

Are Retirement Planning Tools Substitutes or Complements to Financial Capability?

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Abstract

We conduct a randomized controlled trial to understand how a web-based retirement saving calculator affects workers' retirement-savings decisions. In both the treatment and active control conditions, the calculator projects workers' retirement income goal. In the treatment condition only, it also projects retirement income based on defined-contribution savings, prominently displays the gap between projected goal and actual retirement income, and allows users to interactively explore how alternative, future contribution choices would affect the gap. The treatment increased average annual retirement contributions by \$174 (2.3 percent). However, effects were larger for those with higher measures of financial knowledge, suggesting this type of tool complements, rather than substitutes for, underlying financial capability.

JEL Classification Codes: D14, G53, J32

Key Words: retirement planning, retirement saving, exponential-growth bias, present bias, financial literacy, financial capability

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1 Introduction

Determining how much to save for retirement is a complex problem that, in the era of defined contribution (DC) retirement saving plans, largely falls on the individual. Solving for one’s optimal retirement saving contribution in a given year requires simultaneously setting a target income in retirement and determining what contribution path enables one to meet that goal, taking into account investment returns, expected retirement age, and other sources of retirement income, such as Social Security and defined benefit pension income. Navigating this problem is challenging due to its high dimensionality, considerable uncertainty, and the limited opportunity to learn from mistakes.

There is reason to believe that many people are not well-equipped to solve this complex problem. Rates of understanding for basic financial concepts are low ([Lusardi and Mitchell, 2014](#)). Further, limited financial understanding is one explanation for the disproportionate influence of defaults—which dictate employee outcomes when no choice is made—on participation and contribution decisions ([Madrian and Shea, 2001](#); [Beshears et al., 2009](#)). Individuals may look to default settings as implicit saving advice, yet such settings may not be aligned with individuals’ retirement lifestyle goals. In addition, [Goda et al. \(2019\)](#) show that low financial literacy and lack of understanding of exponential-growth bias are associated with lower retirement wealth accumulation among retirement-age individuals. These findings underlie public policy concern regarding the extent to which low financial capability fuels the limited retirement savings observed among many individuals.

Plan sponsors and academic researchers have sought to improve retirement saving decisions by supporting employee decision-making through information campaigns and via online retirement saving tools or calculators. Three key factors that determine whether these informational interventions are likely to be successful in addressing inadequate retirement saving are 1) who selects into using them, 2) how they affect contribution behavior among those who use the tool, and 3) how the intervention differentially affects financially more vulnerable populations. Are such tools effective at raising financial decision-making capacity across the board, including those with limited financial literacy, or do the tools themselves require a sufficient understanding of financial concepts in order to be effective? That is, are such tools a substitute for existing financial knowledge or

a complement? Often plan sponsors introduce decision-support tools with the goal of increasing participation among those with lower financial knowledge, and thus implicitly assume these tools are substitutes.

To address these questions, we conduct a randomized controlled trial among employees at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), an agency of the federal government. Federal employees have an employer-sponsored retirement savings program similar to a 401(k), called the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), in which agencies match employee contributions. Our design randomly assigns employees to receive one of two online retirement saving tools: a treatment and an active control. Both tools elicit information on the participant’s desired lifestyle in retirement, current earnings, and expected retirement age in order to display their target retirement income as well as collect information on inputs to a retirement income projection. The tools differ in how complete this projected income calculation is. The “treatment tool” incorporates expected social security, federal defined-benefit pension income, and existing TSP savings and contribution levels into the projection, allowing participants to see whether the projection aligns with their target and dynamically assess how their TSP contributions map to their retirement income. In contrast, the “active control tool” omits retirement income stemming from TSP in the income projection. Instead, participants in the active control are asked to make their own assessment as to how much additional retirement income their accumulated TSP savings and future contributions will provide to assess whether they are on track to meet their retirement income target.

The difference between these two conditions isolates the effect of financial decision-making involving computations that map current contribution behavior to financial resources in retirement. The accuracy of the subjective mapping used by a person may vary with their financial capability and willingness to engage in effortful thinking and planning. Past research has specifically implicated exponential-growth bias, present bias, and financial illiteracy as attributes implicated in low retirement savings (Goda et al., 2014; Brown and Previtro, 2014; Goda et al., 2019; Lusardi and Mitchell, 2011a). The additional information provided in the treatment condition removes the need to make exponential computations, which require effort that is prone to postponement by present-biased individuals. Therefore, our treatment is designed specifically to overcome the exponential-growth bias and present bias that could otherwise lead to suboptimal decision-making.

We find that approximately half of employees (48 percent) select into using the tool, and selec-

tion is correlated with pre-intervention TSP contributions. We then evaluate whether the treatment tool affected TSP contributions relative to the active control, and how the effect varied across employees using a treatment-on-the-treated (TOT) estimation approach. Overall, we find that the treatment increased average annual contributions by \$174 among those who used it relative to those using the control tool. We examine heterogeneous treatment effects across multiple measures of financial capabilities. We find that the treatment effect is significantly greater for those with: higher measures of financial literacy, a college degree, and a higher financial-capability index score derived from factor analysis. We do not find evidence that exponential-growth bias, present bias, preintervention contributions, or other factors derived from factor analysis significantly predict the treatment effect.

Our study relates to several strands of literature. First, there is extensive evidence documenting the effects of a wide variety of retirement saving interventions, such as automatic enrollment (Madrian and Shea, 2001; Choi et al., 2004), retirement income projections (Goda et al., 2014; Dolls et al., 2018), commitment devices (Thaler and Benartzi, 2004), peer information (Duflo and Saez, 2003; Beshears et al., 2015), reducing complexity (Choi et al., 2006; Beshears et al., 2013) and anchoring (Choi et al., 2017). In general, this literature shows that small perturbations in choice architecture can have large effects on retirement saving decisions, providing indirect evidence that there are barriers present that keep people from optimizing retirement saving decisions.

Second, there is a large literature that evaluates interventions designed to address low financial literacy (e.g., Bernheim et al., 2001; Bernheim and Garrett, 2003; Lusardi, 2008; Mandell and Klein, 2009; Gale and Levine, 2011; Hastings et al., 2013; Austin and Arnott-Hill, 2014). The general findings of this literature, summarized in a meta-analysis by Fernandes et al. (2014) and corroborated by Willis (2021), are that interventions to improve financial literacy explain a small amount of the variance in the financial behaviors studied, and that the effects are weaker in low-income samples. However, this literature suggests a role for “just-in-time” financial education that is tied to specific behaviors.

Finally, a broader literature investigates the selection into take-up of interventions in other contexts and includes several examples of these interventions reaching lower-need populations. For example, those who participate in workplace wellness programs tend to have lower medical expenditures and healthier behaviors than nonparticipants (Jones et al., 2019). Similarly, a randomized

evaluation of an informational intervention to increase take-up of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits found evidence that those who responded to the treatment had higher income and better health than the average enrollee in the control group (Finkelstein and Notowidigdo, 2019). There is also evidence that decision support tools may reach populations with less predicted response (Bundorf et al., 2019). Similarly, Hackethal et al. (2012) find that richer, older and more experienced investors are more likely to seek financial advisors in the German context, rather than being used by less informed or unsophisticated investors. These examples show how interventions designed to improve outcomes for those with greater need can instead widen disparities in outcomes.

Our study makes two main contributions to the literature. First, we find evidence that online retirement-income tools, specifically the part of the treatment focused on exponential computations, lead to modest increases in retirement contributions. These findings are similar to Goda, Manchester and Sojourner (2014) and Song (2020) who find evidence that providing information that corrects underlying bias in exponential growth can increase retirement savings in the United States and in China, but in contrast with findings in Olckers (2021) and Fuentes et al. (Forthcoming), which show negligible impacts of a retirement income calculator in South Africa and Chile. While course-based financial literacy interventions aimed at influencing financial decision-making over the life course have shown limited success, this “just-in-time” tool-based intervention delivers an immediate, albeit modest effect on a financial decision. Yet, due to the relatively high inertia in retirement elections, the effect on contributions may be long-lasting, leading to non-trivial increases in retirement wealth.

At the same time, we find that tool-based interventions have important limitations, including who selects into using the tool and whose decisions are more affected, which connects to this paper’s other contribution. In particular, we find evidence that retirement-income projections are complements rather than substitutes to financial capability. The online tool delivery provides the ability to track tool users and link engagement with the tool to outcomes. Selection into treatment is higher among those with higher pre-intervention contributions, and the treatment effect is larger for those with higher measures of financial literacy and education. This finding is important as it suggests that retirement planning tools are unlikely to be sufficient to overcome biases and/or substitute for shortfalls in financial knowledge that may prevent optimal decision-

making. In fact, such tools may be poised to widen wealth gaps between those with higher relative to lower capabilities for making financial decisions, similar to literature cited above in other contexts.

2 Experimental Design and Data

2.1 Retirement Plan Setting

As federal workers, OPM employees participate in a defined contribution plan known as Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), in which the employer makes a base contribution of 1 percent of pay and matches employee contributions up to 5 percent of pay.¹ Employees can contribute up to the IRS maximum each year, which was \$18,000 in 2017. Employees are also covered by a defined benefit pension.² Employees may elect to invest their contributions in five different funds or a life-cycle option, which is a mix of the other funds based on the employee’s age.

A 2015 TSP report indicates that approximately half of federal employees were not contributing enough to TSP to maximize the agency match (OPM, 2015). The proportion qualifying for the full match is even lower for recent hires, who are covered by a 3 percent automatic enrollment provision introduced in 2010. Concern about employees failing to maximize the match since automatic enrollment began prompted OPM leaders to seek an effective online retirement saving tool to improve TSP contribution decisions for federal employees.

2.2 Intervention

In partnership with OPM, we designed both a treatment and an active control version of a new online retirement saving tool with the aim of 1) providing employees with both a target retirement income and a projected retirement income, and 2) isolating the effect of translating their TSP asset level and any potential contribution stream into a projected retirement-income stream on outcomes. The tool rolled out in November 2017. The two versions of the tool—treatment and active control—were made as similar as possible except that the active control did not provide any information on how TSP balances and contributions translated into retirement income. This allows us to isolate

¹The agency matches dollar-for-dollar on an employee’s contributions up to 3 percent of pay and \$0.50 to the dollar for the next 2 percent of pay.

²Employees hired before 1984 are covered by a more comprehensive defined benefit plan and receive no base and no match on employee contributions to TSP, yet can contribute on their own up to the individual maximum.

the effect of the income projection from any other tool features. The tool begins by asking the user a series of questions to determine their target income in retirement, such as their date of birth, when they started working for the federal government, their annual salary, their expected retirement age, and their desired lifestyle in retirement: 70, 85, 100, or 115 percent of current pay. Participants are visually shown the “goal” as a vertical bar, represented as a monthly annuitized income target for retirement. Then participants are asked questions to produce a projected retirement income based on their current assets and saving rate, including their TSP account balance, TSP annual contribution, pension coverage, and Social Security expectations. The main difference between the treatment and active control conditions is that the income projection of the former uses all information provided, while in the active control, it provides projections based only on pension and Social Security income, and states that retirement income from TSP is an additional amount on top of these other sources. Figure 1 shows the difference between the treatment and active control conditions in terms of the core visual that compares the retirement income goal and the retirement income projection. Screenshots of the entire tool are available in [Appendix G](#).

After displaying the projection, the treatment tool allows users to manipulate sliders to adjust TSP contributions to see how the projection changes relative to the goal in real time. Some parameter values of the economic environment are needed to create the income projection such as the income growth rate, inflation rate, and expected real rate of return. All calculation formulas are available in [Appendix H](#). We provide default values for annual income growth and for inflation of 3 percent and 2 percent, respectively, which the user can modify. Because the real rate of return depends on one’s retirement portfolio, there may be considerable variation in people’s expected rate of return and desired lifestyles for retirement. We randomize these assumptions to test whether these default parameters affect saving behavior. The default rate of return is randomly assigned to 5 percent or 8 percent, and desired retirement lifestyle is randomized to 85 percent or 100 percent of income.³ As with the other assumptions, all participants have the option to change these assumptions using sliders and can view how they change the income projection.

Both versions of the tool end by showing participants a printable summary of their current TSP contribution levels and a link to the TSP website and phone number with instructions on how to

³The results of these regressions are available in [Appendix C](#) in Tables C.11–C.13. The high values of these default parameters had an insignificant effect on savings relative to the low values.

update contribution rates. The printable summary for the treatment tool also includes the last slider position for the TSP election.

Prior to the intervention, we surveyed the employees to measure background characteristics and behavioral parameters not present in administrative data. The survey was fielded between March 29, 2017, and April 14, 2017. OPM emailed each employee an initial survey invitation and two reminders to nonrespondents. Of the 5,426 employees, 1,435 completed the survey, a 26 percent completion rate. Through the survey, we measure financial capabilities, including exponential-growth bias (EGB), measures of financial literacy, and college degree completion. The survey also elicited time preferences, including the long-term discount rate and a measure of present-biased preferences. The full survey instrument is available in [Appendix I](#).

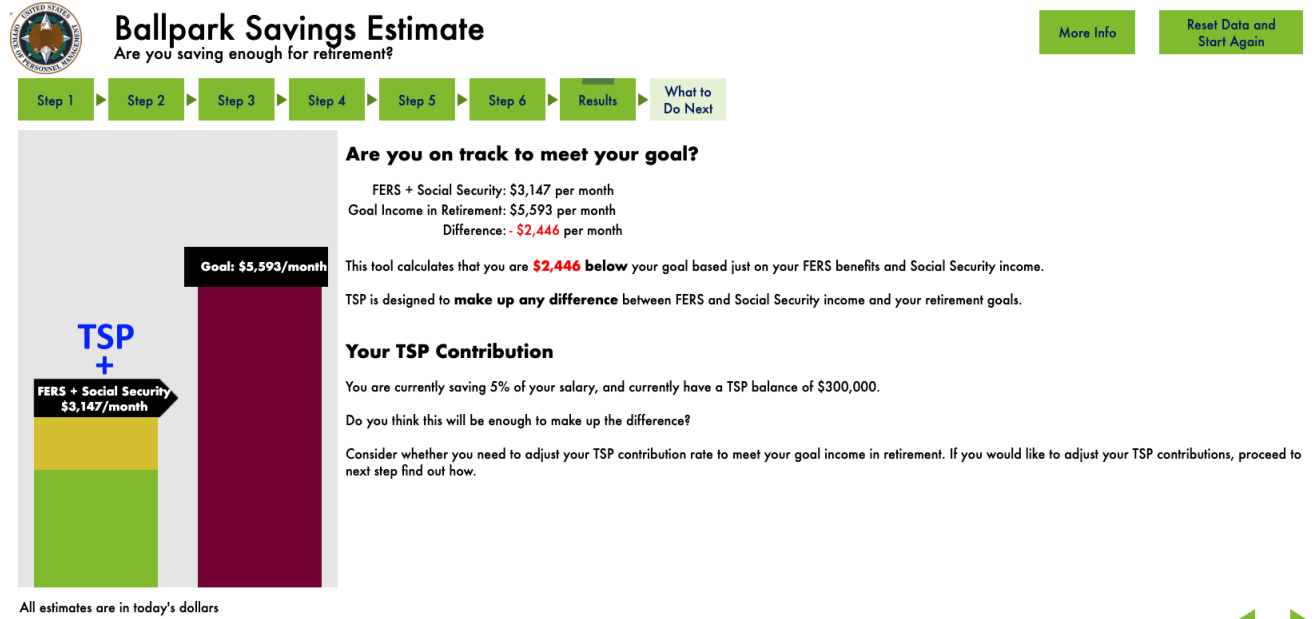
We randomly assigned the 5,426 unique individuals employed at OPM in December 1, 2017, to have access with equal probability either to the treatment tool or the active control tool. We stratified participants based on survey completion with 50 percent of completers and 50 percent of noncompleters each getting the treatment condition. Within a survey-response group (completers/noncompleters) we stratified on total pay, age, TSP total amount, and gender. Survey completers were also stratified on their mean response to the EGB elicitation and mean response to the time-preference elicitation. OPM emailed each employee a personalized link to the appropriate version of the tool. Employees received an invitation to use the tool on December 1, 2017. Subsequent reminder emails were sent to those who had not yet clicked the link on December 7, December 18, and January 11. There was no differentiation in the invitation emails between the treatment and active control groups.

