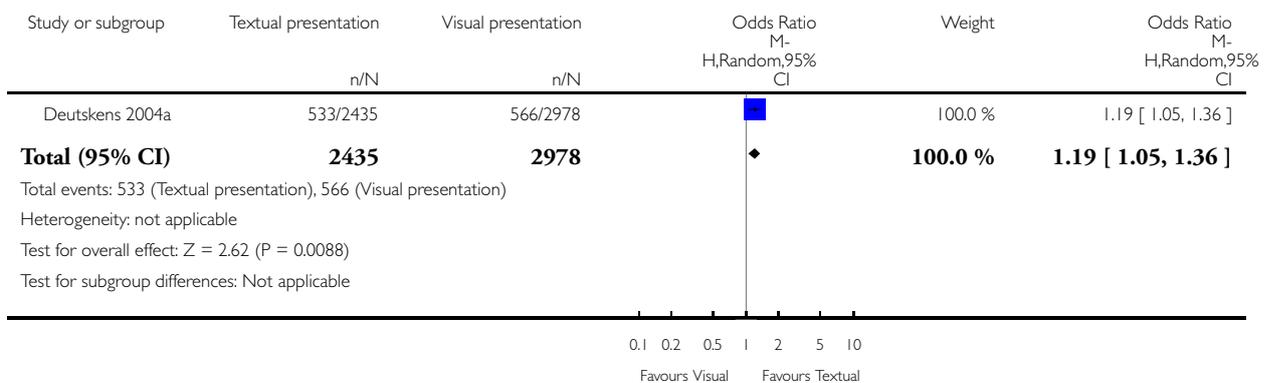


Analysis 43.4. Comparison 43 Textual presentation of response categories vs. visual presentation, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 43 Textual presentation of response categories vs. visual presentation

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

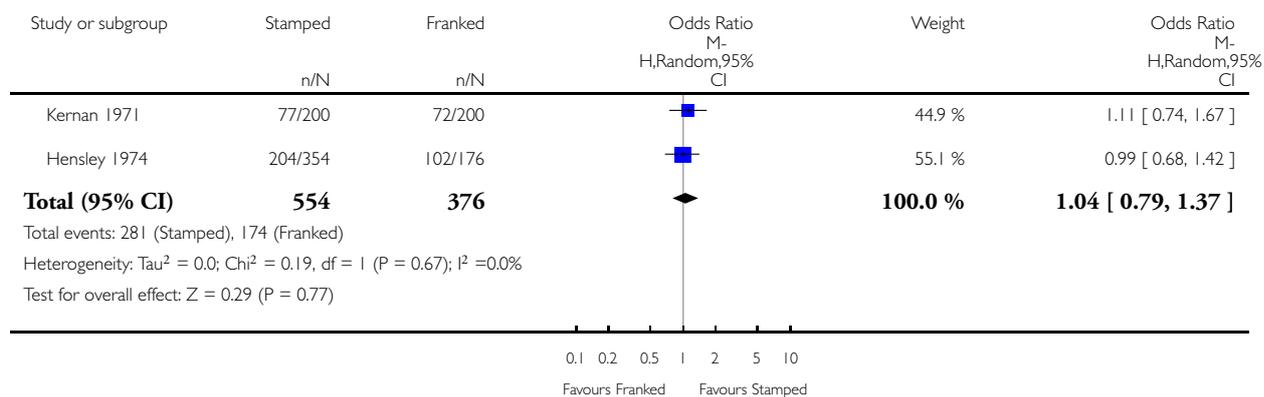


Analysis 44.1. Comparison 44 Stamped vs. franked outward envelope, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 44 Stamped vs. franked outward envelope

Outcome: 1 First response

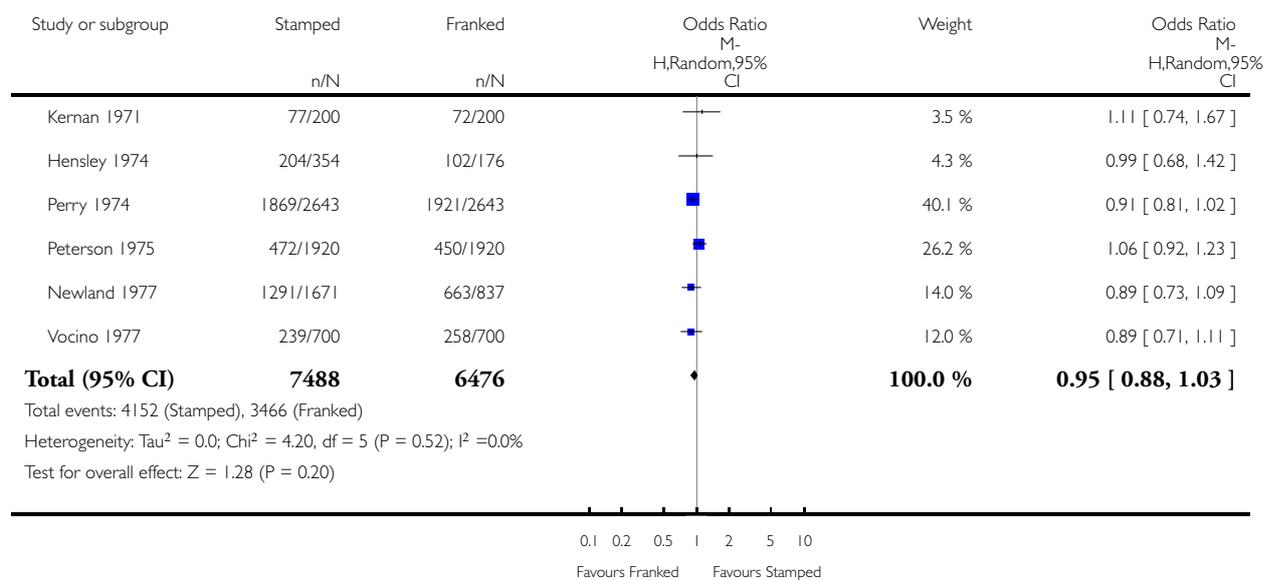


Analysis 44.2. Comparison 44 Stamped vs. franked outward envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 44 Stamped vs. franked outward envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

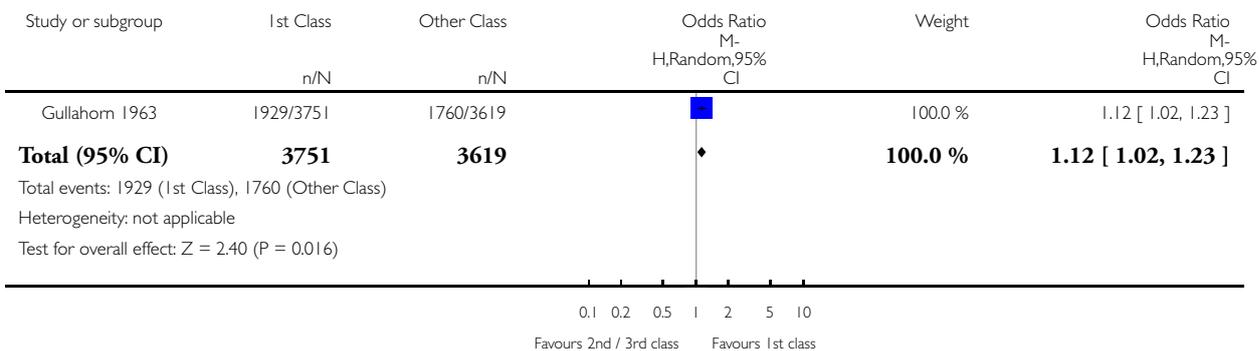


Analysis 45.1. Comparison 45 First vs. second/third class outward mailing, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 45 First vs. second/third class outward mailing

Outcome: 1 First response

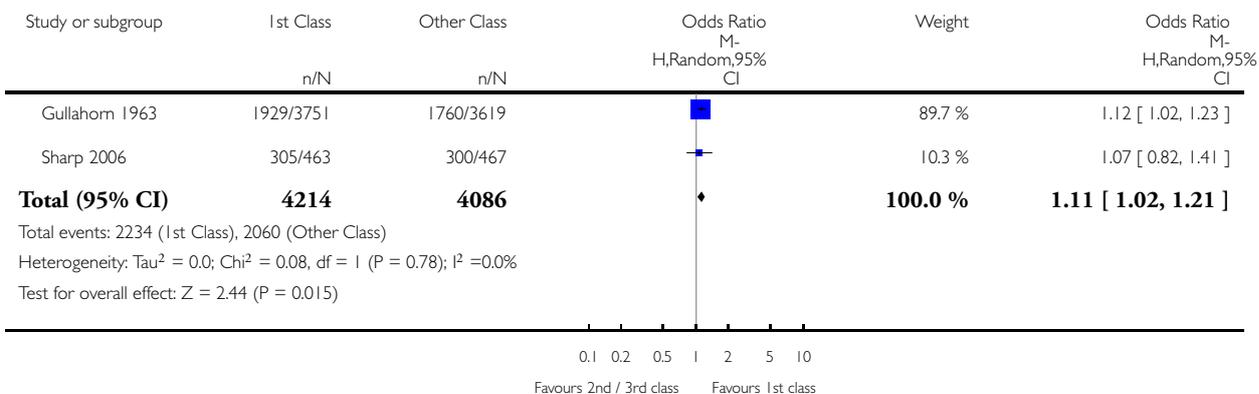


Analysis 45.2. Comparison 45 First vs. second/third class outward mailing, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 45 First vs. second/third class outward mailing

Outcome: 2 Final response

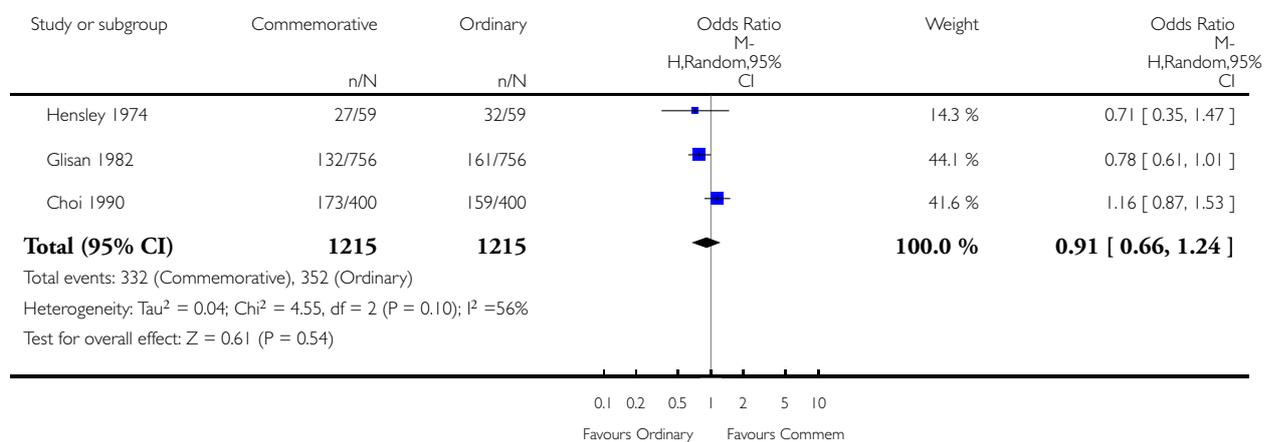


Analysis 46.1. Comparison 46 Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 46 Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope

Outcome: 1 First response

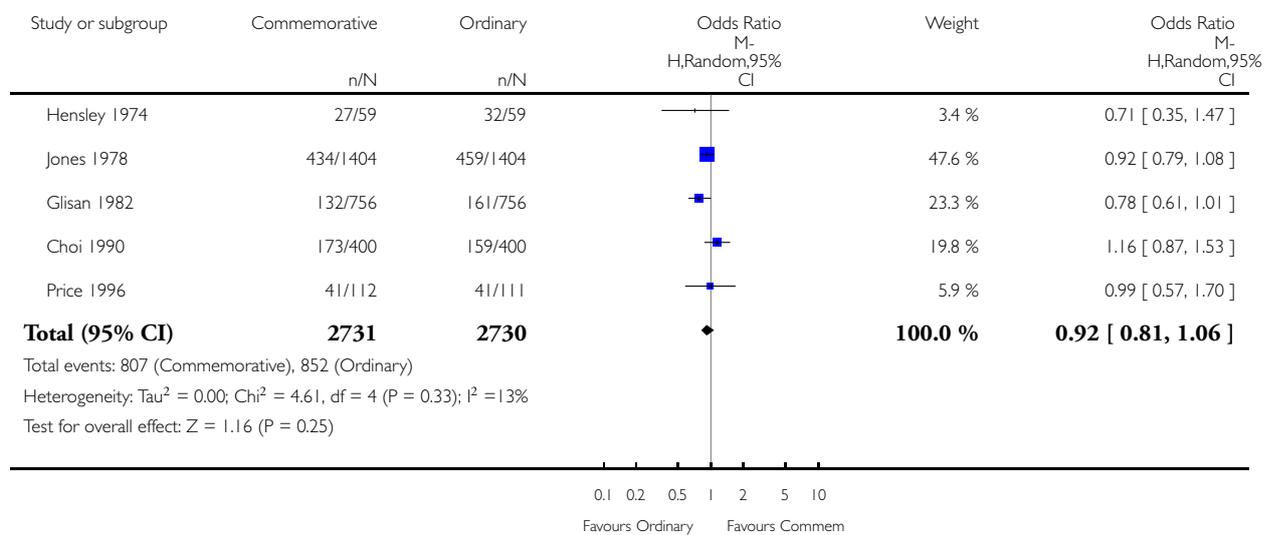


Analysis 46.2. Comparison 46 Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 46 Commemorative/race-specific vs. ordinary stamp on return envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

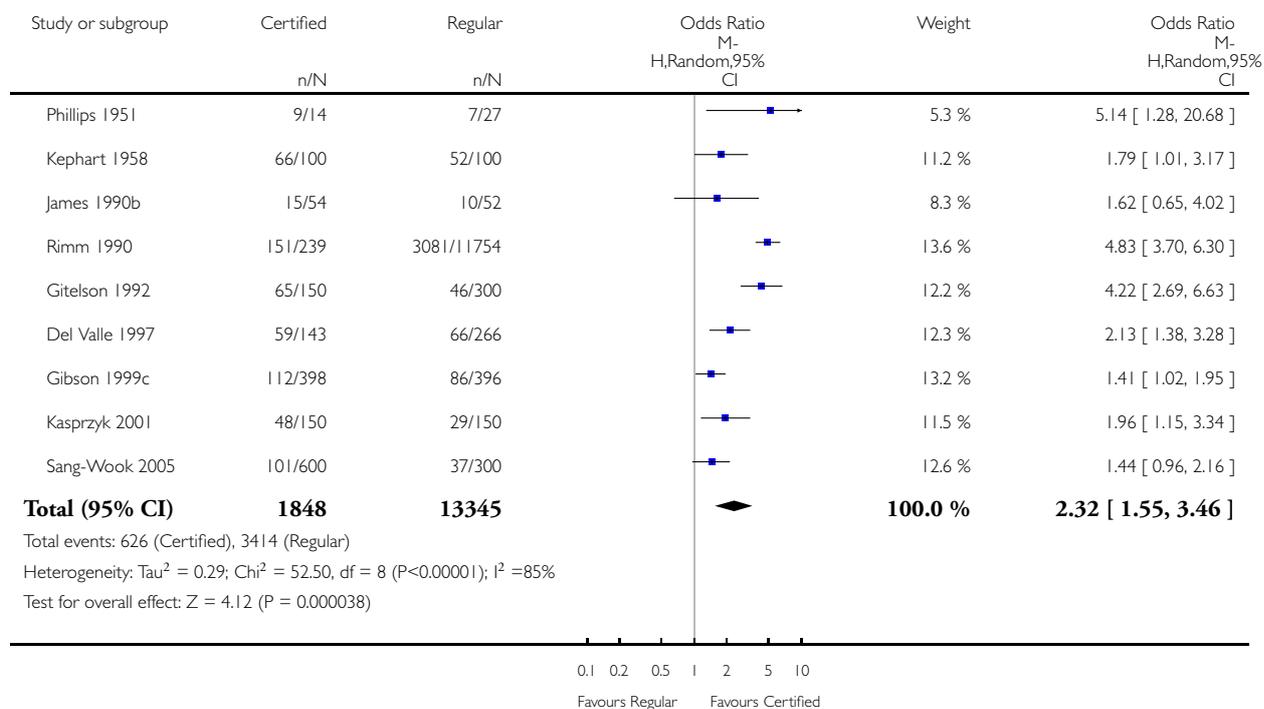


Analysis 47.1. Comparison 47 Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 47 Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing

Outcome: 1 First response

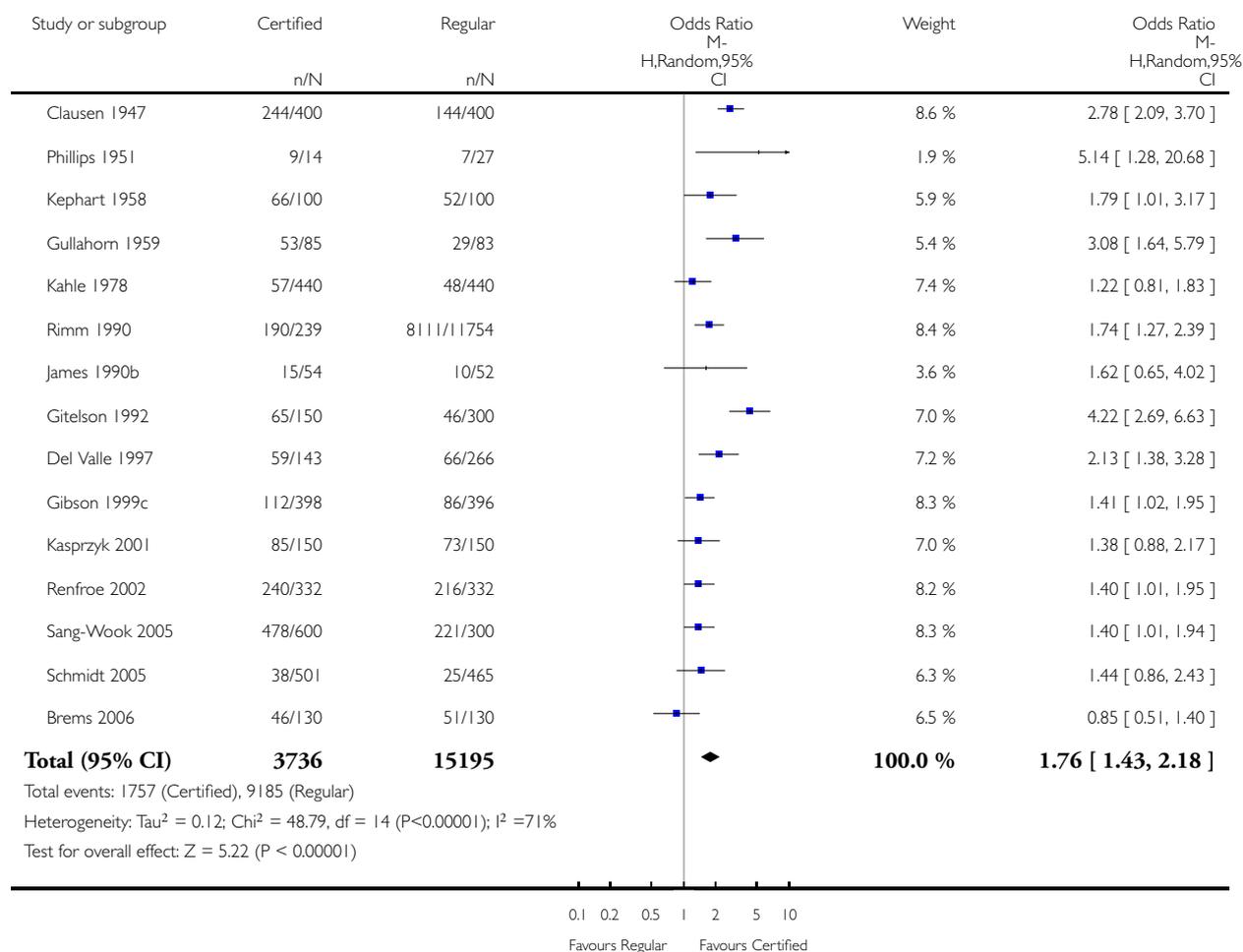


Analysis 47.2. Comparison 47 Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 47 Certified/special delivery vs. regular outward mailing

Outcome: 2 Final response

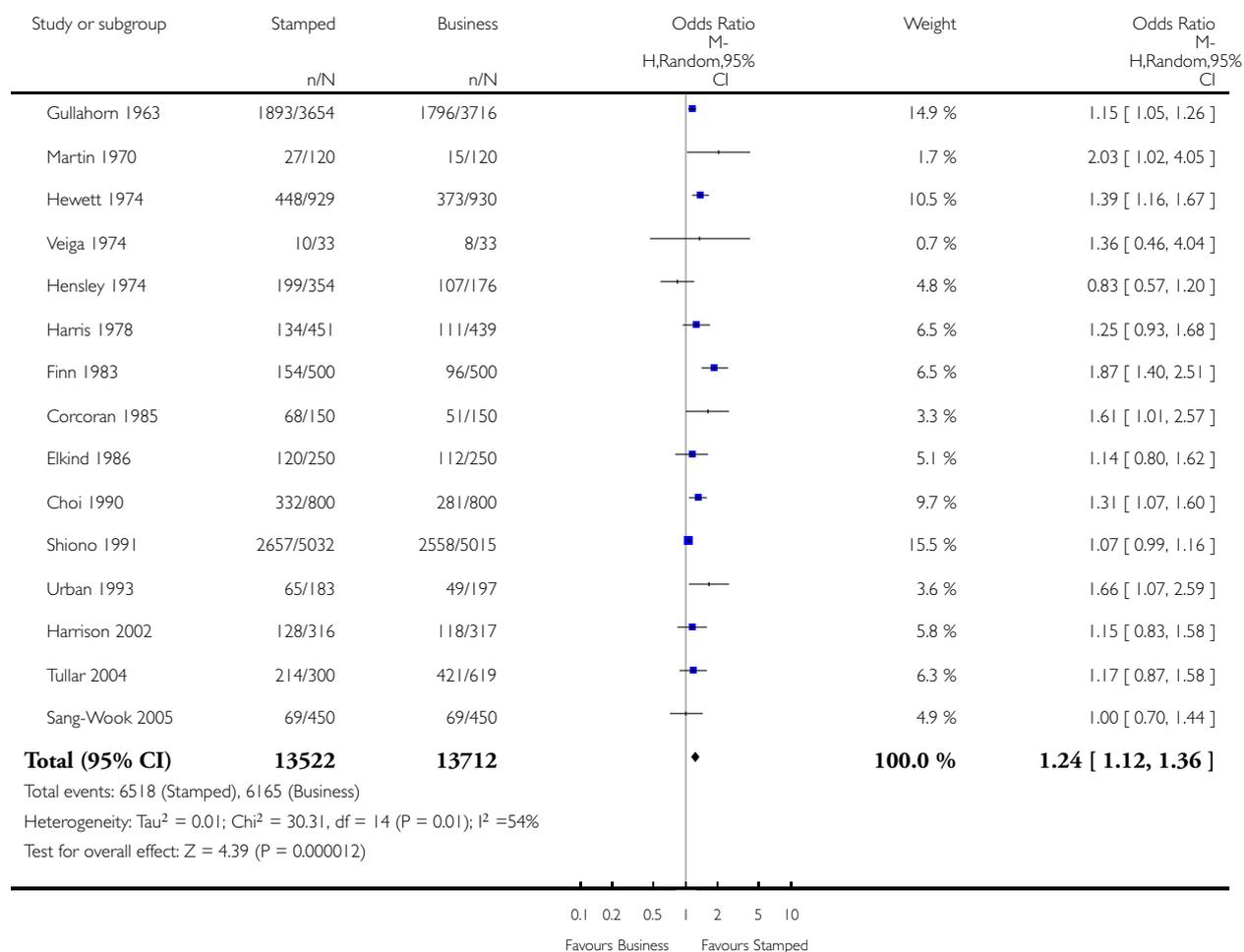


Analysis 48.1. Comparison 48 Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 48 Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope

Outcome: 1 First response

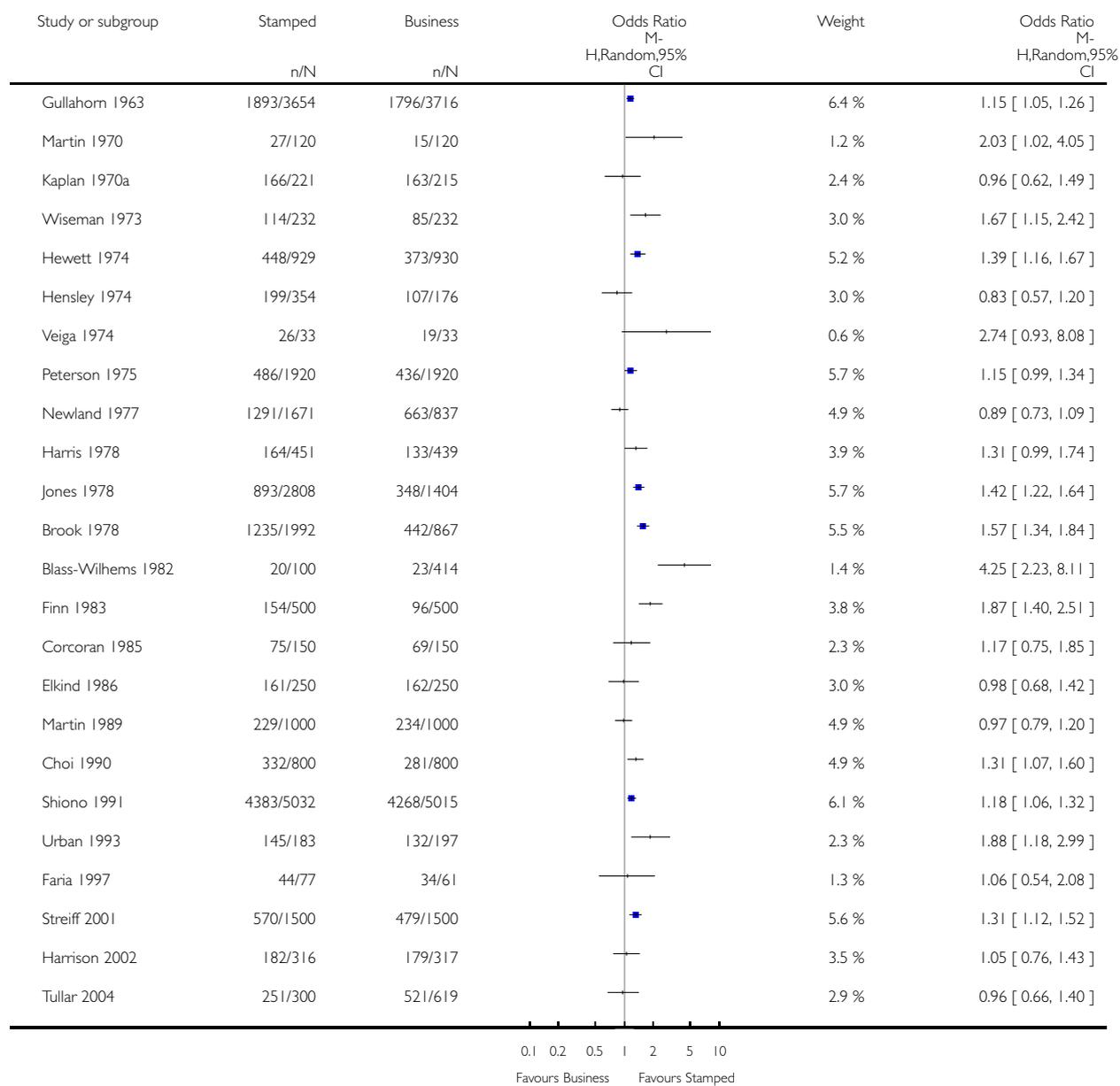


Analysis 48.2. Comparison 48 Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

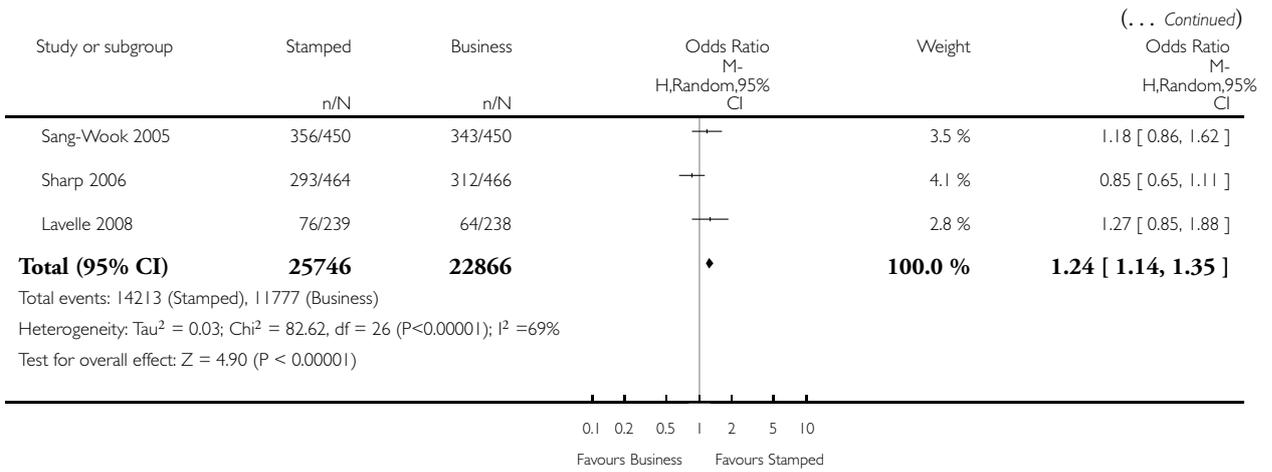
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 48 Stamped vs. business reply/franked return envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued . . .)

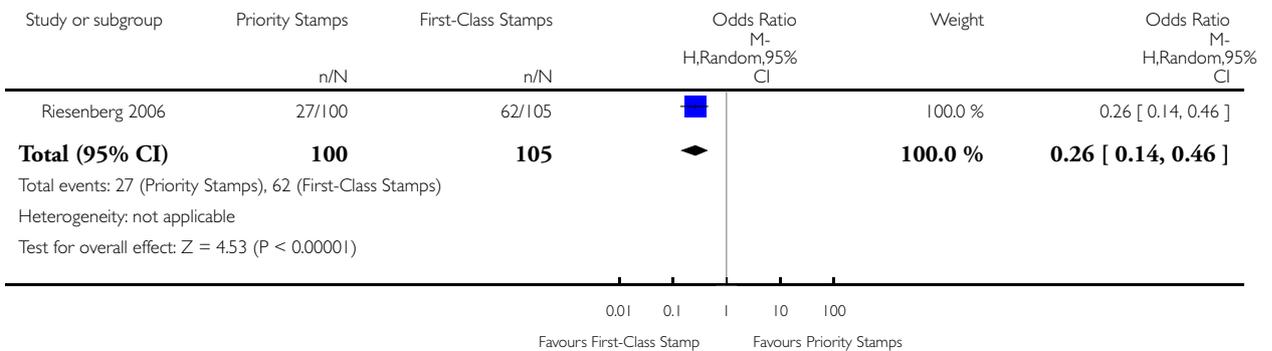


Analysis 49.2. Comparison 49 Priority stamps vs. first-class stamps on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 49 Priority stamps vs. first-class stamps on return envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

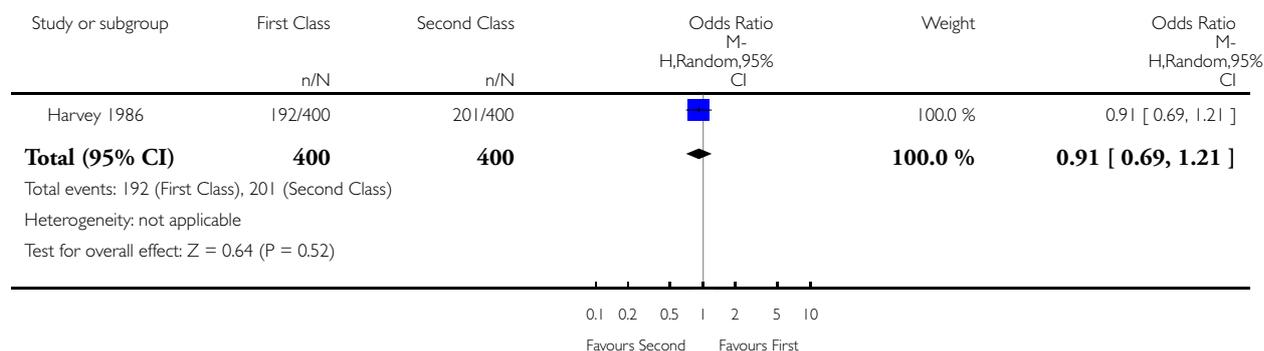


Analysis 50.2. Comparison 50 First vs. second class stamp on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 50 First vs. second class stamp on return envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

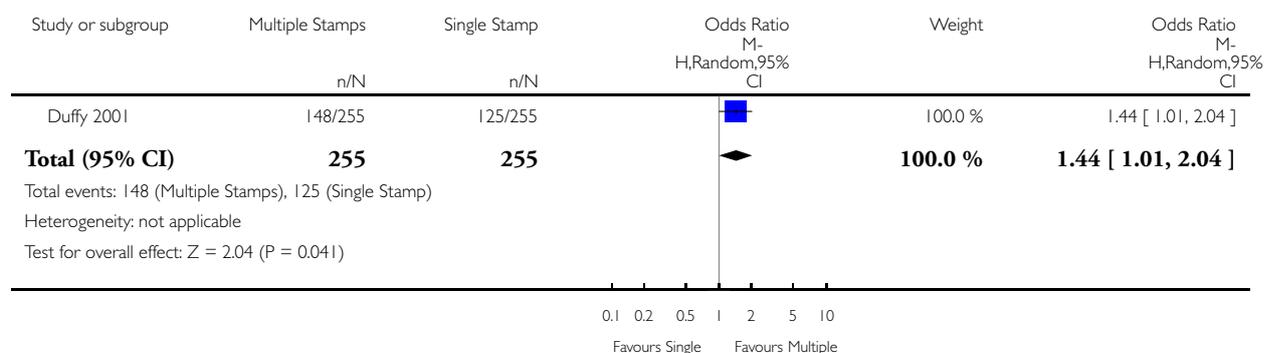


Analysis 51.2. Comparison 51 Multiple stamps vs. single stamp on return envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 51 Multiple stamps vs. single stamp on return envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

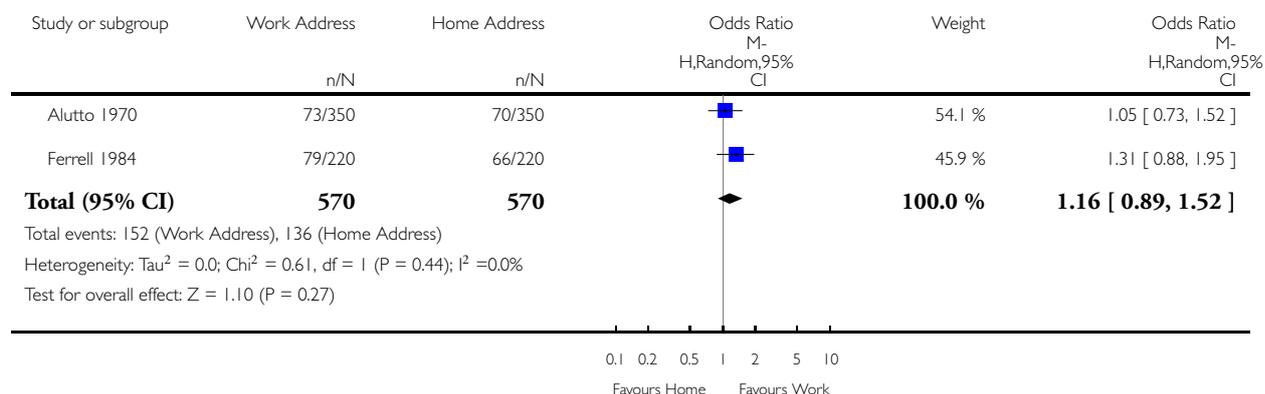


Analysis 52.1. Comparison 52 Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 52 Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address

