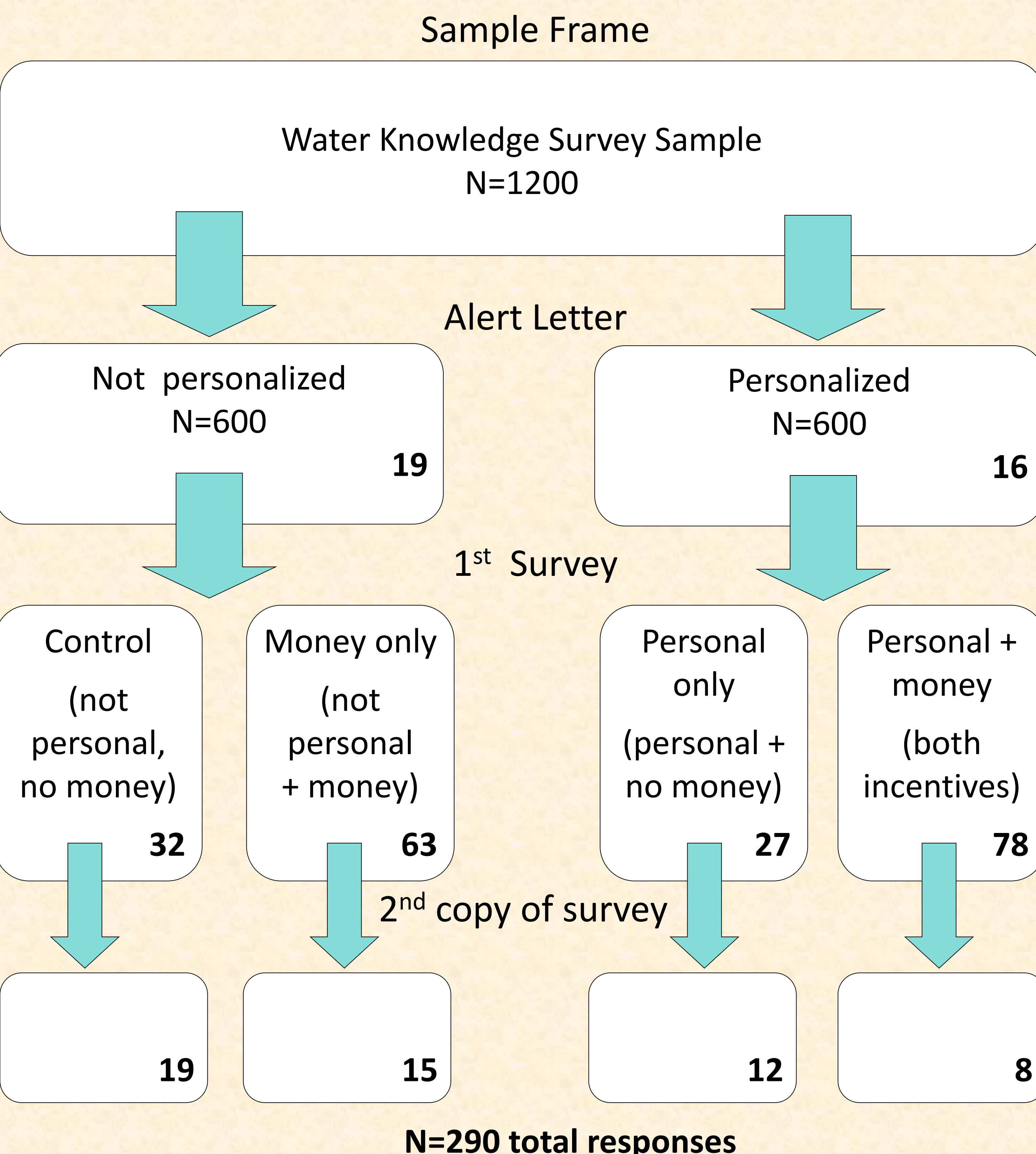


How do survey implementation practices change response rates and diversity among respondents?

Why track the response rate?

- A higher response rate usually signifies stronger data.
- Multiple contacts increase response, but less is known about the effectiveness of token financial incentives and personalization.
- Demographic information is rarely included with response reporting and can offer insights about how bias in gender, age, education level and ethnic background affect response rates.