2.3 Data and Analysis Samples

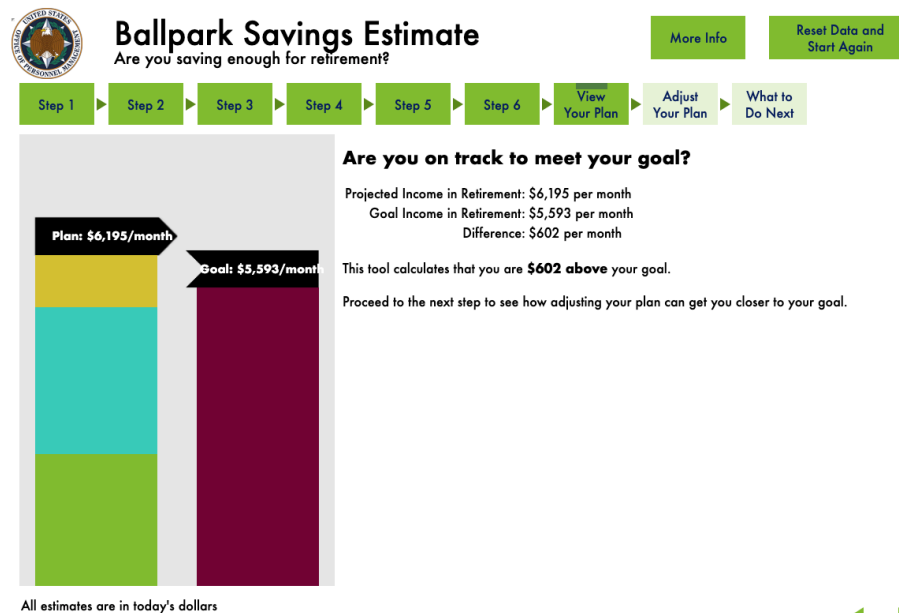
Our data include each individual’s monthly TSP contribution elections and demographic characteristics from administrative HR records from August 2014 to April 2018. We match these data with survey data collected in March and April of 2017, and data on whether each individual chose to use the assigned tool or not: 2,625 (48 percent) did.

We use two analysis samples. The first relies just on administrative records, including TSP contributions and employee characteristics recorded in HR files. This sample consists of the 2,625 unique employees who used the tool and their 152,198 total individual-by-month contribution ob-

Figure 1: Screenshot of Examples from Each Treatment Condition



(a) Active Control



(b) Treatment

servations. The second analysis combines the TSP and HR records with survey responses and captures 1,435 unique individuals with 85,974 total individual-by-month observations. [Appendix E](#) presents a schematic of these samples.

We examine whether there were significant differences in baseline characteristics between individuals assigned to active control versus treatment ([Appendix Table A.1](#)). The joint test of null difference across baseline characteristics has a p -value of 0.96, reflecting successful random assignment. [Appendix Table A.2](#) compares survey completers and noncompleters on administrative variables, which are fully observed. Survey completers are older, are more likely to be white, are higher-paid, and contribute more to TSP than noncompleters. To clarify which characteristics are most strongly associated with response conditional on the other characteristics, [Appendix Table A.3](#) reports estimates from a logit model of survey response. In this model, many observable characteristics predict response, but importantly age, pay, and length of tenure do not.

2.4 Survey Measures

We perform our primary heterogeneity analysis on the subsample who completed the survey. Below we describe our measures of financial capability, which are central for assessing heterogeneous treatment effects, and the elicitation of time preferences. Finally, we present findings from an exploratory factor analysis of the covariate space that shows the construction of a factor that aligns with measuring financial capability.

2.4.1 Exponential-growth bias

We hypothesize that exponential-growth bias plays an important role in creating a gap between individuals' ideal savings rate and their actual savings rate. Exponential-growth bias is the tendency to neglect compound interest ([Stango and Zinman, 2009](#)). Forecasting one's retirement savings without the use of a tool requires considerable sophistication. The lack of an accurate forecast along with exponential-growth bias may cause people to underestimate the benefits of saving for retirement. Because the intervention operates by explicitly computing the exponential growth of the user's savings (along with other computations), those with greater bias may benefit from the intervention more. More precisely, because undersaving is likely a larger problem than oversaving (see, for example, [Goda et al., 2019](#), who show that exponential-growth bias is correlated with lower

retirement savings), people with more exponential-growth bias may exhibit larger treatment effects if the tool compensates for their bias.

We use the parametric model of [Levy and Tasoff \(2016\)](#) given below.

$$p(\vec{r}, t; \alpha_i) = \prod_{s=t}^{T-1} (1 + \alpha_i r_s) + \sum_{s=t}^{T-1} (1 - \alpha_i) r_s \quad (1)$$

When $\alpha_i = 0$, the individual perceives growth to be linear, fully neglecting compound interest. When $\alpha_i = 1$, the person correctly perceives growth to be exponential. Values of $\alpha_i \in (0, 1)$ generate perceptions between linear and exponential growth. Values > 1 reflect overestimation of the returns to compounding. To measure exponential-growth bias, we include three hypothetical investment questions in our survey that ask for the value of an asset after a certain amount of time.⁴ For each question k and each individual i , we construct a measure of exponential-growth misperception that minimizes the distance between the response and the correct answer informed by Equation (1) similarly to [Goda et al. \(2019\)](#). Performance on these questions by OPM employees was similar to the U.S. population: between 29 and 33 percent of survey participants answered the questions within 10 percent of the correct value as compared to 23 to 31 percent in a representative U.S. sample ([Goda et al., 2019](#)).

2.4.2 Time preferences

We hypothesize that present-biased individuals are more likely to have gaps between their ideal savings rate and actual savings rate due to procrastination. If so, displaying the gap may be a cue that inspires them to make a change. Though theory does not make a sharp prediction about the direction of change, we explore whether the treatment differentially affects participants based on the degree of their present bias.

We use a “time-staircase” procedure to construct a simple measure of present bias, which we refer to as “Beta,” as well as of the long-run discount factor (“Delta”) in an approach similar to [Goda et al. \(2019\)](#). The method was developed by [Falk et al. \(2016\)](#) for measuring only the long-run discount factor. Staircases have these forms:

⁴An example question is, “An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of 10 percent each period. What is the value of the asset after 20 periods?” All three questions are available in Section 3 of [Appendix I](#).

Present-Future Staircase: Would you rather receive \$100 today or $\$[X]$ in 12 months?

Future-Future Staircase: Would you rather receive \$120 in 12 months or $\$[Y]$ in 24 months?

Subjects begin with a common value of $[X]$ or $[Y]$. If a subject indicates they prefer the money sooner (later), then the second dollar amount increases (decreases) on the next question.⁵ For each staircase, subjects answer five questions, gradually narrowing the interval that contains the indifference point. Since the questions are binary and have parallel structure, they are easily understood and can be answered quickly. Participants were asked these questions for a 12-month (as shown above) and a 6-month time interval, for a total of four sets. The complete staircase questions are presented in [Appendix I](#). We randomize the order of the staircases and use different base values for the different sets of questions (i.e., the Present-Future Staircase always begins with \$100 today and the Future-Future Staircase with \$120 in 12 months) to minimize the influence of mechanical responses. While this staircase method did not involve real stakes, [Falk et al. \(2016\)](#) show that behavior between a no-stakes and real-stakes version is highly correlated.⁶ From these staircases we construct measures of Beta and Delta from the implied indifference point.⁷

2.4.3 Measure of Financial literacy

Employees with low financial literacy may struggle to make retirement savings decisions, due to not knowing what an appropriate savings rate is. In addition, low financial literacy may create difficulty regarding the process of implementing changes. We hypothesize that employees with low financial literacy would have bigger gaps between their ideal savings rate and their actual savings rate, and that the intervention will have larger treatment effects on those with low financial literacy if the savings tool serves as a substitute for financial capability.

We measure basic financial literacy using the five-item battery of financial literacy questions developed by [Lusardi and Mitchell \(2011b\)](#) and widely used since then ([Lusardi and Mitchell, 2014](#)). These questions measure understanding of inflation, diversification, compound interest, mortgage payments, and bond prices using multiple choice questions. We omit “don’t know” as a response

⁵In our survey instrument, the future value X was always greater than 100 and Y was always greater than 120.

⁶The authors find a correlation between the staircase measures and incentivized experimental measures of 0.524. This correlation is close to the test-retest correlation of 0.664 for the incentivized experiment.

⁷We cannot identify the indifference point for those who select the upper bound of the time staircase. In this case, we use the upper bound value plus the difference between that value and the second-to-last value to determine the indifference point. We include a dummy variable for those with these imputed values in the analysis.

option, in line with research that doing so significantly improves scores for female respondents (Bucher-Koenen et al., 2017).⁸ OPM employees performed well on these questions relative to the U.S. population; percent correct on each of the five questions ranged between 39 and 95 percent for OPM employees, compared to 21 and 70 percent for a representative sample of the U.S. population (Lusardi and Mitchell, 2011b). Similarly, the share of employees who answered all five questions correctly was 30 percent, relative to 10 percent for the U.S. population, suggesting that OPM employees are more financially literate than average. In our subsequent analysis, we use a z -score of the financial literacy measure standardized within the sample.

2.4.4 Factor Analysis

To understand heterogeneity in treatment effects, we take two approaches. First, we look for heterogeneity along theoretically important dimensions—such as financial literacy, exponential-growth bias (EGB), present bias (beta), educational attainment, prior TSP contribution levels—one at a time. Second, we pool information across multiple measures of financial capability and reduce dimensionality by estimating a latent factor and looking at heterogeneous treatment effects between individuals with more or less of this factor.

For the second approach, the first step is to reduce the dimensionality of the heterogeneity by conducting a principal component analysis of the baseline characteristics. Specifically, we include age in years, gender, years of schooling, race/ethnicity categories, household size, tenure in years, a supervisor status dummy, a permanent tenure status dummy, measured EGB, measured beta, measured delta, and measured financial literacy. We retain six significant factors and report the rotated factor loading matrix in Table 1.

⁸We thank an anonymous referee for pointing this out.

Table 1: Factor Loading Matrix

Variable	Factor1 Demographics	Factor2 Seniority	Factor3 Financial Capability	Factor4 Time Preference	Factor5 Household Composition	Factor6 Hispanic Factor	Uniqueness
Age	-0.0753	0.6838	0.0146	0.0648	-0.2091	-0.07	0.4738
Male	0.2269	-0.0046	0.3806	0.046	0.5064	0.0223	0.5446
Years of Schooling	-0.0993	-0.1911	0.7269	-0.0084	-0.1586	0.1145	0.3869
Race = White	0.925	-0.0198	-0.0022	0.0105	-0.0082	-0.2718	0.0699
Race = Hispanic	-0.0756	-0.0451	0.024	0.0178	-0.025	0.9097	0.1632
Race = Black	-0.9478	0.0585	-0.0297	-0.0367	-0.0067	-0.1584	0.071
Household Size	-0.0492	-0.0578	-0.0828	-0.0419	0.8686	-0.0349	0.2299
Tenure(in years)	-0.0802	0.8116	-0.131	0.0262	0.063	-0.0457	0.311
Is Supervisor	0.0577	0.4178	0.3047	-0.0493	0.2453	0.2889	0.5832
Tenure Description = Permanent	-0.0107	0.6444	-0.02	-0.0151	-0.0988	-0.012	0.5741
Std. Alpha	0.0448	0.1002	0.349	-0.0211	0.0972	-0.3106	0.7598
Std. Beta	0.0349	-0.0148	-0.0841	0.8349	-0.074	-0.0388	0.2875
Beta-Delta	0.0313	0.0673	0.1772	0.7921	0.0388	0.0725	0.3289
Financial Literacy	0.1299	0.0207	0.7042	0.1154	0.0648	-0.0656	0.4649
Eigenvalue	2.07686	1.75206	1.50360	1.31937	1.05755	1.04191	

Notes: The principal component analysis generated 14 factors, but factors with eigenvalue greater than 1 are retained and reported.

Table 1 reports the rotated factor loading matrix from the principal component analysis for the retained factors. Parallel analysis is performed, as shown in [Appendix F](#).

While these estimated factors are nothing more than a low-dimensional summary of the variation in the data, examining the loadings allows for some meaningful interpretations. For example, the first factor loads primarily on fixed demographic characteristics such as gender and race (and conversely, these dimensions load primarily on this factor). The second retained factor loads primarily on age, length and type of tenure, and supervisory status. We thus interpret this as a composite measure of seniority. We find that the third retained factor loads on years of education, the measure of EGB, and the measure of financial literacy, and we interpret this as a composite measure of financial capability, measuring different aspects of financial sophistication. Finally, the fourth retained factor loads primarily on the estimated beta and beta $\times$ delta, and so we interpret it as a composite measure of time preference. The fifth factors loads on employee gender and household size, which we label household composition. Finally, the fifth factor aligns most with Hispanic background. We use these composite factors to consider heterogeneity in the treatment effect at a

higher level of abstraction.

Our preanalysis plan was registered at the [Social Science Registry AEARCTR-0002129](#). We prespecified that we would measure the heterogeneous effects of exponential-growth bias, time preferences, and financial literacy but we did not prespecify the factor analysis or the regressions using the factors. The reader should view these analyses as more exploratory.

3 Results

The design of our intervention allows us to investigate three questions. First, we examine whether selection into tool use varies by observable characteristics. Second, we measure the treatment effect among those who clicked the link in the email invitation to use the tool. Finally, we measure how the treatment effect varies with measures of a person’s financial capability to determine whether the treatment is a substitute or complement to financial capability.

3.1 Selection into Tool Use

To examine selection into tool use, we regress tool use on individual characteristics using a logit specification and present our results in Table 2. First, we regress a binary variable that equals 1 for those who use the tool and zero otherwise on mean Alpha, mean Beta, and standardized financial literacy measure, and show these results in Column 1. None of the coefficients are statistically significant, indicating no selection based on the primary variables that we hypothesized would play a role in insufficient retirement saving. We expand the regression to include age, gender, race, education, and household size (Column 2); these coefficients are statistically significant. In Column 3, we layer in employment attributes including total pay, tenure in years, leadership/manager, and tenure status. The only significant effect comes from preintervention TSP contribution amount. The effect is highly significant, with an additional standard deviation of TSP amount ($SD = \$5,707.5$) increasing the likelihood of using the tool by $e^{(5.7075 \times 0.048)} - 1 = 32\%$. This finding indicates that those who are likely in greatest need of a course correction—those with low contributions—are less likely to use the tool.

Table 2: Selection into TOT Sample

	Logit		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Tool Participation	Tool Participation	Tool Participation
Tool Participation			
Mean Alpha	0.111 (0.071)	0.107 (0.072)	0.085 (0.073)
Mean Beta	0.393 (0.683)	0.368 (0.699)	0.233 (0.697)
Std. Financial Literacy	0.078 (0.056)	0.044 (0.061)	-0.009 (0.063)
Age		-0.001 (0.006)	-0.009 (0.006)
Male		-0.031 (0.121)	-0.059 (0.125)
White		0.018 (0.292)	0.215 (0.307)
Hispanic		-0.323 (0.390)	-0.171 (0.408)
Black		-0.240 (0.312)	-0.015 (0.325)
Some College or Associate		0.282 (0.198)	0.191 (0.202)
Bachelor		0.240 (0.168)	0.008 (0.177)
Post-Bachelor		0.186 (0.182)	-0.108 (0.202)
Household Size		0.041 (0.045)	0.037 (0.045)
Total Pay			0.003 (0.003)
Tenure in Years			-0.006 (0.009)
Team Leader			0.222 (0.368)
Supervisor or Manager			0.415* (0.247)
Conditional - Tenure Group 2			0.577 (0.494)
Permanent - Tenure Group 1			0.657 (0.454)
Part-Time			0.845 (0.882)
TSP Amount Pre-Rollout (\$1,000/year)			0.048*** (0.013)
Constant	0.252 (0.690)	0.096 (0.849)	-0.575 (1.007)
Mean DV	0.667	0.668	0.668
Observations	1,435	1,393	1,392

Notes: Robust standard errors reported. Dependent variable in column heading. The omitted groups are: female, of other race, with high school education, holding non-supervisory position, and of other tenure group. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

3.2 Treatment-on-Treated

We next estimate treatment-on-the-treated (TOT) effects, which represent the differences in contributions among the treatment group and the active control within the subsample of individuals who chose to interact with their version of the tool, rather than the intent-to-treat (ITT) effect among everyone invited to interact with the tool. In most experiments, the econometrician cannot observe which individual in the control group would take up treatment if offered the chance. Our active control design allows us to measure this, creating a particularly strong TOT design and precise estimate. We focus on the TOT effect as it is better powered to detect differences between the conditions.