Outcome: 1 First response

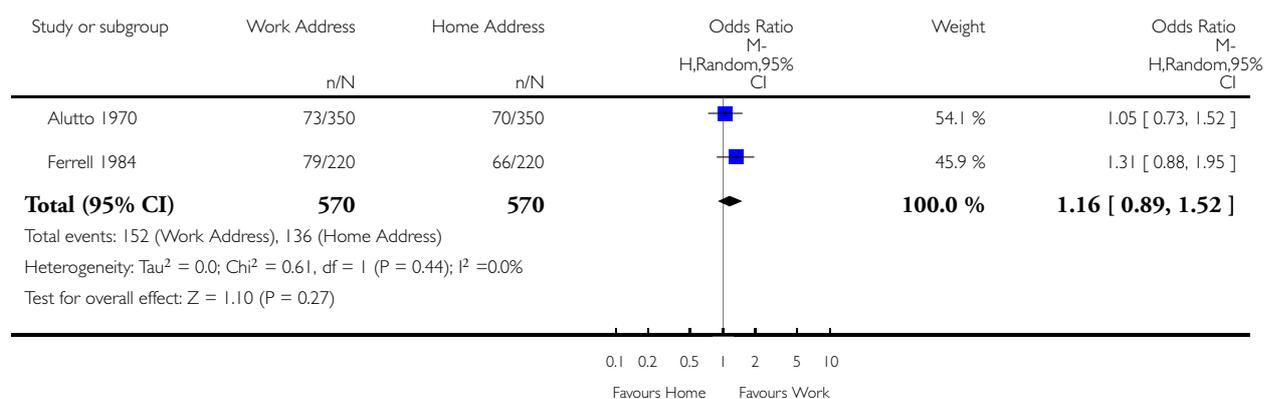


Analysis 52.2. Comparison 52 Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 52 Questionnaire sent to work vs. home address

Outcome: 2 Final response

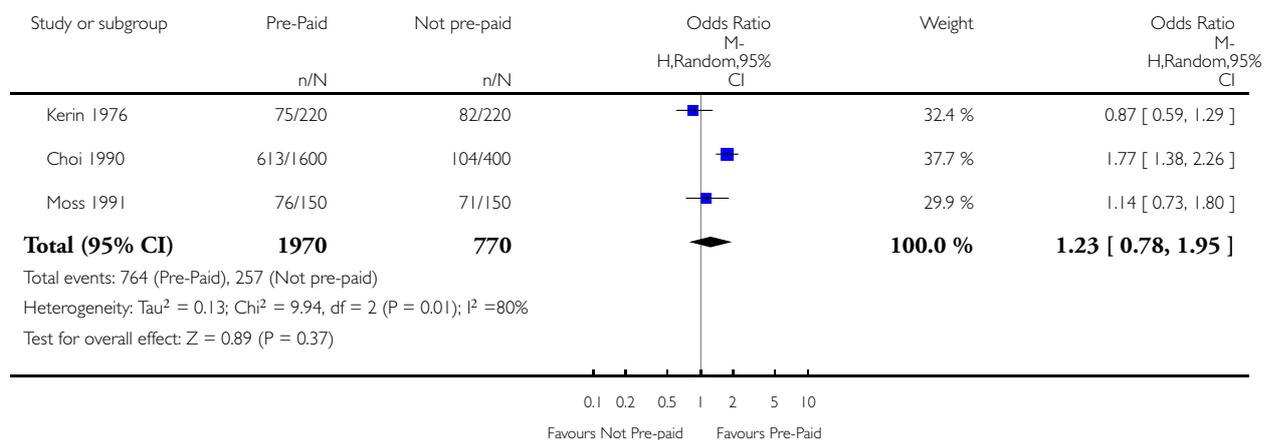


Analysis 53.1. Comparison 53 Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 53 Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid

Outcome: 1 First response

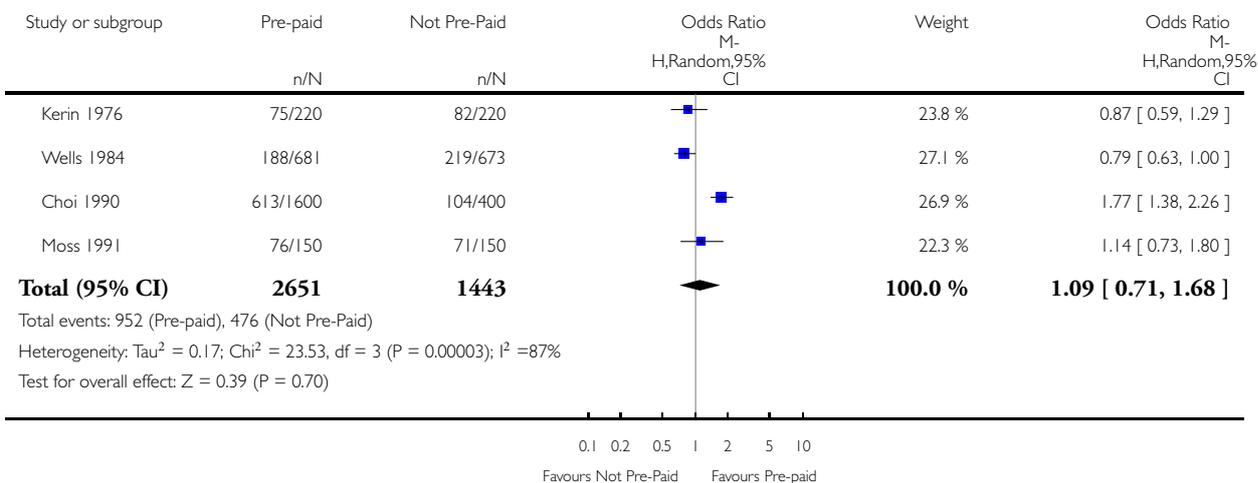


Analysis 53.2. Comparison 53 Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 53 Pre-paid return envelope vs. not pre-paid

Outcome: 2 Final response

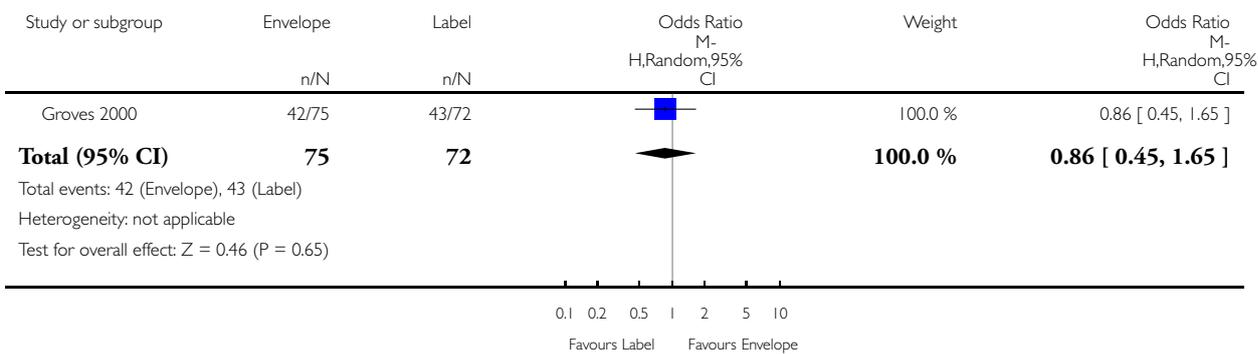


Analysis 54.2. Comparison 54 Stamped addressed return envelope vs. address label only included, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 54 Stamped addressed return envelope vs. address label only included

Outcome: 2 Final response

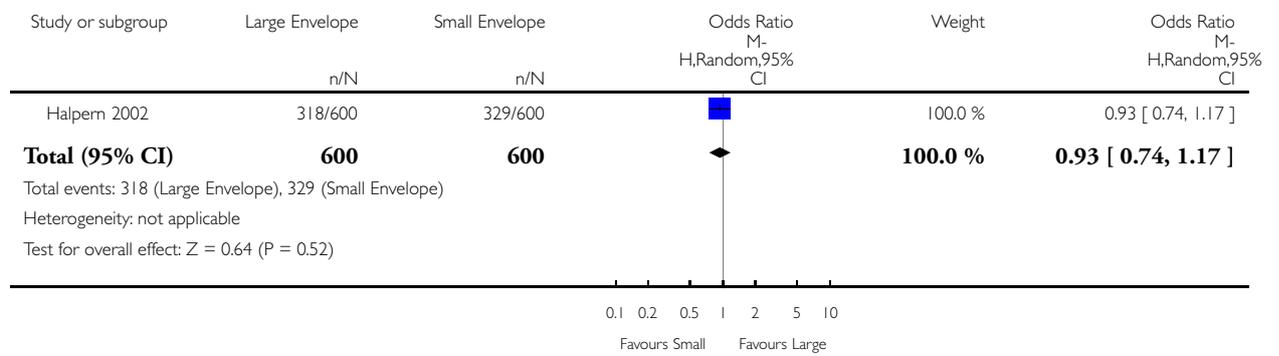


Analysis 55.2. Comparison 55 Q'aire mailed in large vs. standard/small envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 55 Q'aire mailed in large vs. standard/small envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

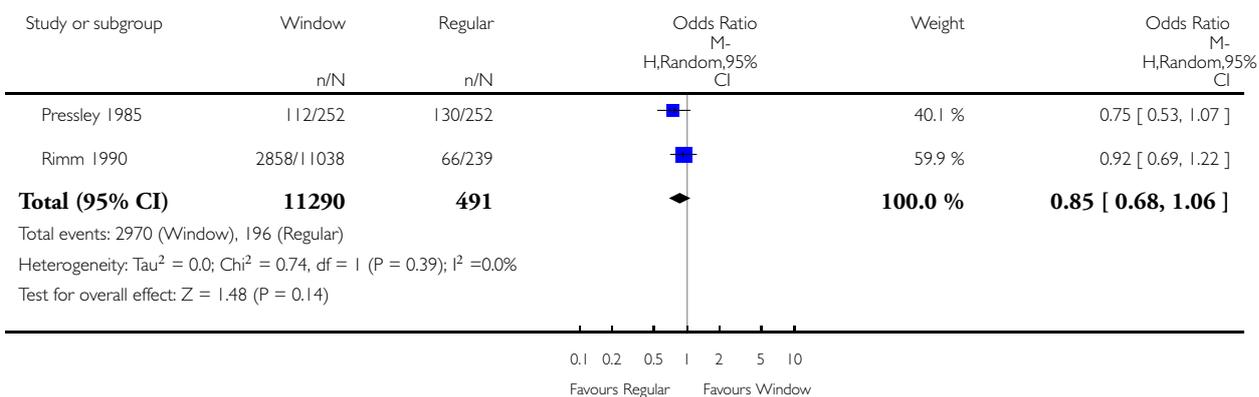


Analysis 56.1. Comparison 56 Window vs. regular envelope, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 56 Window vs. regular envelope

Outcome: 1 First response

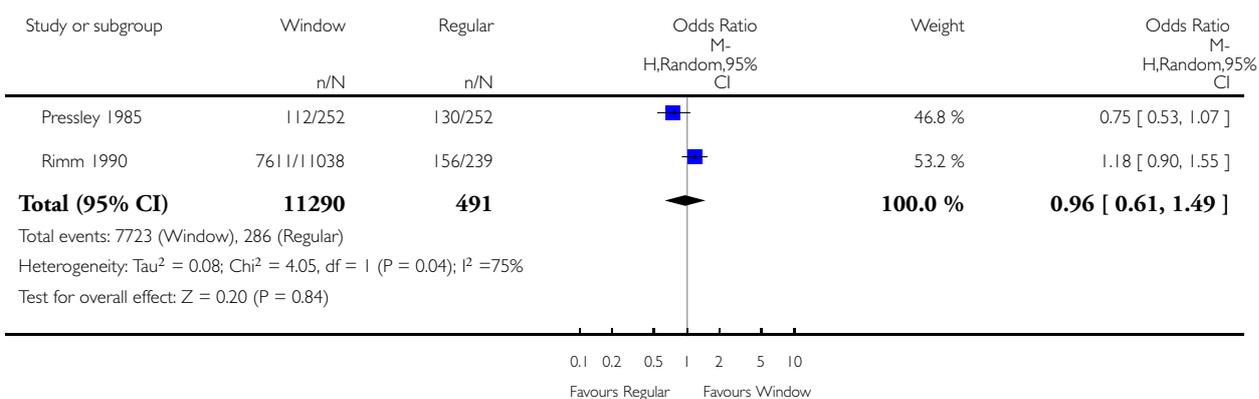


Analysis 56.2. Comparison 56 Window vs. regular envelope, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 56 Window vs. regular envelope

Outcome: 2 Final response

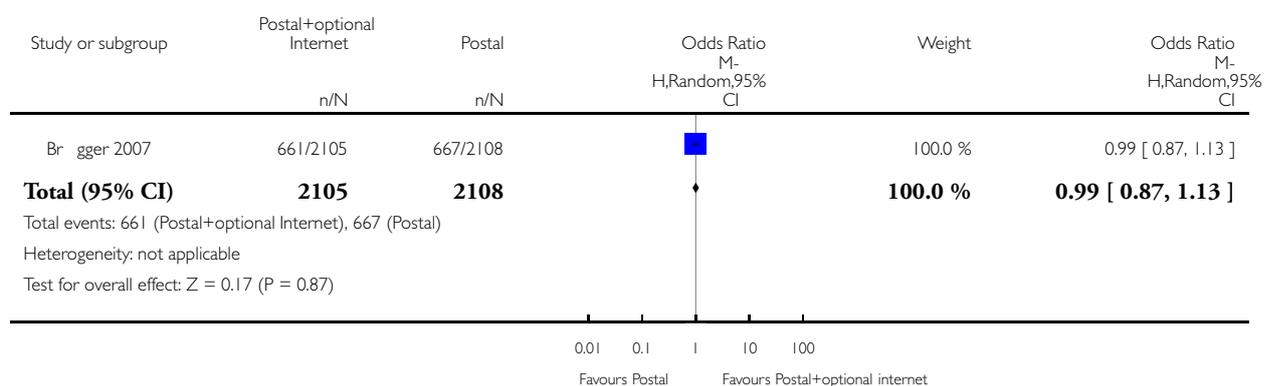


Analysis 57.1. Comparison 57 Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 57 Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response

Outcome: 1 First response

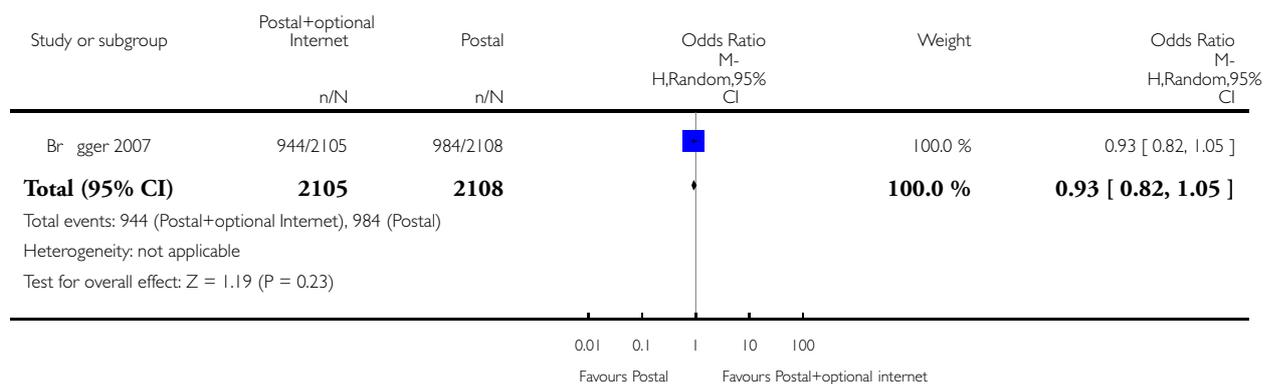


Analysis 57.2. Comparison 57 Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 57 Postal + optional Internet response vs. only postal response

Outcome: 2 Final response

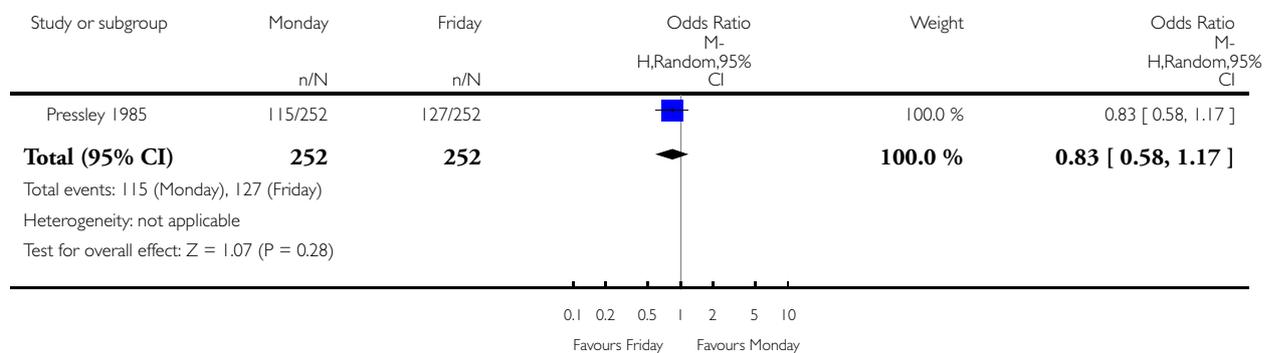


Analysis 58.1. Comparison 58 Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 58 Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday

Outcome: 1 First response

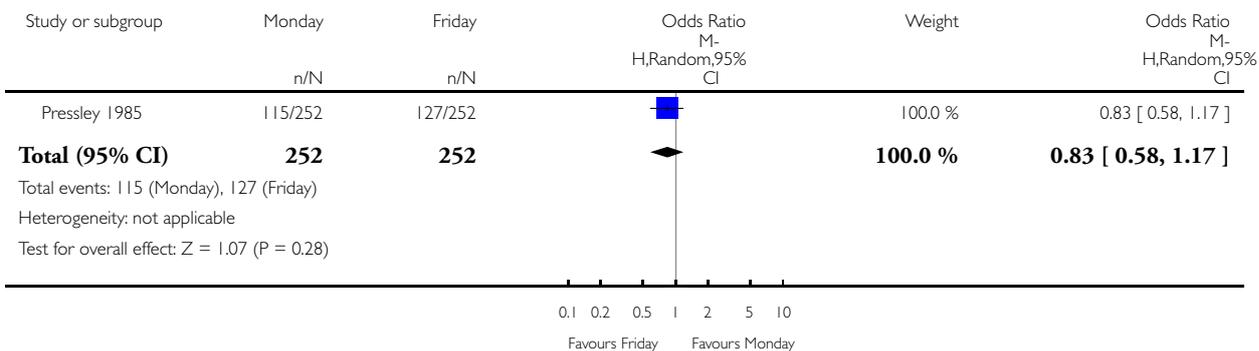


Analysis 58.2. Comparison 58 Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 58 Questionnaire mailed on Monday vs. Friday

Outcome: 2 Final response

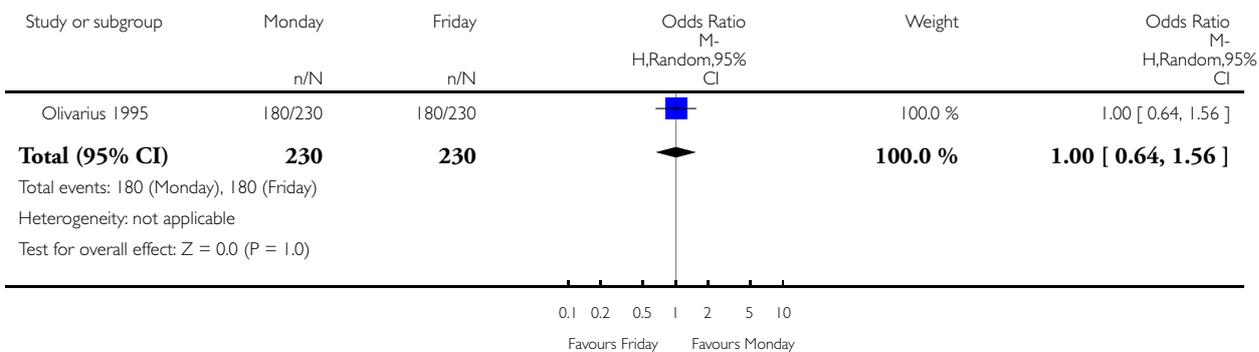


Analysis 59.2. Comparison 59 Questionnaire received on Monday vs. Friday, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 59 Questionnaire received on Monday vs. Friday

Outcome: 2 Final response

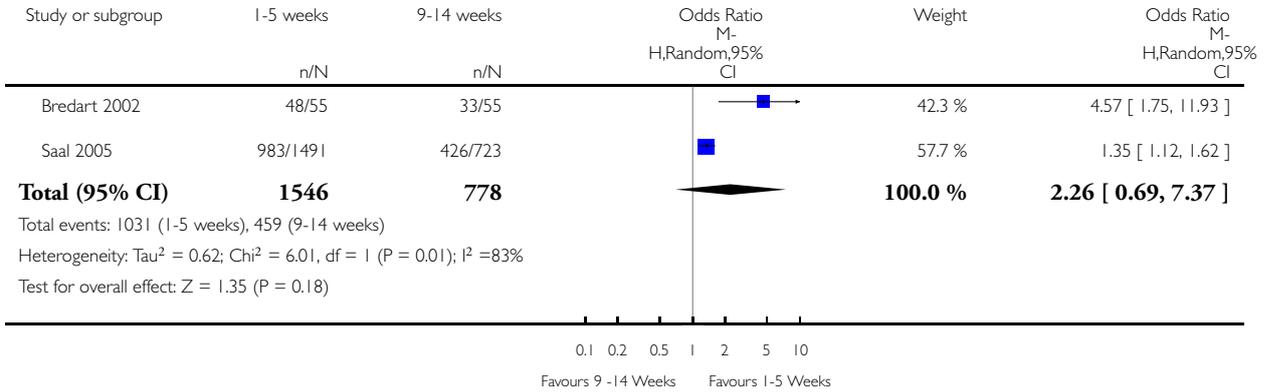


Analysis 60.2. Comparison 60 Q'aire sent 1-5 weeks vs. 9-14 weeks after hospital discharge, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 60 Q'aire sent 1-5 weeks vs. 9-14 weeks after hospital discharge

Outcome: 2 Final response

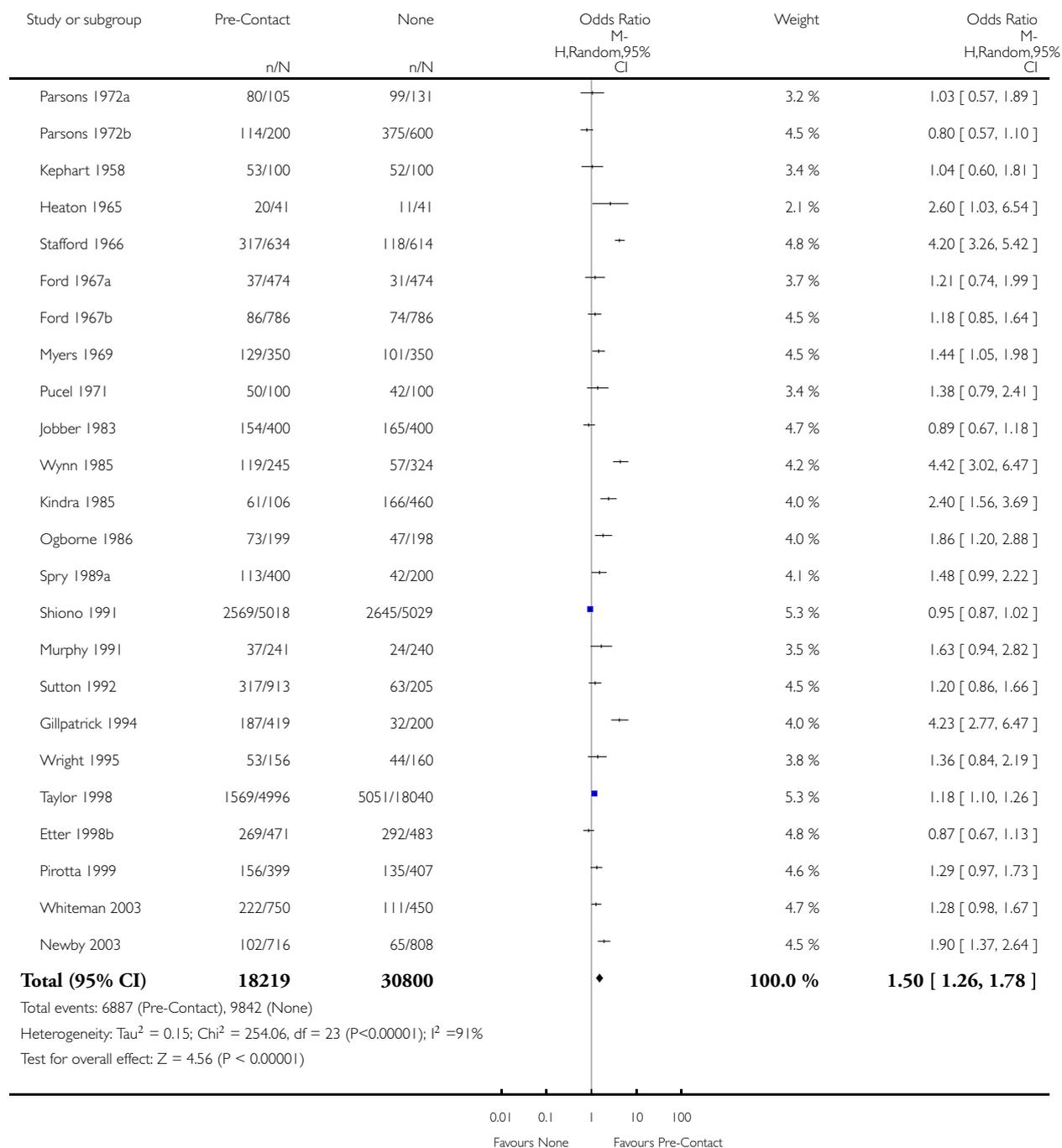


Analysis 61.1. Comparison 61 Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 61 Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact

Outcome: 1 First response

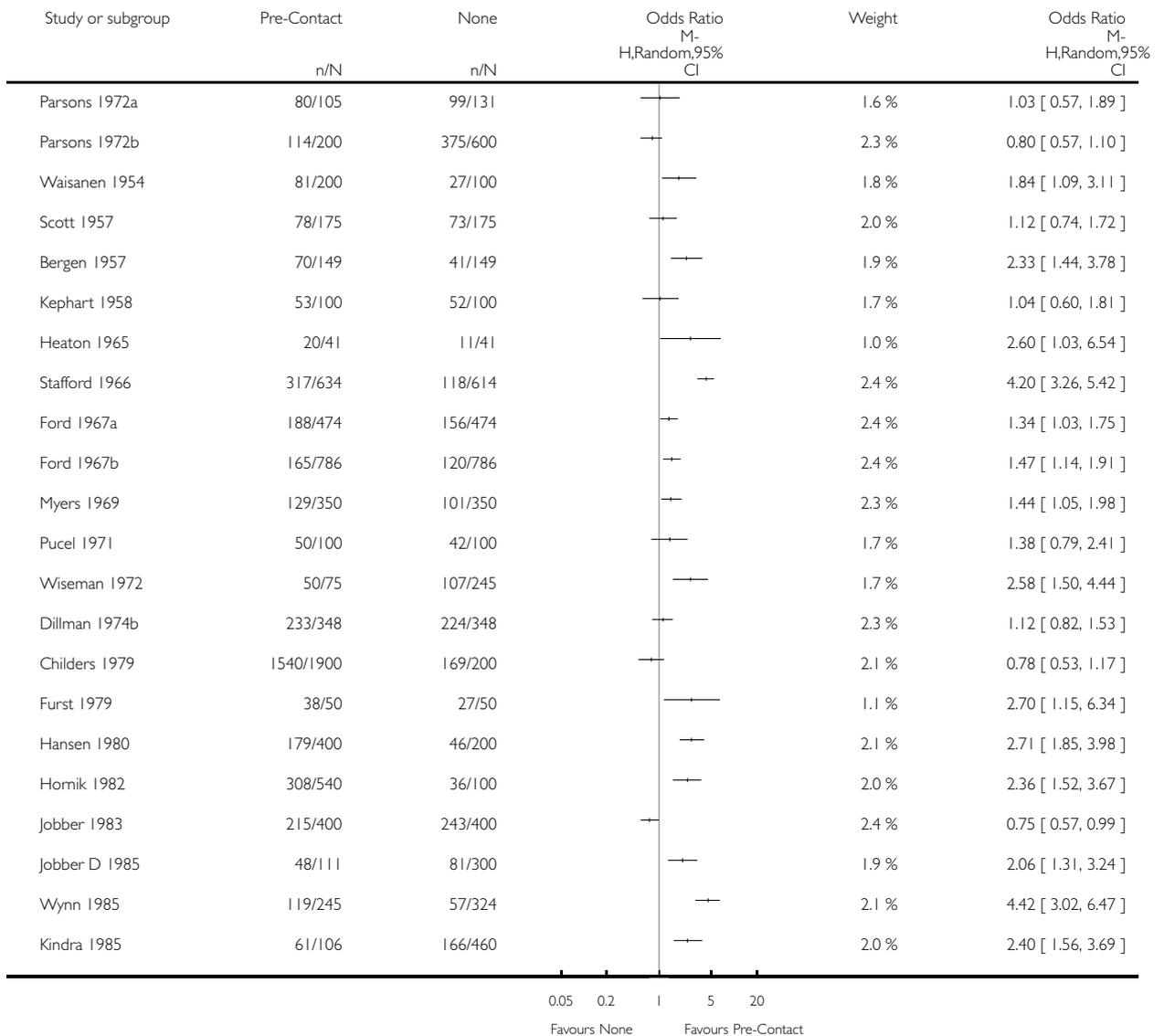


Analysis 61.2. Comparison 61 Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact, Outcome 2 Final response.

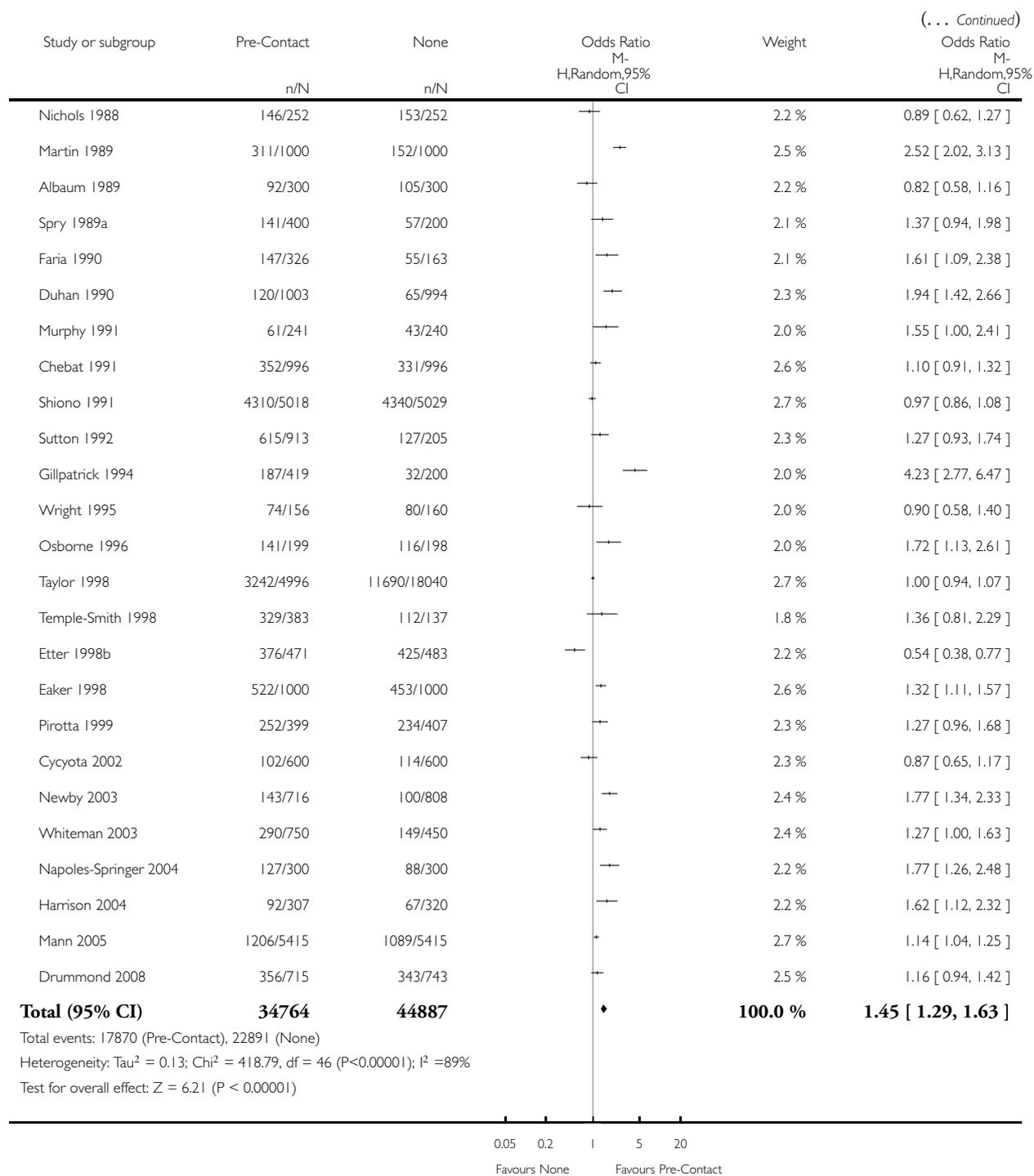
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 61 Pre-contact vs. no pre-contact

Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued . . .)