Token Financial Incentive or Personalized Mailings Experimental Design



*numbers in the bottom right signify the number of responses for that treatment

Improving Survey Response

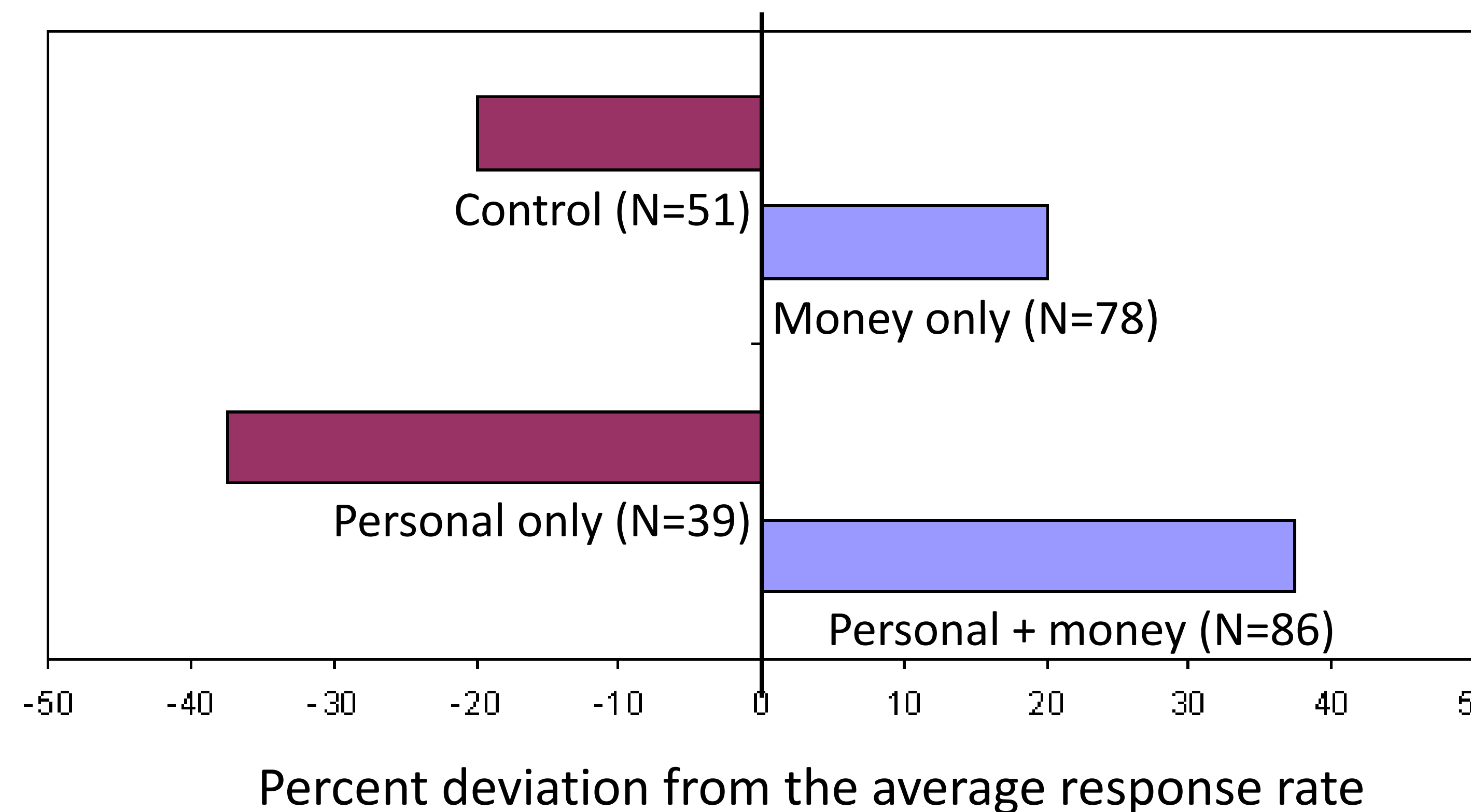
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A: What is the best way to increase survey response?

Hypothesis: Personalization and incentives will increase response rate and the demographic profile of respondents including gender, age, education level and ethnicity will vary between treatment groups

The financial incentive results in greater than average response



- People who received a financial incentive of \$2 were more likely to complete their questionnaire than those who did not.
- Personalization did not significantly increase the response rate; however, the highest number of respondents came from the group that received both a financial incentive and a personalized cover letter.

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B: Do either financial or personalization incentives improve the diversity of survey respondents?

Hypothesis: The profile of respondents in each treatment group will vary by age, education level and ethnicity

The financial incentive increases responses from females and people with lower education levels

	Expected characteristics	Observed characteristics of the sample (by treatment group)			
		Control	Personal incentive only	Money only	Personal & money incentives
Female	Census tract data	50%	44%	40%	41%
Male	Census tract data	50%	56%	60%	59%
Mean age (mode cohort)	40-64yrs	50yrs	52yrs	52yrs	53yrs
Advanced degrees	19%	37%	44%	33%	24%

- Older males with advanced degrees were most likely to take the survey without incentive.
- A financial incentive increased the proportion of respondents that were female and had lower education levels.
- Overall, survey respondents have a higher level of education than the general population..

Future research: Do incentives increase diversity of responses or likelihood of socially desirable responses?

		No incentives	Personal only	Money only	Personal & money
		"Water conservation is important"	No	8%	6%
	Yes	76%	66%	71.6%	68%
	Don't know	16%	28%	23%	29%