Using data at the individual-month level, we regress annualized TSP contributions on a post-intervention indicator, the treatment indicator, and the interaction between the two using a difference-in-difference framework.⁹ The coefficient on the interaction term is our estimate of the treatment effect for the full treatment relative to the active control. We include year and month fixed effects to control for temporal variation in contributions, and individual fixed effects to control for between-person variation. We cluster standard errors at the person level.

Table 3 shows the main results of the treatment-on-treated analysis. The estimated effect of the treatment is a \$174 increase in contributions per year ($p=0.021$), which represents a 2.5 percent increase in annual contributions compared to the \$7,078 average annual contribution and 0.2 percent of average annual pay (Column 1). We also report the mean of the dependent variable for the estimation sample and a p -value calculated using permutation inference at the bottom of the table. We do this by randomly relabeling participants as control and treatment 1,000 times and computing a counterfactual treatment effect for each simulation, which creates a distribution of treatment effects under the null hypothesis. Our estimated treatment effect exceeds all but the top 0.1 percent of our simulated treatment effects, giving rise to a p -value smaller than the estimate’s p -value using asymptotic approximation. This effect is similar in magnitude to the

⁹The post-intervention indicator equals 1 for all individuals after the tool roll-out date. Thus, our analysis does not have staggered treatment timing and is not subject to concerns raised about two-way fixed effect models in difference-in-differences designs due to staggered treatment timing (Goodman-Bacon, 2021; Borusyak et al., 2022). Our estimates may be conservative given that some of the period after the tool rollout may be before an individual accesses the tool. To assess sensitivity to this issue, we estimate a model with staggered treatment timing across individuals based on the date of their first click through to the tool (Appendix Figure D.11). As expected, the effect estimated using Borusyak et al. (2022) is larger (Appendix Table D.14). However, the timing of first click is driven by individual differences between subjects and not random, so we do not prefer this specification.

effect found in [Goda, Manchester and Sojourner \(2014\)](#), who randomly assigned retirement income projections in the mail to University of Minnesota employees. Their treatment boosted average optional contributions by \$85 annually, which was 3.6 percent of average optional contributions and 0.15 percent of pay. We also include False Discovery Rate (FDR) sharpened q-values as a row in the table, which correct for multiple hypothesis testing across our main statistical tests across the table ([Anderson, 2008](#)).¹⁰

¹⁰In Columns (1) and (2) the q-values refer to the coefficient on Post×Full Tool, and in Columns (3)-(7) the q-values refer to the coefficients on Post×Full Tool×Attribute.

Table 3: Average Effects and Heterogeneous Effects by Single Dimensions of Heterogeneity (TOT)

	TOT Main		TOT Heterogeneity				
	(1) Overall Sample	(2) Survey Sample	(3) Std. Alpha	(4) Std. Beta	(5) Std. Financial Literacy	(6) TSP Amount per year pre Rollout	(7) Bachelor or Higher
Post $\times$ Full Tool	174.184** (75.621)	120.979 (129.646)	114.466 (129.537)	118.969 (129.367)	132.774 (129.607)	308.069* (174.319)	-210.650 (195.251)
Post $\times$ Attribute			-63.461 (84.566)	120.159 (108.571)	-166.267 (102.292)	0.073*** (0.018)	-179.543 (201.044)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute			122.769 (106.152)	-152.713 (131.581)	328.038** (130.793)	-0.022 (0.024)	496.098* (257.274)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	7078.012	7577.489	7577.489	7577.489	7577.489	7577.489	7577.489
Permutation P Value	0.001	0.335					
FDR Sharpened Q-Value	0.081	0.259	0.248	0.248	0.081	0.259	0.1
R-squared	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.090	0.096	0.090
Observations	151,732	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744

Notes: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at the person level. The dependent variable is TSP amount. "Full" refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (1) reports the estimated TOT effects of all tool users, Col (2) of tool users who also answered the survey. Single-dimension attributes are collected from the survey. Col (3)–(7) report the heterogeneous TOT effects by attributes as specified in the corresponding column heading. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effects, month fixed effects, and individual fixed effects. For Col (1) and Col (2), p-values from permutation inference of 1,000 times are reported. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. In Columns (1) and (2) they refer to the coefficient on Post $\times$ Full Tool and in Columns (3)–(7) they refer to the coefficients on Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Column 2 reproduces the same specification from Column 1 for the survey-response subsample, which is the sample we use to investigate heterogeneity in the treatment effect. While the TOT estimates in Columns 1 and 2 are similar, the estimate in Column 2 is a bit smaller in magnitude and the standard errors increase with the smaller sample, making the treatment effect no longer statistically significant at conventional levels.

3.3 Heterogeneity in Treatment Effects

Next, we estimate heterogeneous treatment effects (Columns 3–7). The coefficient of interest in each column is the three-way interaction ($\text{postintervention} \times \text{treatment group} \times \text{attribute}$), which may be interpreted as the increase in the treatment effect, relative to the active control, of a one-unit increase in the attribute. In Column 3, the attribute is measured exponential-growth bias; in Column 4, the attribute is the measured short-run discount rate, Beta; and in Column 5, the attribute is measured financial literacy. We standardize each of these attributes so a one-unit change corresponds to one standard deviation.

While we find no evidence of heterogeneous treatment effects with respect to measures of exponential-growth bias and present bias, we find evidence of a statistically significant difference in the treatment effect depending on one’s level of measured financial literacy. The sign of the coefficient indicates that, rather than less financially literate employees benefiting from the increase in information, the treatment has a greater impact on more financially literate individuals, leading them to increase their contributions more. Specifically, having one standard deviation higher measured financial literacy increases the treatment effect by \$328 in annual contributions. Because the treatment leads those with higher levels of measured financial literacy to make bigger changes in their contributions than those with lower measured financial literacy, the evidence suggests that the intervention complements rather than substitutes for financial capability.

The lack of significant heterogeneity by exponential-growth bias or present bias ran contrary to our expectation. The intervention was designed to help individuals accurately understand the mapping from retirement account contributions to retirement income. Exponential-growth bias distorts this understanding, tending to lead one to underestimate the future benefits of more-immediate sacrifices [Goda et al. \(2019\)](#). This may be a particularly acute issue for those with naive present bias as well.

In Column 6 we examine heterogeneity in the treatment effect based on preintervention contributions. We find no evidence of differences in the treatment effect between those who were contributing different amounts prior to the intervention (Column 6). We estimate heterogeneity by formal educational attainment and find that those with at least a bachelor’s degree exhibit treatment effects that are \$496 greater than those with lower levels of education, though the effect is only marginally significant (Column 7).¹¹

Drawing on the latent factors described and estimated in Section 2.4.4, in Table 4, we include interaction terms for the three meaningful composite factors—seniority, financial capability, and time preference. As before, we include year and month fixed effects to control for temporal variation in contributions and individual fixed effects to control for between-person variation. The coefficients of interest are thus the triple-interactions of $\text{post} \times \text{treatment} \times \text{factor}$, which describes how the relative increase in the treatment group over the active control differs for those with a standard deviation higher level of the composite factor. In Columns 1 and 5, the estimated coefficient on the three-way interaction provides evidence that demographics is not associated with a statistically or economically significant heterogeneity in treatment effects. In Columns 2 and 5 the same can be said about seniority.¹² In contrast, one standard deviation higher in the financial capability factor is associated with a \$412 stronger treatment effect. These results are consistent with those in Table 3, where measured financial literacy and education levels were associated with larger treatment effects. At this greater level of abstraction, we find that more financially capable employees benefit more from the increase in information; that is, the information intervention and financial capability are complements rather than substitutes. Third, we fail to find evidence that time preferences mediate the treatment effect. Finally, we include all four factors and their interactions with treatment and post simultaneously and find evidence that the only significant interaction is with financial capability and that this significant interaction is evident even when allowing heterogeneity on the other factors.¹³

¹¹Appendix Table A.5 replicates Table 3 but with the outcome in terms of standard deviations of TSP amount. Appendix Table A.8 replicates Table 3 but with the outcome in terms of TSP rate. Intent-to-treat versions of these tables are available in Appendix Table A.4, A.7, and A.10. The main effect is not significant in these analyses but the heterogeneous effects of financial literacy and education are similar in terms of sign and significance, as are the null effects of the other attributes.

¹²To aid interpretation, note that, in the control group, greater seniority is associated with a \$294 smaller change after the experiment began versus before.

¹³Appendix Table A.6 replicates Table 4 but with the outcome in terms of standard deviations of TSP amount. Appendix Table A.9 replicates Table 4 but with the outcome in terms of TSP rate.

Table 4: Heterogeneous Effects by Factors (TOT)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)
Post × Full Tool	141.889 (130.840)	75.229 (130.527)	151.798 (131.326)	137.219 (130.473)	173.534 (135.362)	133.807 (131.544)	25.538 (134.771)
Post × Demographics	-105.760 (95.464)						-107.469 (96.001)
Post × Full Tool × Demographics	149.497 (128.685)						157.211 (126.854)
Post × Seniority		-293.914*** (99.988)					-288.275*** (99.769)
Post × Full Tool × Seniority		-38.885 (137.083)					-67.622 (133.333)
Post × Financial Capability			-126.354 (97.740)				-113.895 (96.591)
Post × Full Tool × Financial Capability			411.633*** (132.631)				364.711*** (128.438)
Post × Time Preference				164.910 (109.860)			176.523 (109.173)
Post × Full Tool × Time Preference				-180.815 (133.436)			-180.677 (132.239)
Post × Household Composition					46.222 (104.020)		57.651 (102.362)
Post × Full Tool × Household Composition					-101.637 (128.338)		-113.733 (125.478)
Post × Hispanic Factor						-81.289 (93.459)	-78.221 (84.823)
Post × Full Tool × Hispanic Factor						89.919 (108.988)	56.255 (103.873)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	7579.859	7579.859	7579.859	7579.859	7579.859	7579.859	7579.859
F-Statistic	1.350	0.080	9.632	1.836	0.627	0.681	
P-Value	0.246	0.777	0.002	0.176	0.429	0.410	
R-squared	0.089	0.094	0.093	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.107
Observations	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131

Notes: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at the person level. The dependent variable in the column heading. “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Factors are generated from the principal component analysis using single-dimensional attributes from survey as inputs. Factor loadings are reported in Table 1. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effects, month fixed effects, and individual fixed effects. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. Q-values refer to the triple interaction terms. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

4 Discussion

Our results are surprising in several ways. We find that selection into tool use favors those who save more, and who are therefore less likely to need a TSP saving correction. This finding goes against the overall efficacy of the tool in closing saving gaps as those who are at greatest risk of inadequate retirement savings are those who are least likely to use it. The treatment effect is increasing in measured financial literacy, education, and our composite financial capability metric, generated through exploratory factor analysis. We designed the intervention expecting that behavioral biases likely cause people to make suboptimal retirement-savings decisions, targeting EGB and procrastination, which have been shown in prior work to be associated with lower levels of retirement savings. We therefore hypothesized that an intervention designed to counteract those behavioral biases would improve decisions overall, but more specifically for those who were more biased. However, we found no evidence that either of these biases were correlated with the treatment effect.

Past literature has shown that measured financial literacy and financial capability is positively correlated with more retirement savings, while controlling for many other variables including income and age (Goda et al., 2019). However, complementarity between the treatment and financial capability implies that interventions like the one in this paper may be ineffective at helping employees who are most vulnerable. If this lower savings stems from uninformed decision-making, retirement saving outcomes are likely suboptimal, and so helping individuals who lack financial capability would be a natural policy goal. Our results suggest that simple online retirement-savings tools are not sufficient meet this goal despite their “just-in-time” design feature aimed (i.e., both versions of the tool included support for immediate implementation of contribution changes).

We speculate that a certain degree of financial capability is necessary to effectively digest the information contained in the treatment-version of the online tool. For those with higher measures of financial capability, providing information for how much annual income in retirement their current TSP contribution election provided was useful; in contrast, we found no evidence that this additional information was useful to those with lower measures of financial capability. Employees with lower financial capability may have been intimidated by the specific information pertaining to TSP election in the treatment version of the tool if self-knowledge about the saving vehicle was low. Past research has shown that financial self-knowledge is low. Bhargava and Conell-Price

(2021) find that 20–37 percent of nonparticipants in their employer’s 401(k) program mistakenly believed that they had already enrolled. Furthermore, Bhargava et al. (2021) find that cosmetic user-interface design elements can have a large effect on employee savings rates, suggesting that many employees are making decisions in a haphazard or nondeliberative manner. To help employees with lower financial capability, online tools may require better automation whereby the fields in the online tool are autopopulated by the employee’s administrative data. Such integration would lead to fewer steps, less reliance on financial language, and less need for employee self-knowledge. However, it is also possible that more expensive forms of intervention, such as one-on-one sessions and/or personalized materials, may be necessary to help those with lower financial capabilities.

5 Conclusion

We conducted a randomized controlled trial, inviting federal employees to use an online retirement-savings tool. Participants who received projections of their retirement income from their defined contribution plan saved \$174 more annually than those who did not. Selection into the tool favored those who already had higher TSP contributions. The treatment effect was larger for those with higher measure of financial literacy and those who were more “Financial Capable,” a factor generated by our factor analysis. This complementarity between the tool and financial capability indicators suggests that similar tools may be effective at helping the well-informed, educated, and financially literate to make optimal retirement-savings decisions, but unlikely to help those who are relatively uninformed, less educated, and less financially literate. Different approaches may be needed to help different populations. One of the strengths of online tools is that they scale well: the marginal cost to the employer or plan manager is near zero. We find evidence of benefits for financially capable workers that may justify those costs. However, these findings suggest that more research and development regarding cost-effective ways to assist those with lower financial capability are needed to close gaps in retirement wealth.

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(For Online Publication Only)

Appendix A Additional Results

Table [A.1](#) shows balance of observables by condition assignment for the full sample and for tool users.

Table [A.2](#) shows descriptive statistics for the survey sample.

Table [A.3](#) displays selection into the survey sample. The survey sample is highly selected.

Table [A.4](#) shows both the main intent-to-treat effect, and heterogeneous intent-to-treat effects for Alpha, Beta, financial literacy, TSP amount, and education. The main effect is not significant. Only the heterogeneous effect on financial literacy is statistically significant.

Tables [A.5](#), [A.6](#), and [A.7](#) replicate Tables [3](#), [4](#), and [A.4](#), except the outcome is in standard deviations of TSP amount.

Tables [A.8](#), [A.9](#), and [A.10](#) replicate Tables [3](#), [4](#), and [A.4](#), except the outcome is in TSP rate.