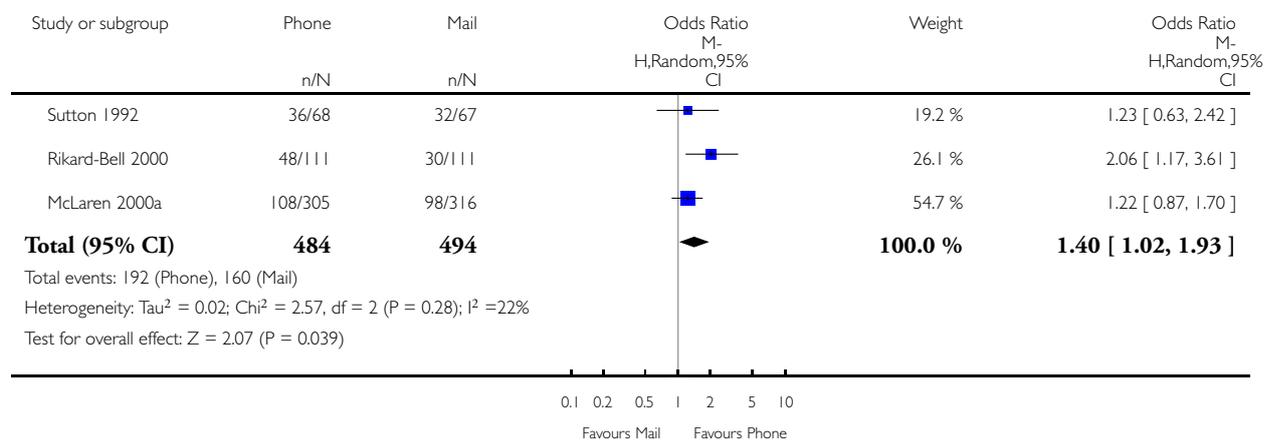


Analysis 62.1. Comparison 62 Pre-contact by phone vs. mail, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 62 Pre-contact by phone vs. mail

Outcome: 1 First response

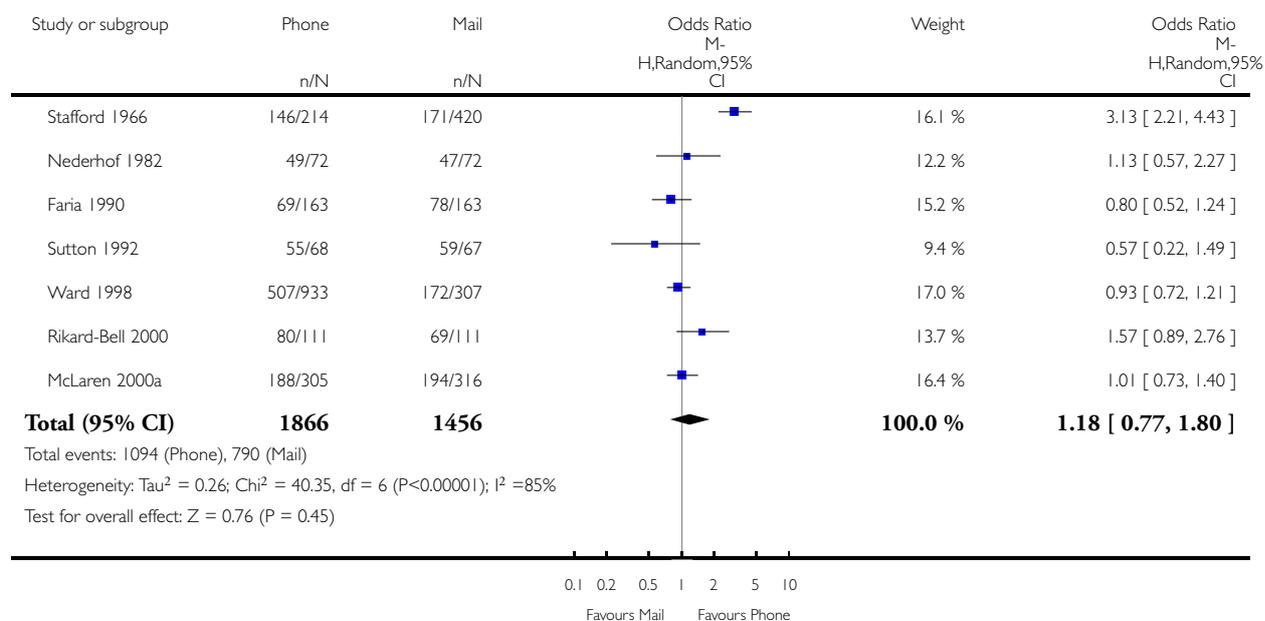


Analysis 62.2. Comparison 62 Pre-contact by phone vs. mail, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 62 Pre-contact by phone vs. mail

Outcome: 2 Final response

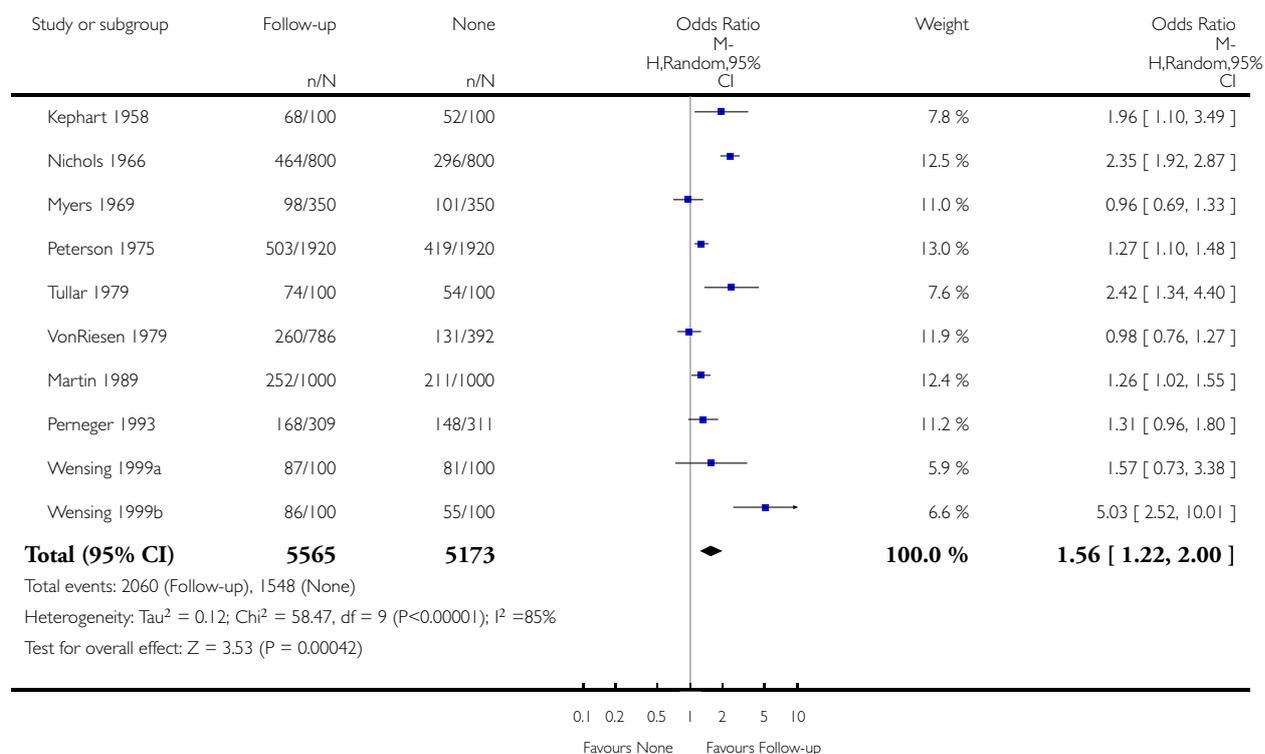


Analysis 63.1. Comparison 63 Follow up vs. no follow up, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 63 Follow up vs. no follow up

Outcome: 1 First response

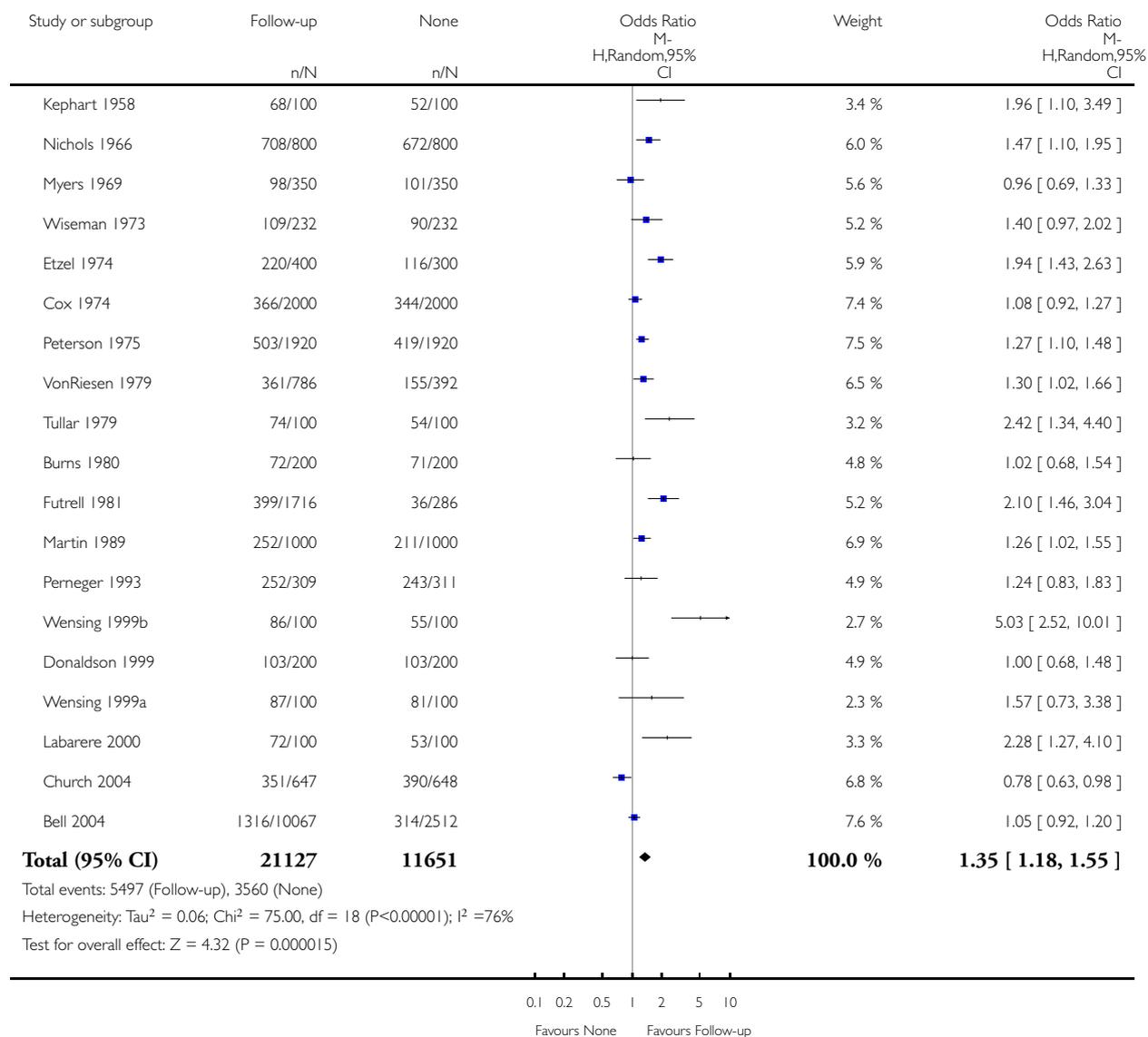


Analysis 63.2. Comparison 63 Follow up vs. no follow up, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 63 Follow up vs. no follow up

Outcome: 2 Final response

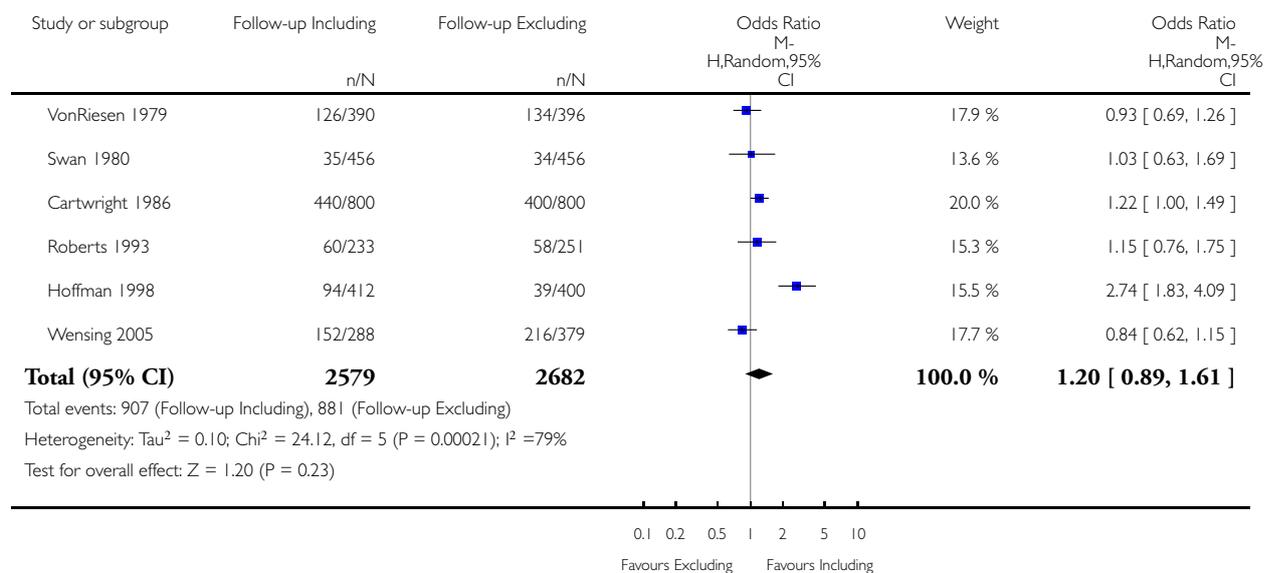


Analysis 64.1. Comparison 64 Postal follow-up including vs. excluding q'aire, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 64 Postal follow-up including vs. excluding q'aire

Outcome: 1 First response

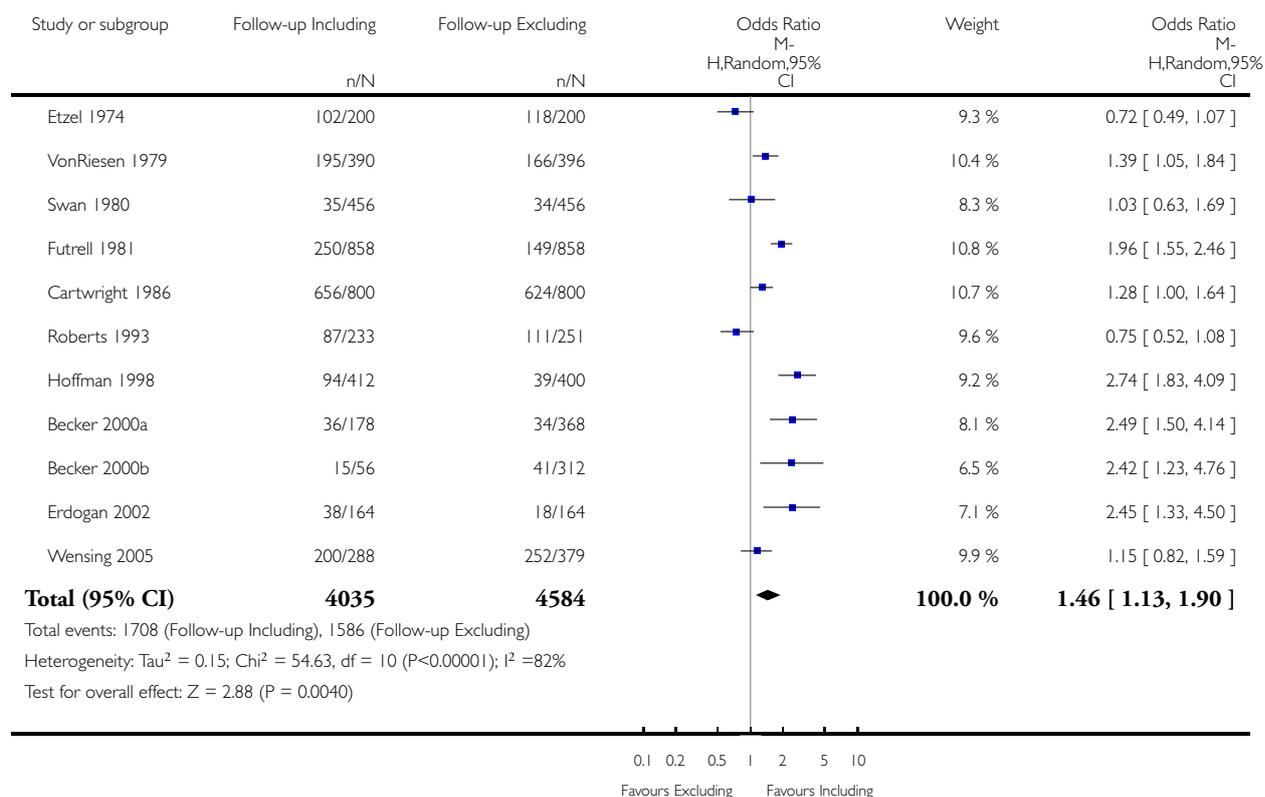


Analysis 64.2. Comparison 64 Postal follow-up including vs. excluding q'aire, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 64 Postal follow-up including vs. excluding q'aire

Outcome: 2 Final response

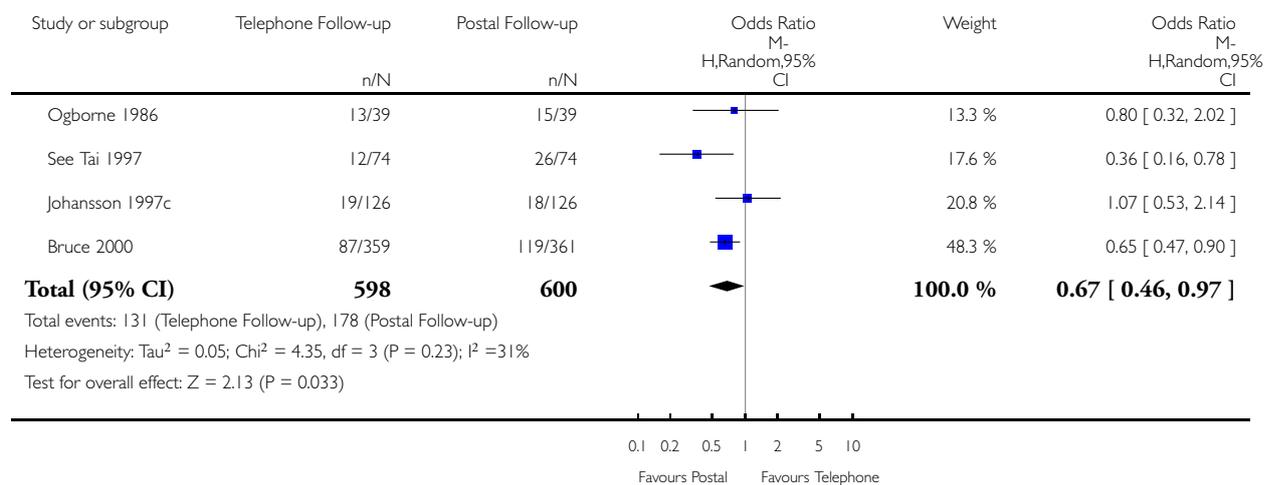


Analysis 65.1. Comparison 65 Follow up by phone vs. mail, Outcome 1 First Response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 65 Follow up by phone vs. mail

Outcome: 1 First Response

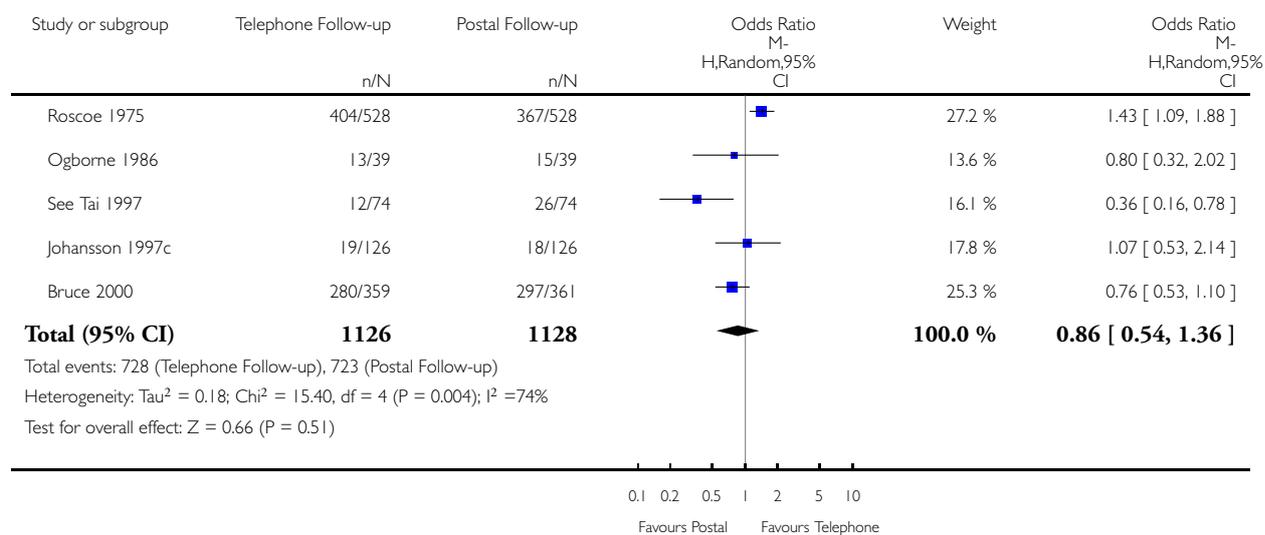


Analysis 65.2. Comparison 65 Follow up by phone vs. mail, Outcome 2 Final Response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 65 Follow up by phone vs. mail

Outcome: 2 Final Response

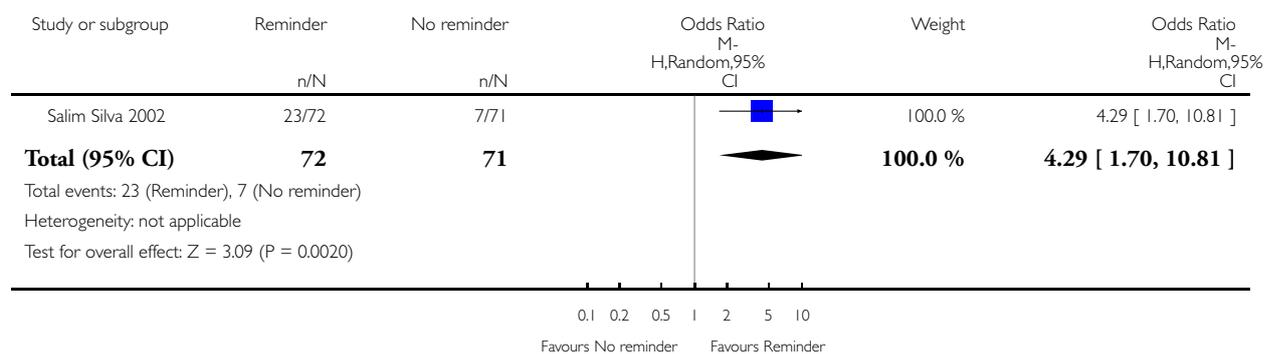


Analysis 66.1. Comparison 66 Telephone reminder vs. no reminder, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 66 Telephone reminder vs. no reminder

Outcome: 1 First response

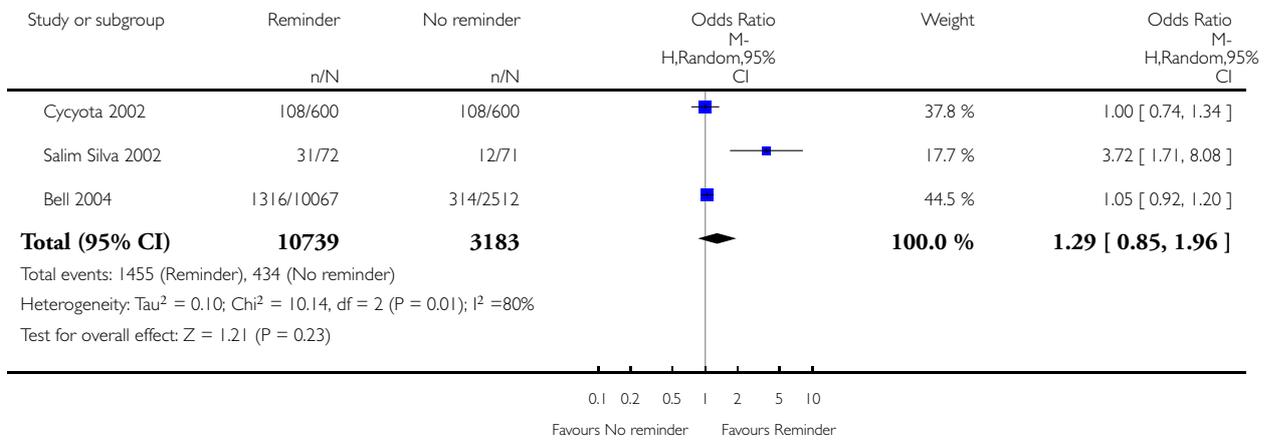


Analysis 66.2. Comparison 66 Telephone reminder vs. no reminder, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 66 Telephone reminder vs. no reminder

Outcome: 2 Final response

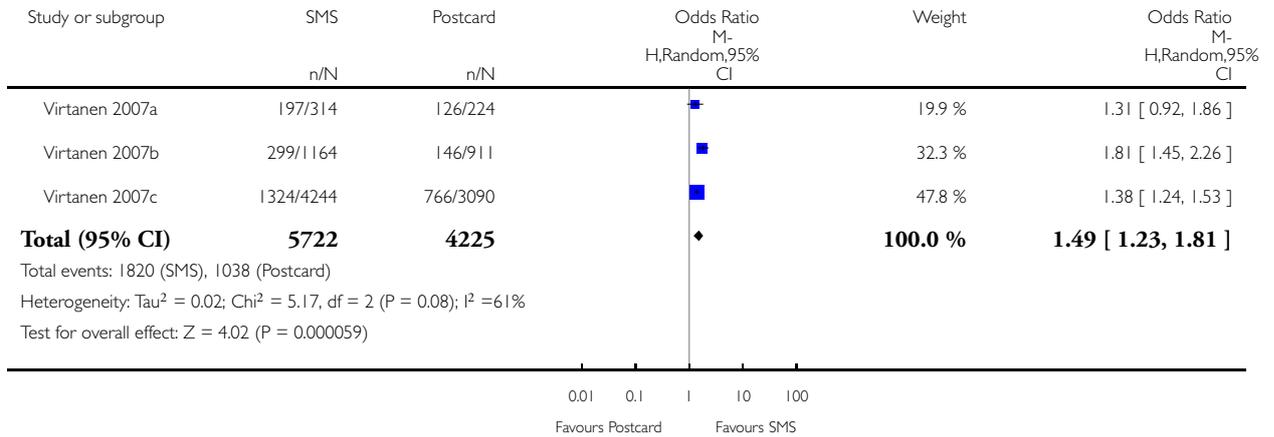


Analysis 67.2. Comparison 67 SMS vs. postcard reminder, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 67 SMS vs. postcard reminder

Outcome: 2 Final response

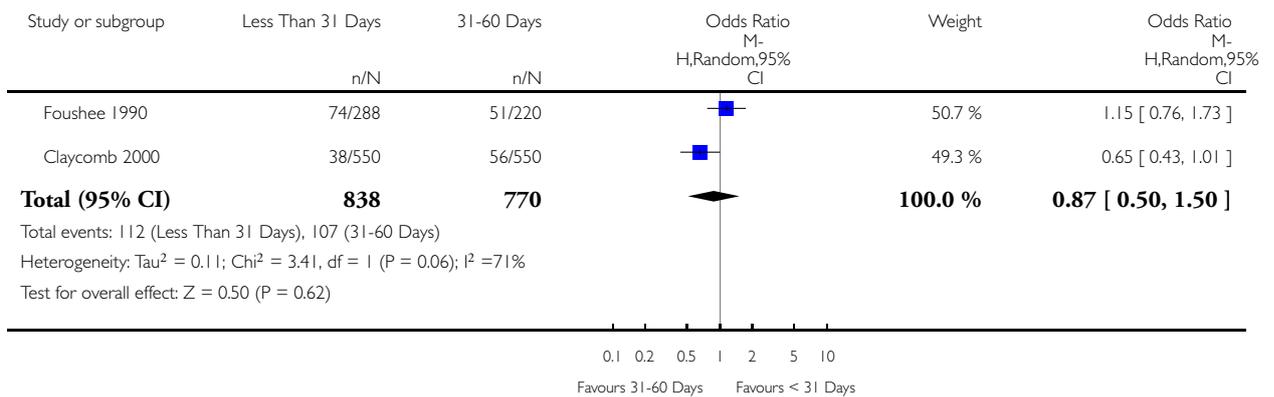


Analysis 68.1. Comparison 68 Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 68 Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days

Outcome: 1 First response

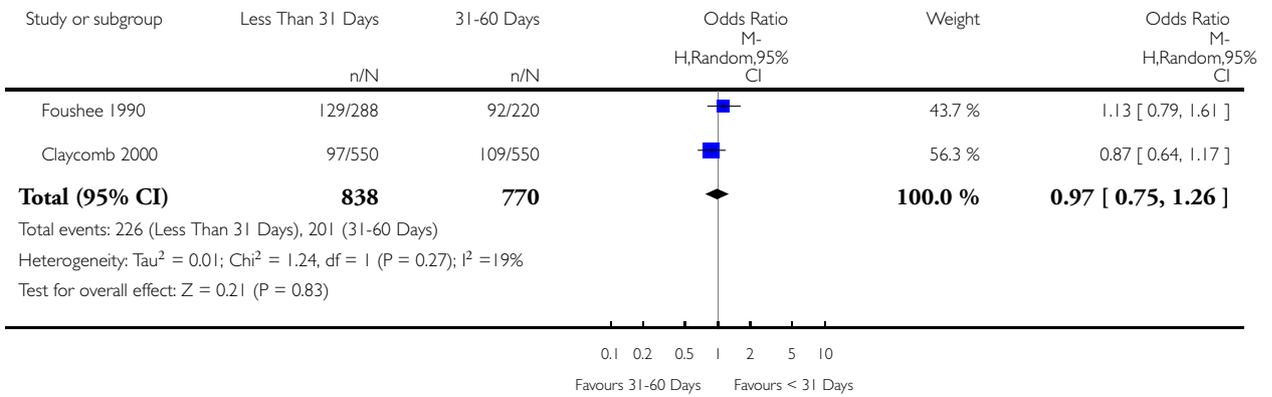


Analysis 68.2. Comparison 68 Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 68 Follow-up interval < 31 days vs. 31-60 days

Outcome: 2 Final response

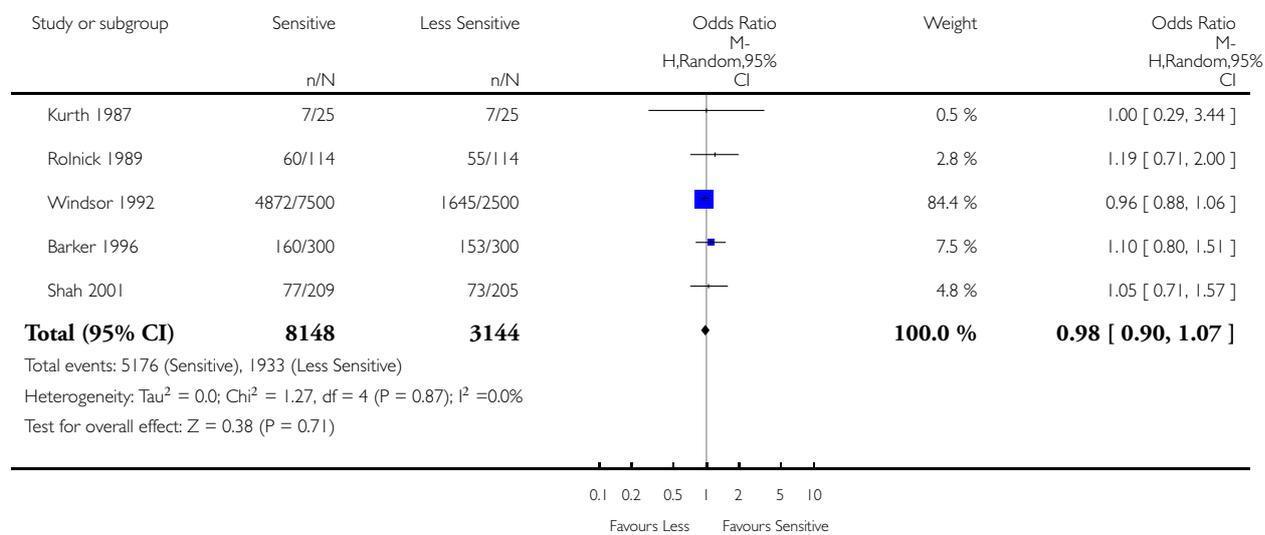


Analysis 69.1. Comparison 69 Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 69 Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked

Outcome: 1 First response

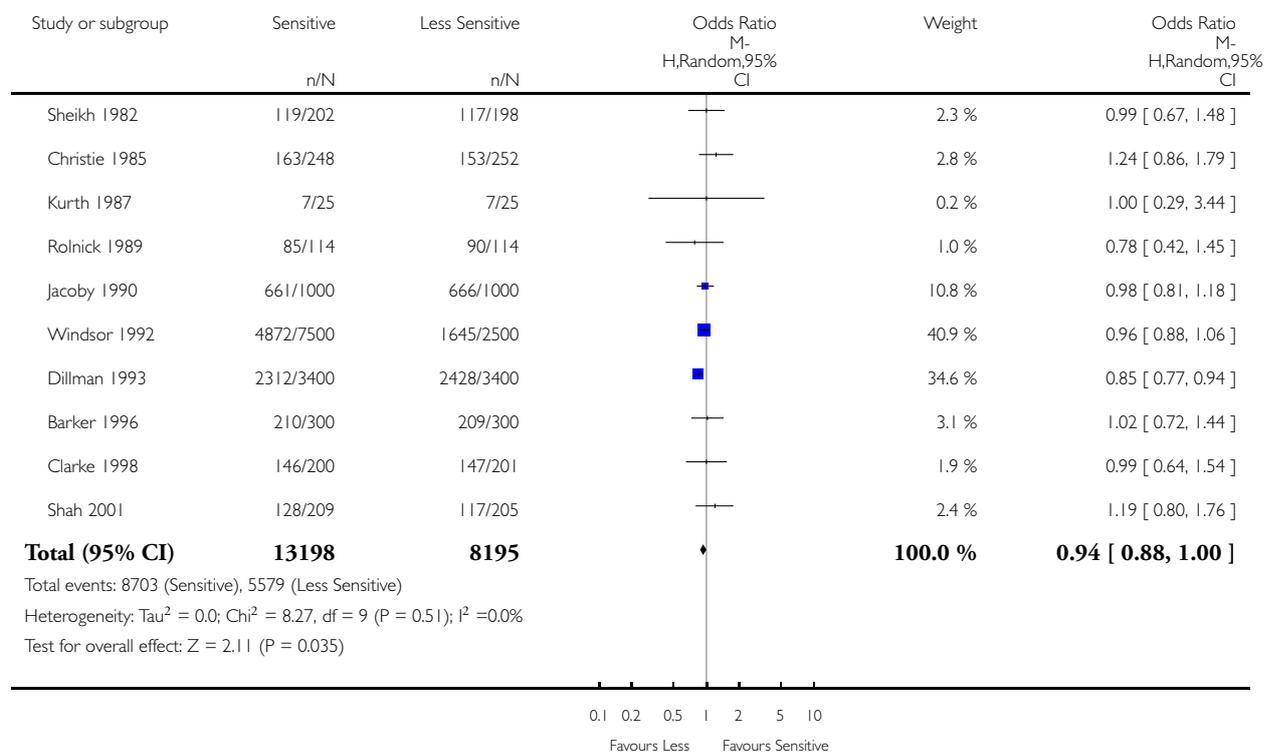


Analysis 69.2. Comparison 69 Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 69 Sensitive questions vs. no/fewer/less sensitive questions asked

Outcome: 2 Final response

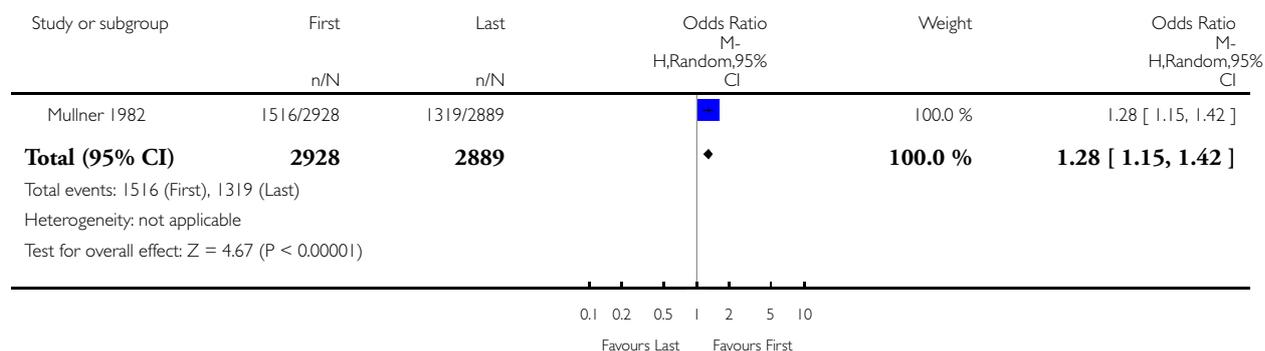


Analysis 70.1. Comparison 70 More relevant questions first vs. last, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 70 More relevant questions first vs. last

Outcome: 1 First response

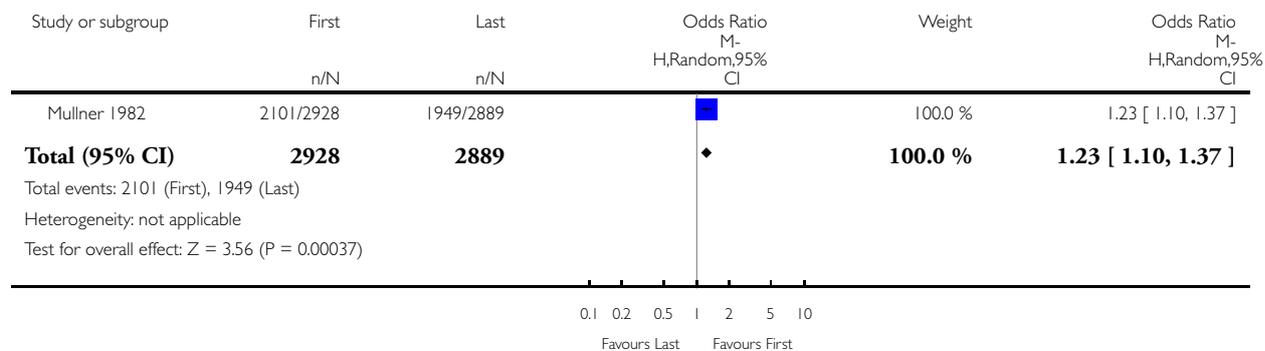


Analysis 70.2. Comparison 70 More relevant questions first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 70 More relevant questions first vs. last