Table A.1: Descriptive Statistics for ITT and TOT Sample

	Assignment				Tool Use				
	(1) All	(2) Partial	(3) Full	(4) Difference	(5) All Tool User	(6) Non-User	(7) Partial User	(8) Full User	(9) Difference
TSP Amount (\$/year)	6274.8 (5721.6)	6287.8 (5783.8)	6262.0 (5660.6)	25.803 (155.366)	7269.9 (6037.8)	5382.0 (5265.6)	7319.5 (6190.1)	7219.2 (5880.0)	100.357 (238.437)
SD Change in TSP Amount	1.107 (1.009)	1.109 (1.020)	1.105 (0.998)	0.005 (0.027)	1.282 (1.065)	0.949 (0.929)	1.291 (1.092)	1.273 (1.037)	0.018 (0.042)
Final TSP Rate	6.899 (5.467)	6.899 (5.611)	6.898 (5.323)	0.000 (0.148)	7.852 (5.869)	6.043 (4.927)	7.870 (6.114)	7.833 (5.610)	0.037 (0.232)
Mean Alpha	0.483 (0.826)	0.472 (0.813)	0.493 (0.838)	-0.021 (0.042)	0.516 (0.836)	0.417 (0.802)	0.480 (0.792)	0.550 (0.875)	-0.069 (0.053)
Mean Beta	1.007 (0.0865)	1.005 (0.0854)	1.008 (0.0875)	-0.003 (0.004)	1.007 (0.0827)	1.006 (0.0935)	1.005 (0.0831)	1.008 (0.0823)	-0.003 (0.005)
Std. Financial Literacy	-0.0753 (1.019)	-0.0844 (1.023)	-0.0664 (1.015)	-0.018 (0.053)	-0.0445 (0.995)	-0.138 (1.065)	-0.0400 (1.008)	-0.0487 (0.984)	0.009 (0.064)
Total Pay (in Thousand)	85.99 (31.62)	86.08 (31.74)	85.90 (31.50)	0.180 (0.859)	88.61 (31.77)	83.64 (31.30)	88.71 (32.48)	88.51 (31.04)	0.195 (1.255)
Age	45.73 (10.70)	45.80 (10.69)	45.65 (10.70)	0.144 (0.290)	46.72 (10.43)	44.83 (10.86)	46.75 (10.53)	46.69 (10.33)	0.058 (0.412)
Gender	0.429 (0.495)	0.428 (0.495)	0.429 (0.495)	-0.001 (0.013)	0.443 (0.497)	0.416 (0.493)	0.444 (0.497)	0.441 (0.497)	0.003 (0.020)
Bachelor or Higher	0.654 (0.476)	0.659 (0.474)	0.649 (0.477)	0.010 (0.013)	0.658 (0.475)	0.651 (0.477)	0.679 (0.467)	0.636 (0.481)	0.043* (0.019)
White	0.658 (0.474)	0.653 (0.476)	0.664 (0.473)	-0.011 (0.013)	0.684 (0.465)	0.635 (0.481)	0.688 (0.464)	0.680 (0.467)	0.008 (0.018)
Observations	5,426	2,696	2,730	5,426	2,566	2,860	1,297	1,269	2,566
Chi-Squared				2.42					2.49
P-Value				0.97					0.96

NOTE: Summary statistics of all outcome variables one month before the intervention and single-dimension attributes are reported. Single-dimension attributes are obtained from the survey. Standard deviation in parentheses below. Selected sample in column heading “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (5) reports the difference between active control and treatment group in the ITT sample, with join significant test statistics reported at the bottom. Col (9) reports the difference between active control and treatment group in the TOT sample. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.2: Descriptive Statistics by Survey Participation

	(1) All	(2) Survey Non-Completers	(3) Survey Completer	(4) Difference
TSP Amount (\$/year)	6274.0 (5724.1)	5939.1 (5537.6)	7205.4 (6119.9)	-1266.219*** (175.365)
SD Change in TSP Amount	1.107 (1.010)	1.048 (0.977)	1.271 (1.080)	-0.223*** (0.031)
Final TSP Rate	6.895 (5.465)	6.568 (5.268)	7.801 (5.885)	-1.233*** (0.167)
Total Pay (in Thousand)	85.99 (31.62)	85.30 (31.60)	87.90 (31.60)	-2.598** (0.973)
Age	45.73 (10.70)	45.18 (10.65)	47.24 (10.69)	-2.052*** (0.328)
Gender	0.429 (0.495)	0.424 (0.494)	0.442 (0.497)	-0.018 (0.015)
Bachelor or Higher	0.654 (0.476)	0.651 (0.477)	0.663 (0.473)	-0.013 (0.015)
White	0.658 (0.474)	0.642 (0.479)	0.704 (0.457)	-0.062*** (0.015)
Observations	5,426	3,991	1,435	5,426
Chi-Squared				62.39
P-Value				0.00

NOTE: Summary statistics for all outcome variables one month before the intervention and demographics are reported by survey participation. Robust standard errors reported. Sample selection in column heading. Col (5) reports the difference between survey participants and non-participants, with joint significant test statistics reported at the bottom. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.3: Selection into Survey Sample

	Logit	
	(1) In Survey Sample	(2) In Survey Sample
In Survey Sample		
Age	-0.003*** (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Male	0.355*** (0.017)	0.356*** (0.017)
White	0.351*** (0.037)	0.359*** (0.037)
Hispanic	-0.106** (0.048)	-0.077 (0.049)
Black	0.202*** (0.039)	0.254*** (0.040)
Some College or Associate	0.503*** (0.028)	0.492*** (0.029)
Bachelor	0.105*** (0.021)	0.103*** (0.023)
Post-Bachelor	0.315*** (0.024)	0.300*** (0.027)
Household Size	0.054*** (0.006)	0.061*** (0.007)
Total Pay		-0.002*** (0.000)
Tenure in Years		-0.019*** (0.001)
Team Leader		0.133*** (0.047)
Supervisor or Manager		-0.001 (0.031)
Conditional - Tenure Group 2		-0.459*** (0.069)
Permanent - Tenure Group 1		-0.104* (0.063)
Part-Time		1.421*** (0.186)
Full-Time		1.572*** (0.169)
Constant	0.807*** (0.059)	-0.490*** (0.188)
Mean DV	0.806	0.806
Observations	103,607	103,607

NOTE: Robust standard errors reported. Dependent variable in column heading. The omitted group is female, of other race, with High School education, holding non-supervisory position, and of other tenure group.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.4: Effect of the Treatment (ITT) on TSP Amount

	ITT Main		ITT Heterogeneity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Overall Sample	Survey Sample	Std. Alpha	Std. Beta	Std. Financial Literacy	TSP Amount per year pre Rollout	Bachelor or Higher
Post $\times$ Full Tool	61.055 (48.990)	134.103 (100.994)	131.192 (100.774)	134.080 (100.901)	151.680 (101.817)	285.584** (135.674)	-89.439 (148.638)
Post $\times$ Attribute			41.775 (74.787)	30.028 (73.575)	-125.891* (75.388)	0.081*** (0.014)	
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute			80.896 (92.855)	21.494 (92.759)	238.383** (99.264)	-0.021 (0.020)	
Post $\times$ Attribute=1							-90.545 (147.613)
Post $\times$ Attribute=1 $\times$ Full Tool							337.035* (198.862)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	6188.494	7016.741	7016.741	7016.741	7016.741	7016.741	7016.741
F-Statistic			0.759	0.054	5.767	1.089	2.872
P-Value			0.384	0.817	0.016	0.297	0.090
FDR Sharpened Q-Value	0.463	0.463	0.471	0.594	0.131	0.463	0.372
R-squared	0.069	0.072	0.073	0.072	0.073	0.081	0.073
Observations	318,873	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in title. “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (1) reports the estimated ITT effects, Col (2) of who answered the survey. Single-dimension attributes are collected from the survey. Col (3)–(7) reports the heterogeneous ITT effects by attributes as specified in the corresponding column heading. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. In Columns (1) and (2) they refer to the coefficient on Post $\times$ Full Tool and in Columns (3)–(7) they refer to the coefficients on Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.5: Effect of the Treatment (TOT) on SD Change in TSP Amount

	TOT Main		TOT Heterogeneity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Overall Sample	Survey Sample	Std. Alpha	Std. Beta	Std. Financial Literacy	TSP Amount per year pre Rollout	Bachelor or Higher
Post $\times$ Full Tool	0.031** (0.013)	0.021 (0.023)	0.020 (0.023)	0.021 (0.023)	0.023 (0.023)	0.054* (0.031)	-0.037 (0.034)
Post $\times$ Attribute			-0.011 (0.015)	0.021 (0.019)	-0.029 (0.018)	0.000*** (0.000)	-0.032 (0.035)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute			0.022 (0.019)	-0.027 (0.023)	0.058** (0.023)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.088* (0.045)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	1.248533	1.336639	1.336639	1.336639	1.336639	1.336639	1.336639
Permutation P-Value	0.000	0.348					
FDR Sharpened Q-Value	0.081	0.259	0.248	0.248	0.081	0.259	0.1
R-squared	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.090	0.096	0.090
Observations	151,732	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in title. “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (1) reports the estimated TOT effects of tool users, Col (2) of tool users who also answered the survey. Single-dimension attributes are collected from the survey. Col (3)–(7) reports the heterogeneous TOT effects by attributes as specified in the corresponding column heading. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. For Col (1) and Col (2), p-values from permutation inference of 1,000 times are reported. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. In Columns (1) and (2) they refer to the coefficient on Post $\times$ Full Tool and in Columns (3)–(7) they refer to the coefficients on Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute. *p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table A.6: Heterogeneous Effects by Factors (TOT) on SD Change in TSP Amount

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount
Post × Full Tool	0.025 (0.023)	0.013 (0.023)	0.027 (0.023)	0.024 (0.023)	0.031 (0.024)	0.024 (0.023)	0.005 (0.024)
Post × Demographics	-0.019 (0.017)						-0.019 (0.017)
Post × Full Tool × Demographics	0.026 (0.023)						0.028 (0.022)
Post × Seniority		-0.052*** (0.018)					-0.051*** (0.018)
Post × Full Tool × Seniority		-0.007 (0.024)					-0.012 (0.024)
Post × Financial Capability			-0.022 (0.017)				-0.020 (0.017)
Post × Full Tool × Financial Capability			0.073*** (0.023)				0.064*** (0.023)
Post × Time Preference				0.029 (0.019)			0.031 (0.019)
Post × Full Tool × Time Preference				-0.032 (0.024)			-0.032 (0.023)
Post × Household Composition					0.008 (0.018)		0.010 (0.018)
Post × Full Tool × Household Composition					-0.018 (0.023)		-0.020 (0.022)
Post × Hispanic Factor						-0.014 (0.016)	-0.014 (0.015)
Post × Full Tool × Hispanic Factor						0.016 (0.019)	0.010 (0.018)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	1.337	1.337	1.337	1.337	1.337	1.337	1.337
F-Statistic	1.350	0.080	9.632	1.836	0.627	0.681	
P-Value	0.246	0.777	0.002	0.176	0.429	0.410	
R-squared	0.089	0.094	0.093	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.107
Observations	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in column heading. "Partial" refers to the tool in the active control condition and "Full" refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Factors are generated from the principal component analysis using single-dimensional attributed obtained from survey. 6 factors with eigenvalue greater than 1 are retained. Factor loadings are reported in Table 1. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. They refer to the triple interaction term. * p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table A.7: Effect of the Treatment (ITT) on SD Change in TSP Amount

	ITT Main		ITT Heterogeneity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Overall Sample	Survey Sample	Std. Alpha	Std. Beta	Std. Financial Literacy	TSP Amount per year pre Rollout	Bachelor or Higher
Post $\times$ Full Tool	0.011 (0.009)	0.024 (0.018)	0.023 (0.018)	0.024 (0.018)	0.027 (0.018)	0.050** (0.024)	-0.016 (0.026)
Post $\times$ Attribute			0.007 (0.013)	0.005 (0.013)	-0.022* (0.013)	0.000*** (0.000)	
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute			0.014 (0.016)	0.004 (0.016)	0.042** (0.018)	-0.000 (0.000)	
Post $\times$ Attribute=1							-0.016 (0.026)
Post $\times$ Attribute=1 $\times$ Full Tool							0.059* (0.035)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	1.092	1.238	1.238	1.238	1.238	1.238	1.238
F-Statistic			0.759	0.054	5.767	1.089	2.872
P-Value			0.384	0.817	0.016	0.297	0.090
FDR Sharpend Q-Value	0.463	0.463	0.471	0.594	0.131	0.463	0.372
R-squared	0.069	0.072	0.073	0.072	0.073	0.081	0.073
Observations	318,873	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in title. “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (1) reports the estimated ITT effects, Col (2) of who also answered the survey. Single-dimension attributes are collected from the survey. Col (3)–(7) reports the heterogeneous ITT effects by attributes as specified in the corresponding column heading. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. In Columns (1) and (2) they refer to the coefficient on Post $\times$ Full Tool and in Columns (3)–(7) they refer to the coefficients on Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute. $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.8: Effect of the Treatment (TOT) on TSP Rate

	TOT Main		TOT Heterogeneity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Overall Sample	Survey Sample	Std. Alpha	Std. Beta	Std. Financial Literacy	TSP Amount per year pre Rollout	Bachelor or Higher
Post $\times$ Full Tool	0.145 (0.088)	0.119 (0.162)	0.112 (0.163)	0.116 (0.163)	0.130 (0.162)	0.453* (0.233)	-0.372 (0.289)
Post $\times$ Attribute			-0.061 (0.106)	0.130 (0.157)	-0.325** (0.136)	0.000** (0.000)	-0.667** (0.291)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute			0.125 (0.128)	-0.175 (0.175)	0.412** (0.171)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.727** (0.349)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	7.687612	8.166443	8.166443	8.166443	8.166443	8.166443	8.166443
Permutation P Value	0.051	0.452					
FDR Sharpened Q-Value	0.206	0.363	0.314	0.314	0.127	0.314	0.127
R-squared	0.023	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.025	0.026	0.025
Observations	151,732	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744	57,744

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in title. “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (1) reports the estimated TOT effects of tool users, Col (2) of tool users who also answered the survey. Single-dimension attributes are collected from the survey. Col (3)–(7) reports the heterogeneous TOT effects by attributes as specified in the corresponding column heading. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. For Col (1) and Col (2), p-values from permutation inference of 1,000 times are reported. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. In Columns (1) and (2) they refer to the coefficient on Post $\times$ Full Tool and in Columns (3)–(7) they refer to the coefficients on Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.9: Heterogeneous Effects by Factors (TOT) on TSP Rate

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate
Post $\times$ Full Tool	0.148 (0.164)	0.010 (0.167)	0.136 (0.167)	0.133 (0.164)	0.166 (0.166)	0.145 (0.165)	-0.070 (0.181)
Post $\times$ Demographics	-0.075 (0.102)						-0.079 (0.100)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Demographics	0.147 (0.142)						0.163 (0.141)
Post $\times$ Seniority		-0.456*** (0.149)					-0.428*** (0.146)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Seniority		0.078 (0.190)					0.025 (0.186)
Post $\times$ Financial Capability			-0.375** (0.148)				-0.357** (0.145)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Financial Capability			0.517*** (0.187)				0.465** (0.180)
Post $\times$ Time Preference				0.178 (0.151)			0.203 (0.151)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Time Preference				-0.183 (0.171)			-0.202 (0.172)
Post $\times$ Household Composition					0.153 (0.119)		0.152 (0.114)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Household Composition					-0.200 (0.147)		-0.190 (0.142)
Post $\times$ Hispanic Factor						-0.097 (0.096)	-0.083 (0.084)
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Hispanic Factor						0.070 (0.118)	0.031 (0.111)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	8.176	8.176	8.176	8.176	8.176	8.176	8.176
F-Statistic	1.078	0.169	7.665	1.141	1.845	0.349	
P-Value	0.299	0.682	0.006	0.286	0.175	0.555	
R-squared	0.024	0.029	0.027	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.038
Observations	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131	56,131

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in column heading. “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Factors are generated from the principal component analysis using single-dimensional attributes from survey as inputs. 6 factors with eigenvalue greater than 1 are retained. Factor loadings are reported in Table 1. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. They refer to the triple interaction term. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.10: Effect of the Treatment (ITT) on TSP Rate

	ITT Main		ITT Heterogeneity				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Overall Sample	Survey Sample	Std. Alpha	Std. Beta	Std. Financial Literacy	TSP Amount per year pre Rollout	Bachelor or Higher
Post $\times$ Full Tool	0.033 (0.055)	0.103 (0.122)	0.101 (0.122)	0.103 (0.123)	0.126 (0.122)	0.402** (0.173)	-0.238 (0.206)
Post $\times$ Attribute			0.051 (0.089)	0.037 (0.104)	-0.266*** (0.098)	0.000*** (0.000)	
Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute			0.073 (0.108)	0.018 (0.120)	0.319*** (0.123)	-0.000 (0.000)	
Post $\times$ Attribute=1							-0.499** (0.203)
Post $\times$ Attribute=1 $\times$ Full Tool							0.515** (0.256)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	6.848	7.707	7.707	7.707	7.707	7.707	7.707
F-Statistic			0.454	0.023	6.723	2.399	4.055
P-Value			0.501	0.879	0.010	0.122	0.044
FDR Sharpened Q-Value	0.568	0.568	0.568	1	0.072	0.255	0.153
R-squared	0.014	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.017	0.019	0.017
Observations	318,873	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974	85,974

NOTE: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable in title. “Partial” refers to the tool in the active control condition and “Full” refers to the tool in the treatment condition. Col (1) reports the estimated ITT effects, Col (2) of who also answered the survey. Single-dimension attributes are collected from the survey. Col (3)–(7) reports the heterogeneous ITT effects by attributes as specified in the corresponding column heading. All specifications include post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. False Discovery Rate (FDR) Sharpened Q-values correct for table-wide multiple hypothesis testing, and include only the main statistical tests, not the controls. In Columns (1) and (2) they refer to the coefficient on Post $\times$ Full Tool and in Columns (3)–(7) they refer to the coefficients on Post $\times$ Full Tool $\times$ Attribute. $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Appendix B Randomization Inference by Heterogeneous Characteristics

Figure B.1: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for High Std. Alpha Sample

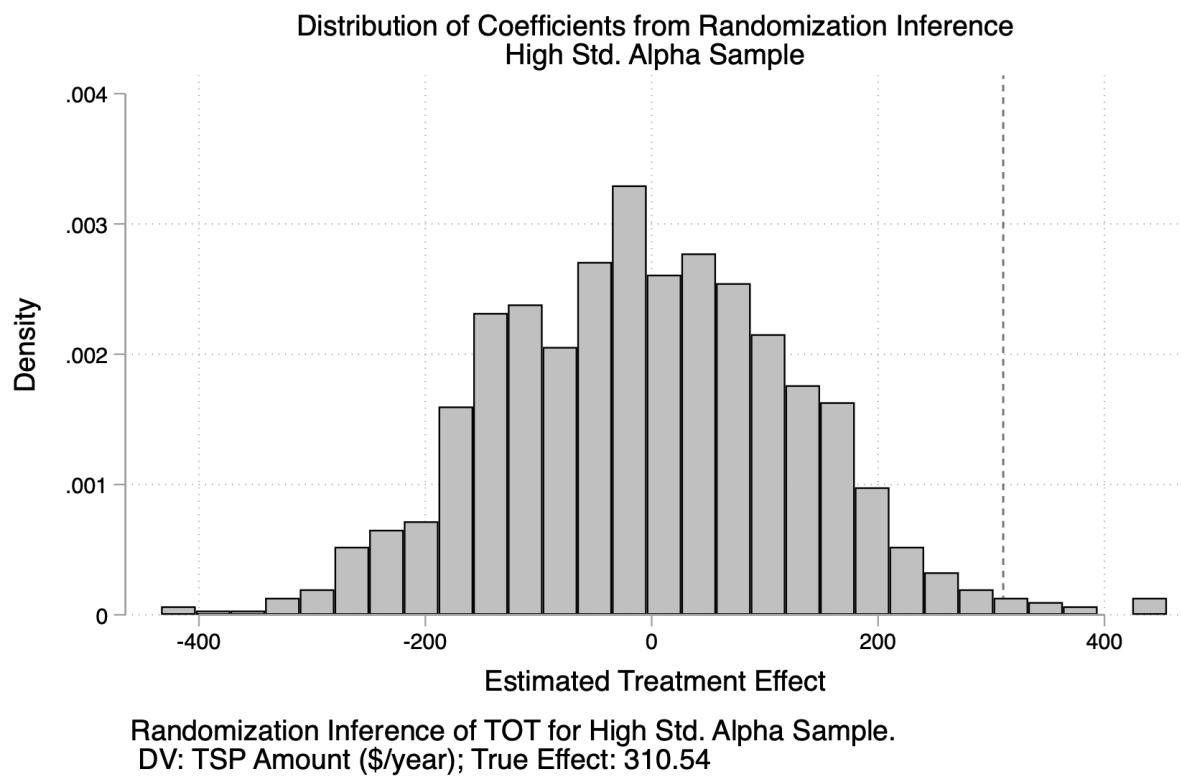
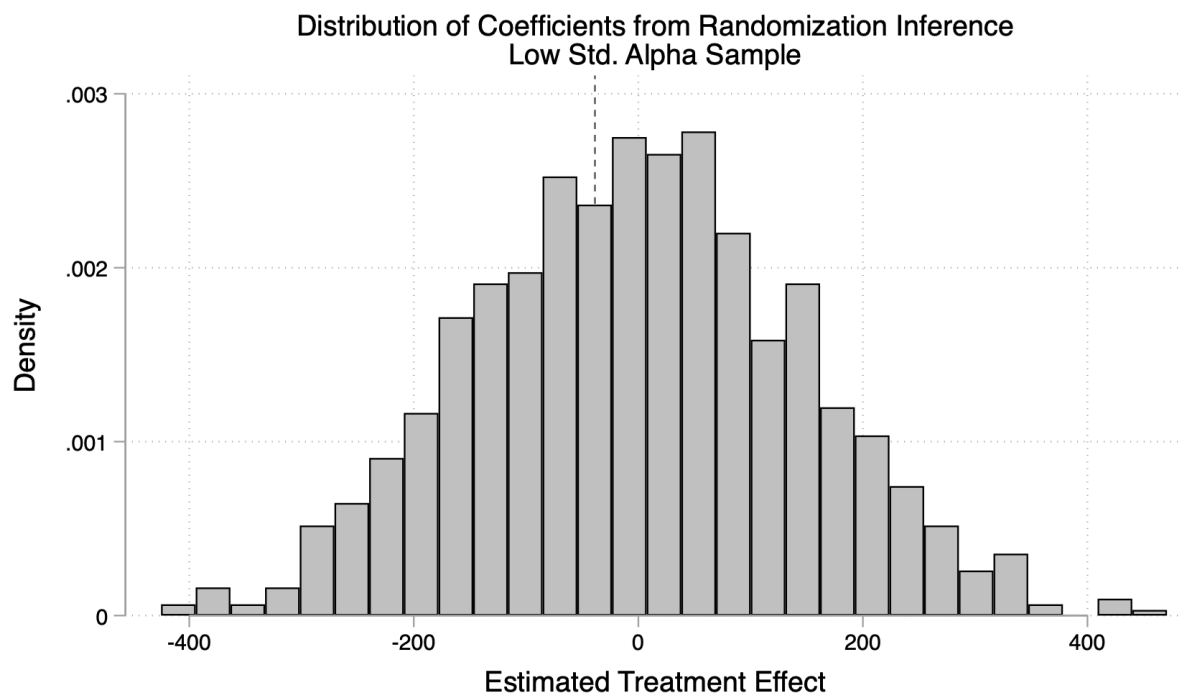
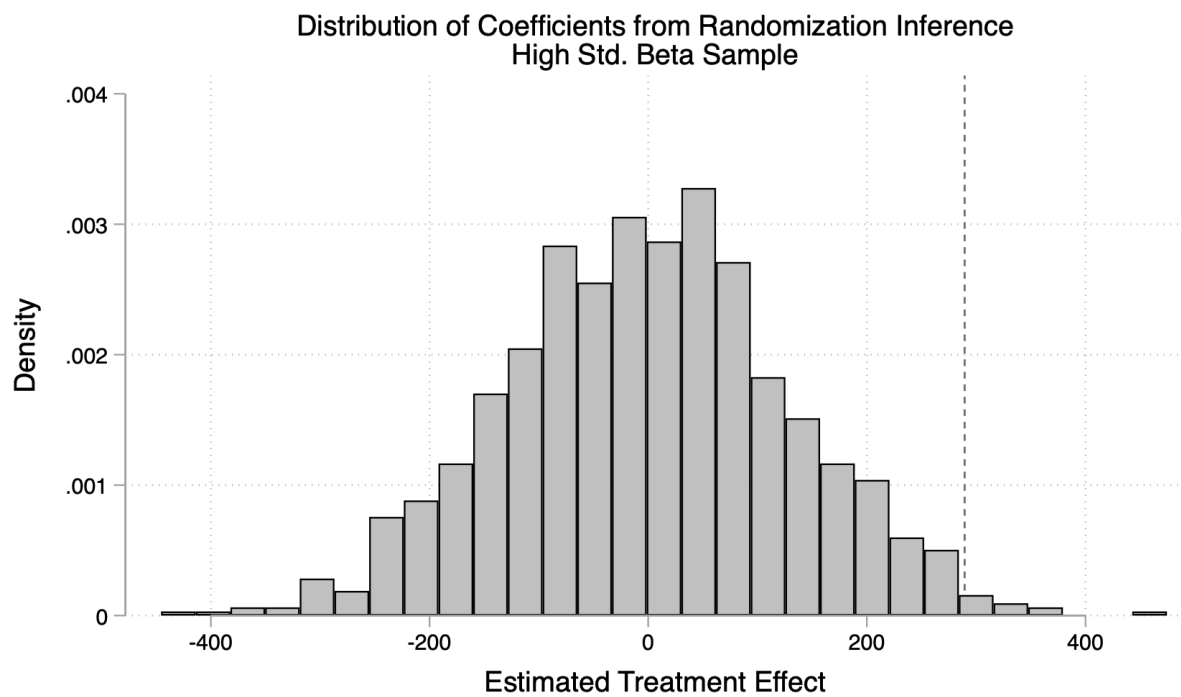


Figure B.2: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for Low Std. Alpha Sample



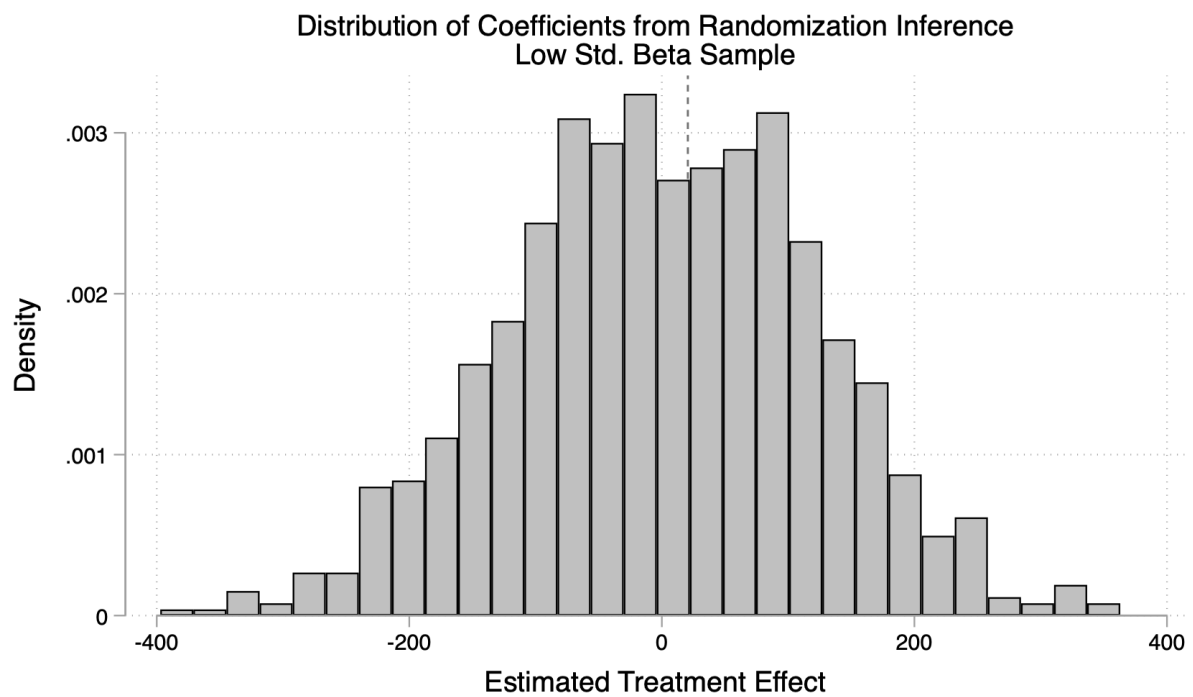
Randomization Inference of TOT for Low Std. Alpha Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: -38.69

Figure B.3: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for High Std. Beta Sample



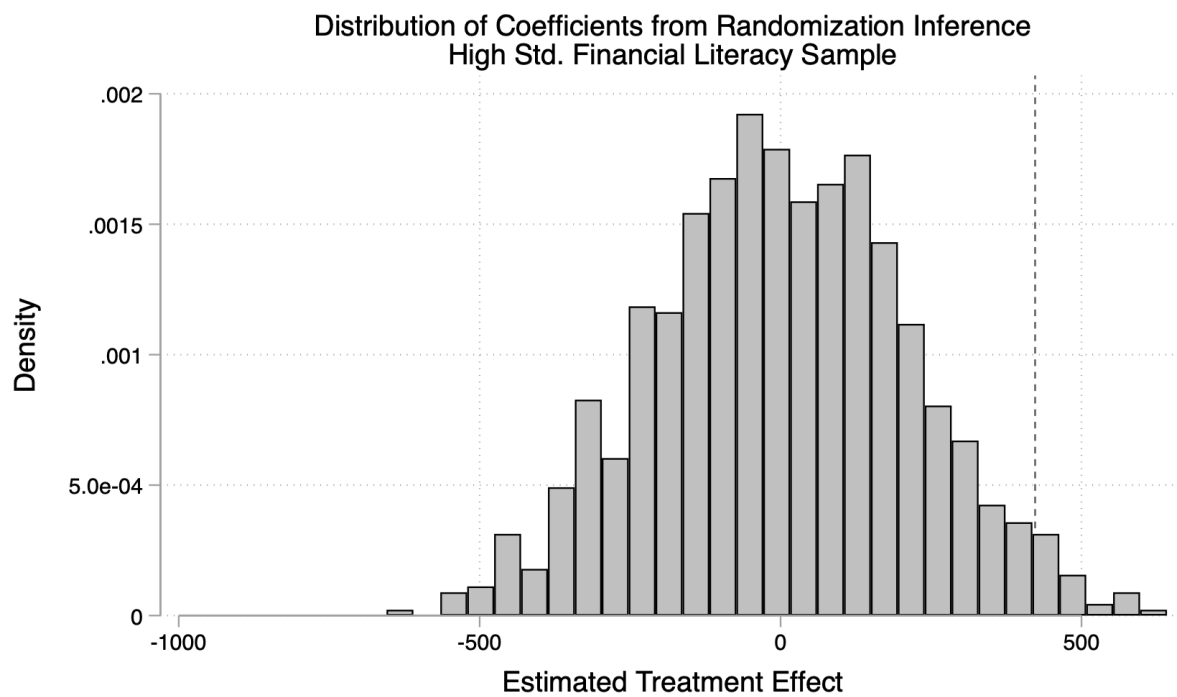
Randomization Inference of TOT for High Std. Beta Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 289.47

Figure B.4: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for Low Std. Beta Sample



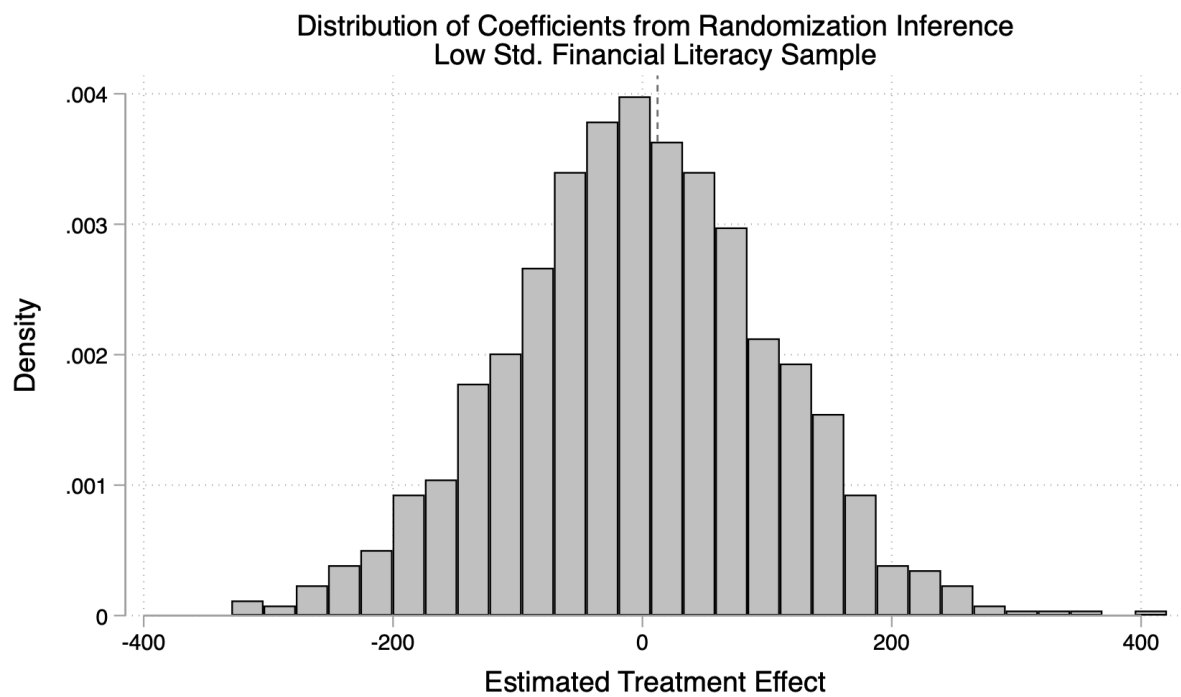
Randomization Inference of TOT for Low Std. Beta Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 20.59

Figure B.5: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for High Financial Literacy Sample