Outcome: 2 Final response

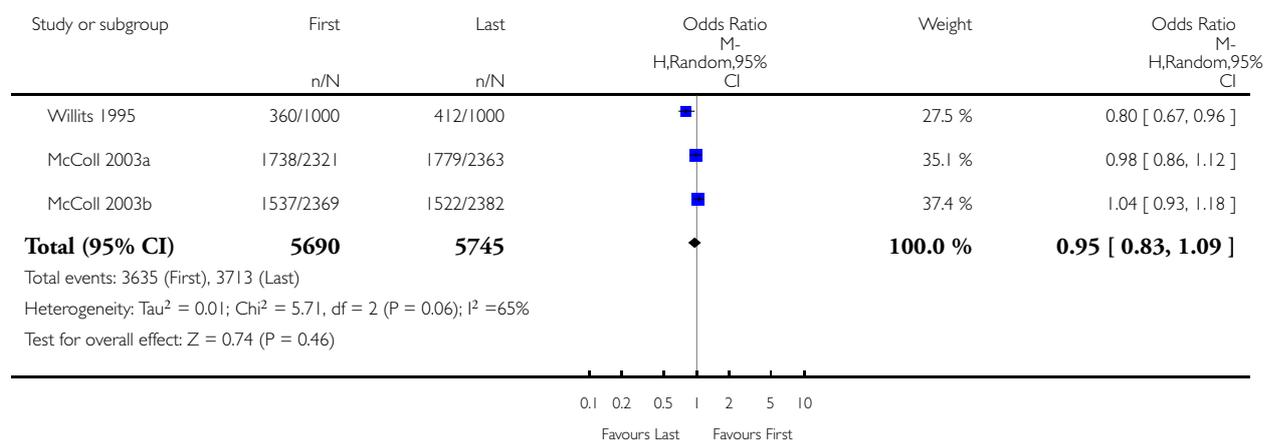


Analysis 71.2. Comparison 71 Most general question first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 71 Most general question first vs. last

Outcome: 2 Final response

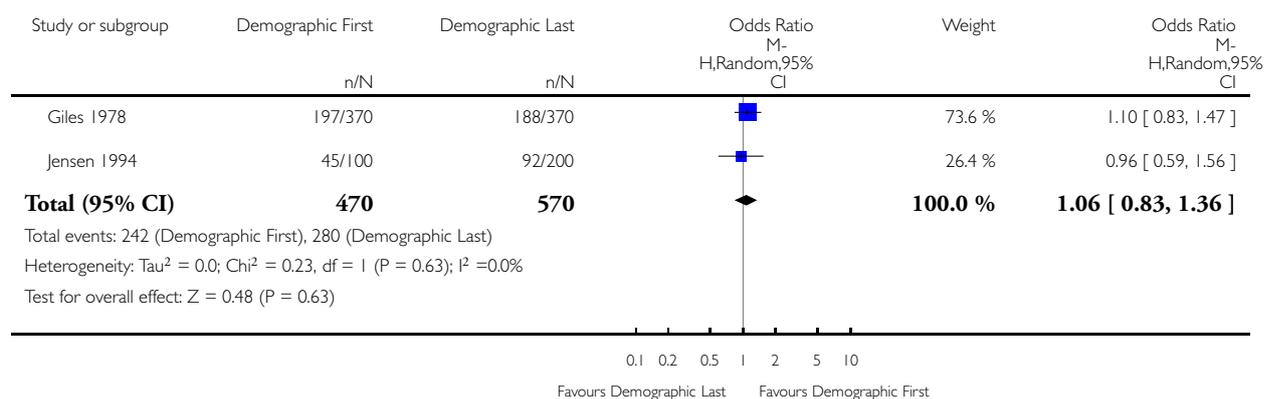


Analysis 72.1. Comparison 72 Demographic items first vs. last, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 72 Demographic items first vs. last

Outcome: 1 First response

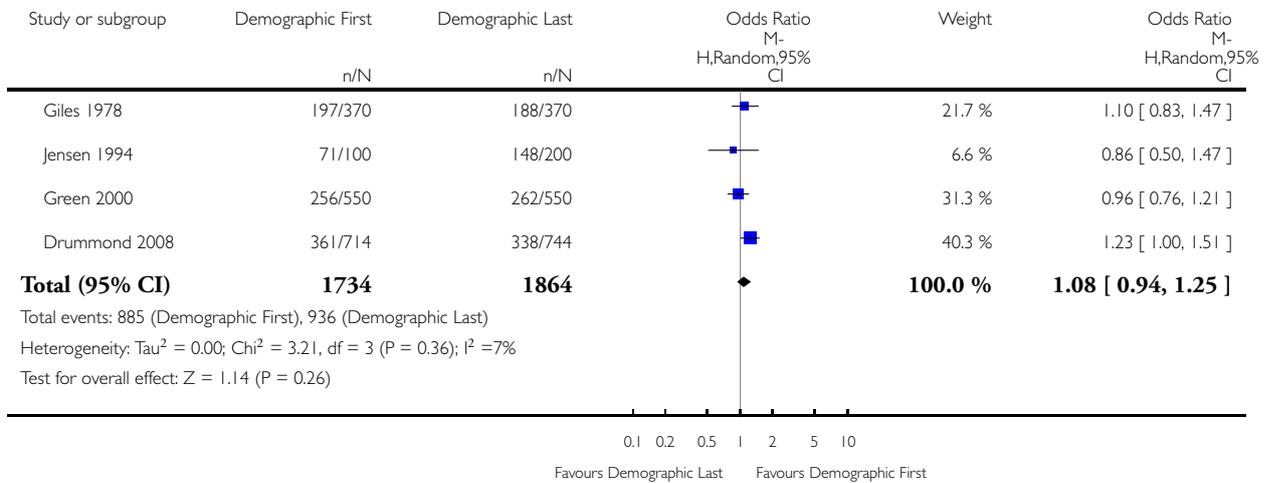


Analysis 72.2. Comparison 72 Demographic items first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 72 Demographic items first vs. last

Outcome: 2 Final response

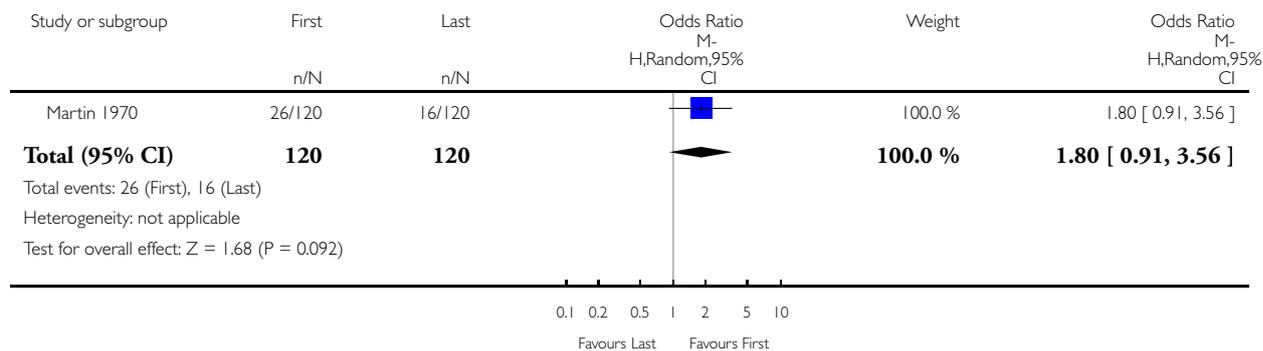


Analysis 73.1. Comparison 73 Easier questions first vs. last, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 73 Easier questions first vs. last

Outcome: 1 First response

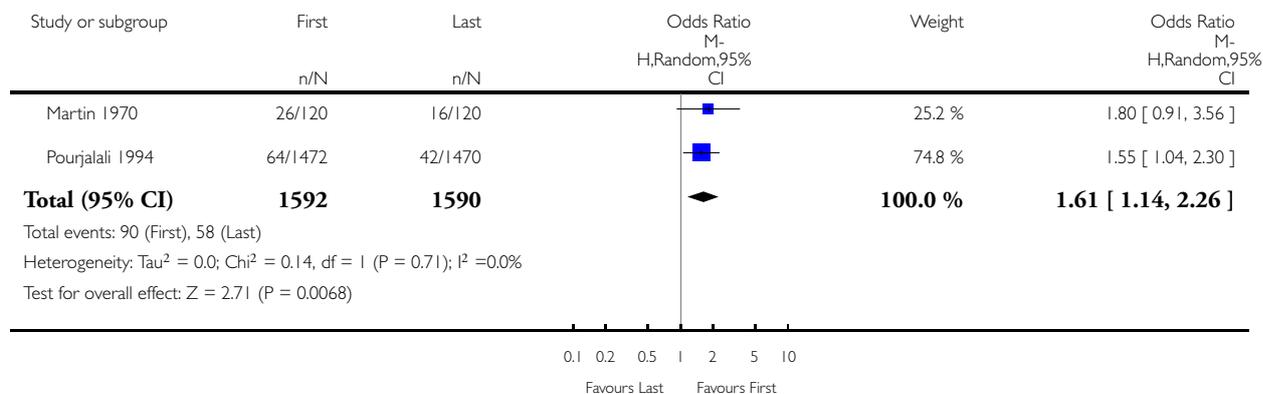


Analysis 73.2. Comparison 73 Easier questions first vs. last, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 73 Easier questions first vs. last

Outcome: 2 Final response

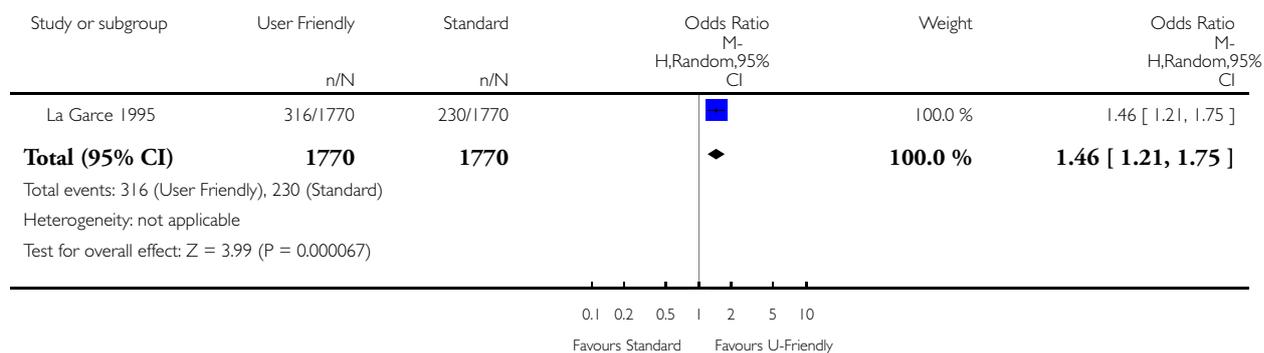


Analysis 74.1. Comparison 74 User friendly vs. standard questionnaire, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 74 User friendly vs. standard questionnaire

Outcome: 1 First response

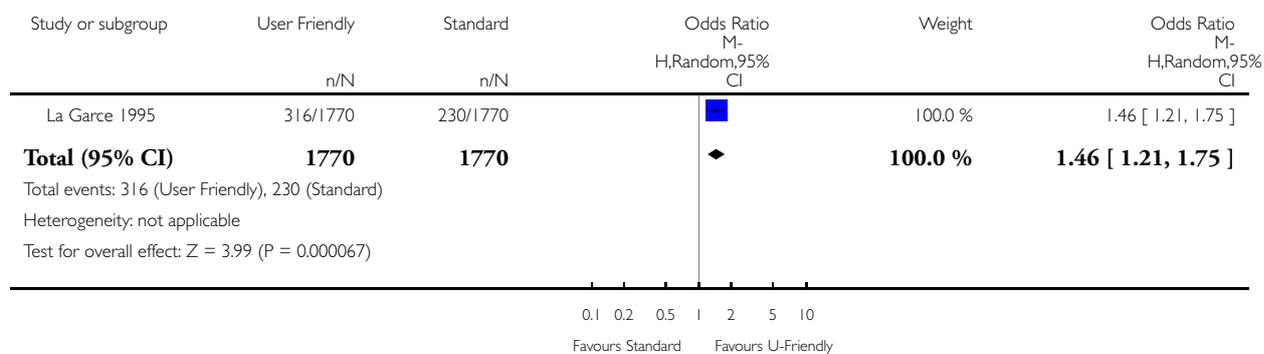


Analysis 74.2. Comparison 74 User friendly vs. standard questionnaire, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 74 User friendly vs. standard questionnaire

Outcome: 2 Final response

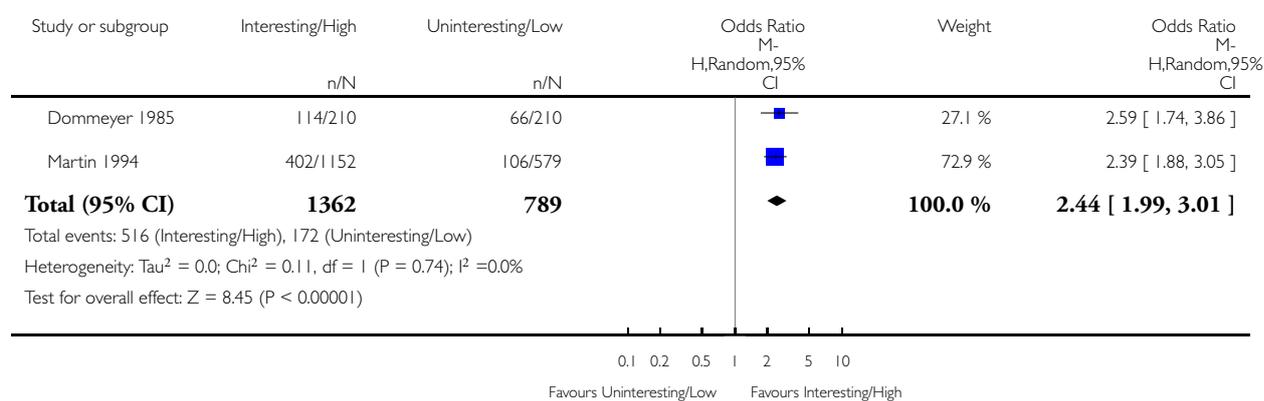


Analysis 75.1. Comparison 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low

Outcome: 1 First response

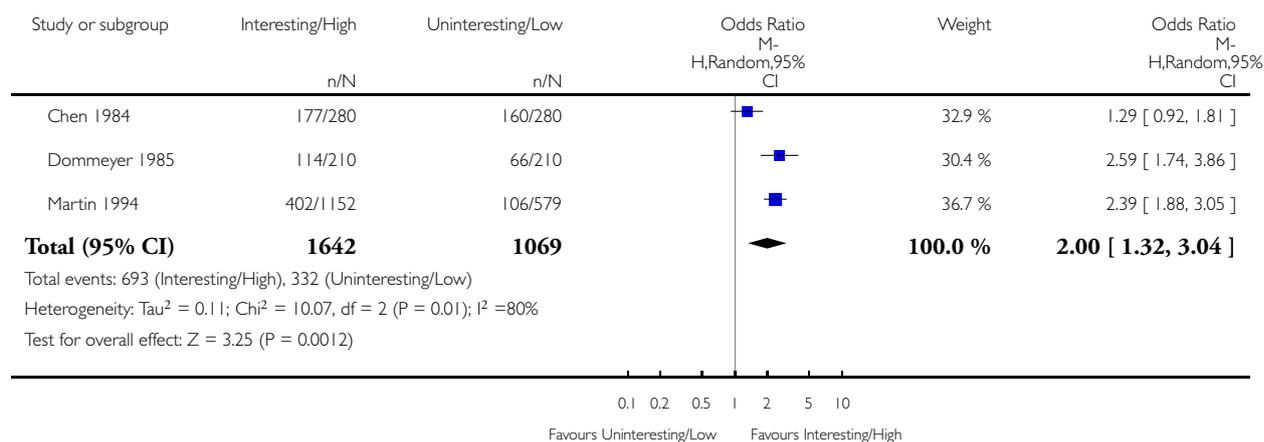


Analysis 75.2. Comparison 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low

Outcome: 2 Final response

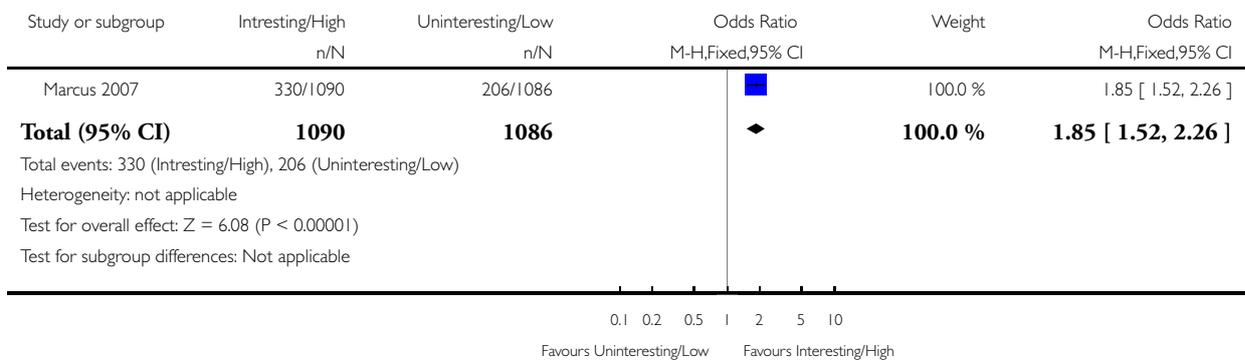


Analysis 75.4. Comparison 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 75 More interesting vs. less or high salient topic vs. low

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

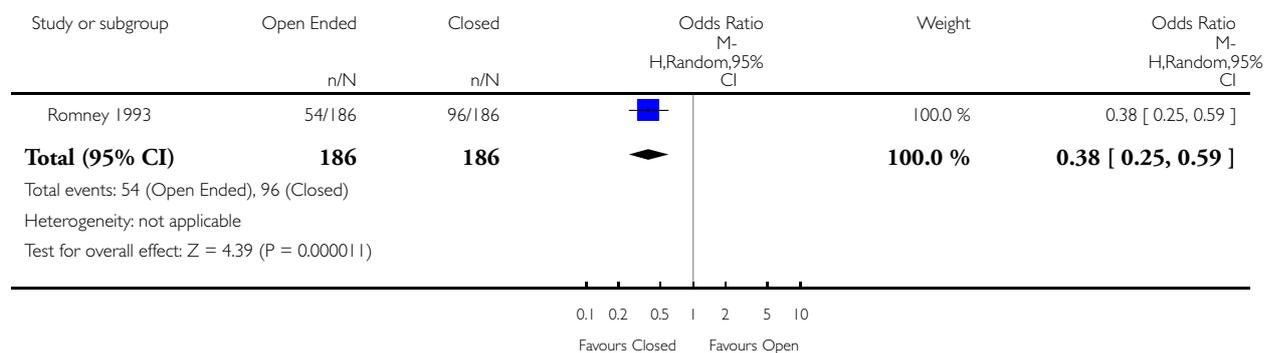


Analysis 76.1. Comparison 76 Open-ended vs. closed questions, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 76 Open-ended vs. closed questions

Outcome: 1 First response

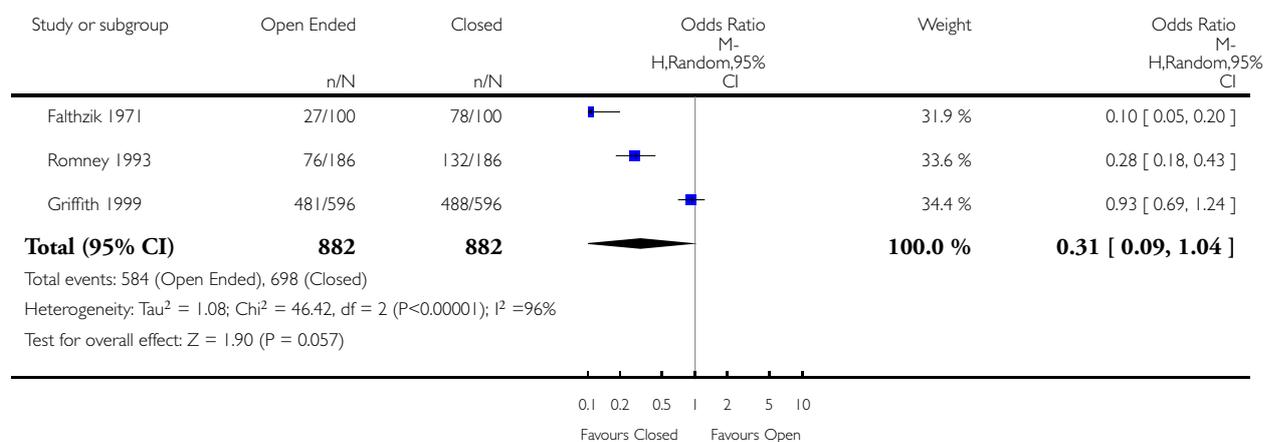


Analysis 76.2. Comparison 76 Open-ended vs. closed questions, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 76 Open-ended vs. closed questions

Outcome: 2 Final response

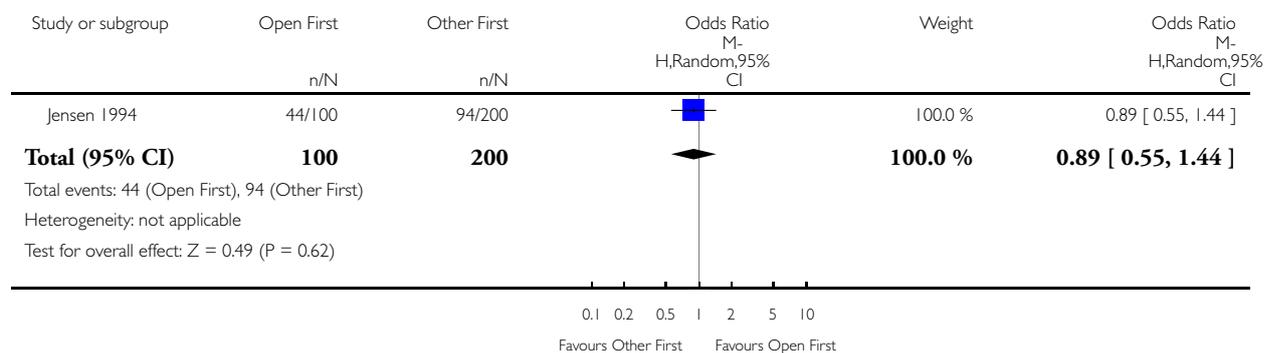


Analysis 77.1. Comparison 77 Open-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 77 Open-ended items first vs. other items first

Outcome: 1 First response

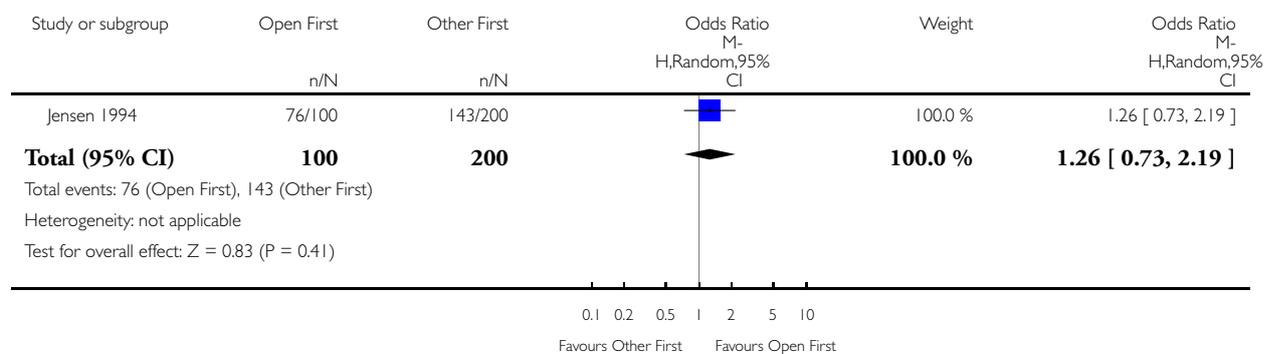


Analysis 77.2. Comparison 77 Open-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 77 Open-ended items first vs. other items first

Outcome: 2 Final response

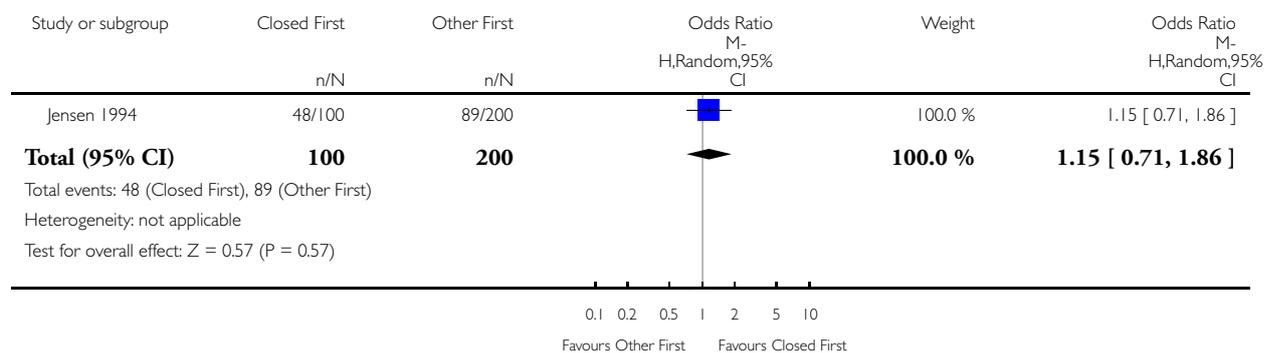


Analysis 78.1. Comparison 78 Closed-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 78 Closed-ended items first vs. other items first

Outcome: 1 First response

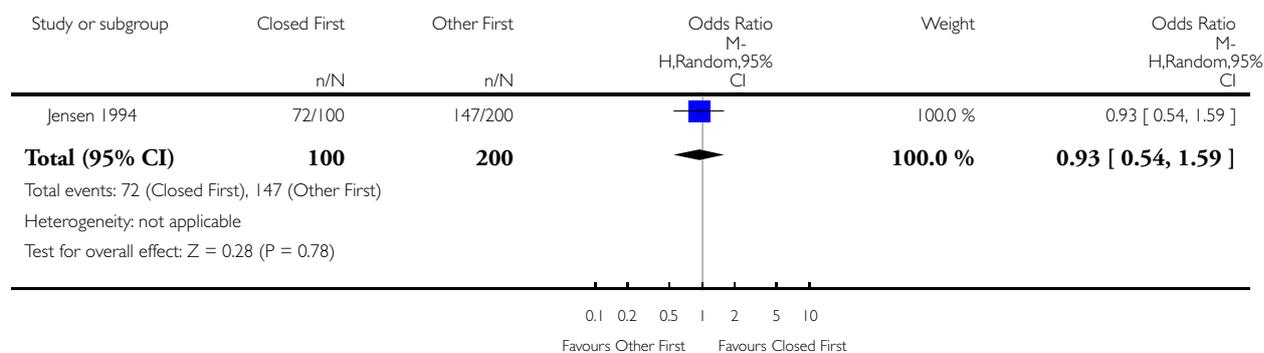


Analysis 78.2. Comparison 78 Closed-ended items first vs. other items first, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 78 Closed-ended items first vs. other items first

Outcome: 2 Final response

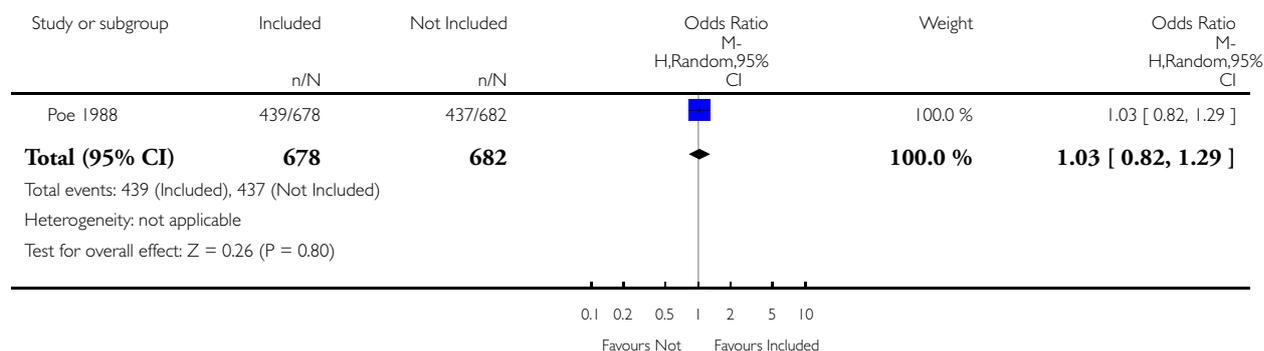


Analysis 79.2. Comparison 79 'Don't know' boxes included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 79 'Don't know' boxes included vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

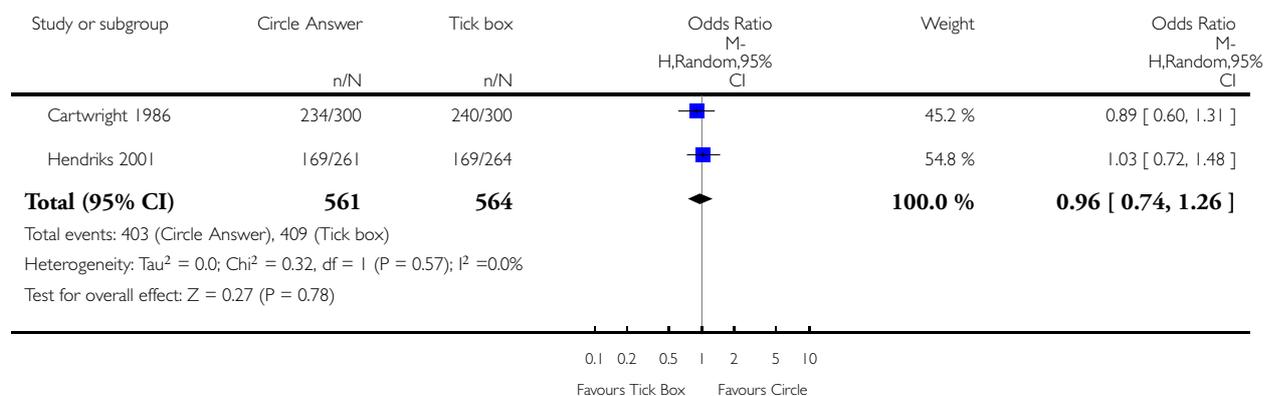


Analysis 80.2. Comparison 80 Circle answer vs. tick box format, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 80 Circle answer vs. tick box format

Outcome: 2 Final response

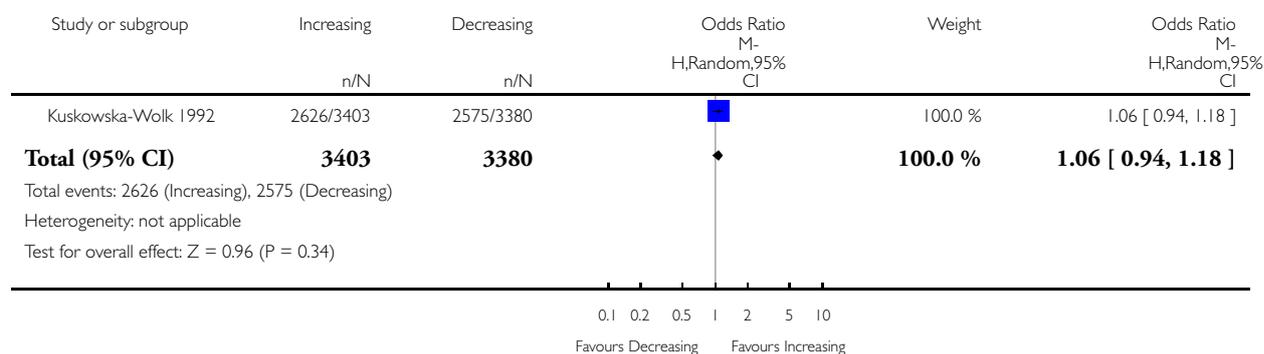


Analysis 81.2. Comparison 81 Response options listed in increasing vs. decreasing order, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 81 Response options listed in increasing vs. decreasing order

Outcome: 2 Final response

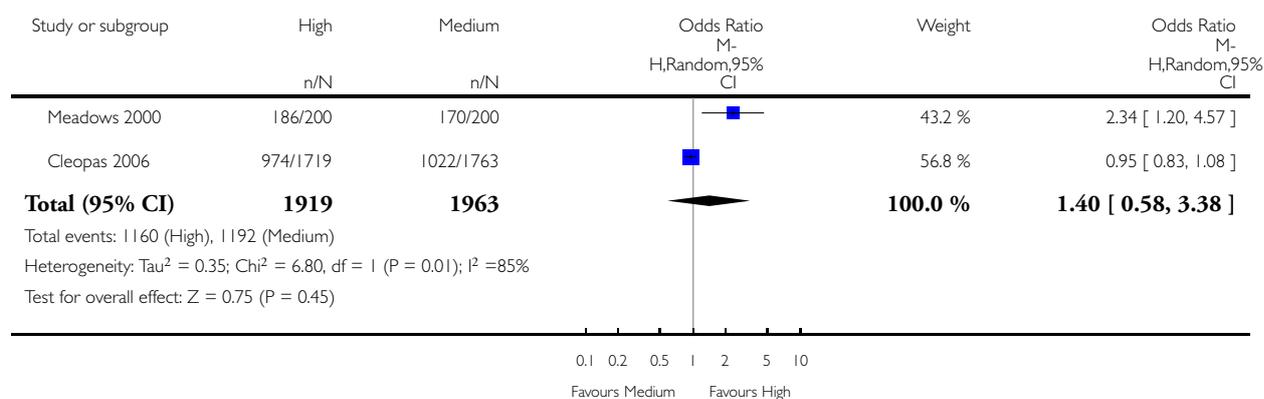


Analysis 82.2. Comparison 82 High vs. medium frequency response alternatives, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 82 High vs. medium frequency response alternatives

Outcome: 2 Final response

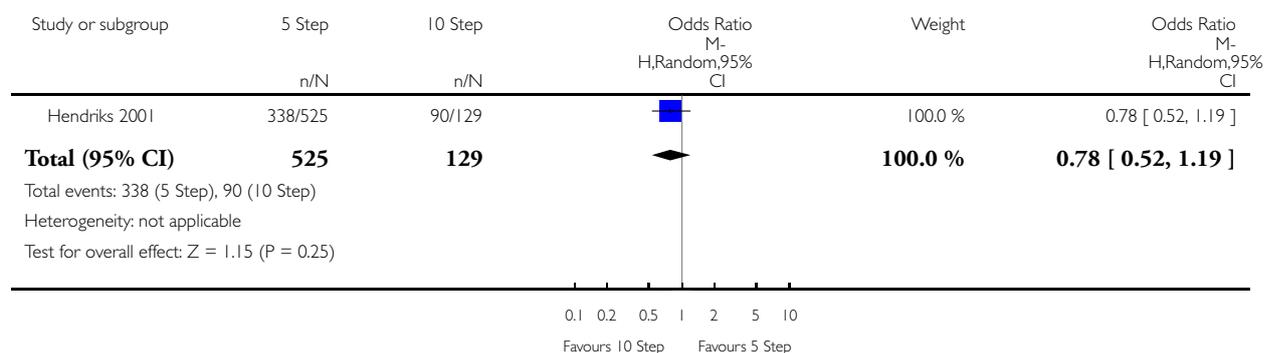


Analysis 83.2. Comparison 83 5-step vs. 10-step response scale, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 83 5-step vs. 10-step response scale

Outcome: 2 Final response

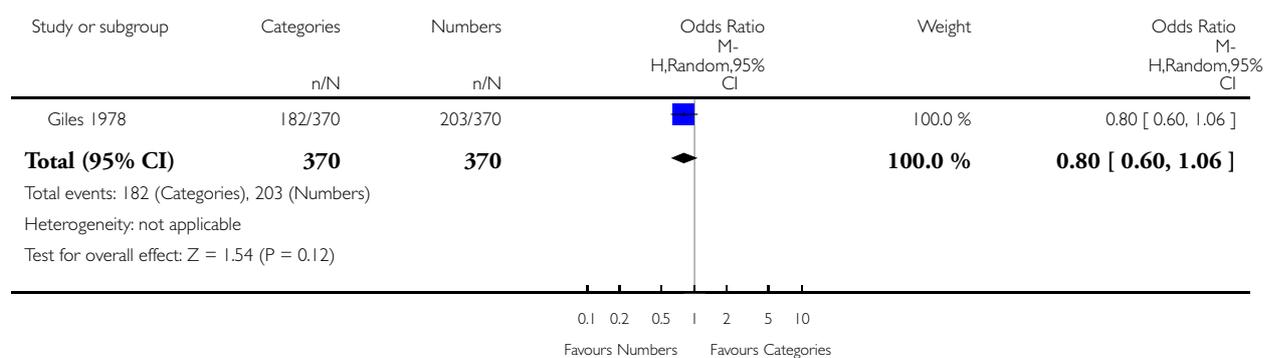


Analysis 84.1. Comparison 84 Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 84 Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only