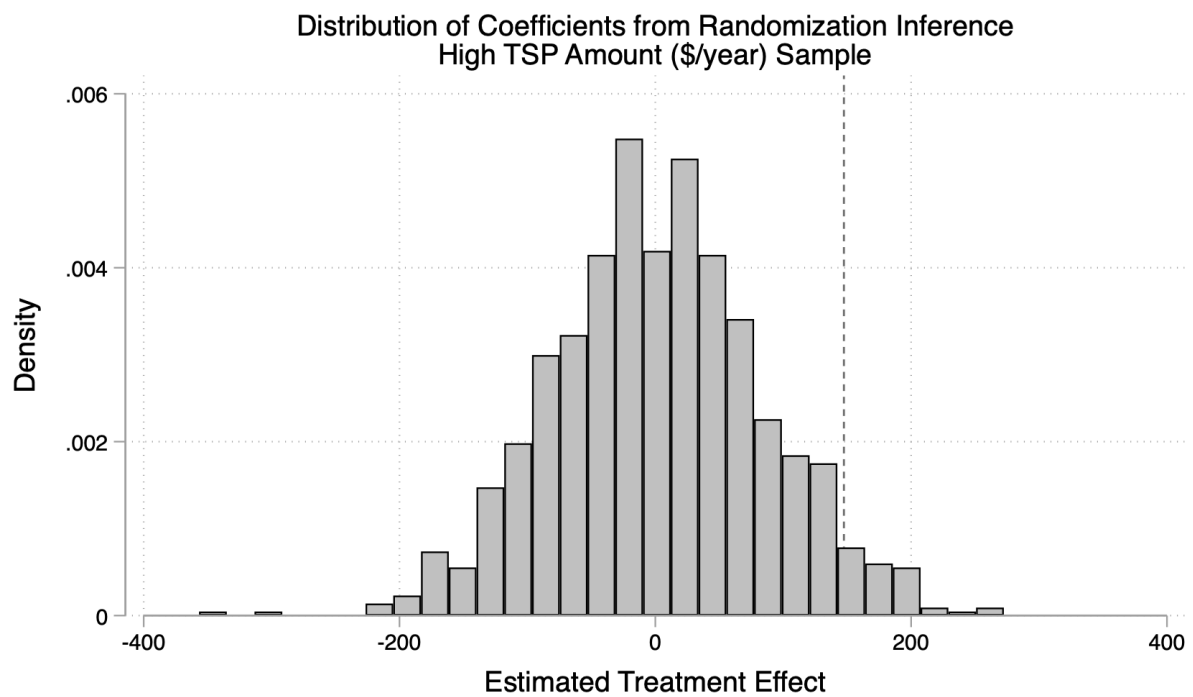
Randomization Inference of TOT for High Std. Financial Literacy Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 422.98

Figure B.6: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for Low Financial Literacy Sample



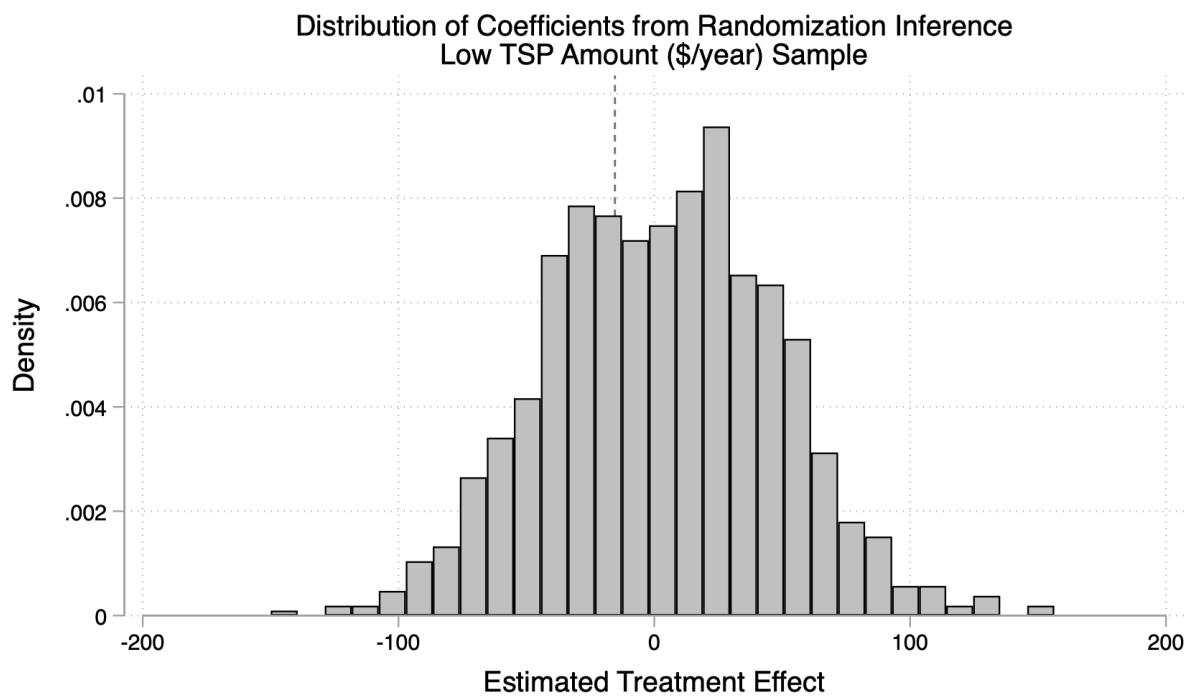
Randomization Inference of TOT for Low Std. Financial Literacy Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 12.15

Figure B.7: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for High TSP Amount Pre Rollout Sample



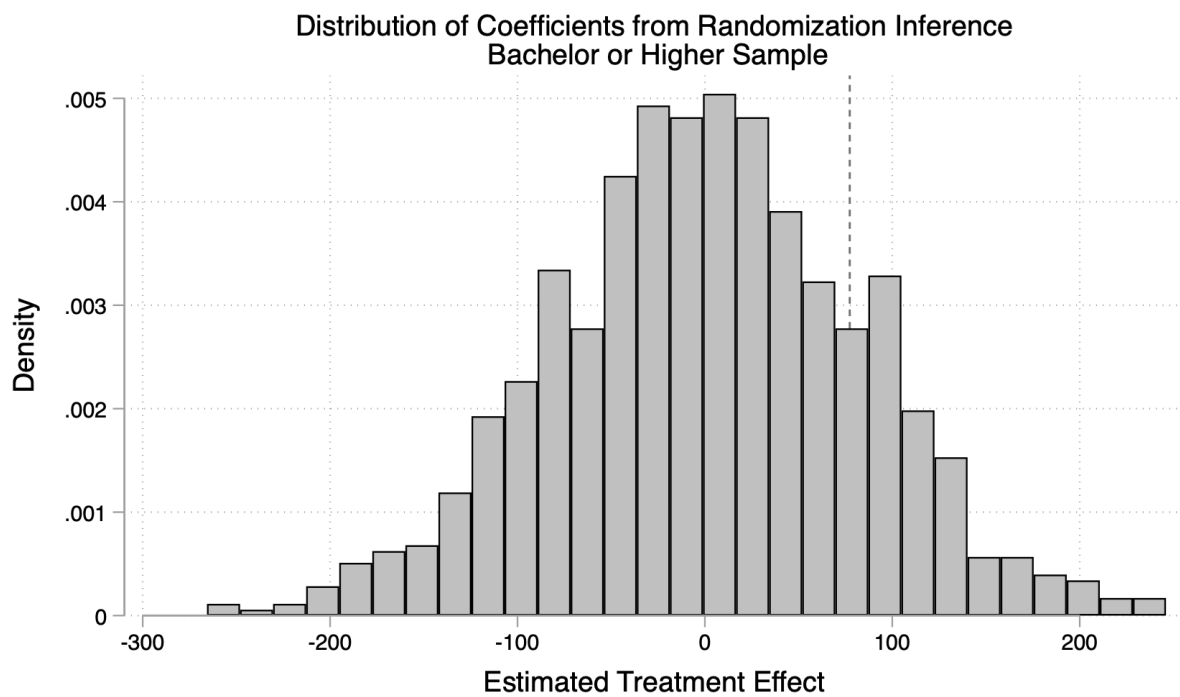
Randomization Inference of TOT for High TSP Amount (\$/year) Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 147.44

Figure B.8: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for Low TSP Amount Pre Rollout Sample



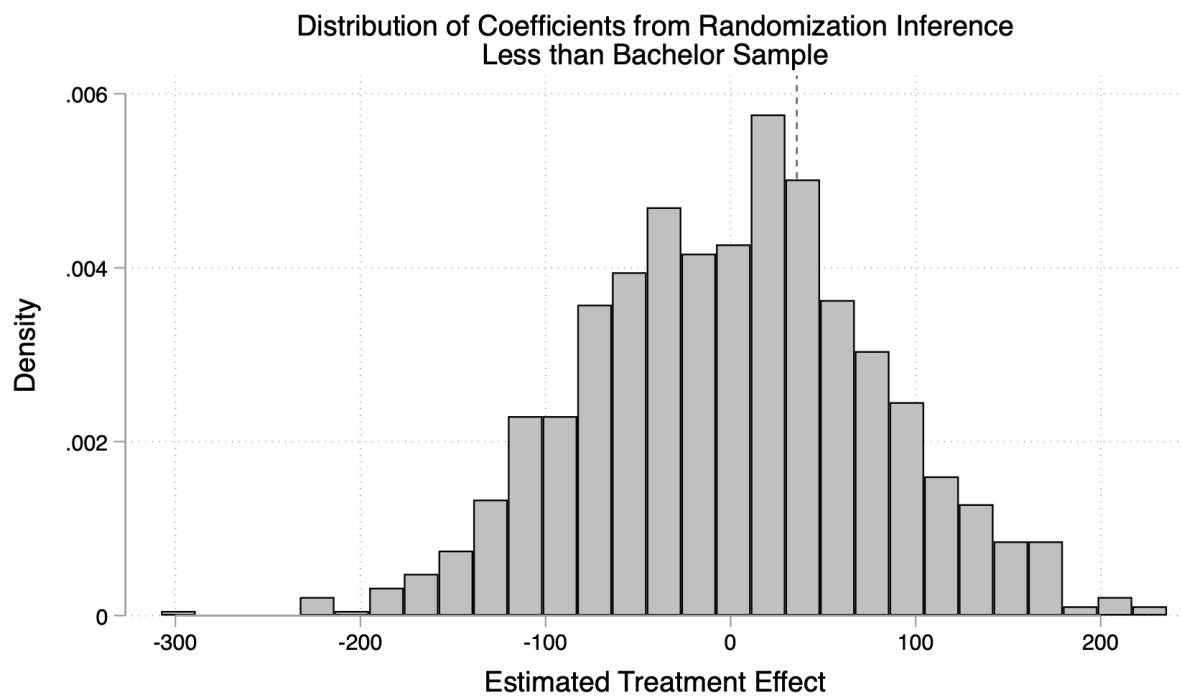
Randomization Inference of TOT for Low TSP Amount (\$/year) Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: -15.4

Figure B.9: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for High Education Sample



Randomization Inference of TOT for Bachelor or Higher Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 77.29000000000001

Figure B.10: Randomization Inference Histogram of TOT effect on TSP Amount for Low Education Sample



Randomization Inference of TOT for Less than Bachelor Sample.
DV: TSP Amount (\$/year); True Effect: 35.76

Appendix C TOT Effects by Assumptions

Table C.11: Heterogeneous Effects by Assumptions (TOT) on TSP Amount

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)	TSP Amount (\$/year)
Post × LR-HL Full Tool	287.964** (131.179)				
Post × HR-HL Full Tool	3.149 (104.879)				
Post × LR-LL Full Tool	211.459* (118.889)				
Post × HR-LL Full Tool	211.512 (129.502)				
Post × LR-HL Partial Tool		50.926 (105.181)			
Post × LR-HL Full Tool		314.025** (142.692)			
Post × HR-HL Full Tool		29.210 (118.974)			
Post × LR-LL Full Tool		237.520* (131.488)			
Post × HR-LL Full Tool		237.573* (141.156)			
Post × Full Tool			248.594*** (95.801)	211.489** (95.195)	280.937*** (107.046)
Post × Full Tool × High Return			-147.862 (108.815)		-144.777 (109.623)
Post × Full Tool × High Lifestyle				-73.336 (108.891)	-66.632 (109.658)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Omitted	All Partial	LR-LL Partial	All Partial	LL Partial	LR-LL Partial
Assumptions Type	Separating	Separating	Pooling	Pooling	Pooling
Mean DV	7078.012	7078.012	7078.012	7078.012	7078.012
R-squared	0.090	0.090	0.089	0.089	0.090
Observations	151,732	151,732	151,732	151,732	151,732

Notes: The active control group (“Partial Tool”) were assigned two assumptions: Low Return, Low Lifestyle (LR-LL) and Low Return, High Lifestyle (LR-HL). The treatment group (“Full Tool”) were assigned four assumptions: Low Return-Low Lifestyle (LR-LL), Low Return-High Lifestyle (LR-HL), High Return-Low Lifestyle (HR-LL), and High Return-High Lifestyle (HR-HL) . In Col (3)–(5), assumptions are pooled by return and by lifestyle. Robust standard errors in parentheses and clustered on ID. Dependent variables as indicated in column heading. All specifications also include controls for post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table C.12: Heterogeneous Effects by Assumptions (TOT) on SD change in TSP Amount

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount	SD Change in TSP Amount
Post × LR-HL Full Tool	0.051** (0.023)				
Post × HR-HL Full Tool	0.001 (0.019)				
Post × LR-LL Full Tool	0.037* (0.021)				
Post × HR-LL Full Tool	0.037 (0.023)				
Post × LR-HL Partial Tool		0.009 (0.019)			
Post × LR-HL Full Tool		0.055** (0.025)			
Post × HR-HL Full Tool		0.005 (0.021)			
Post × LR-LL Full Tool		0.042* (0.023)			
Post × HR-LL Full Tool		0.042* (0.025)			
Post × Full Tool			0.044*** (0.017)	0.037** (0.017)	0.050*** (0.019)
Post × Full Tool × High Return			-0.026 (0.019)		-0.026 (0.019)
Post × Full Tool × High Lifestyle				-0.013 (0.019)	-0.012 (0.019)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Omitted	All Partial	LR-LL Partial	All Partial	LL Partial	LR-LL Partial
Assumptions Type	Separating	Separating	Pooling	Pooling	Pooling
Mean DV	1.249	1.249	1.249	1.249	1.249
R-squared	0.090	0.090	0.089	0.089	0.090
Observations	151,732	151,732	151,732	151,732	151,732

Notes: The active control group (“Partial Tool”) were assigned two assumptions: Low Return, High Lifestyle (LR-HL) and Low Return, Low Lifestyle (LR-LL). The treatment group (“Full Tool”) were assigned four assumptions: Low Return-High Lifestyle (LR-HL), Low Return-Low Lifestyle (LR-LL), High Return-High Lifestyle (HR-HL), and High Return-Low Lifestyle (HR-LL). In Col (3)-(5), assumptions are pooled by return and by lifestyle. Robust standard errors in parentheses and clustered on ID. Dependent variables as indicated in column heading. All specifications also include controls for post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. * p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table C.13: Heterogeneous Effects by Assumptions (TOT) on TSP Rate

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate	Final TSP Rate
Post × LR-HL Full Tool	0.300* (0.159)				
Post × HR-HL Full Tool	-0.060 (0.119)				
Post × LR-LL Full Tool	0.218* (0.128)				
Post × HR-LL Full Tool	0.139 (0.139)				
Post × LR-HL Partial Tool		0.010 (0.131)			
Post × LR-HL Full Tool		0.305* (0.172)			
Post × HR-HL Full Tool		-0.055 (0.136)			
Post × LR-LL Full Tool		0.223 (0.144)			
Post × HR-LL Full Tool		0.144 (0.154)			
Post × Full Tool			0.258** (0.112)	0.180* (0.105)	0.286** (0.118)
Post × Full Tool × High Return			-0.225* (0.119)		-0.222* (0.121)
Post × Full Tool × High Lifestyle				-0.070 (0.119)	-0.059 (0.120)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Omitted	All Partial	LR-LL Partial	All Partial	LL Partial	LR-LL Partial
Assumptions Type	Separating	Separating	Pooling	Pooling	Pooling
Mean DV	7.688	7.688	7.688	7.688	7.688
R-squared	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024
Observations	151,732	151,732	151,732	151,732	151,732

Notes: The active control group (“Partial Tool”) were assigned two assumptions: Low Return, Low Lifestyle (LR-LL) and Low Return, High Lifestyle (LR-HL). The treatment group (“Full Tool”) were assigned four assumptions: Low Return-Low Lifestyle (LR-LL), Low Return-High Lifestyle (LR-HL), High Return-Low Lifestyle (HR-LL), and High Return-High Lifestyle (HR-HL) . In Col (3)–(5), assumptions are pooled by return and by lifestyle. Robust standard errors in parentheses and clustered on ID. Dependent variables as indicated in column heading. All specifications also include controls for post dummy, year fixed effect, month fixed effect, and individual fixed effect. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Appendix D TOT Effects by Differential Timing of Initial Click Date

Figure D.11: Distribution of the Initial Click Date among Tool Users

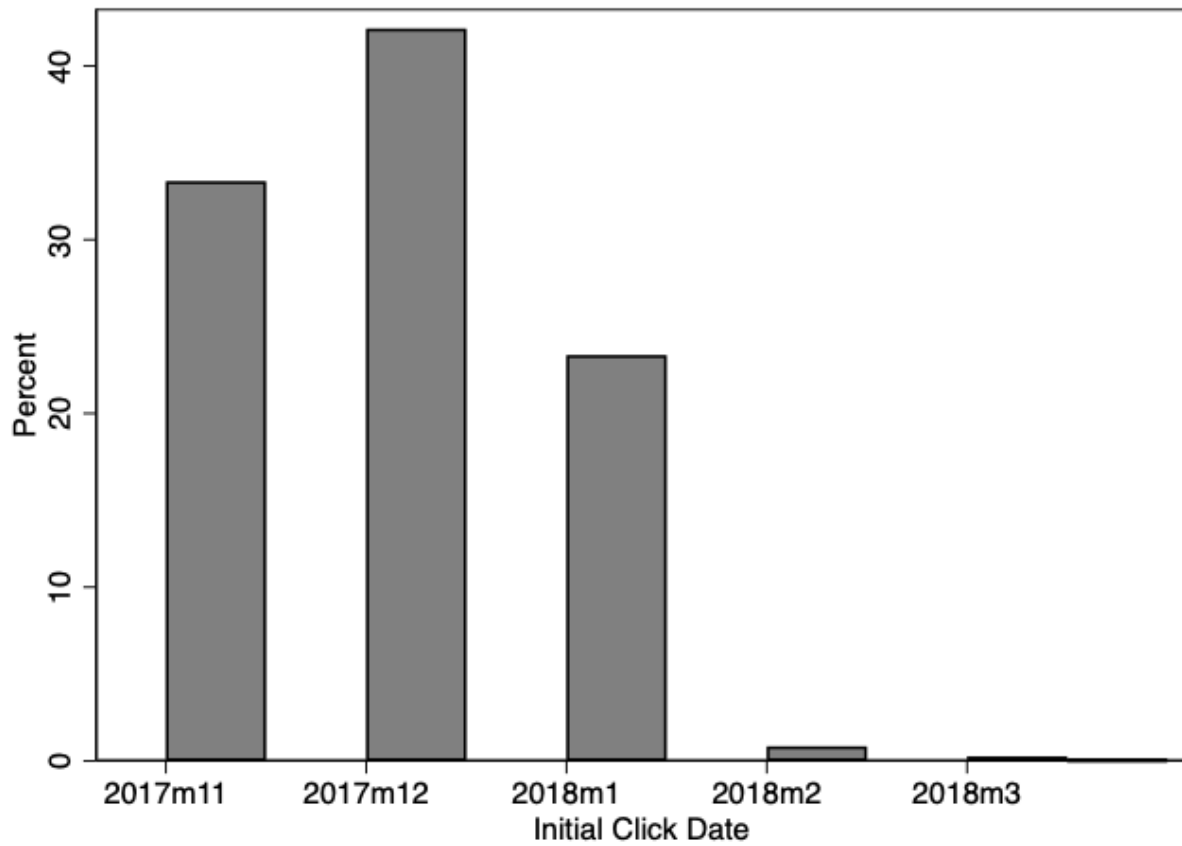
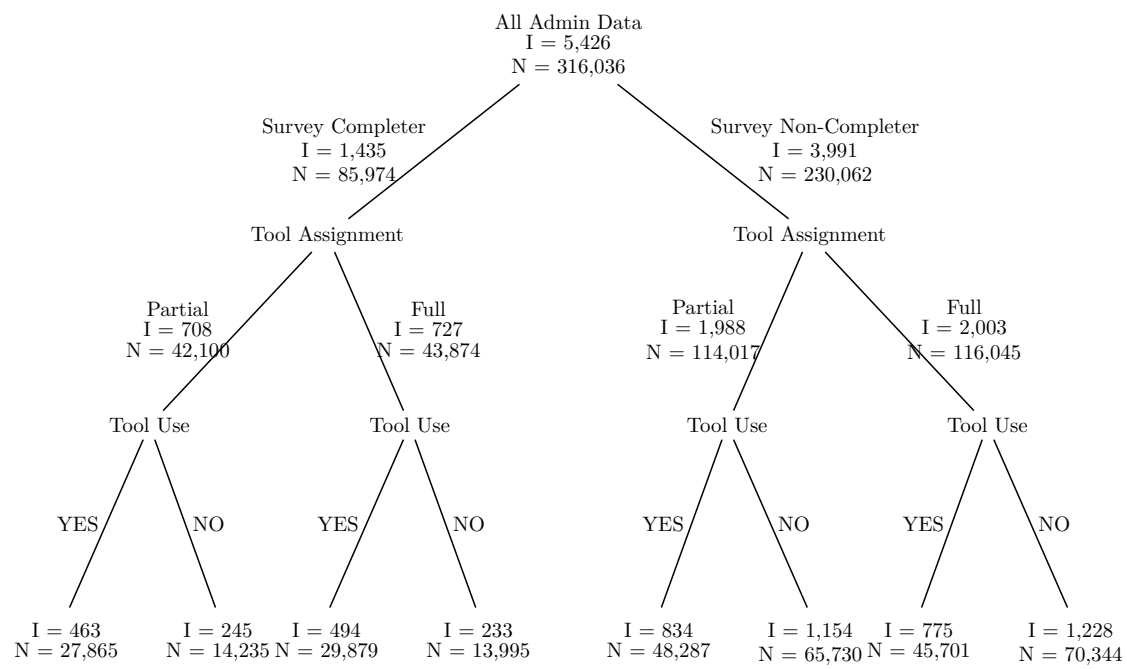


Table D.14: Treatment Effects on TSP Amount using Staggered Treatment Timing

	TOT Main	
	(1)	(2)
	Overall Sample	Survey Sample
tau	265.892*** (86.341)	237.249* (124.234)
Year F.E.	Yes	Yes
Month F.E.	Yes	Yes
Individual F.E.	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	7067.786	7577.489

Notes: Robust standard errors in parenthesis and clustered at person level. Dependent variable is TSP amount. “tau” refers to the treatment effect of the treatment group relative to the active control group using the [Borusyak et al. \(2022\)](#) estimator. The timing of treatment is the individual’s initial click date of the tool. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

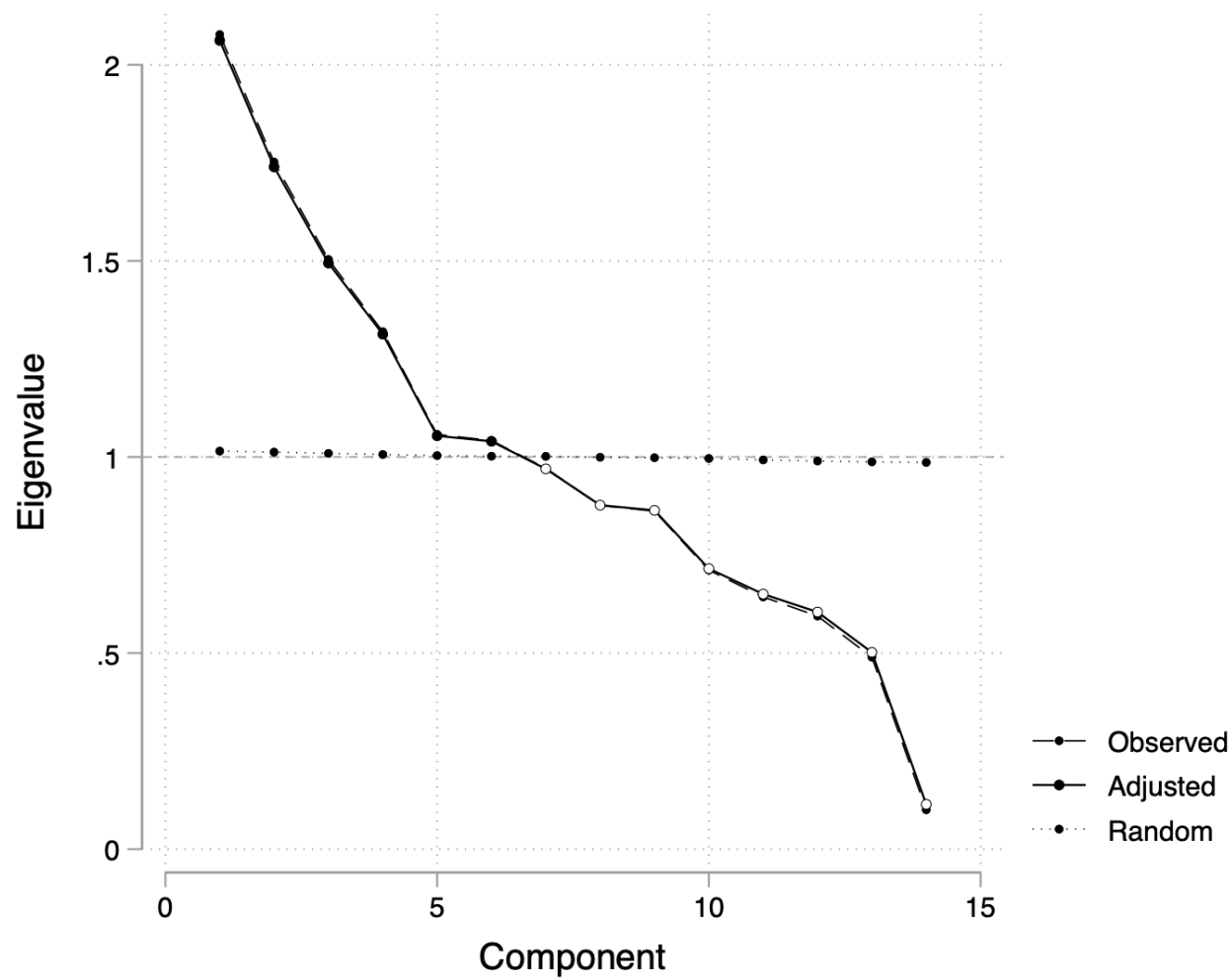
Appendix E Sample Schematic



Note: *I* refers to the number of unique individuals in the corresponding node. *N* refers to the number of observations, the unit of observation is bimonthly paychecks for each individual. Survey Non-Completers include individuals who did not answer all five questions as well as individuals who did not participate in the survey at all.

Appendix F Parallel Analysis

Figure F.12: Parallel Analysis for Factors



Appendix G Screenshots

Figure G.13: Step 1



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

[More Info](#)[Reset Data and Start Again](#)

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

View Your Plan

Adjust Your Plan

What to Do Next

Let's get started

What is your date of birth?

Month:

Year:

When did you start working for the Federal government?
(Service Computation Date)

Month:

Year:

Current Annual Salary \$

Expected Retirement Age

[Report Issue](#)

Figure G.14: Step 2



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

[More Info](#)[Reset Data and Start Again](#)

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

View Your Plan

Adjust Your Plan

What to Do Next

What lifestyle would you like in retirement?

Select your desired lifestyle in retirement. This will set your retirement income goal.



70% of Income

Expect to have **lower spending** in retirement as compared to today.



85% of Income

Expect to have **similar spending** in retirement as compared to today.



100% of Income

Expect to have **higher spending** in retirement as compared to today.



115% of Income

Or enter other amount (%)

[Report Issue](#)

Figure G.15: Step 3

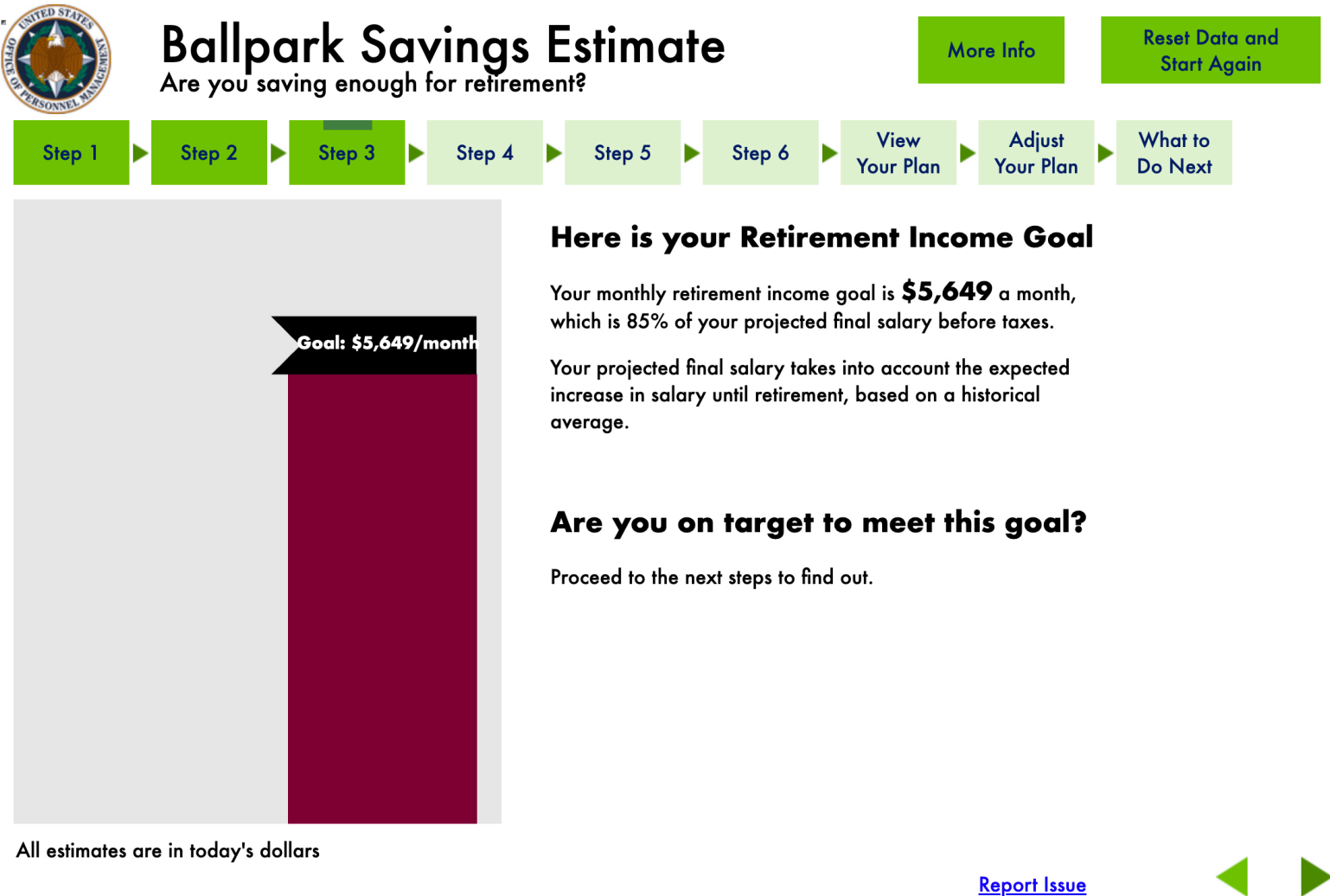


Figure G.16: Step 4



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

[More Info](#)[Reset Data and Start Again](#)

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

View Your Plan

Adjust Your Plan

What to Do Next

What is your Retirement System?

- ☒ FERS
- ☐ CSRS
- ☐ CSRS Offset

As a Federal employee, you fall into one of three retirement systems: FERS, CSRS, CSRS Offset. Most people hired after 1984 are in FERS, which represents over 90 percent of Federal employees.

[Report Issue](#)



Figure G.17: Step 5



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

[More Info](#)[Reset Data and Start Again](#)

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

View Your Plan

Adjust Your Plan

What to Do Next

What are your current retirement savings?

Federal employees can save additional income for retirement through the Thrift Savings Program (TSP).