Outcome: 1 First response

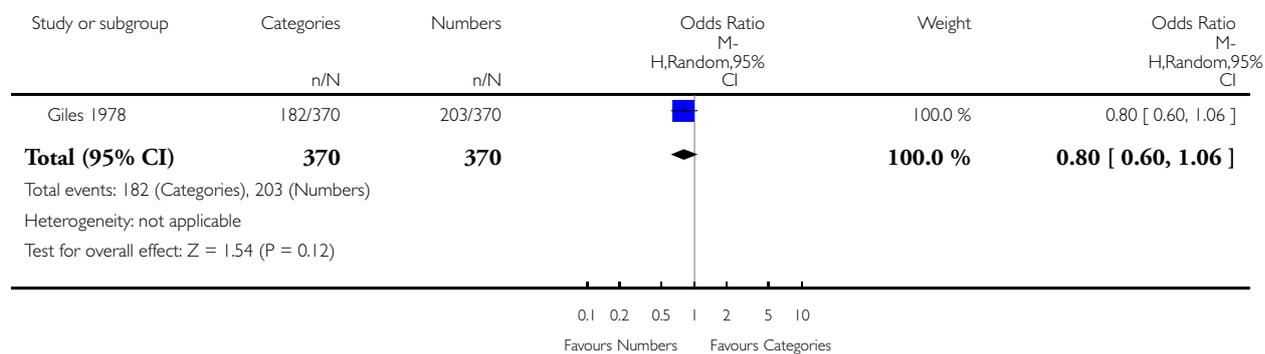


Analysis 84.2. Comparison 84 Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 84 Check categories or specify numbers vs. check categories only

Outcome: 2 Final response

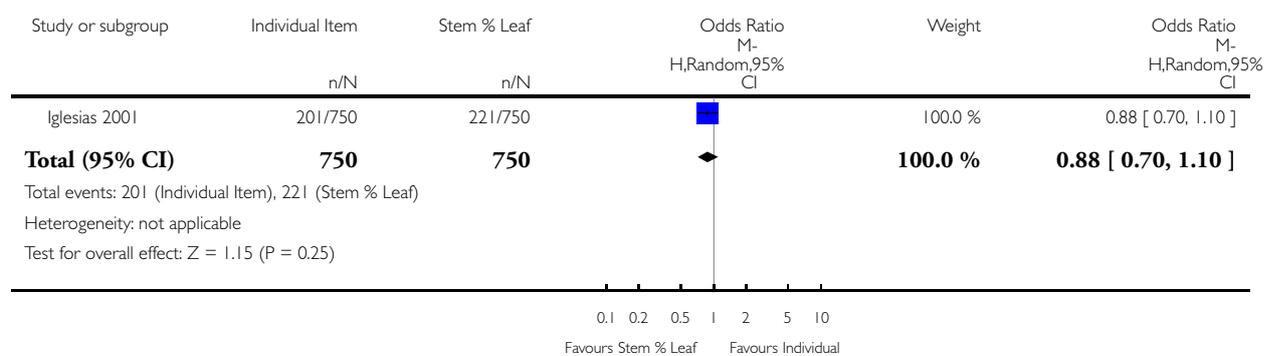


Analysis 85.2. Comparison 85 Individual item vs. stem & leaf format, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 85 Individual item vs. stem % leaf format

Outcome: 2 Final response

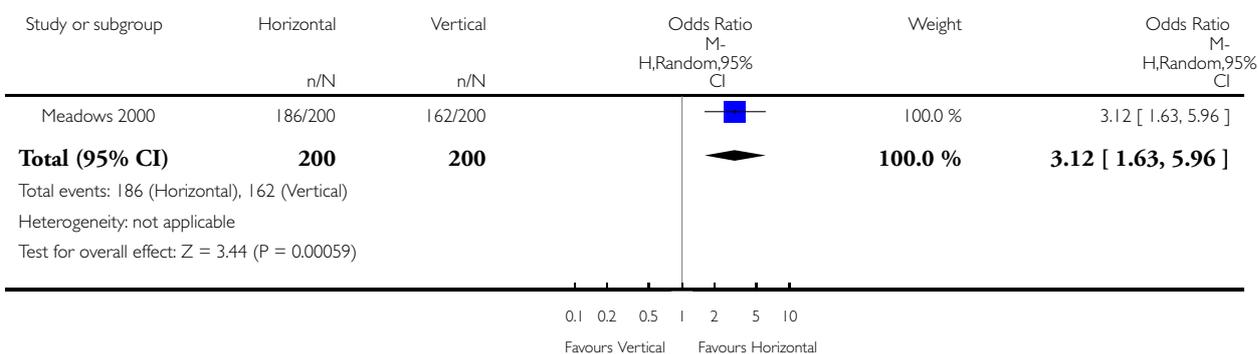


Analysis 86.2. Comparison 86 Horizontal vs. vertical orientation of response options, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 86 Horizontal vs. vertical orientation of response options

Outcome: 2 Final response

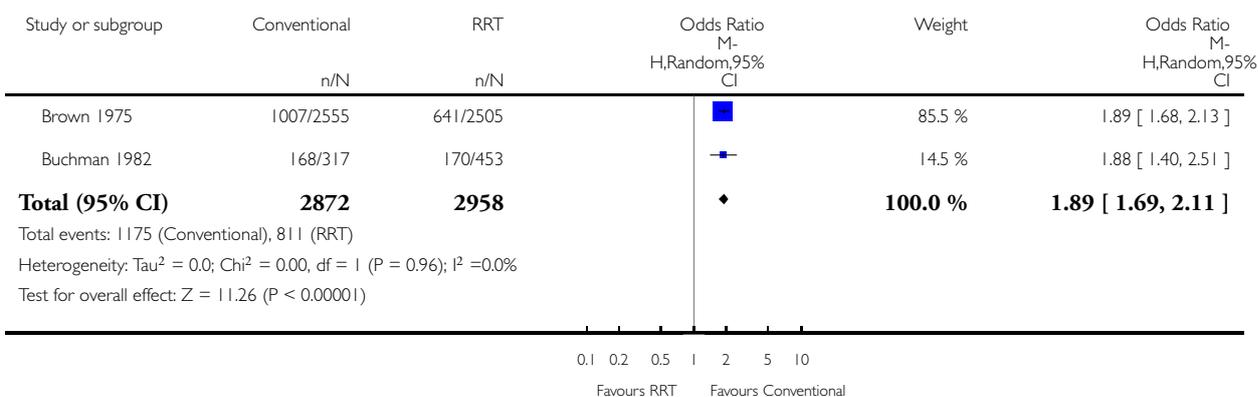


Analysis 87.1. Comparison 87 Conventional vs. randomised response technique, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 87 Conventional vs. randomised response technique

Outcome: 1 First response

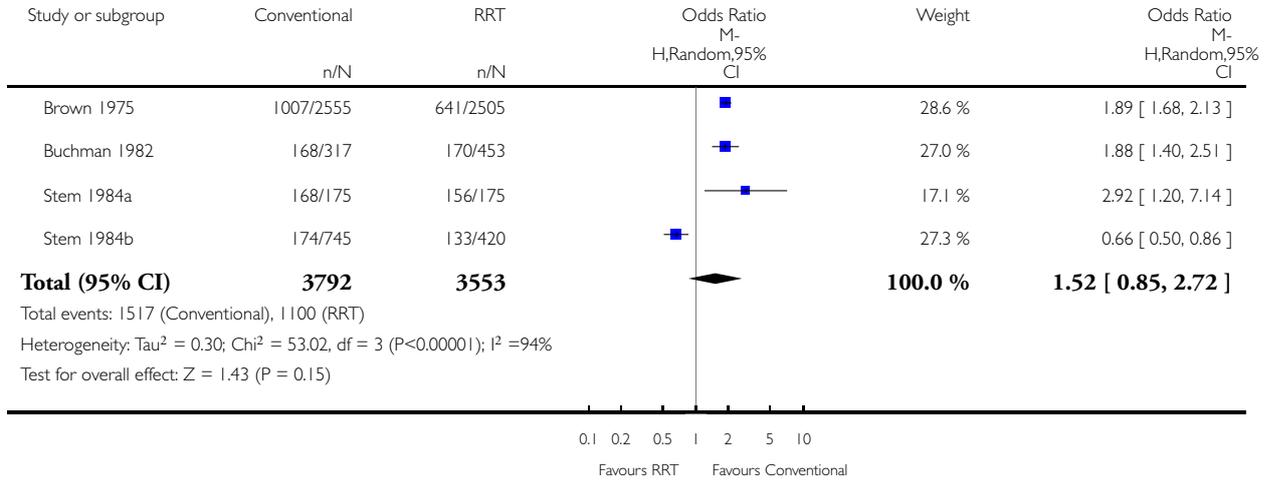


Analysis 87.2. Comparison 87 Conventional vs. randomised response technique, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 87 Conventional vs. randomised response technique

Outcome: 2 Final response

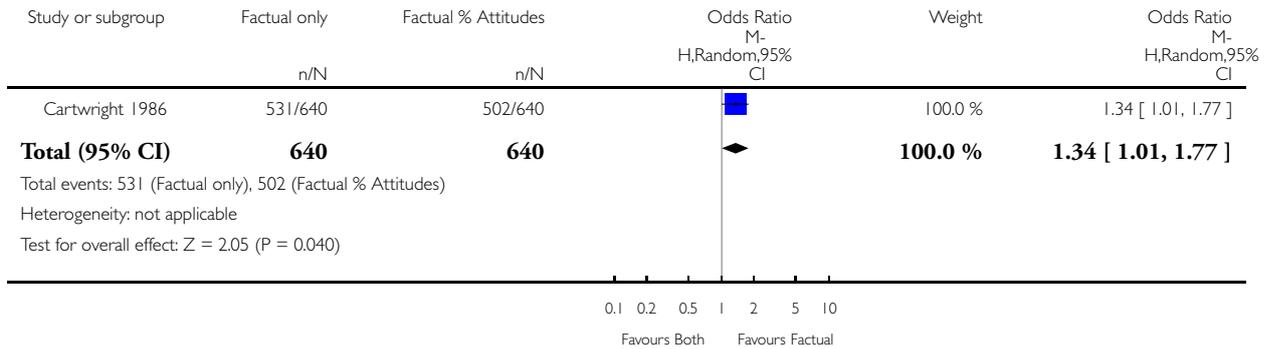


Analysis 88.2. Comparison 88 Factual questions only vs. factual and attitudinal questions, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 88 Factual questions only vs. factual and attitudinal questions

Outcome: 2 Final response

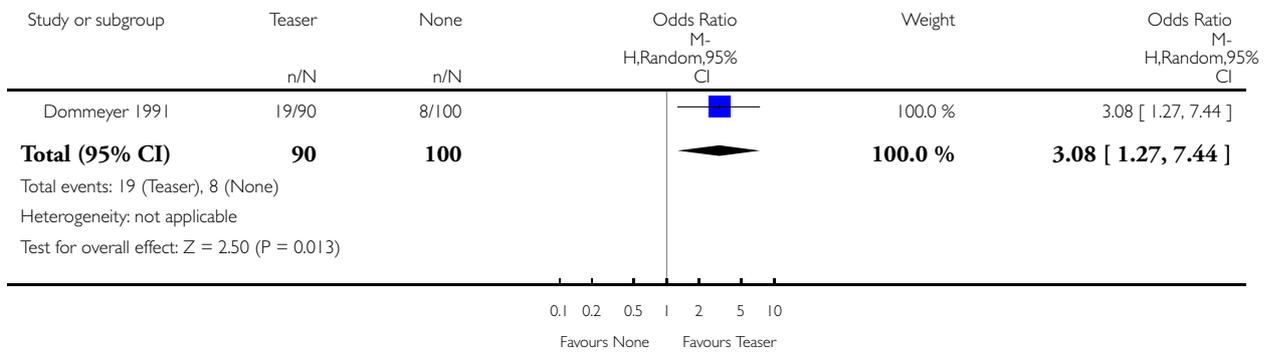


Analysis 89.1. Comparison 89 Teaser on envelope vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 89 Teaser on envelope vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

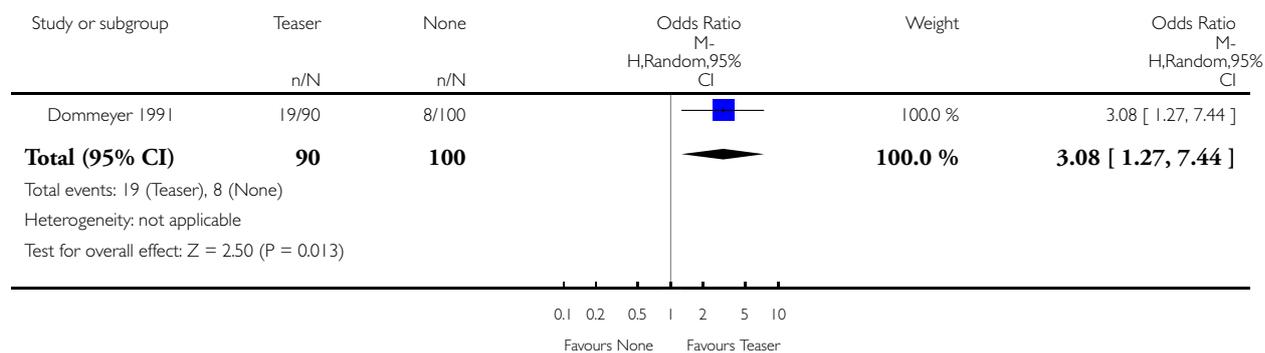


Analysis 89.2. Comparison 89 Teaser on envelope vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 89 Teaser on envelope vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

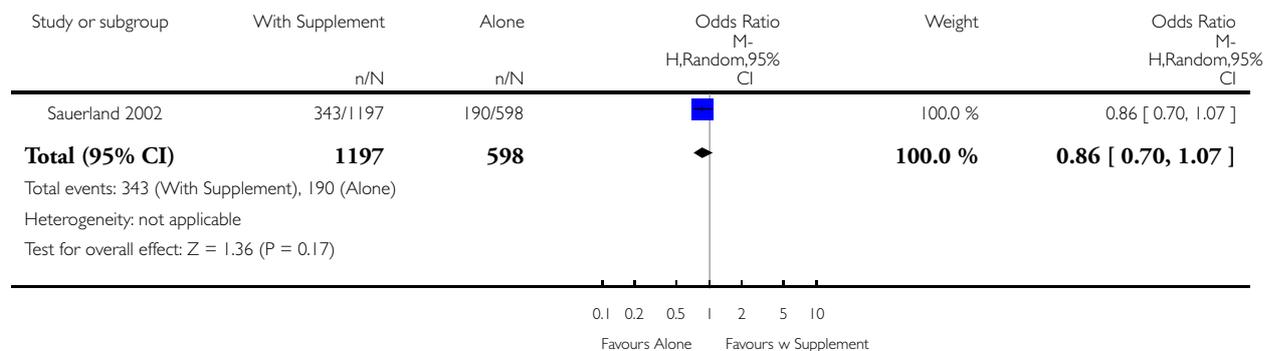


Analysis 90.2. Comparison 90 Questionnaire sent with supplement vs. alone, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 90 Questionnaire sent with supplement vs. alone

Outcome: 2 Final response

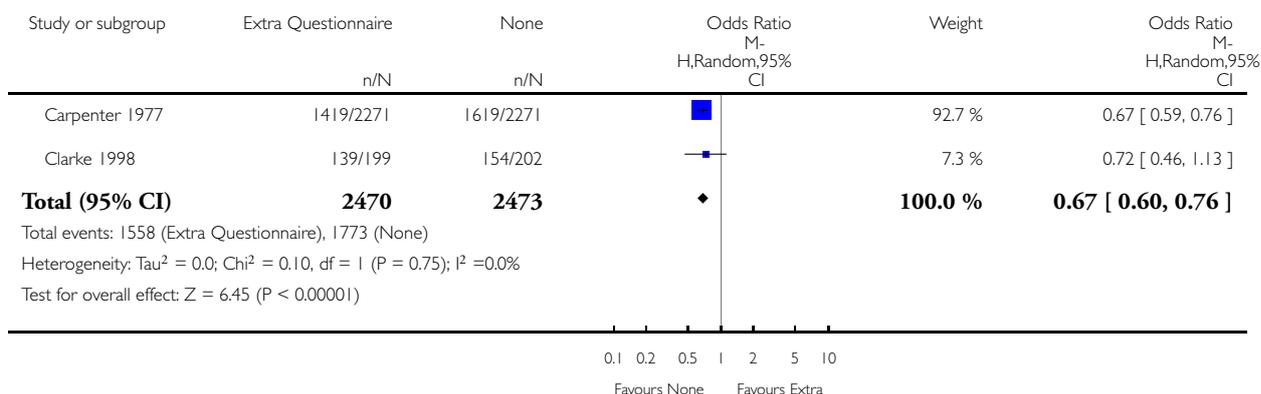


Analysis 91.2. Comparison 91 Extra questionnaire for relatives included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 91 Extra questionnaire for relatives included vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

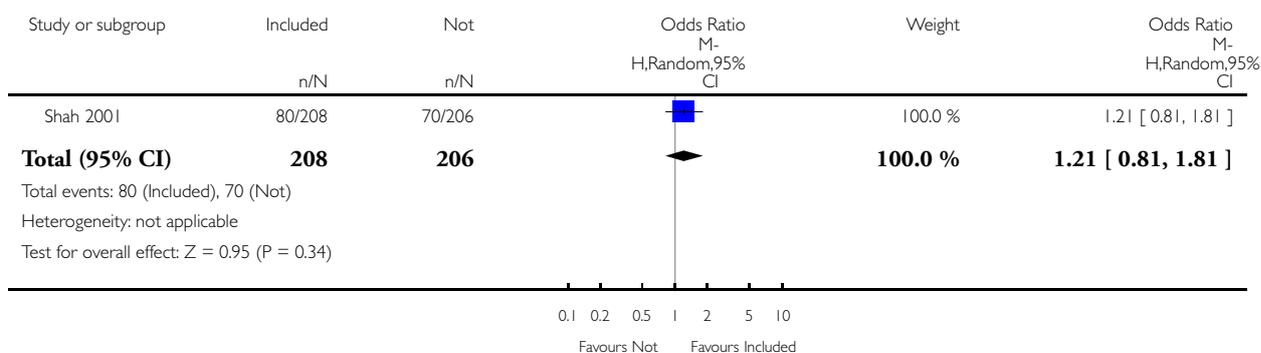


Analysis 92.1. Comparison 92 Consent form included vs. not, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 92 Consent form included vs. not

Outcome: 1 First response

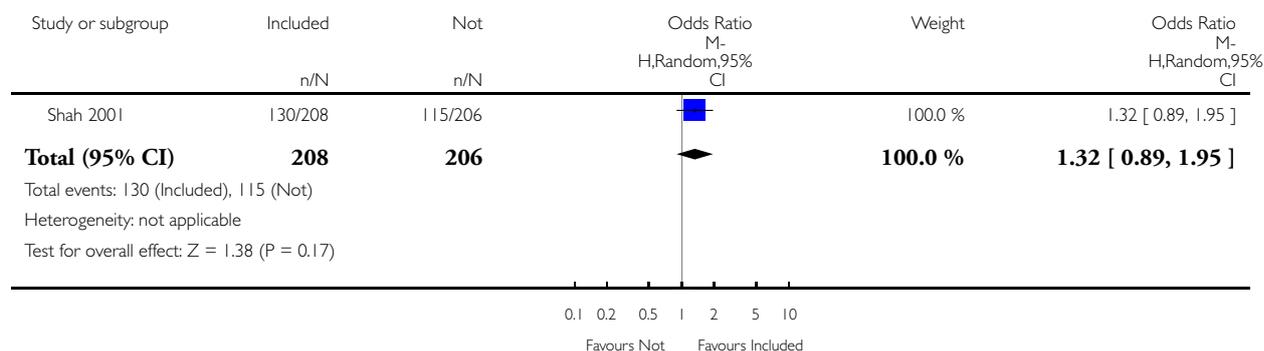


Analysis 92.2. Comparison 92 Consent form included vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 92 Consent form included vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

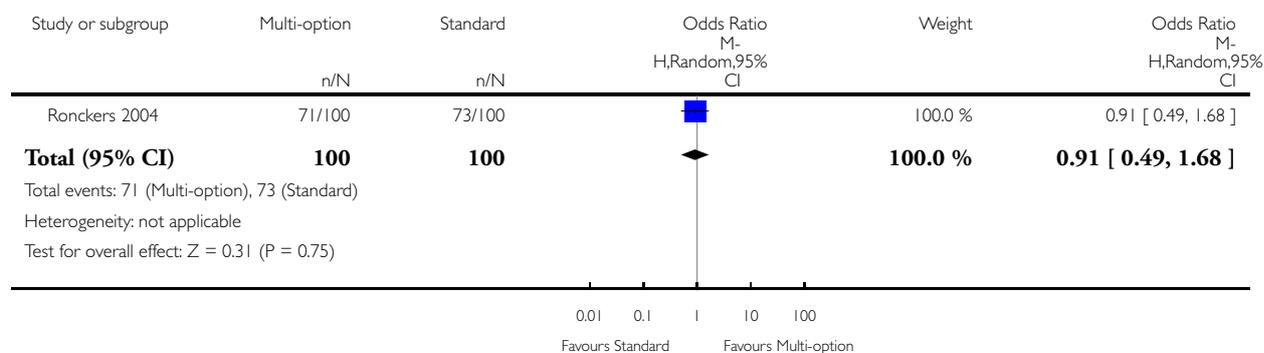


Analysis 93.2. Comparison 93 Multi-option vs. standard consent form, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 93 Multi-option vs. standard consent form

Outcome: 2 Final response

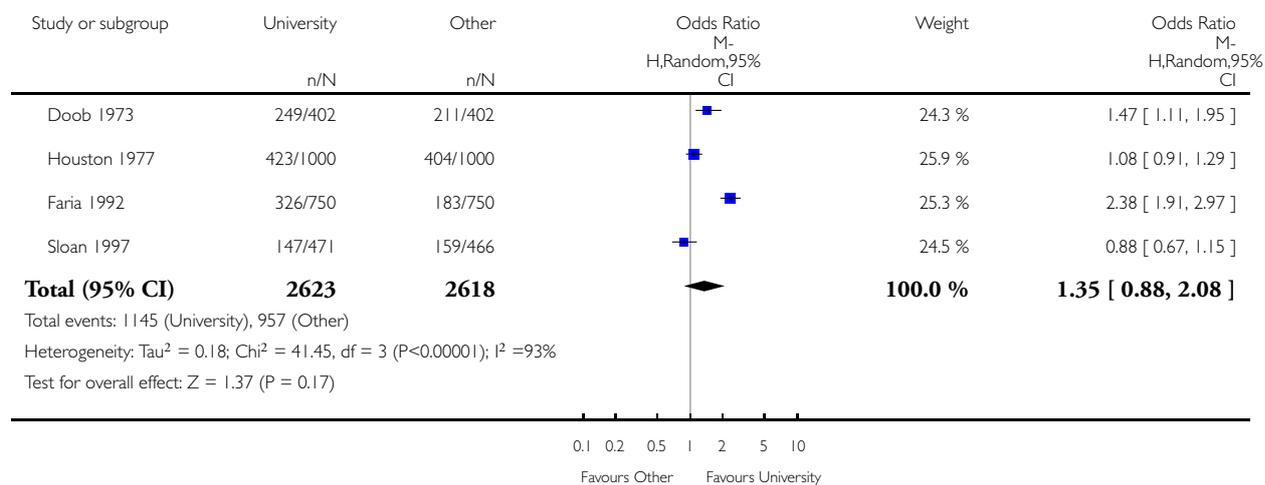


Analysis 94.1. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 94 University sponsor/source vs. other

Outcome: 1 First response

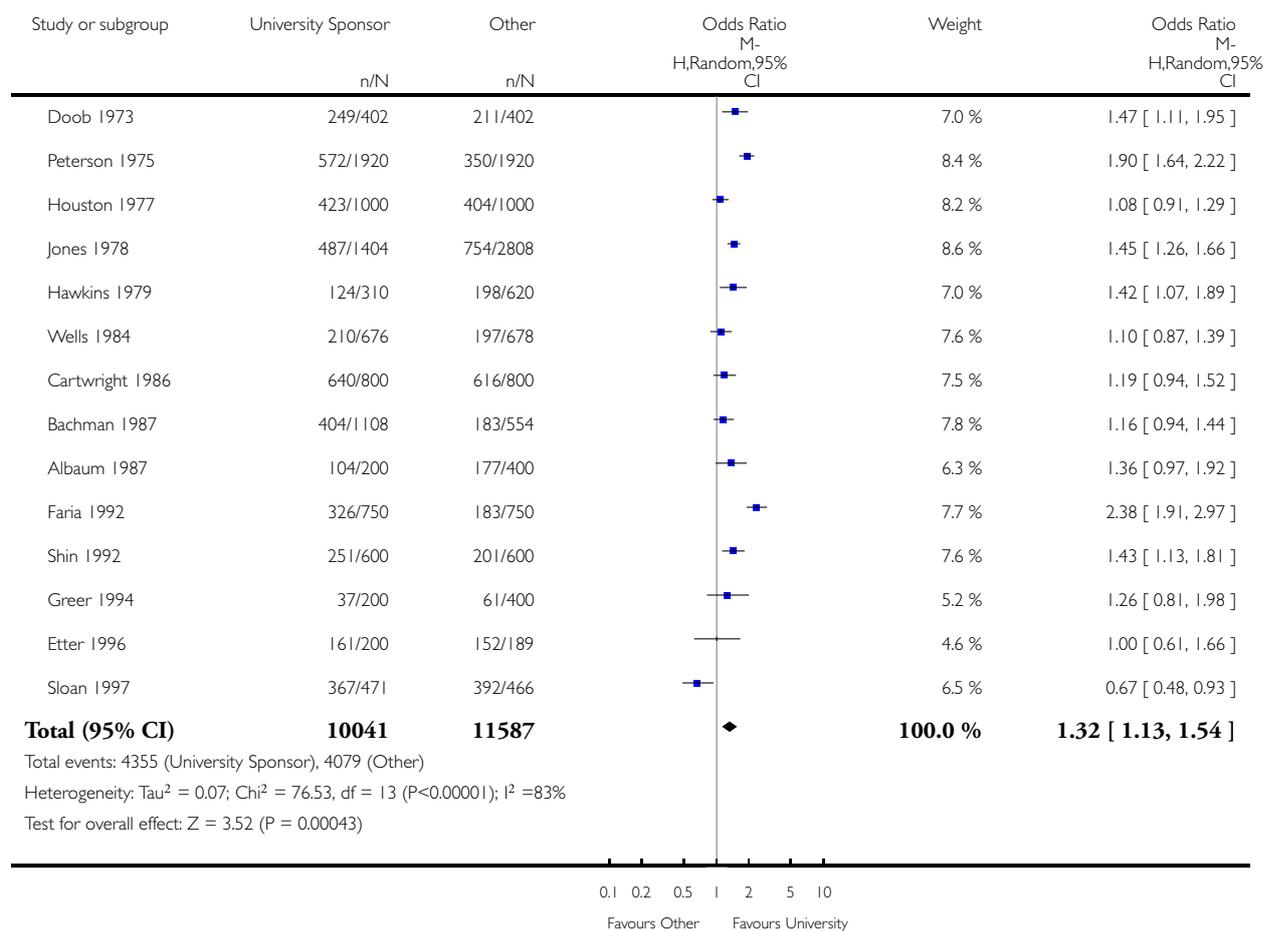


Analysis 94.2. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 94 University sponsor/source vs. other

Outcome: 2 Final response

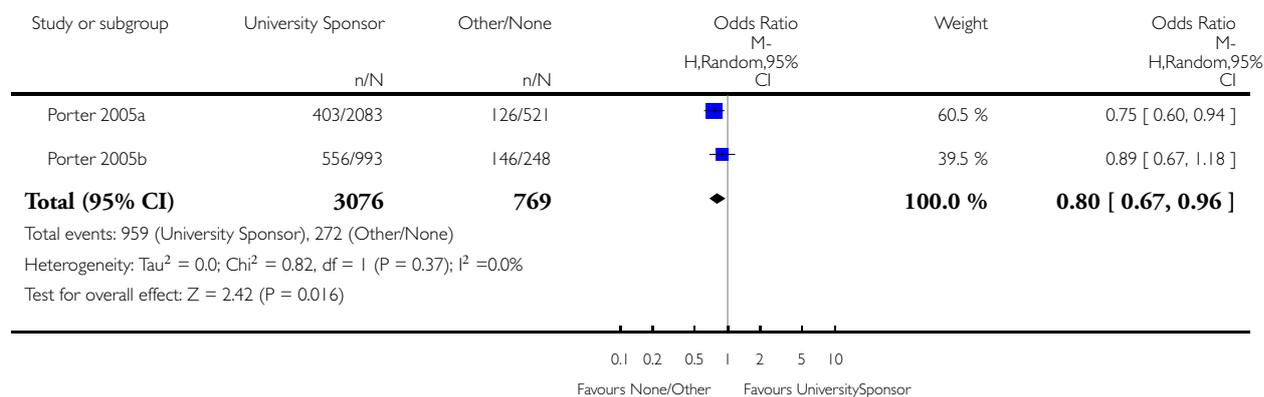


Analysis 94.3. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 94 University sponsor/source vs. other

Outcome: 3 e - Login

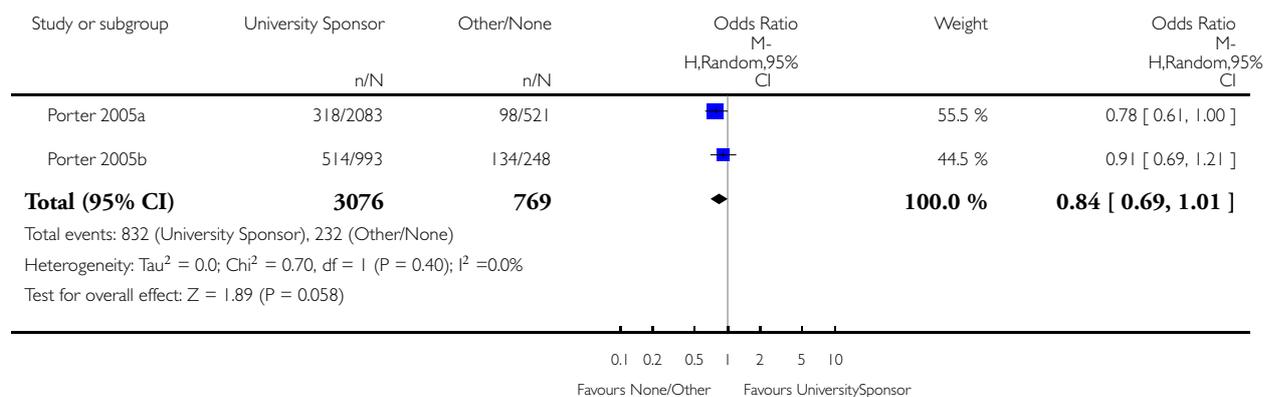


Analysis 94.4. Comparison 94 University sponsor/source vs. other, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 94 University sponsor/source vs. other

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

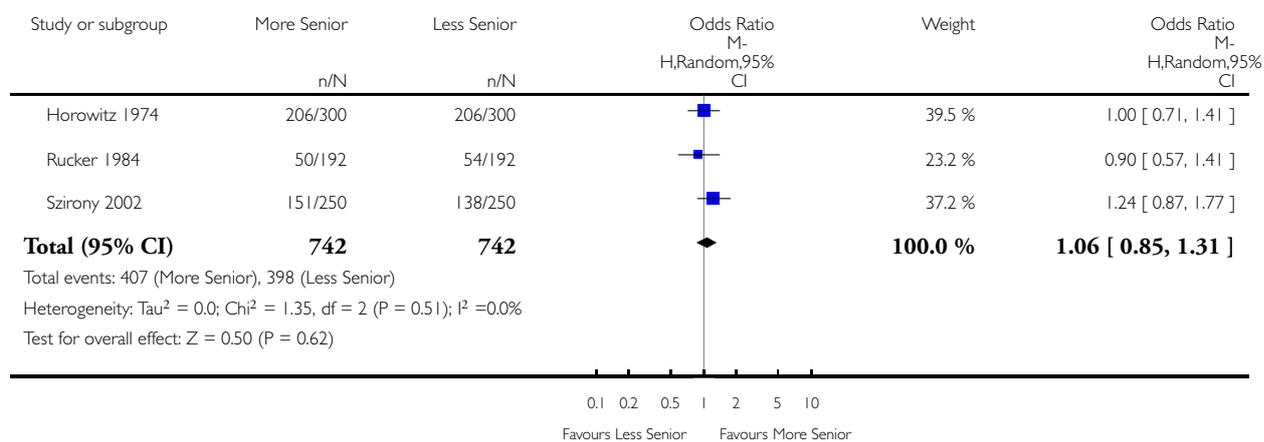


Analysis 95.1. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person

Outcome: 1 First response

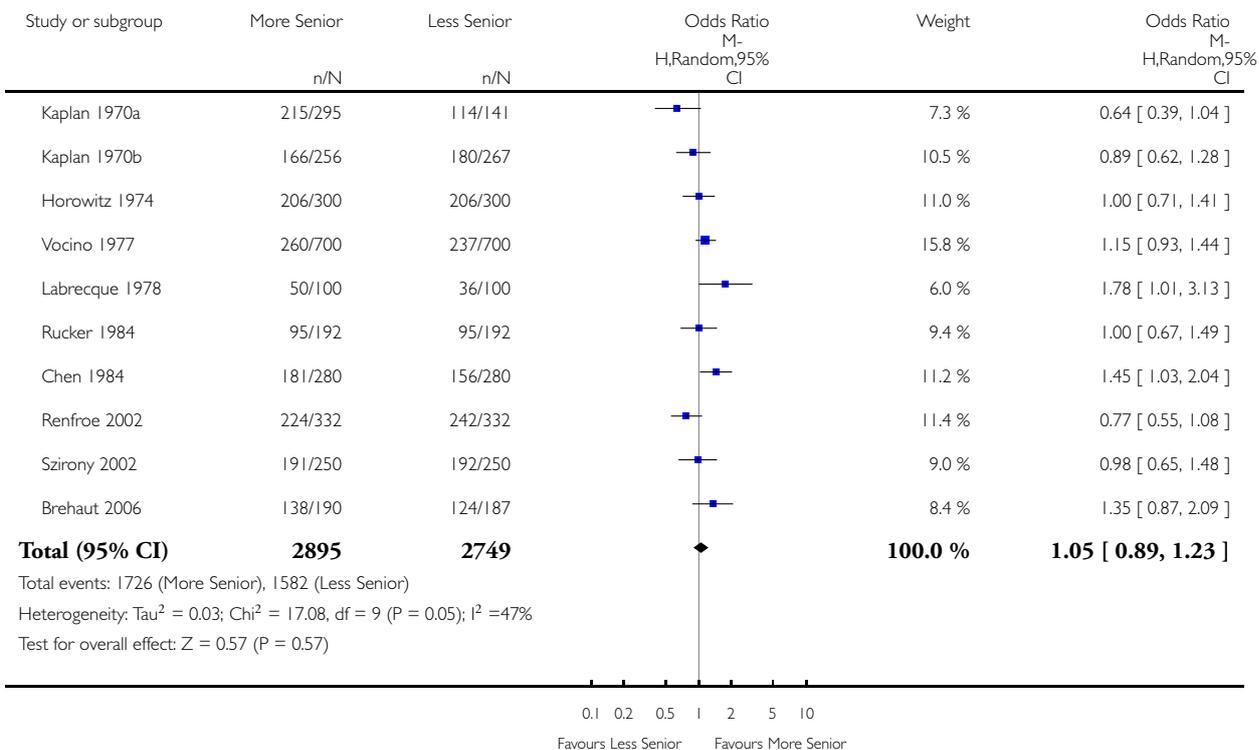


Analysis 95.2. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person

Outcome: 2 Final response

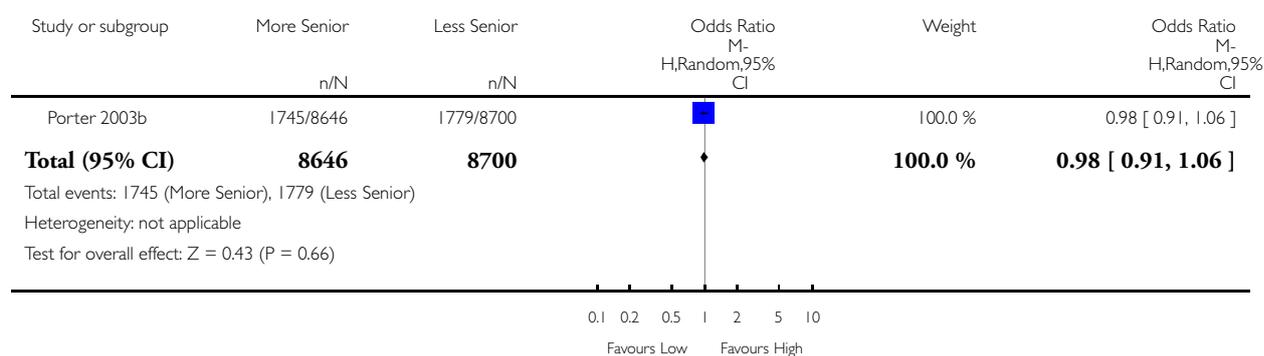


Analysis 95.3. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person

Outcome: 3 e - Login

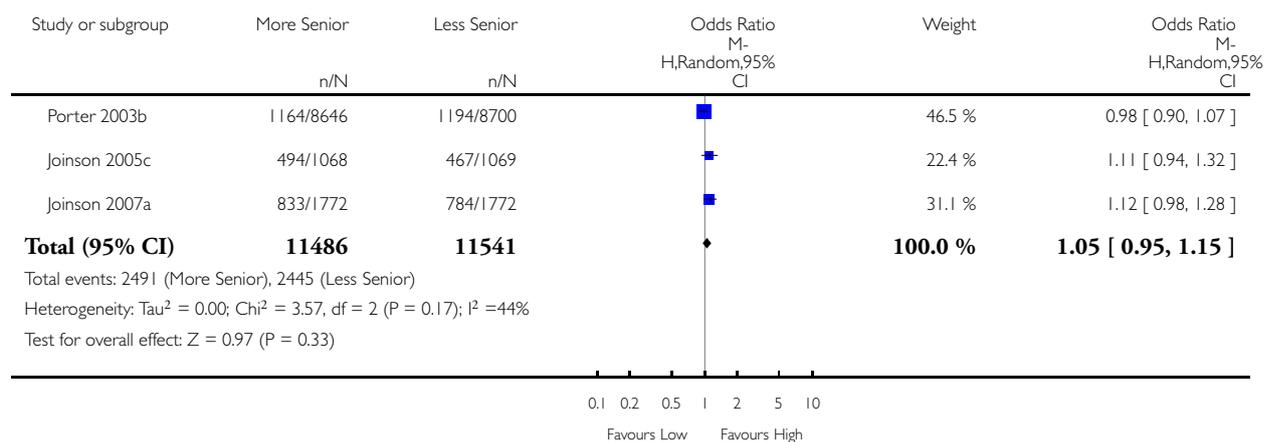


Analysis 95.4. Comparison 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 95 Sent or signed by more vs. less senior/well-known person

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

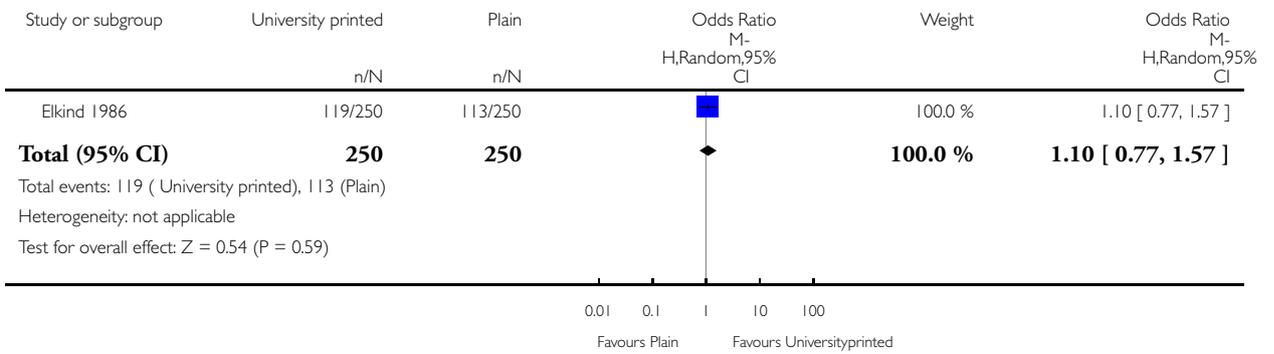


Analysis 96.1. Comparison 96 University printed envelope vs. plain, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 96 University printed envelope vs. plain

Outcome: 1 First response

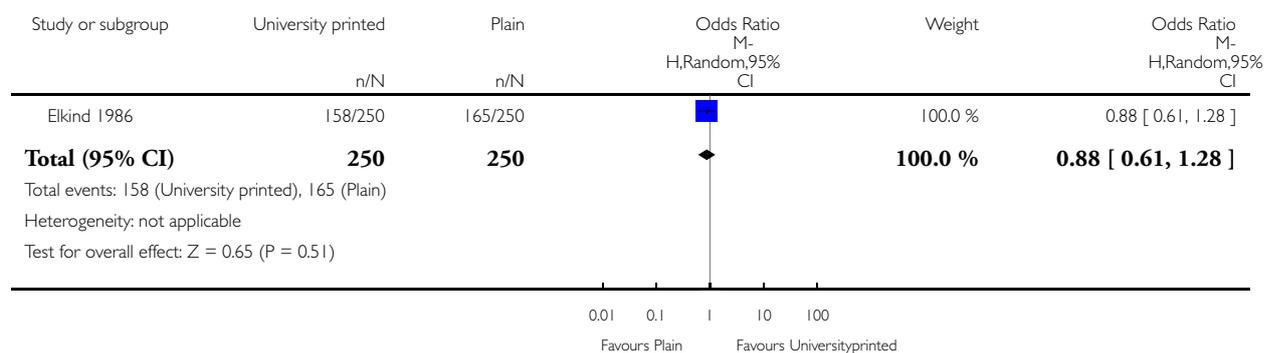


Analysis 96.2. Comparison 96 University printed envelope vs. plain, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 96 University printed envelope vs. plain

Outcome: 2 Final response

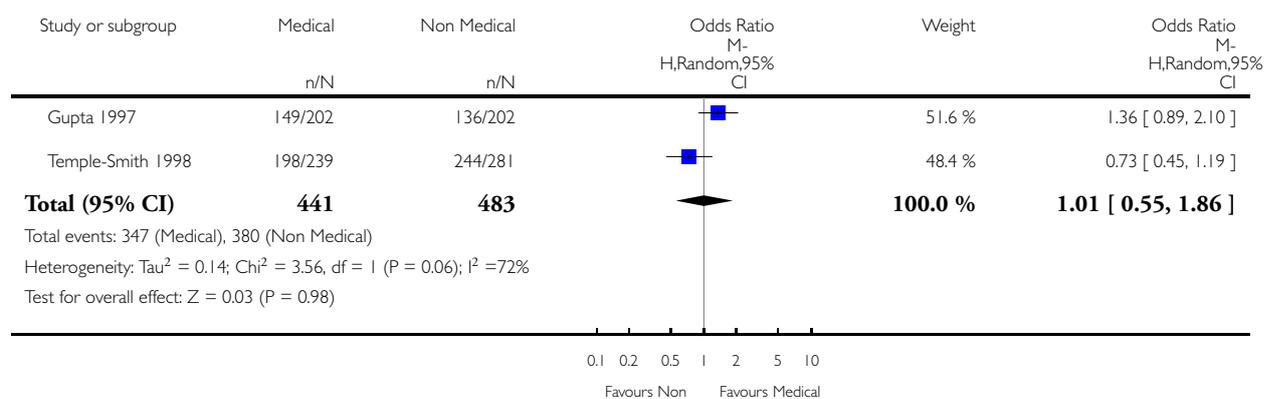


Analysis 97.2. Comparison 97 Pre-contact by medical researcher vs. non medical researcher, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 97 Pre-contact by medical researcher vs. non medical researcher

Outcome: 2 Final response

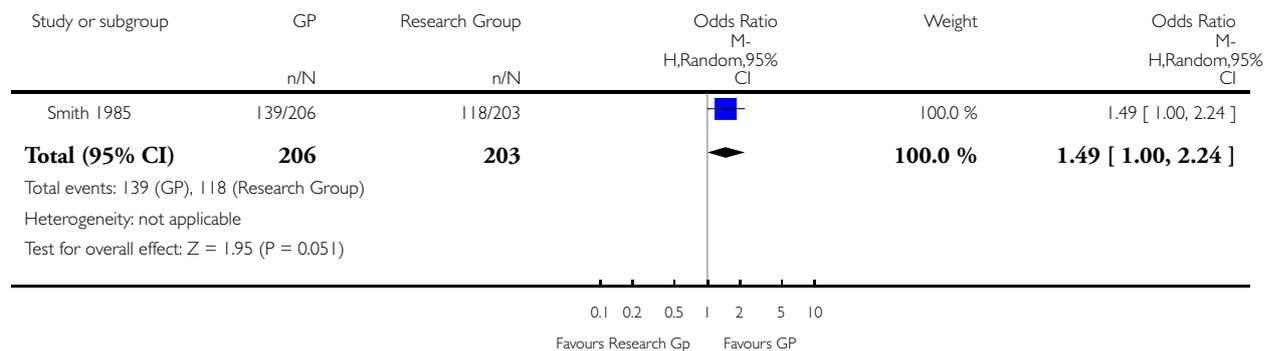


Analysis 98.1. Comparison 98 Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 98 Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group

Outcome: 1 First response

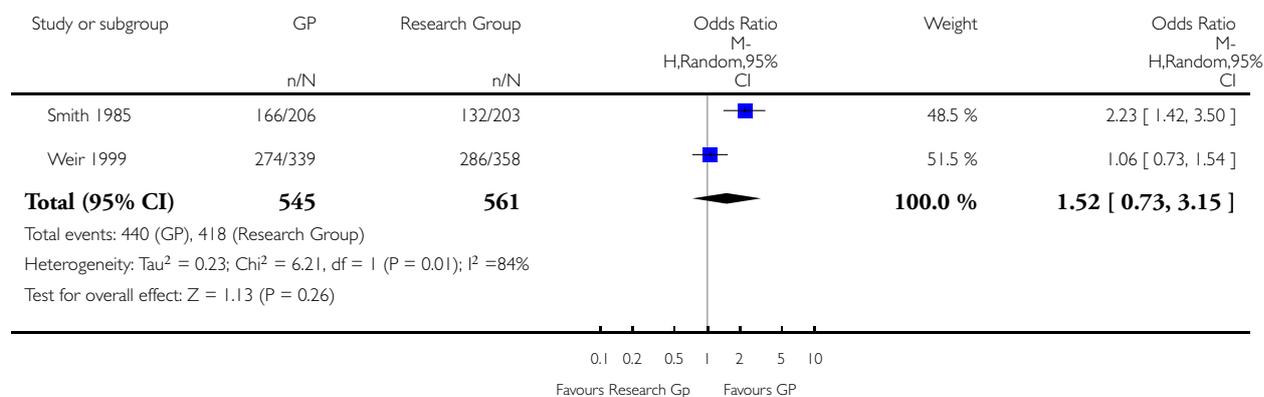


Analysis 98.2. Comparison 98 Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 98 Q'aire sent by GP vs. by research group

Outcome: 2 Final response

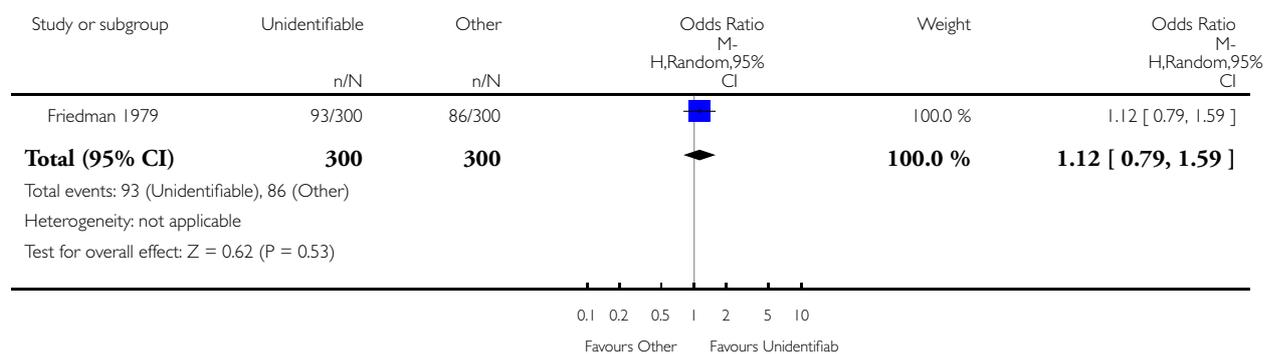


Analysis 99.1. Comparison 99 Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 99 Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name

Outcome: 1 First response

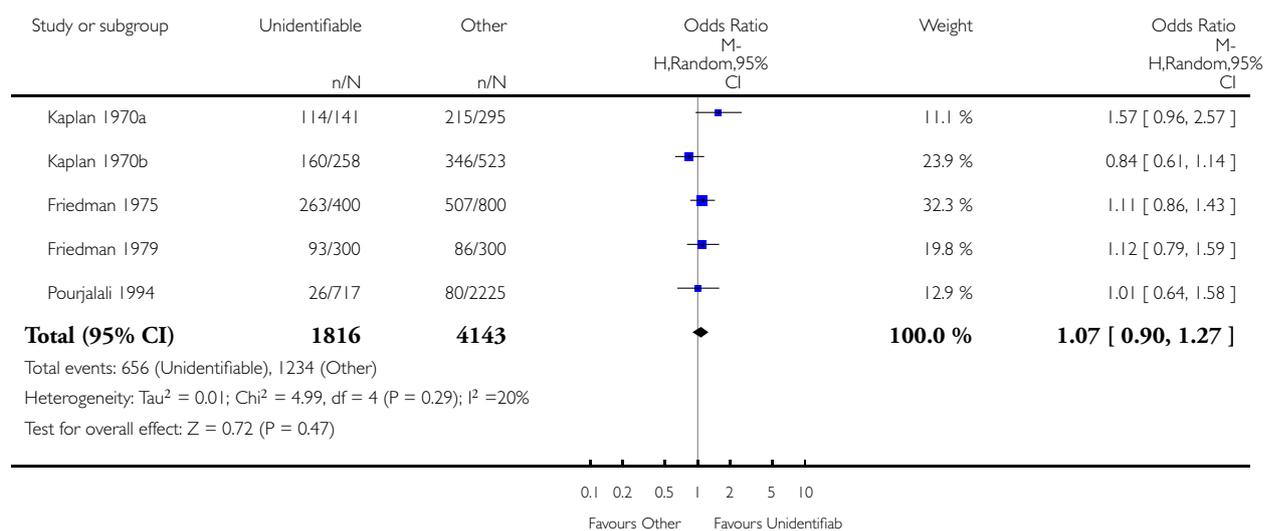


Analysis 99.2. Comparison 99 Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 99 Ethnically unidentifiable/white vs. other name

Outcome: 2 Final response

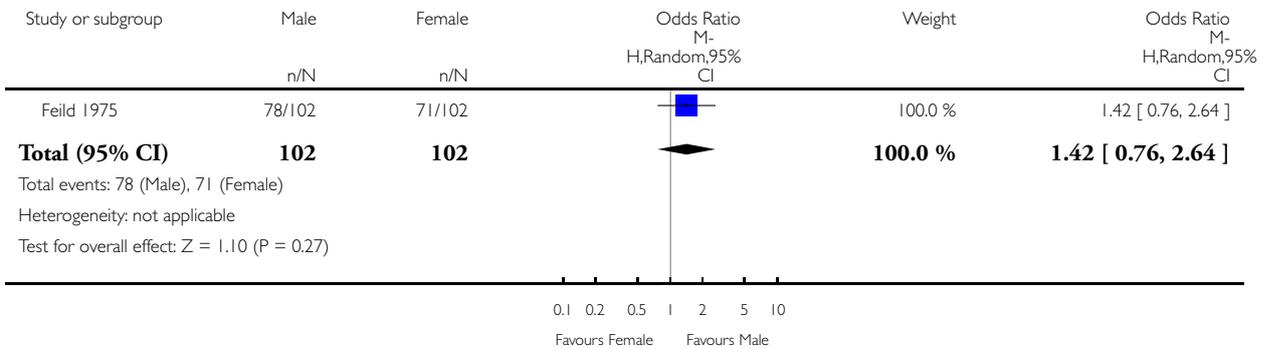


Analysis 100.1. Comparison 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature

Outcome: 1 First response

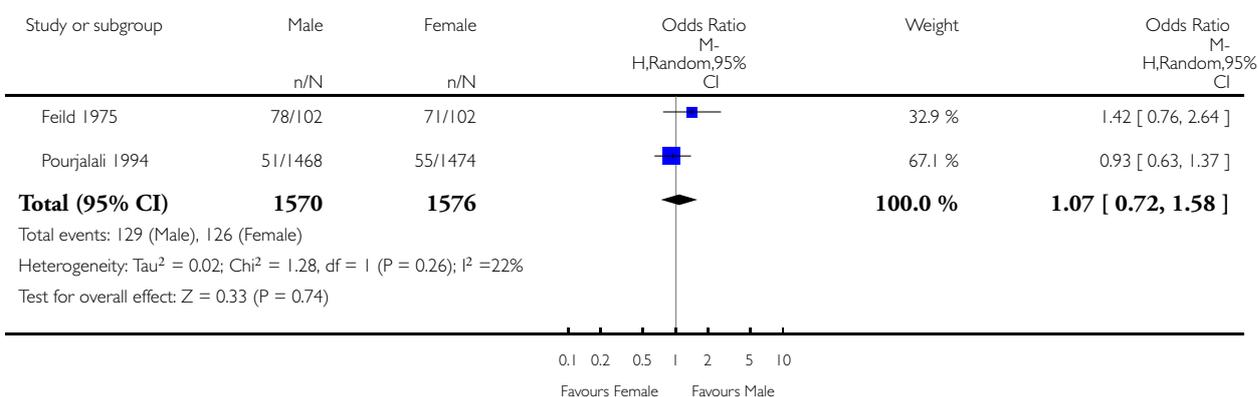


Analysis 100.2. Comparison 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature

Outcome: 2 Final response

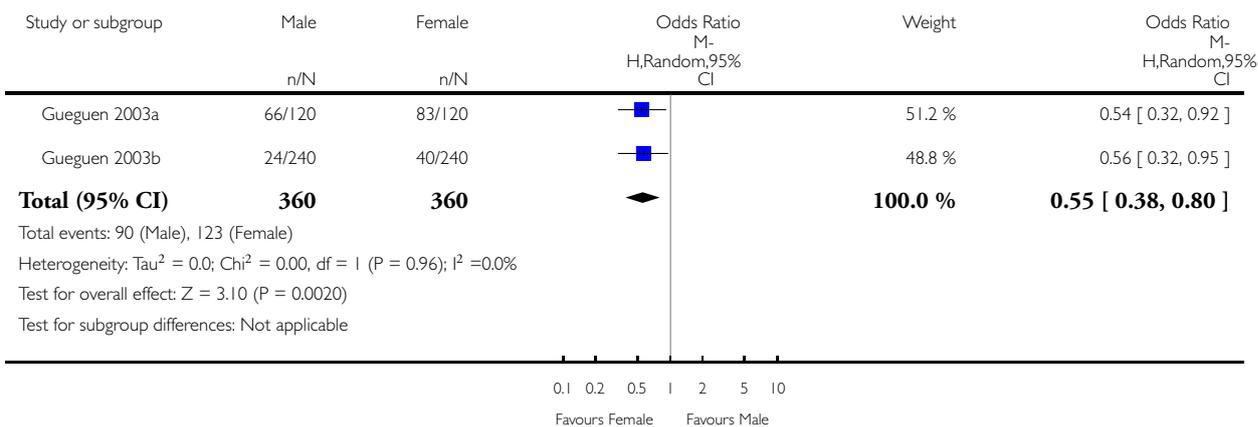


Analysis 100.4. Comparison 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 100 Male vs. female investigator or male vs. female signature

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

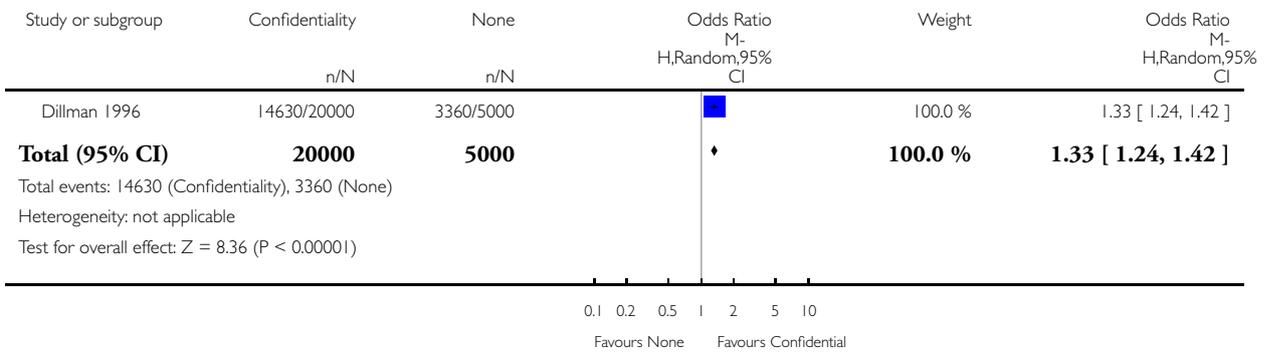


Analysis 101.2. Comparison 101 Assurance of confidentiality vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 101 Assurance of confidentiality vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

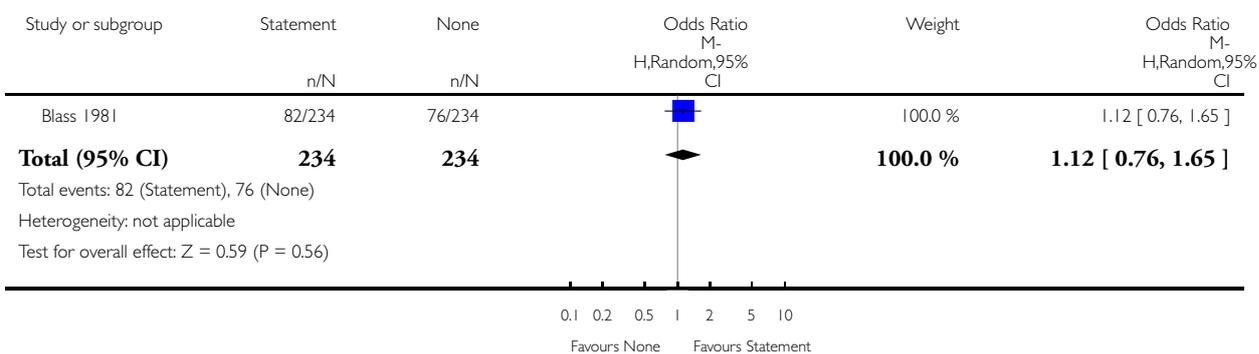


Analysis 102.1. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement

Outcome: 1 First response

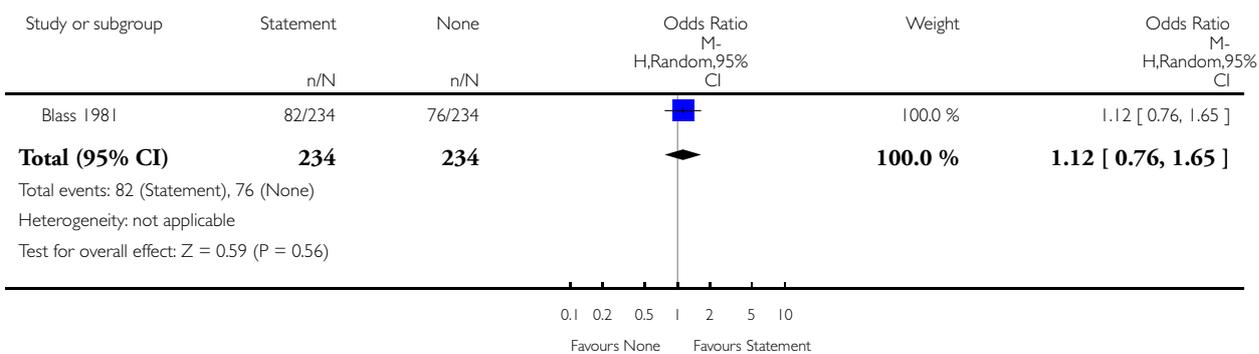


Analysis 102.2. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement

Outcome: 2 Final response

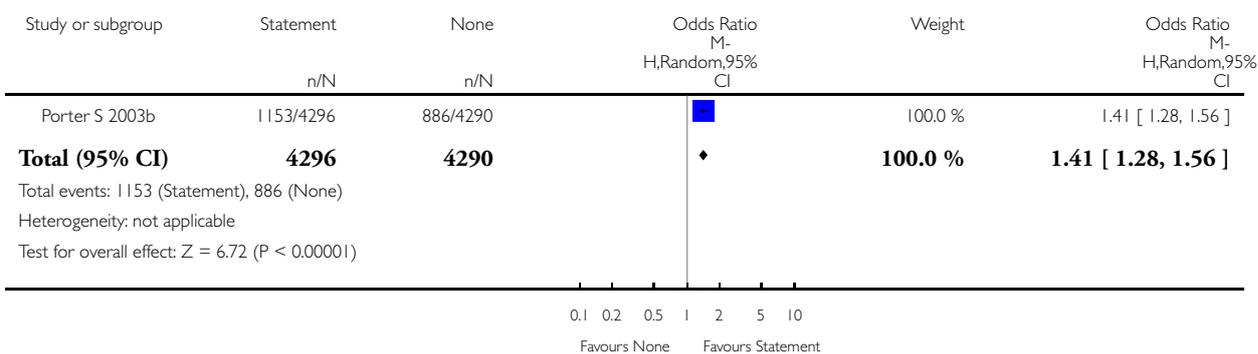


Analysis 102.3. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement

Outcome: 3 e - Login

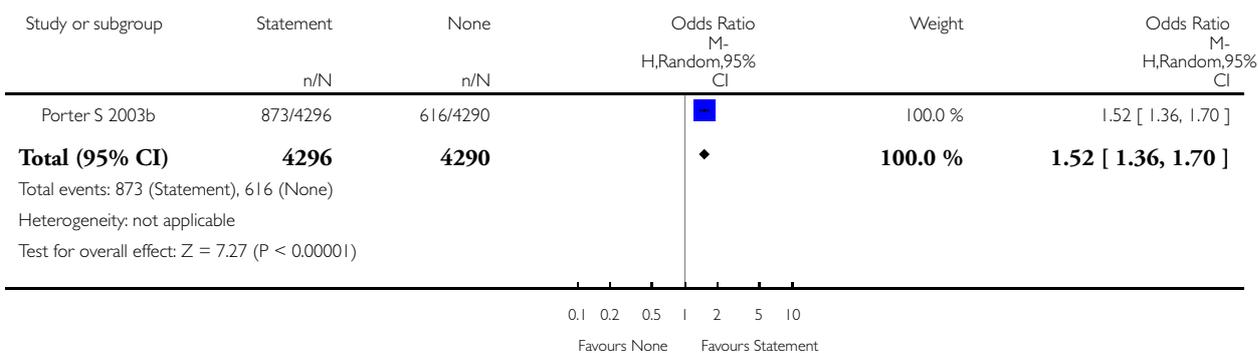


Analysis 102.4. Comparison 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 102 Included statement that others had responded vs. no statement

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

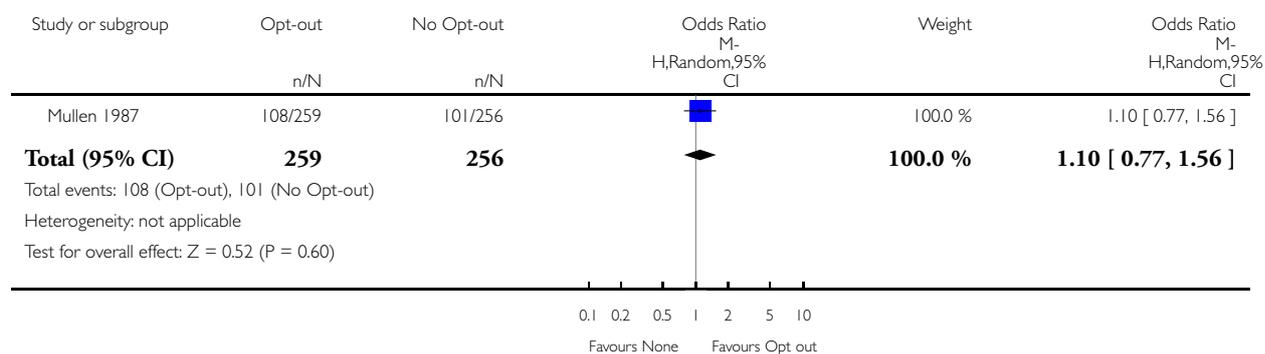


Analysis 103.1. Comparison 103 Choice to opt-out from study vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 103 Choice to opt-out from study vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

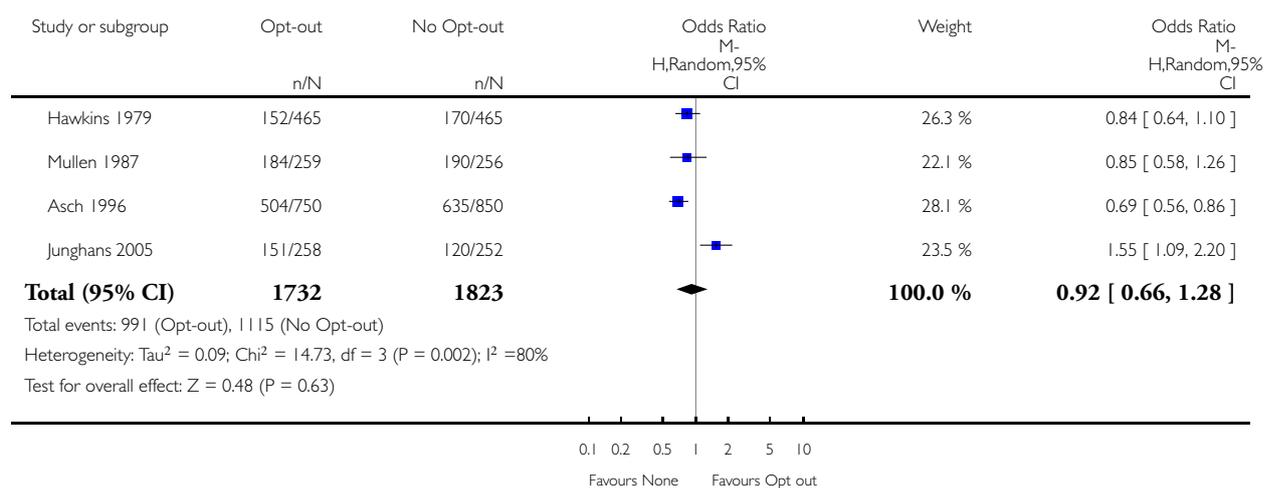


Analysis 103.2. Comparison 103 Choice to opt-out from study vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 103 Choice to opt-out from study vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

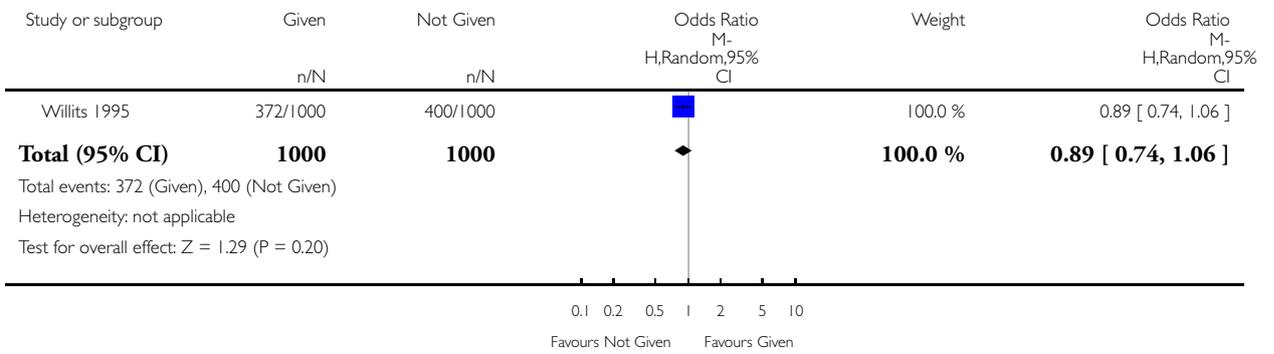


Analysis 104.2. Comparison 104 Instructions given vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 104 Instructions given vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

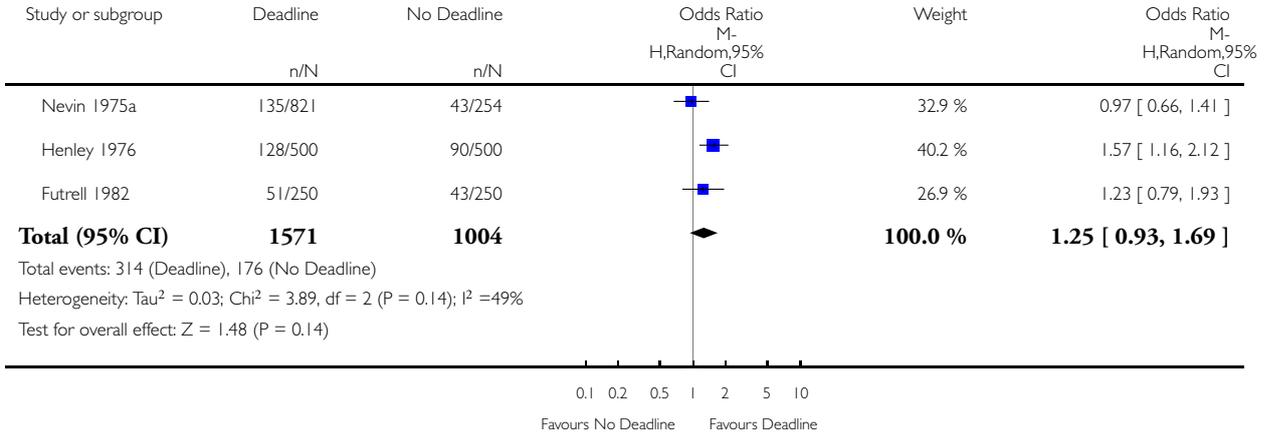


Analysis 105.1. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline

Outcome: 1 First response

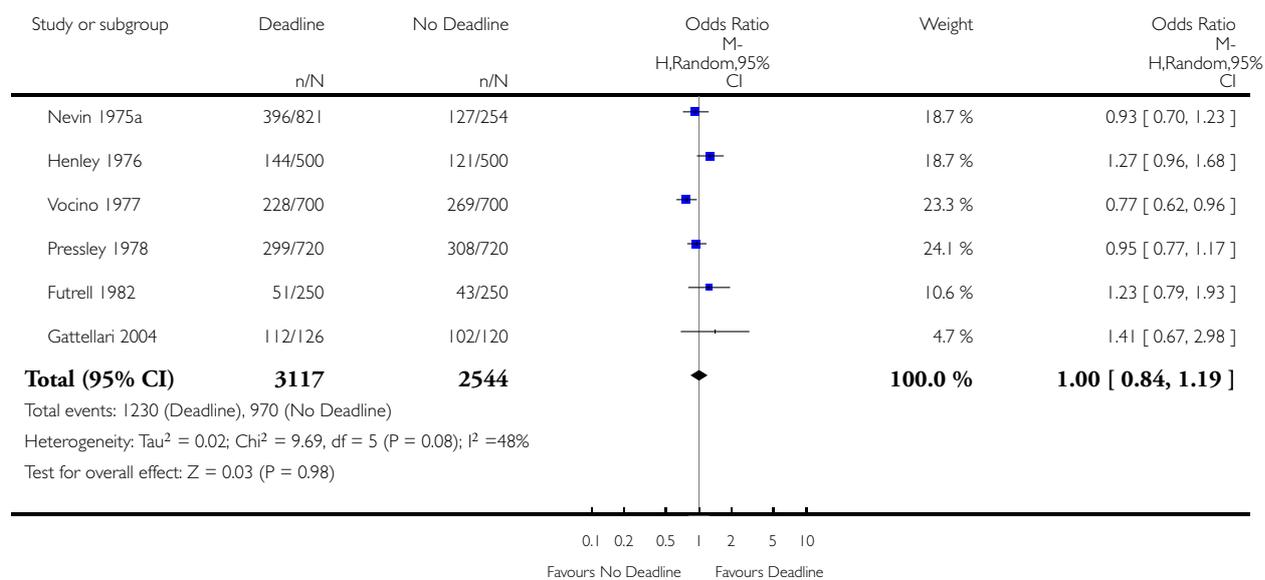


Analysis 105.2. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline

Outcome: 2 Final response

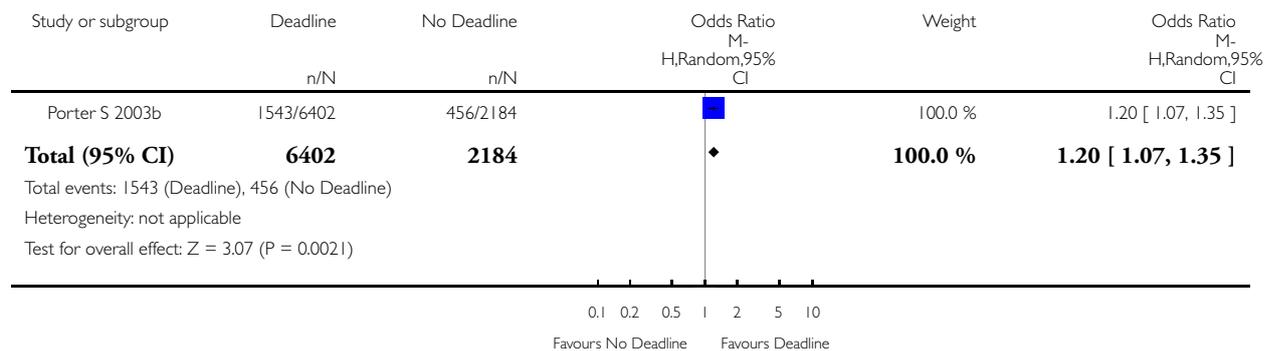


Analysis 105.3. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline

Outcome: 3 e - Login

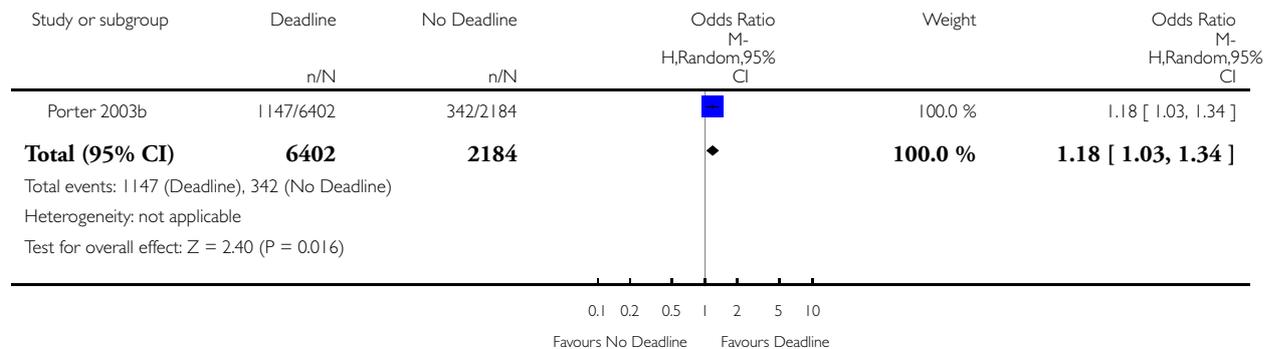


Analysis 105.4. Comparison 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 105 Response deadline given vs. no deadline

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

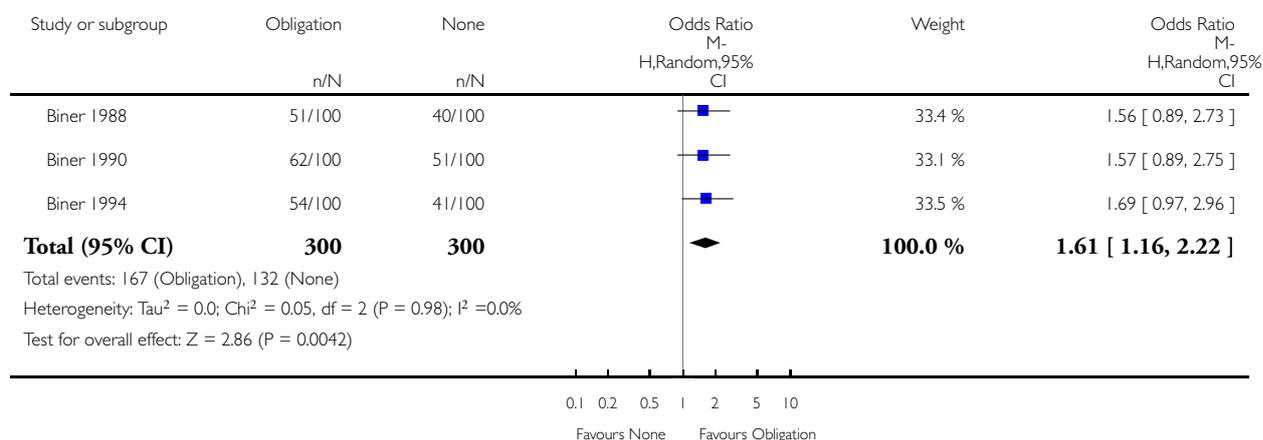


Analysis 106.1. Comparison 106 Mention of obligation to respond vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 106 Mention of obligation to respond vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

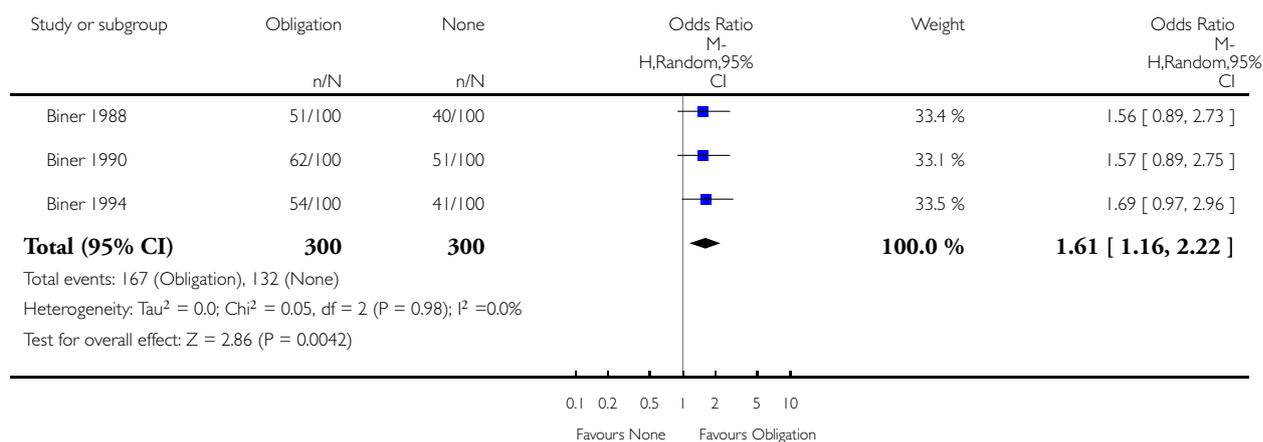


Analysis 106.2. Comparison 106 Mention of obligation to respond vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 106 Mention of obligation to respond vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

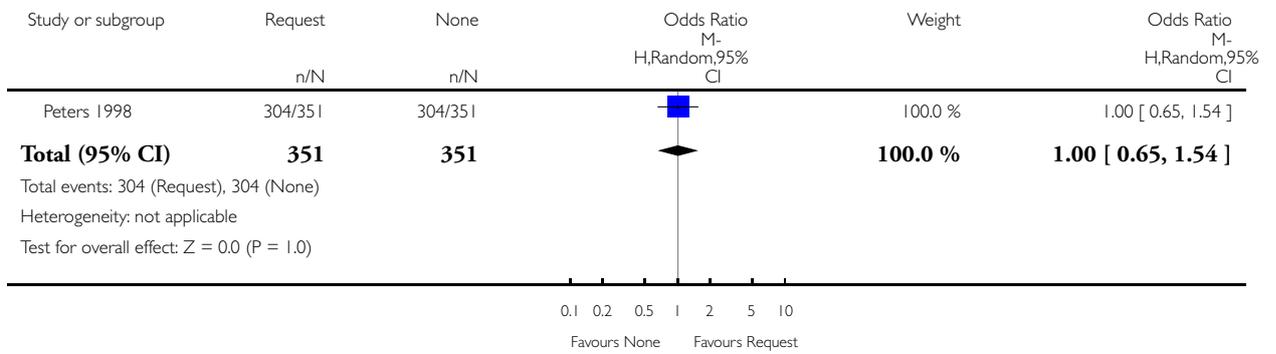


Analysis 107.1. Comparison 107 Request for telephone number vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 107 Request for telephone number vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

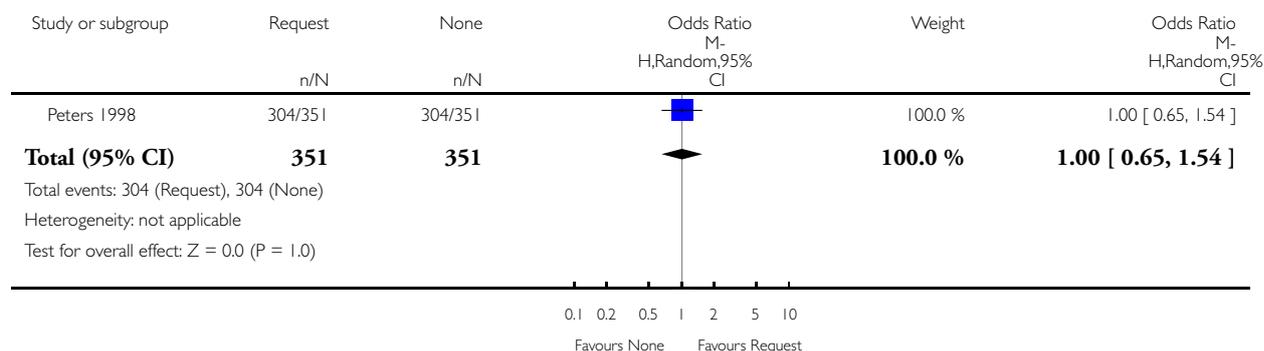


Analysis 107.2. Comparison 107 Request for telephone number vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 107 Request for telephone number vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

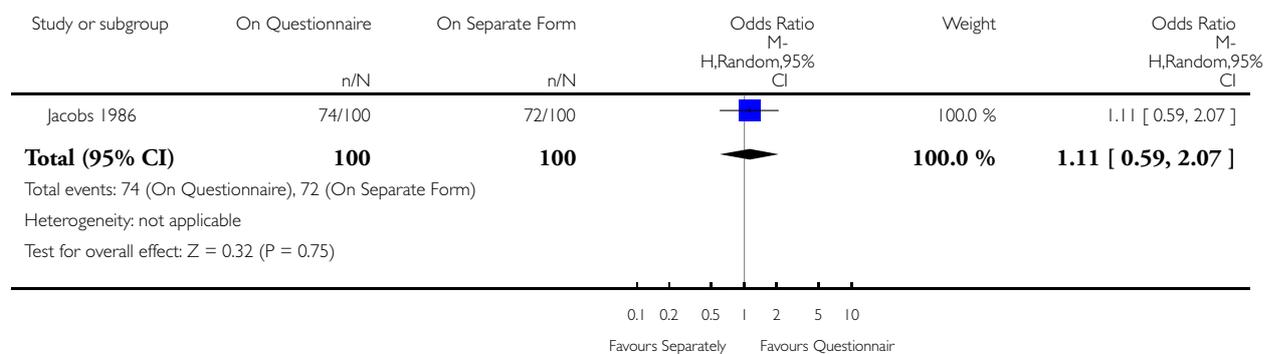


Analysis 108.1. Comparison 108 Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 108 Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form

Outcome: 1 First response

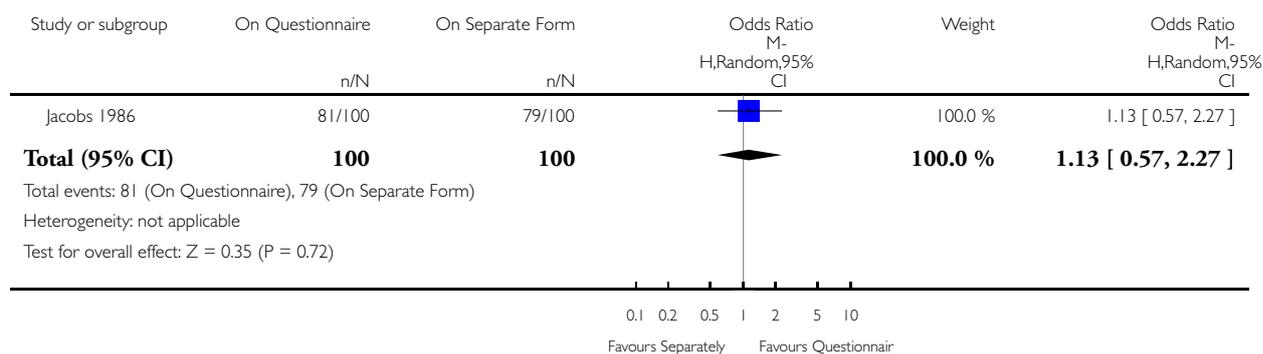


Analysis 108.2. Comparison 108 Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 108 Respond on questionnaire vs. on separate form

Outcome: 2 Final response

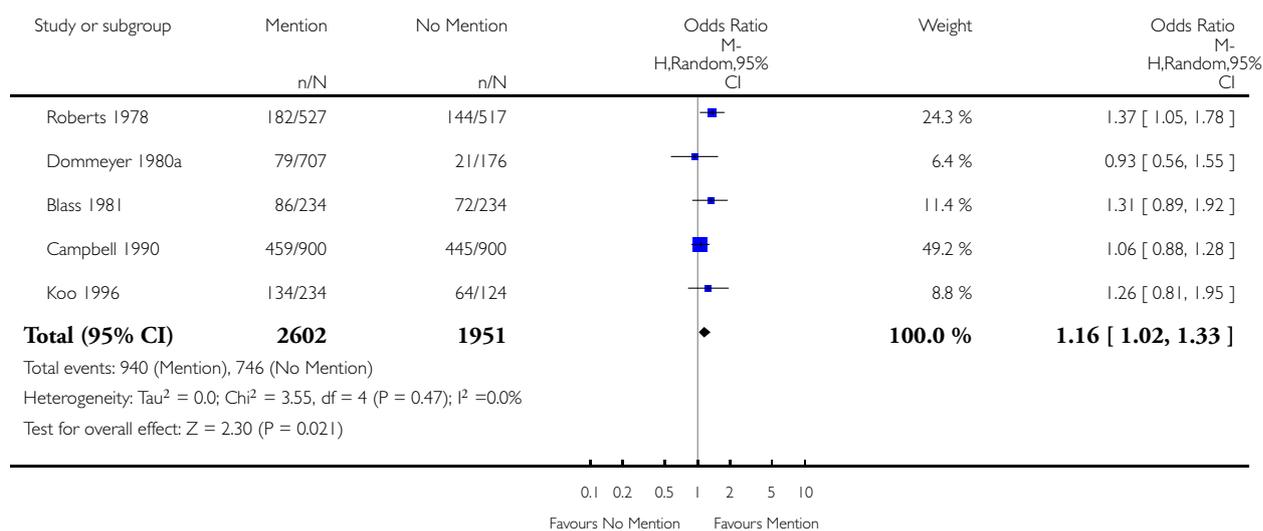


Analysis 109.1. Comparison 109 Mention of follow-up contact vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 109 Mention of follow-up contact vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

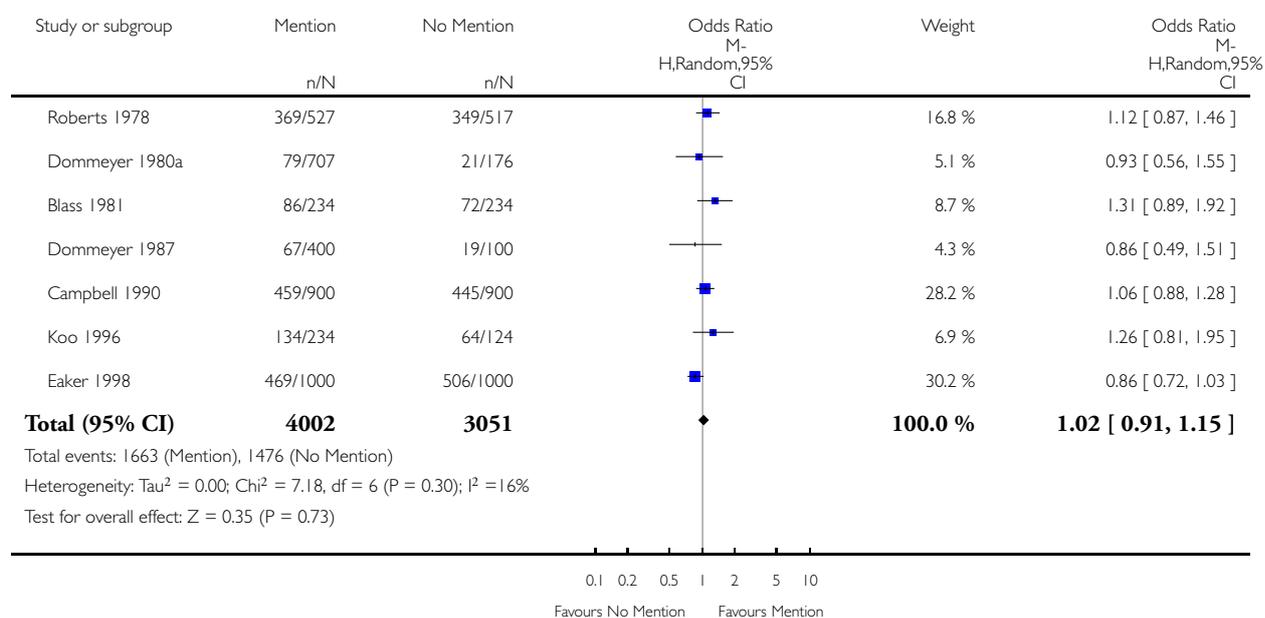


Analysis 109.2. Comparison 109 Mention of follow-up contact vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 109 Mention of follow-up contact vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

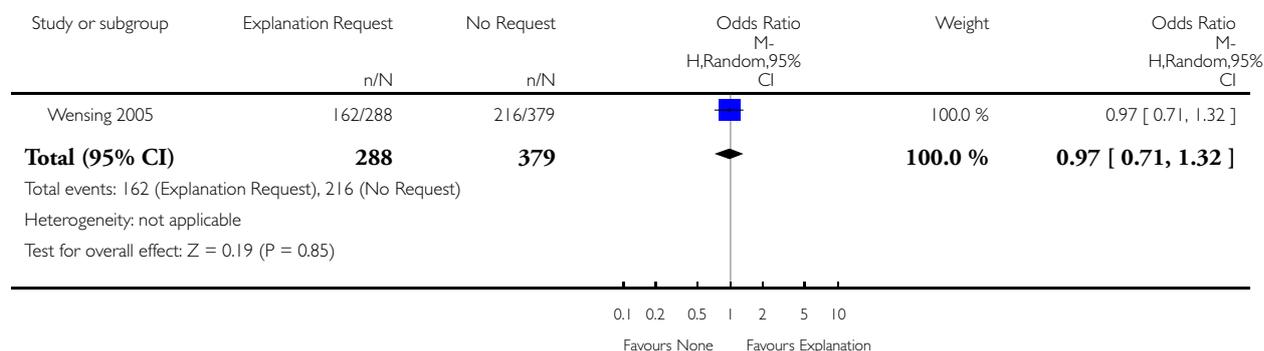


Analysis 110.1. Comparison 110 Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 110 Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not

Outcome: 1 First response

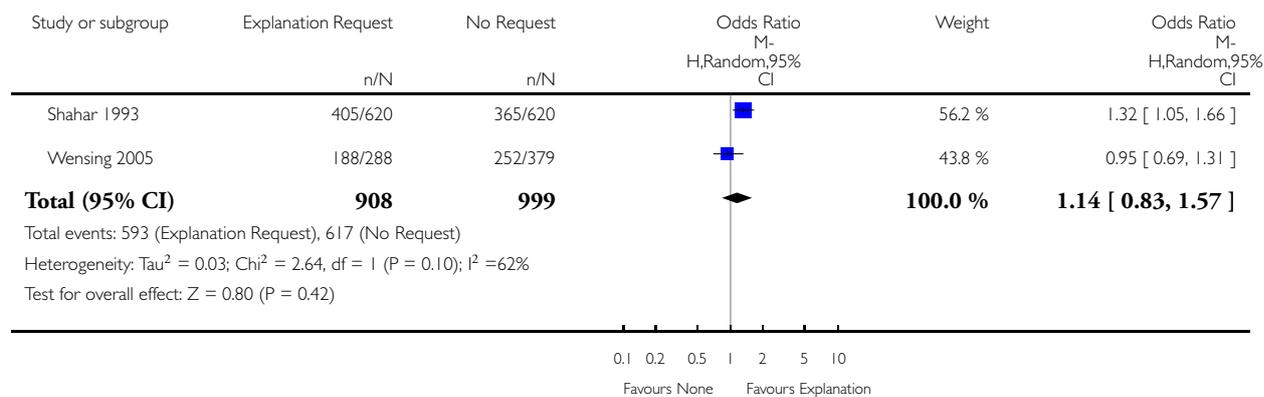


Analysis 110.2. Comparison 110 Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 110 Explanation for non-participation requested vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

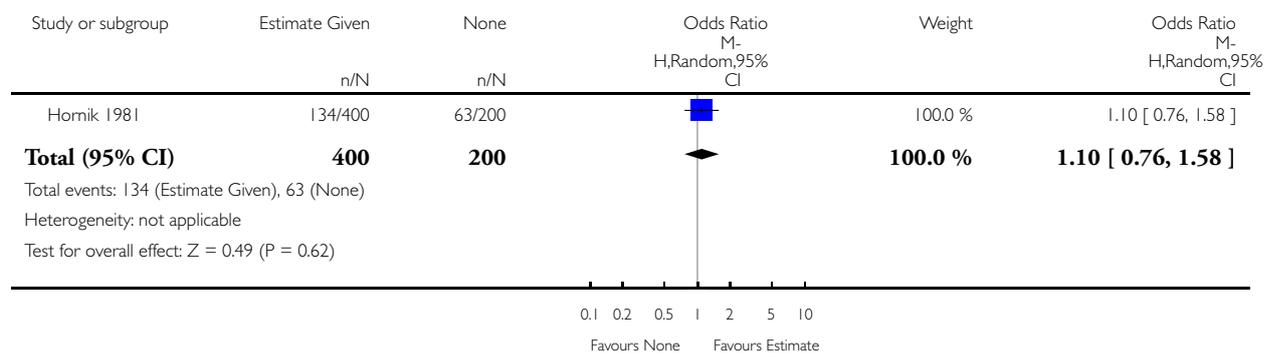


Analysis III.1. Comparison III Time estimate for completion given vs. not, Outcome I First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: III Time estimate for completion given vs. not

Outcome: I First response

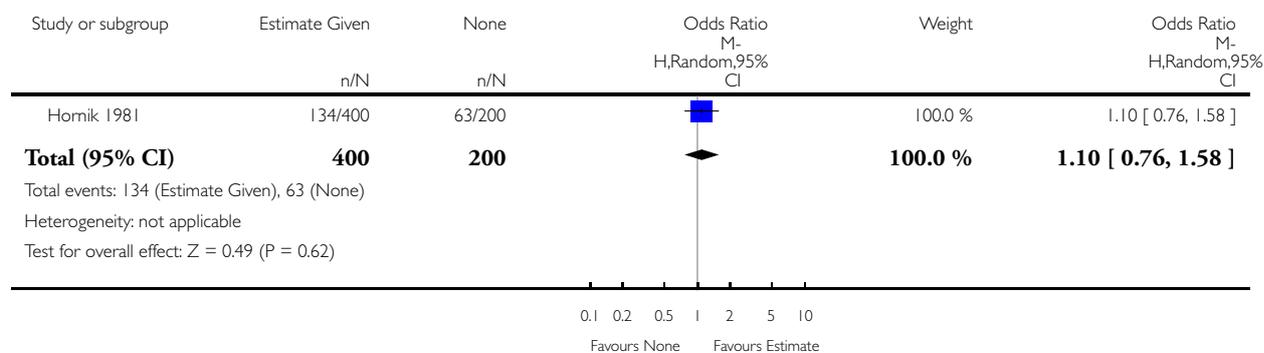


Analysis III.2. Comparison III Time estimate for completion given vs. not, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: III Time estimate for completion given vs. not

Outcome: 2 Final response

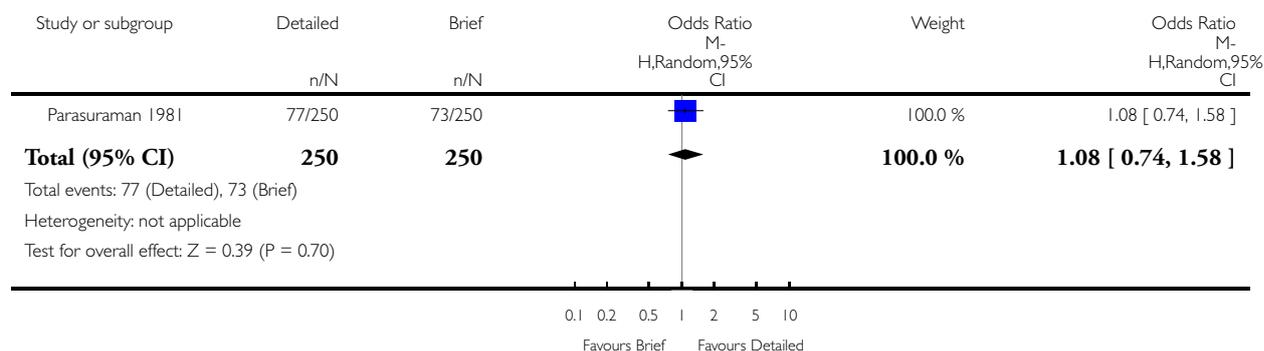


Analysis 112.2. Comparison 112 Detailed vs. brief cover letter, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 112 Detailed vs. brief cover letter

Outcome: 2 Final response

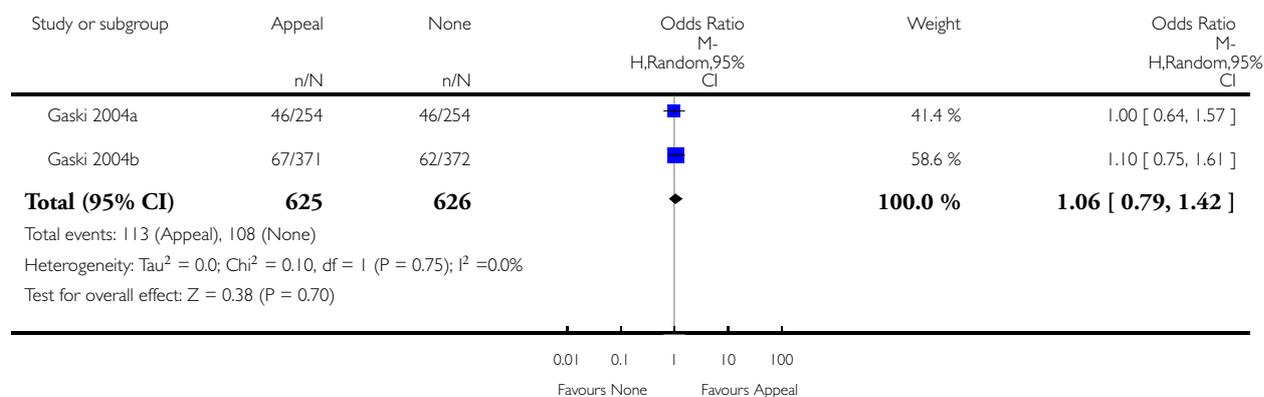


Analysis 113.2. Comparison 113 Appeal vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 113 Appeal vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

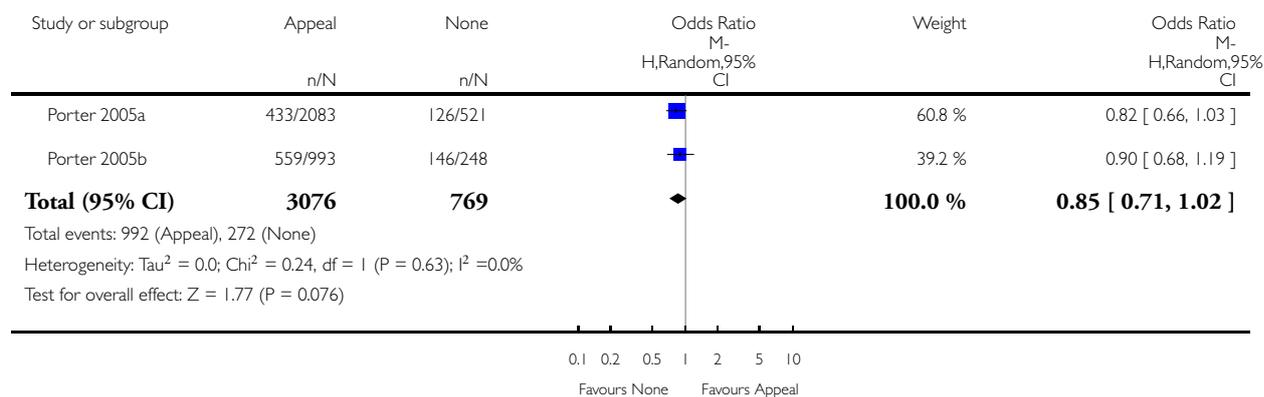


Analysis 113.3. Comparison 113 Appeal vs. none, Outcome 3 e - Login.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 113 Appeal vs. none

Outcome: 3 e - Login

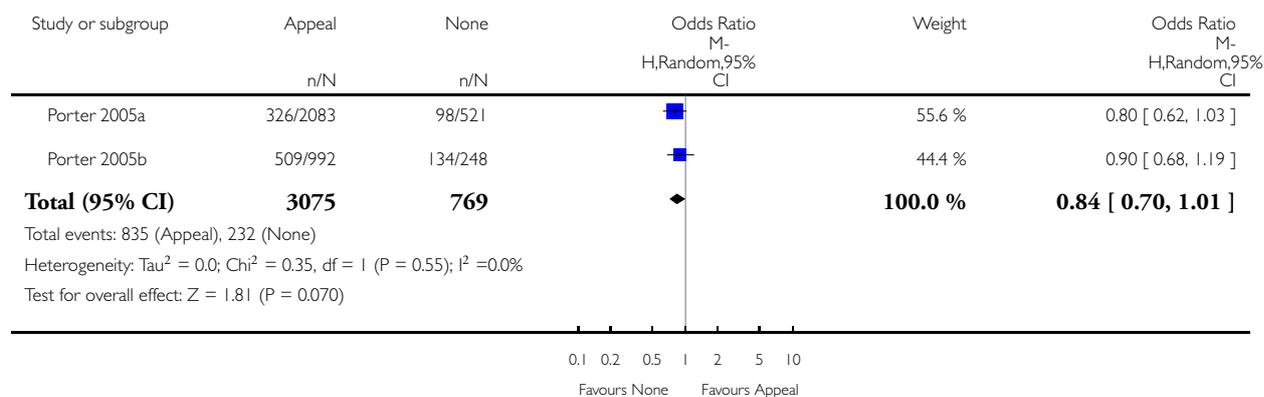


Analysis 113.4. Comparison 113 Appeal vs. none, Outcome 4 e - Submission.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 113 Appeal vs. none

Outcome: 4 e - Submission

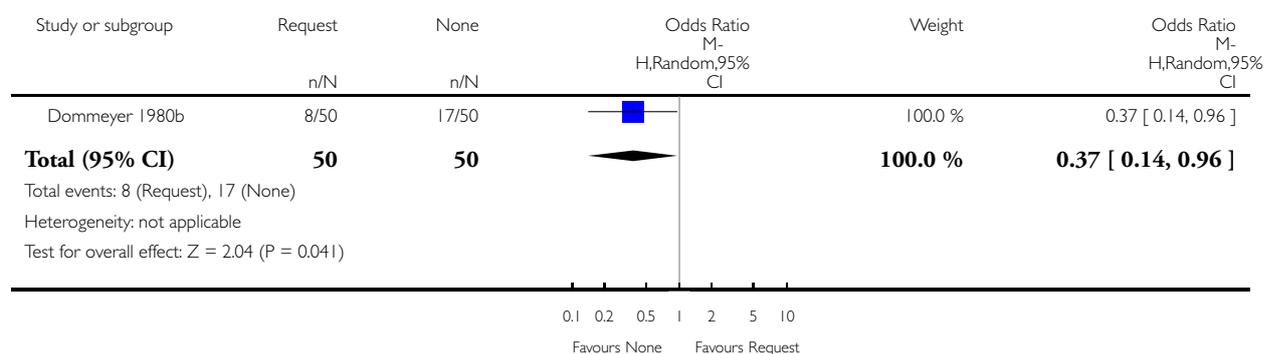


Analysis 114.1. Comparison 114 Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 114 Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

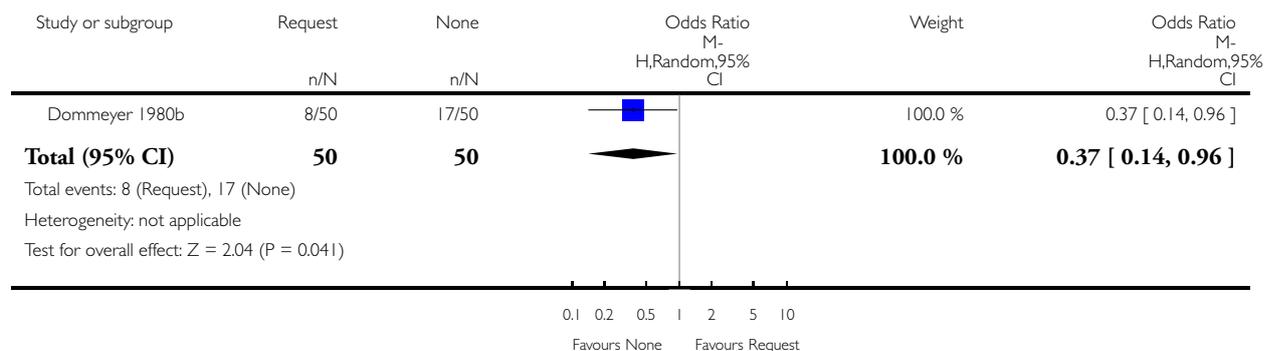


Analysis 114.2. Comparison 114 Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 114 Note requesting not to remove ID code vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

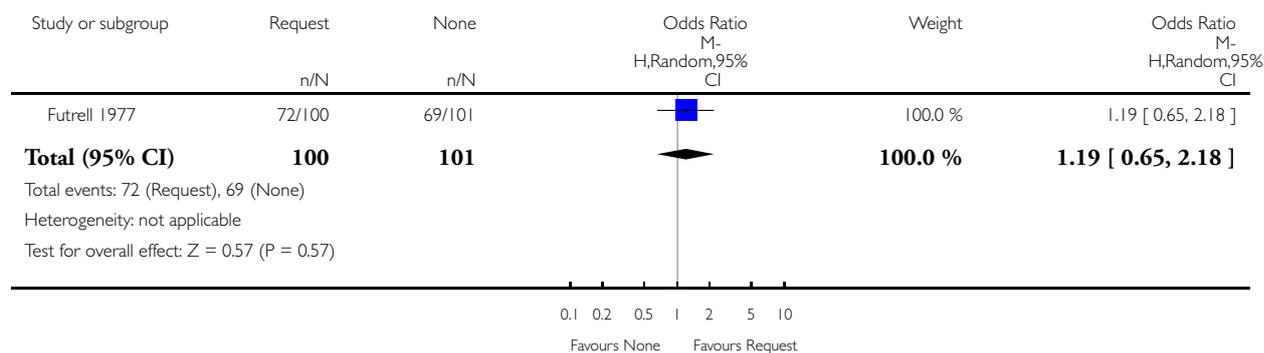


Analysis 115.2. Comparison 115 Request for participant signature vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 115 Request for participant signature vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

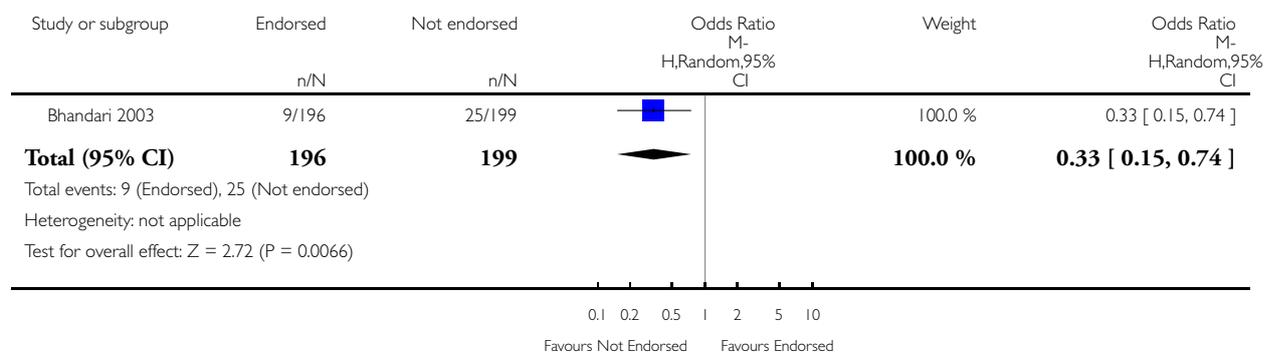


Analysis 116.1. Comparison 116 Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 116 Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed

Outcome: 1 First response

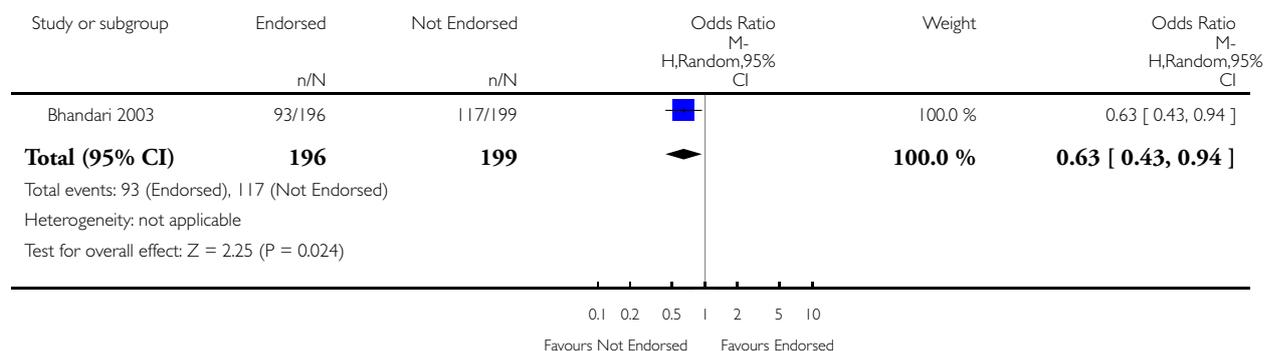


Analysis 116.2. Comparison 116 Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 116 Questionnaire endorsed vs. not endorsed

Outcome: 2 Final response

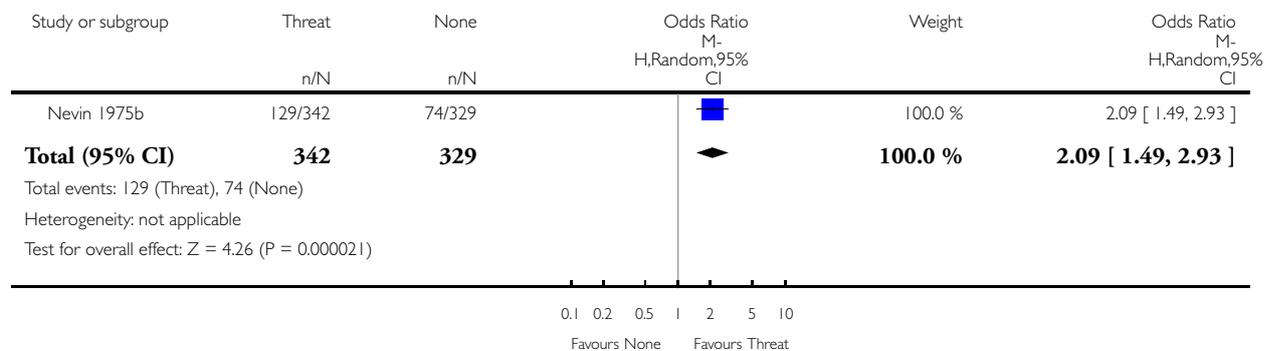


Analysis 117.1. Comparison 117 Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 117 Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none

Outcome: 1 First response

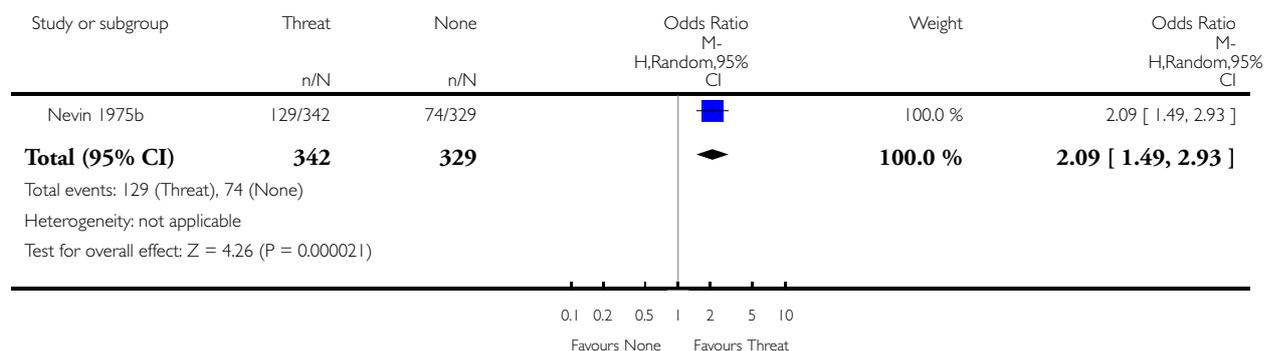


Analysis 117.2. Comparison 117 Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 117 Veiled threat in follow-up letter vs. none

Outcome: 2 Final response

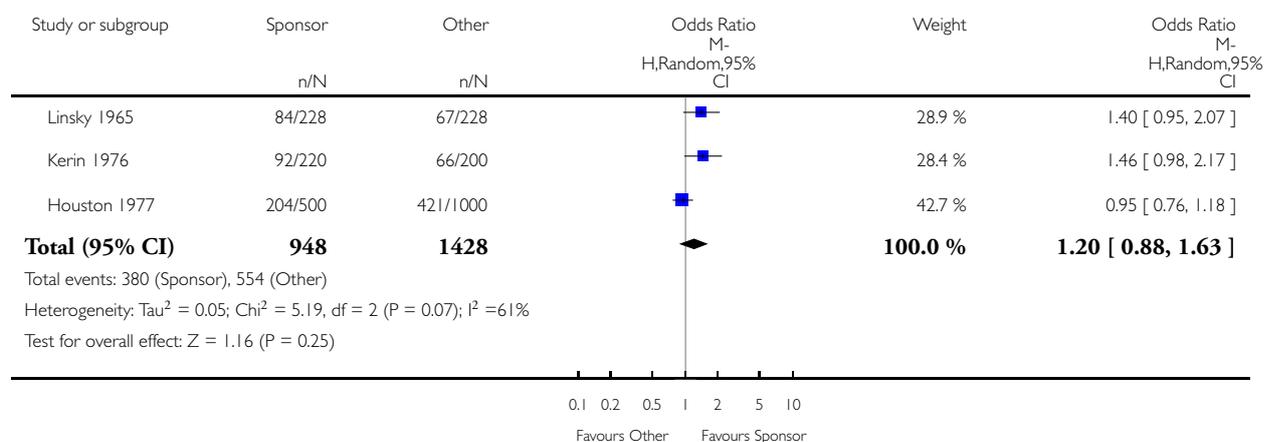


Analysis 118.1. Comparison 118 Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 118 Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other

Outcome: 1 First response

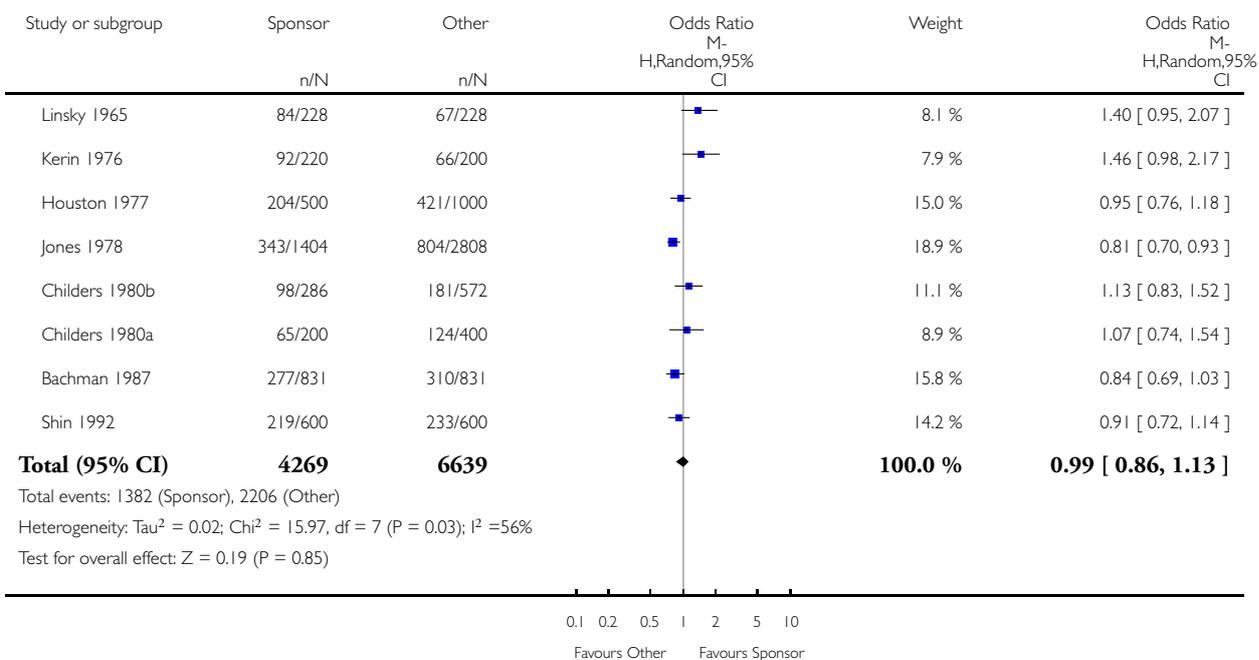


Analysis 118.2. Comparison 118 Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 118 Appeal stresses benefit to sponsor vs. other

Outcome: 2 Final response

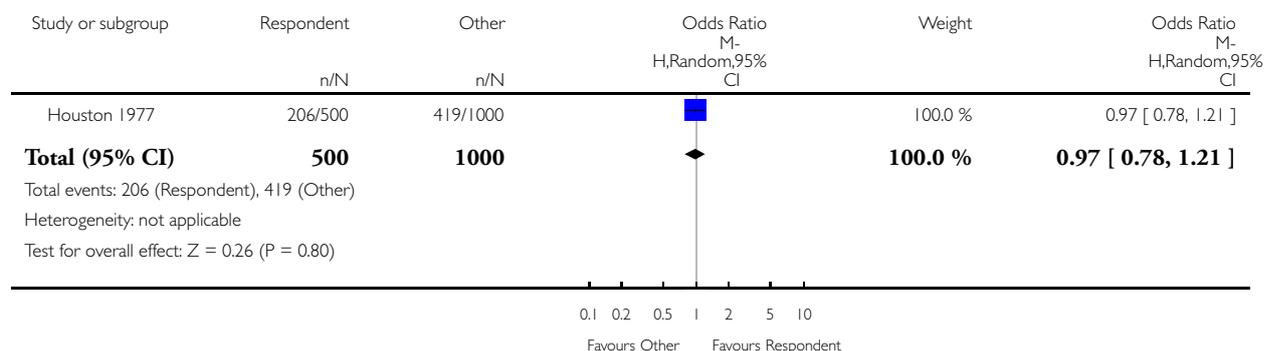


Analysis 119.1. Comparison 119 Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 119 Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other

Outcome: 1 First response

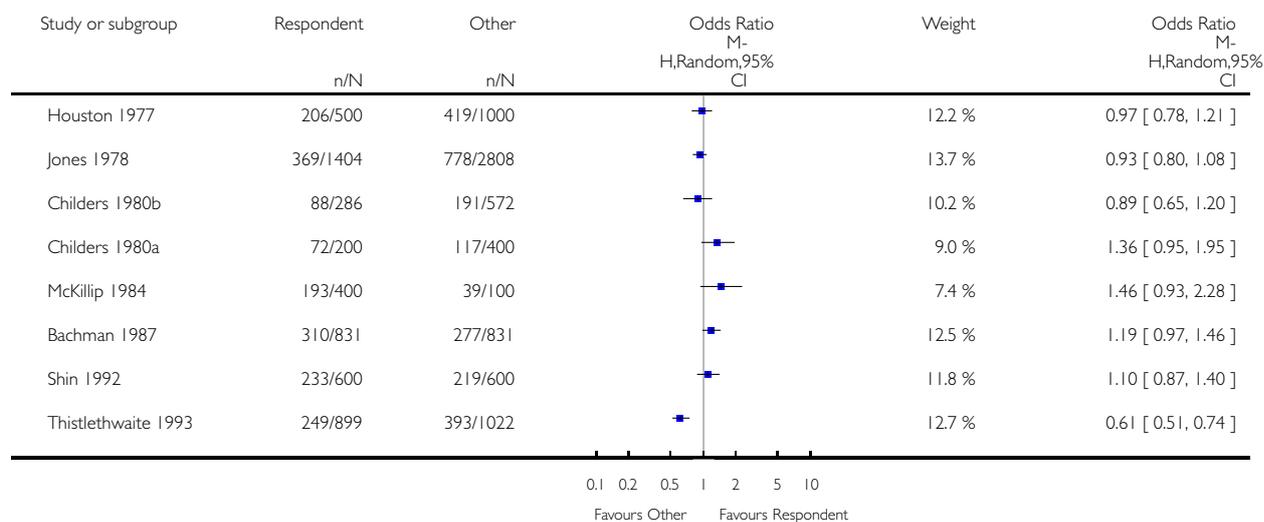


Analysis 119.2. Comparison 119 Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.

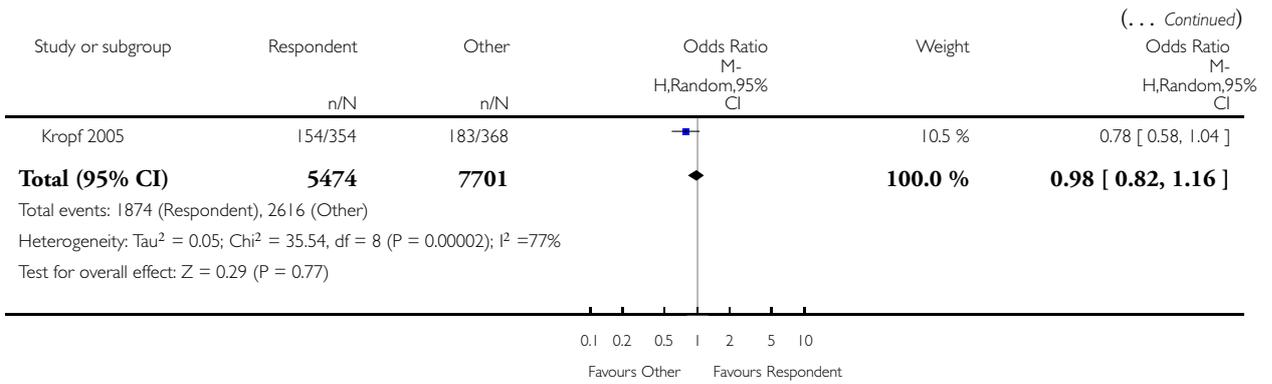
Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 119 Appeal stresses benefit to respondent vs. other

Outcome: 2 Final response



(Continued ...)

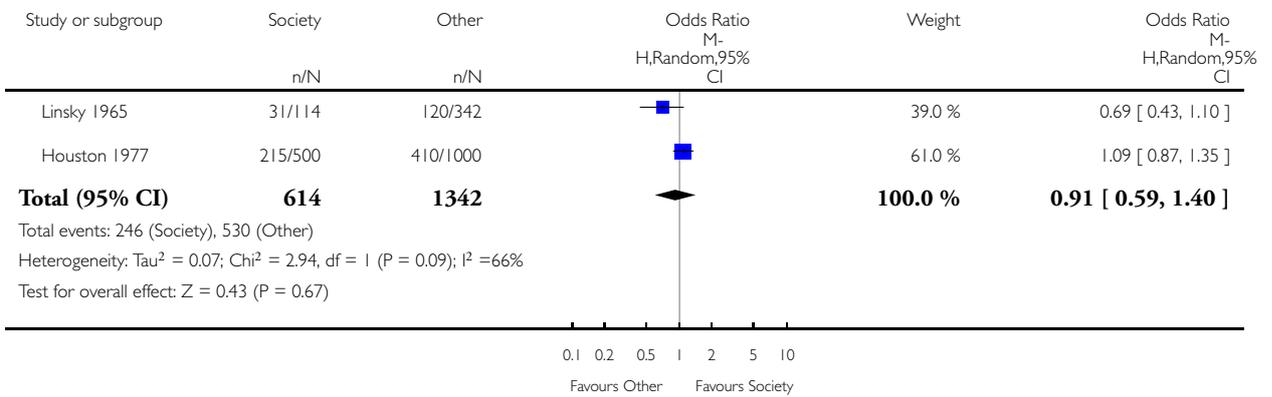


Analysis 120.1. Comparison 120 Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other, Outcome 1 First response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 120 Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other

Outcome: 1 First response

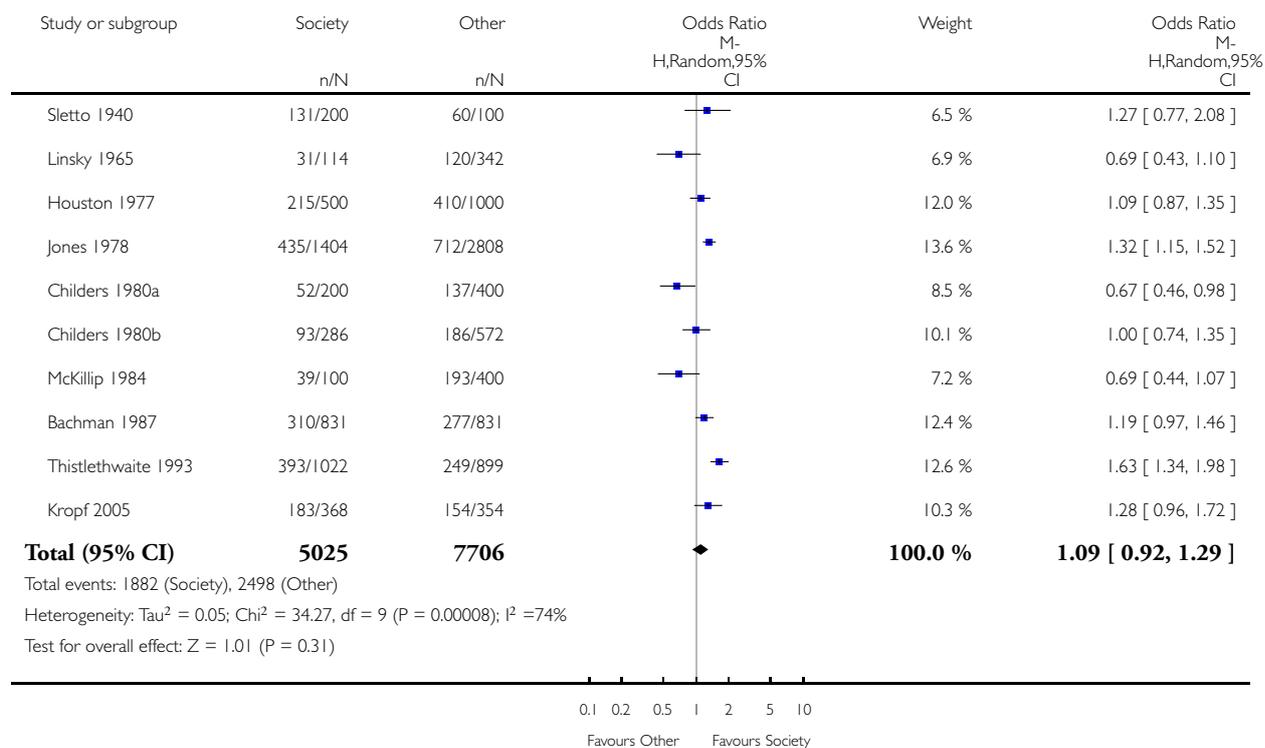


Analysis 120.2. Comparison 120 Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 120 Appeal stresses benefit to society vs. other

Outcome: 2 Final response

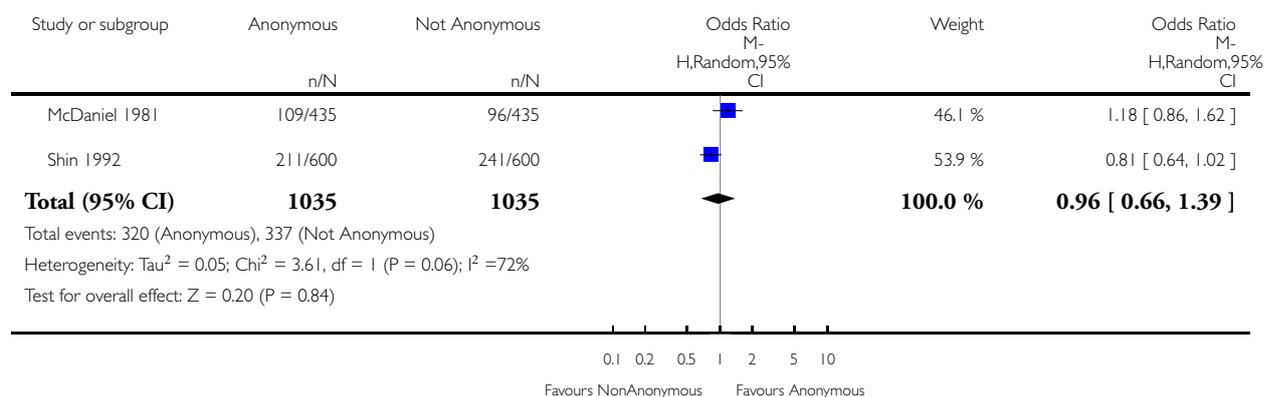


Analysis 121.2. Comparison 121 Anonymous vs. not anonymous, Outcome 2 Final response.

Review: Methods to increase response to postal and electronic questionnaires

Comparison: 121 Anonymous vs. not anonymous

Outcome: 2 Final response



APPENDICES

Appendix I. Search strategy

Electronic bibliographic databases

Search strategies were developed for use in a range of electronic bibliographic databases.

Database time period or version

Cochrane Controlled Trials Register 1999.3

CINAHL 1982 - 1999.07

ERIC 1982 - 1998.09

PsycLit 1887 - 1999.09

Dissertation Abstracts 1861 - 1999.08

MEDLINE 1966 - 1999

EMBASE 1980 - 1999.08

A. questionnair* or survey* or data collection

B. respon* or return*

C. remind* or letter* or postcard* or incentiv* or reward* or money* or monetary or payment* or lottery or raffle or prize or personalis* or sponsor* or anonym* or length or style* or format or appearance or color or colour or stationery or envelope or stamp* or postage or certified or registered or telephon* or telefon* or notice or dispatch* or deliver* or deadline or sensitive

D. control* or randomi* or blind* or mask* or trial* or compar* or experiment* or "exp" or factorial

E. A and B and C and D

Social Science Citation Index 1981 - 1999

Science Citation Index 1981 - 1999

[(survey* or questionnair*) and (return* or respon*)]

Social Psychological Educational Criminological Trials Register (SPECTR) 1950 - 1998

EconLit 1969 - 2000

Sociological Abstracts 1963 - 2000

((survey\$ or questionn\$) and (return\$ or respon\$)).ti

or ((survey\$ or questionn\$) and (mail\$ or post\$)).ti

or ((return\$ or respon\$) and (mail\$ or post\$)).ti

Index to Scientific & Technical Proceedings 1982 - 2000

((survey*, questionn*)+(return*,respon*))@TI,

((return*,respon*)+(mail,mailed,postal))@TI,

((survey*,questionn*)+(mail,mailed,postal))@TI

National Research Register (Web version): 2000.1

((survey*:ti or questionn*:ti) and (return*:ti or respon*:ti))

or ((return*:ti or respon*:ti) and (mail:ti or mailed:ti or postal:ti))

or ((survey*:ti or questionn*:ti) and (mail:ti or mailed:ti or postal:ti))

The following literature reviews and meta-analyses were inspected for eligible trials:

- Armstrong JS. Monetary incentives in mail surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1975;39:111-6.
- Armstrong S. Return postage in mail surveys: a meta analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1987;51:233-48.
- Bogen K. The effects of questionnaire length on response rates - a review of the literature. *American Statistical Association* 1996; 1020-5.
- Boser JA. Reviewing the research on mail survey response rates: descriptive study. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association New York. April 1996.
- Boser JA. Factors influencing mail survey response rates: What do we really know? Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. November 1995.
- Brehm J. Stubbing our toes for a foot in the door? Prior contact, incentives and survey response. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 1994;6(1):45-63.
- Church AH. Estimating the effect of incentives on mail survey response rates: a meta-analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1993; 57:62-79.
- Cox WE. Response patterns to mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1966;3:392-7.
- Downs PE. Recent evidence on the relationship between anonymity and response variables for mail surveys. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 1986;14(1):72-82.
- Duncan WJ. Mail questionnaires in survey research: a review of response inducement techniques. *Journal of Management* 1979; 5(1):39-55.
- Erdos PL. Visible vs. disguised keying on questionnaires. *Journal of Advertising Research* 1977;17(1):13-8.
- Fox RJ. Mail survey response rate. A meta-analysis of selected techniques for inducing response. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1988; 52:467-91.
- Francel EG. Mail-administered questionnaires: a success story. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1966;3:89-92.
- Goyder JC. Further evidence on factors affecting response rates to mailed questionnaires. *American Sociological Review* 1982; 47:550-3.
- Green KE. Reviewing the research on mail survey response rates: a meta-analysis. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. April 1996.
- Greenwald HP. Issues in survey data on medical practice: some empirical comparisons. *Public Health Reports* 1986;101(5):514-46.
- Guffey H. Stamps versus postal permits: a decisional guide for return postage in mail questionnaires. *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science* 1980;8(3): 234-42.
- Harvey L. Factors affecting response rates to mailed questionnaires: a comprehensive literature review. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1987;29:341-53.
- Heberlein TA. Factors affecting response rates to mailed questionnaires. *American Sociological Review* 1978;43(4):447-62.
- Hopkins KD. Response rates in survey research: a meta-analysis of the effects of monetary gratuities. *Journal of Experimental Education* 1992;61:52-62.

- Houston MJ. Broadening the scope of methodological research on mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1976;13:397-403.
- Jobber D. Improving response rates in industrial mail surveys. *Industrial Marketing Management* 1986;15:183-95.
- Jobber D. Modelling the effects of prepaid monetary incentives on mail survey response. *Journal of the Operational Research Society* 1988;39:365-72.
- Jobber D. Questionnaire factors and mail survey response rates. *European Research*. 1985;(July)124-9.
- Jobber D. Maximizing response rates in industrial mail surveys: a review of the evidence. *Advances in Business Marketing* 1990;4:121-46.
- Kanuk L. Mail surveys and response rates: a literature review. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1975;12:440-53.
- King FW. Anonymous versus identifiable questionnaires in drug usage surveys. *American Psychologist* 1970;25:982-5.
- Leslie L. Increasing response rates to long questionnaires. *Journal of Educational Research* 1970;63:347-50.
- Linsky AS. Stimulating responses to mailed questionnaires: a review. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1975;39:82-101.
- Mayer EN. Postage stamps do affect results of your mailing. *Printers' Ink* 1946;217:91.
- Nowack KM. Getting them out and getting them back. *Training Development Journal* 1990;(April)82-5.
- Ransdell LB. Maximising response rate in questionnaire research. *American Journal of Health Behaviour* 1996;20:50-6.
- Robin S. A procedure for securing returns to mail questionnaires. *Sociology and Social Research* 1965;50:24-35
- Roth PL. Response rates in HRM/OB survey research: norms and correlates, 1990-1994. *Journal of Management* 1998;24:97-117.
- Schlegelmilch BB. Prenotification and mail survey response rates: a quantitative integration of the literature. *Journal of the Market Research Society* 1991;33(3):243-55.
- Scott C. Research on mail surveys. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 1961;124:143-205.
- Singer E. Confidentiality assurances and response: a quantitative review of the experimental literature. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1995;59: 66-77.
- Vaux A. Conducting mail surveys. *Psychology Research Handbook*. 1996:(Chapter 10).
- Wiseman F. A reassessment of the effects of personalization on response patterns in mail surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1976;31:110-1.
- Yammarino FJ. Understanding mail survey response behaviour: a meta-analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1991;55: 613-39.
- Young JM. Improving survey response rates: a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of an advance telephone prompt from a medical peer. *Medical Journal of Australia* 1999;170: 339.
- Yu J. A quantitative review of research design effects on response rates to questionnaires. *Journal of Marketing Research* 1983;XX:36-44.
- Zelnio RN. Data collection techniques: mail questionnaires. *American Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* 1980;37:1113-9.

The following journals were searched by hand:
 Public Opinion Quarterly 1960 to 1998
 American Journal of Epidemiology 1948 to 1999

Reliability of screening for eligible trials

The electronic bibliographic searches outlined above yielded several thousand records of potentially relevant reports that were then screened to determine eligibility. Because exclusion of reports during screening would mean that they would not be considered again, we assessed the accuracy and reliability of screening for relevant trials using the records retrieved by a search of ten databases. A search of ten electronic bibliographic databases yielded 26,937 records of potentially relevant reports that were downloaded into a ProCite database. After removing duplicate records, there were 22,571 records of potentially relevant reports. These records were divided into six approximately equal sets (A to F) and each of four reviewers was allocated three of the sets to screen. The six sets were allocated such that two reviewers examined each record and identification of trials by each reviewer could be compared with each of the other reviewers. Agreement between reviewers was assessed using Cohen's kappa statistic (k) which adjusts the proportion of records in which there was agreement between reviewers by the amount of agreement that is expected by chance alone. Ascertainment intersection (capture-recapture) methods (Hook 1992) were then used to estimate the likely number of relevant records missed by all four reviewers. When screening was complete, full copies of the reports identified by at least one reviewer as potentially relevant were requested. Each report obtained was assessed independently by two reviewers for eligibility for inclusion in the systematic review. Disagreements about eligibility were referred to a third reviewer. Eligible reports were used as the 'gold standard' against which an assessment was made about the accuracy of screening by reviewers.

After screening, 301 of 22,571 records were identified by at least one reviewer as potentially relevant. Of the six possible comparisons between reviewers, kappa coefficients of agreement ranged from 0.59 (95% CI 0.56 to 0.62) to 0.93 (95% CI 0.90 to 0.96). Agreement was 'almost perfect' ($k > 0.81$) between two pairs, 'substantial' ($k > 0.61$) between three pairs, and 'moderate' ($k > 0.41$) between one pair. Ascertainment intersection methods suggest that, on average, pairs of reviewers missed 4% (range 0% to 6%) of potentially relevant records. In contrast, single reviewers missed on average 22% (range 3% to 55%). Twenty-eight reports were not available by the time of the ascertainment intersection analysis. Of the 273 reports that were available, 156 (57%) met the inclusion criteria for the systematic review. Ascertainment intersection methods estimated that pairs of reviewers had missed very few eligible records (0 records missed, 95% CI 0 to 3 records). In the light of these results we believe that very few eligible trials were inappropriately excluded during screening.

Sensitivity of combined search strategy

The sensitivity of the search strategy was assessed by handsearching Public Opinion Quarterly and comparing the trials identified by handsearching with those identified by the combined search strategy. Of the 40 eligible trials identified by hand searching, 15 trials had been identified from electronic bibliographic databases and 23 had been identified from the reference lists of identified trials and relevant meta-analyses. Two studies identified by handsearching were not identified by any part of the combined search strategy. On the basis of these results, electronic bibliographic database searching had a sensitivity of 38% (15/40), searching reference lists of identified trials and relevant meta-analyses had a sensitivity of 58% (23/40), and the combined search strategy had a sensitivity of 95% (38/40), (95% CI 84% to 99%).

UPDATE OF REVIEW: 2003

In 2003 the following databases were searched again using the appropriate strategies detailed above.

Database time period or version

Cochrane Controlled Trials Register 2002.4
CINAHL 1999.07 - 2003.02
ERIC 1998.09 - 2003.01
PsycLit 1999.09 - 2003.02
Dissertation Abstracts 1999.08 - 2003.02
MEDLINE 1999 - 2003
EMBASE 1999.08 - 2003.02
Science Citation Index 1999 - 2003
Social Science Citation Index 1999 - 2003
Social Psychological Educational Criminological Trials Register (SPECTR) 1998 - 2003
EconLit 2000 - 2003.01
Sociological Abstracts 2000 - 2002.12
Index to Scientific & Technical Proceedings 2000 - 2003
National Research Register (Web version): 2003.2

A search of these databases yielded 6423 records of potentially relevant reports that were downloaded into a ProCite database. Two reviewers examined each record so that identification of trials by each reviewer could be compared. After screening, 194 of 6423 records were identified by at least one reviewer as potentially relevant.

During the update, attempts were made to obtain sufficient information on studies awaiting assessment to be able to include or exclude them from the review. This included writing to or emailing the authors of all potentially eligible trials and those in studies awaiting assessment.

UPDATE OF REVIEW: 2008

In 2008 the following databases were searched again using the appropriate strategies detailed above. The search also included electronic-based questionnaires such as those sent via e-mail, and online surveys.

Cochrane Library Online Issue 4 2007 CENTRAL
Cochrane Library Online Issue 4 2007 Methodology studies (CMR)

CINAHL 2003 - 2007.12
ERIC 2003 - 2007.12
PsycINFO 2003 - 2008.01
MEDLINE 2003 - 2007.11
EMBASE 2003 - 2007.10
Science Citation Index 2003 - 2008.01
Social Science Citation Index 2003 - 2008.01
Social Psychological Educational Criminological Trials Register (SPECTR) 2003 - 2007.12
EconLit 2003 - 2007.12
Sociological Abstracts 2003 - 2007.12
Dissertation & Theses 2003 - 2008.01
Index to Scientific & Technical Proceedings 2003 - 2008.01
National Research Register (Web version): 2008.02

A search of these databases yielded 19,826 records of potentially relevant reports that were downloaded into an EndNote database. After removing duplicates, we identified 14,792 records. Two reviewers examined each record so that identification of trials by each reviewer could be compared. After screening, 253 of 14,792 records were identified by at least one reviewer as potentially relevant and their full texts were sought.

During the update, attempts were made to obtain sufficient information on studies awaiting assessment to be able to include or exclude them from the review. This included writing to or emailing the authors of all potentially eligible trials and those studies awaiting assessment.

Appendix 2. Conversion of odds ratios to response rates from different baseline rates

Odd ratio	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00
Baseline %											
10	5	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	23	25
20	11	16	20	24	27	30	33	36	38	41	43
30	18	24	30	35	39	43	46	49	52	54	56
40	25	33	40	45	50	54	57	60	63	65	67
50	33	43	50	56	60	64	67	69	71	73	75
60	43	53	60	65	69	72	75	77	79	80	82
65	48	58	65	70	74	76	79	81	82	84	85
70	54	64	70	74	78	80	82	84	85	87	88
75	60	69	75	79	82	84	86	87	88	89	90

(Continued)

80	67	75	80	83	86	88	89	90	91	92	92
85	74	81	85	88	89	91	92	93	93	94	94
90	82	87	90	92	93	94	95	95	96	96	96
95	90	93	95	96	97	97	97	98	98	98	98

WHAT'S NEW

Last assessed as up-to-date: 9 December 2008.

Date	Event	Description
12 May 2009	New citation required but conclusions have not changed	The current update includes randomised controlled trials of questionnaires distributed by electronic mail, and strategies designed to improve response to online or web surveys
10 December 2008	New search has been performed	This review has been updated (new search December 2007). The current update includes 481 eligible trials that evaluated 110 different strategies for increasing response to postal questionnaires and 32 eligible trials that evaluated 27 different strategies for increasing response to electronic questionnaires. A new search was re-run February 2009 in MEDLINE and Psycinfo and 23 possibly eligible trials are listed under Studies awaiting classification

HISTORY

Protocol first published: Issue 2, 1999

Review first published: Issue 3, 2001

Date	Event	Description
27 December 2007	Amended	Converted to new review format.
20 February 2007	New citation required and conclusions have changed	Substantive amendment

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AUTHORS

Mike Clarke, Carolyn DiGuseppi, Phil Edwards and Ian Roberts contributed to study design, record screening, reviewing reports, data extraction and drafting of the report. Phil Edwards and Ian Roberts analysed the data. Sarah Pratap and Irene Kwan contributed to data searches and data extraction. Reinhard Wentz conducted all electronic searches. Phil Edwards and Rachel Cooper contributed to record screening, reviewing reports, data extraction, additional data analysis and alterations to the report during the 2003 update. Phil Edwards and Lambert Felix contributed to record screening, reviewing reports, data extraction, additional data analysis and alterations to the report during the 2008 update.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Internal sources

- No sources of support supplied

External sources

- The BUPA Foundation, UK.
- The Nuffield Trust, UK.

INDEX TERMS

Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)

*Correspondence as Topic; *Surveys and Questionnaires; Electronic Mail; Randomized Controlled Trials as Topic; Reminder Systems; Reward