Enter Current TSP Account Balance \$

Enter Your TSP Contribution ☒ Percent %
☐ Dollar \$

Max: \$18,500/year or \$712/pay period

Annual TSP Catch-up Contribution

\$0

Max: 6000

Min: 0

Enter Additional Retirement Savings Balance \$

[Report Issue](#)

Figure G.18: Step 6



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

More Info

Reset Data and Start Again

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

View Your Plan

Adjust Your Plan

What to Do Next

Do you have other sources of retirement income?

☒ I expect to receive Social Security benefits.

Enter Expected Monthly Social Security Benefits \$ 0

Need help? [Estimate my Social Security benefit](#)

☐ I expect to work after retirement.

☐ I expect an additional pension.

[Report Issue](#)

Figure G.19: Step 7



Figure G.20: Step 8

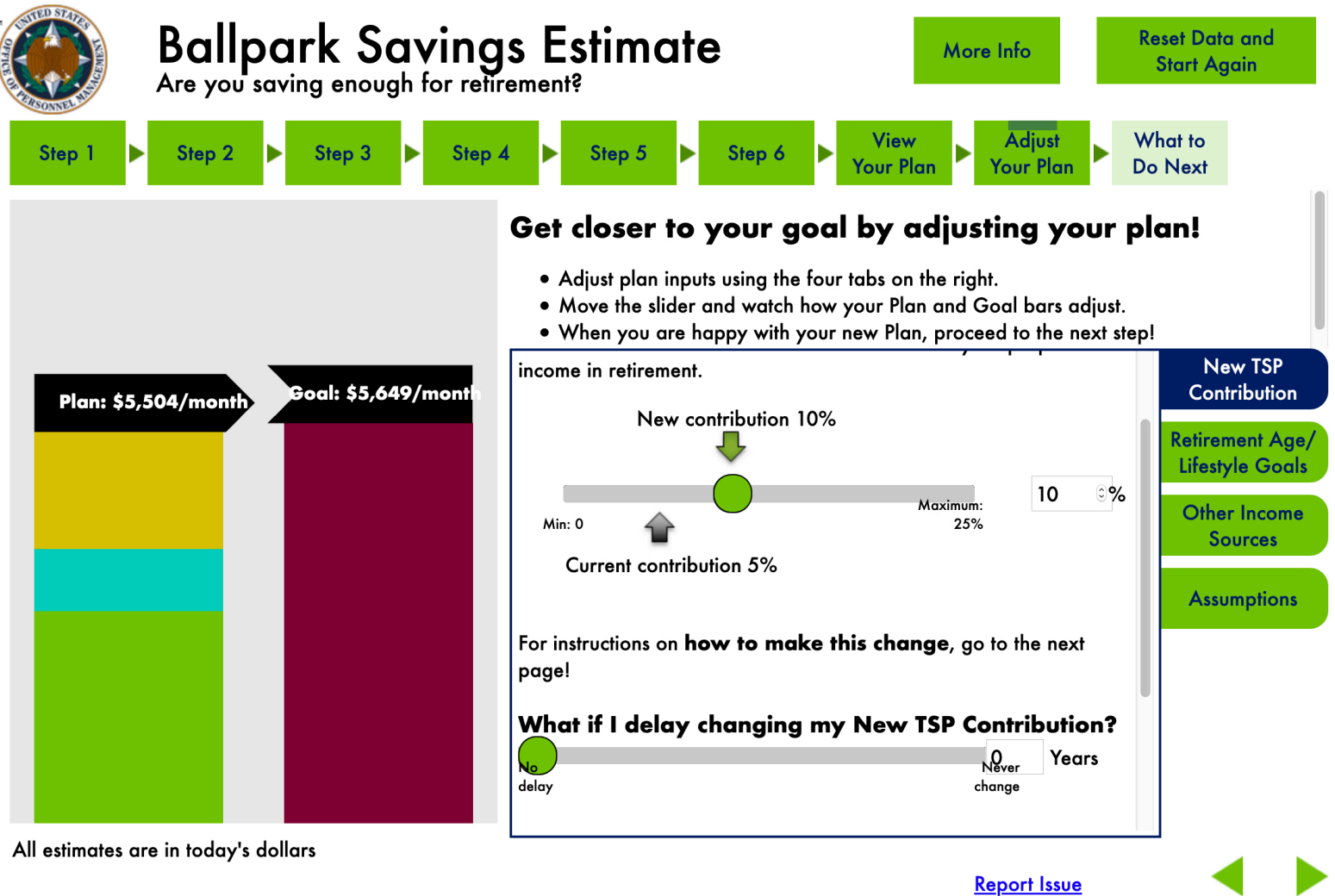


Figure G.21: Step 9



Figure G.22: Step 10



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

[More Info](#)[Reset Data and Start Again](#)

[Step 1](#)[Step 2](#)[Step 3](#)[Step 4](#)[Step 5](#)[Step 6](#)[View Your Plan](#)[Adjust Your Plan](#)[What to Do Next](#)

Plan: \$5,504/month

Goal: \$5,649/month

Get closer to your goal by adjusting your plan!

- Adjust plan inputs using the four tabs on the right.
- Move the slider and watch how your Plan and Goal bars adjust.
- When you are happy with your new Plan, proceed to the next step!

Try adjusting your income from other sources

Monthly Social Security - [Calculate Social Security](#)

Min: \$0

Max: \$1,650
\$5,000

Post Retirement Yearly Income

Min: \$0

Max: \$0
\$100,000

Years Working Post Retirement

Min: 0

Max: 0
22

[New TSP Contribution](#)

[Retirement Age/Lifestyle Goals](#)

[Other Income Sources](#)

[Assumptions](#)

[Report Issue](#)

All estimates are in today's dollars

Figure G.23: Step 11

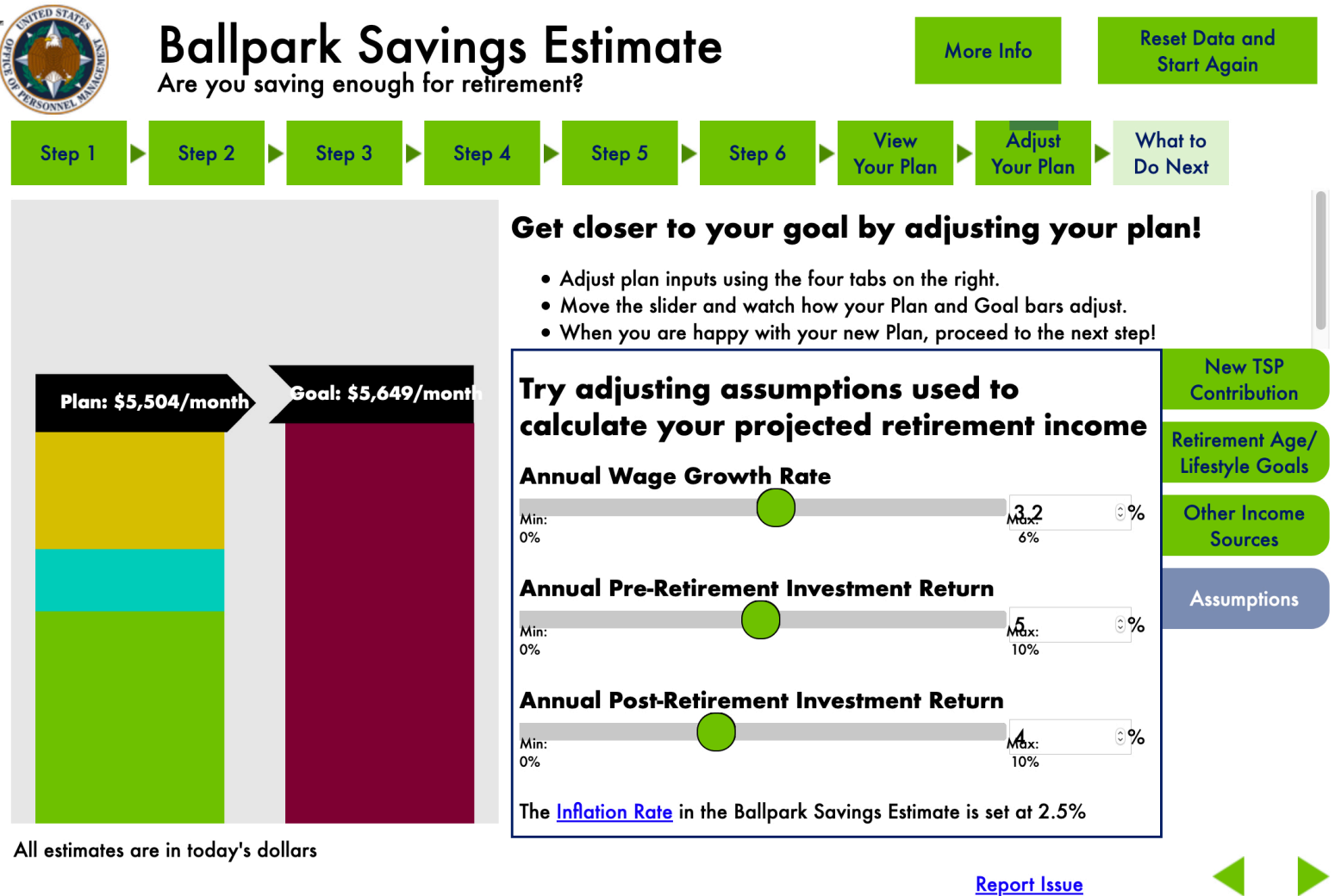


Figure G.24: Step 12



Ballpark Savings Estimate

Are you saving enough for retirement?

[More Info](#)
[Reset Data and Start Again](#)

Step 1
▶
Step 2
▶
Step 3
▶
Step 4
▶
Step 5
▶
Step 6
▶
View Your Plan
▶
Adjust Your Plan
▶
What to Do Next

Here is a summary of your Current Saving Plan and your proposed New Saving Plan based on using this tool:

Current Saving Plan

Your Current TSP Contribution:	5% per pay period
Projected Income in Retirement:	\$5,353 per month
Goal Income in Retirement:	\$5,649 per month
Difference:	-\$296 per month

This tool calculates that you are \$296 below your goal with your Current Saving Plan.

▶

New Saving Plan

Your New TSP Contribution:	10% per pay period
Projected Income in Retirement:	\$5,504 per month
Goal Income in Retirement:	\$5,649 per month
Difference:	-\$145 per month

This tool calculates that you are \$145 below your goal with your New Saving Plan.

Print this plan to keep for your records [Print](#)

Change your TSP contribution now! Here's how:

Sign into your agency's electronic payroll system and select the "Thrift Savings Plan" option. You can contribute a percentage of your salary or a fixed dollar amount.

If your agency doesn't have an electronic system you can also complete form TSP-1 and send it to your agency's payroll or benefits office.

II. CHOOSE THE AMOUNT OF YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Your choice will cancel all previous elections.

To start or change the amount of traditional (pre-tax) or Roth (after-tax) contributions to your TSP account, enter **either** a whole percentage of your basic pay per pay period **or** a whole dollar amount per pay period for each type of contribution you elect. (You may choose a percentage for one type of contribution and a dollar amount for the other type of contribution.) **Remember:** A blank line next to a type of contribution equals 0% or \$0 contributed.

6. Traditional (Pre-Tax) Contributions	.0%	OR	7. \$ _____ .00
8. Roth (After-Tax) Contributions	.0%	OR	9. \$ _____ .00

In Section II, enter 10% in Box 6 or Box 8 on the TSP-1.

Call TSP at 1-877-968-3778 and choose option 3 for help, or visit the TSP Website, <https://www.tsp.gov/forms/index.html> (Select TSP-1) it includes a short video

Appendix H Ballpark Tool Formulas

Total monthly retirement income in today's dollars comprises three parts:

$$\begin{aligned} Total &= \underbrace{Annuities}_I + \underbrace{TSP\ Balance}_{II} + \underbrace{Other\ Income}_{III} \\ &= \frac{FERS}{(1+i)^b} + SS + \frac{TotBal + WorkRet + AddPens}{12 \times RAV(R)} \end{aligned}$$

Variable I: Inflation-indexed annuities (SS, FERS)

This variable captures the value of Federal Employee Retirement System(FERS) and Social Security (SS) payments.

- SS = Value of initial monthly SS payment in today's dollars (user input or calculated).
- FERS = Value of initial monthly FERS payment in future dollars (at retirement age) (calculated).

Variable II: TSP Balance

User Inputs:

- $CurrTSPBal$ = Value of TSP balance in today's dollars
- $ContribRate$ = Contribution rate as percent of salary
- $ContribAmt$ = Contribution amount in dollars per pay period
- $ContribRateEquiv$ = Contribution rate equivalent as percent of salary
- $Salary$ = Annual salary in today's dollars
- $OthSav$ = Value of additional retirement savings in today's dollars

Calculated Values:

- $ContribRateEquiv$ = Contribution rate equivalent as percent of salary. See equation 2.

$$ContribRateEquiv = \begin{cases} ContribRate, & \text{if rate selected} \\ ContribAmt/Salary, & \text{if amount selected} \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

- $AddTSPBal$ = Value of future TSP contributions accumulated at r_b in future dollars (at retirement age). See equation 3.

$$AddTSPBal = \frac{ContribRateEquiv \times Salary}{n} \times \left[\left(1 + \frac{g}{n}\right)^{bn} \frac{\left(\frac{1+(r_b/n)}{1+(g/n)}\right)^{bn} - 1}{\frac{1+(r_b/n)}{1+(g/n)} - 1} - 1 \right] \quad (3)$$

where g is annual wage growth, n is the number of pay periods in a year, b is the number of years before retirement, and r_b is expected rate of return before retirement.

- $TotBalAtRet$ = Value of total retirement savings balance in future dollars (at retirement age). See equation 4.

$$TotBalAtRet = (CurrTSPBal + OthSav) \times (1 + r_b)^b + AddTSPBal \quad (4)$$

where b is the number of years before retirement, and r_b is expected rate of return before retirement.

- $TotBal$ = Value of total retirement savings balance in today's dollars.

$$TotBal = \frac{TotBalAtRet}{(1+i)^b} \quad (2)$$

where b is the number of years before retirement, and i is the inflation rate.

Variables III: Other Income

User Inputs:

- w = Expected income from working after retirement (assumed to be in today's dollars and annual)
- p = Expected pension in retirement (assumed to be in today's dollars and annual amount)

Calculated Values:

- $WorkRet$ = Value of income from working in retirement in future dollars (at retirement age). See equation 3

$$WorkRet = w \times \frac{(1+r_a)^{w_a}-1}{r_a} \quad (3)$$

where r_a is the expected rate of return after retirement, and w_a is the number of years working after retirement

- $AddPens$ = Value of income from additional pension in future dollars (at retirement age). See equation 4

$$AddPens = p \times \frac{[RAV(R+o)]}{(1+r_a)^o} \quad (4)$$

where $RAV(X)$ is the real annuity value function ¹⁴ R is retirement age , o is years in retirement before other pension begin, and r_a is the expected rate of return after retirement.

Total Monthly Retirement Income Formula

Total monthly retirement income in today's dollars is then calculated as follows:

$$Total = \frac{FERS}{(1+i)^b} + SS + \frac{TotBal + WorkRet + AddPens}{12 \times RAV(R)} \quad (5)$$

Definition Glossary

- i : Inflation rate
- R : Retirement age
- a : Number of expected years in retirement
- b : Number of years before retirement
- o : Years in retirement before other pension begins
- r_b : Expected rate of return before retirement
- r_a : Expected rate of return after retirement
- w_a : Number of years working after retirement

¹⁴ $RAV(X)$ calculates the value of \$1 paid annually for someone currently age x until death, growing with inflation each year, valued in today's dollars.

- n : Number of pay periods in a year
- g : Annual wage growth
- $RealAnnuityValue(x)$: Value of \$1 paid annually for someone currently age x until death, growing with inflation each year, valued in today's dollars

Appendix I Survey

Intro Screen

Thank you for taking the time to answer this survey. Please be assured that all of your answers will be **confidential and voluntary**. Therefore, please try to answer these questions as openly and honestly as possible. Your responses to the survey will help inform the public policy discussion on the saving decisions of Americans.

The survey consists of six sections and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The survey sections are as follows:

- Section 1: Background Information
- Section 2: Hypothetical Payment Choices
- Section 3: Hypothetical Investment Questions – Part One
- Section 4: Financial Knowledge Questions
- Section 5: Hypothetical Investment Questions – Part Two
- Section 6: Retirement and Risk Questions

Your responses will be saved each time you hit the “Next” button.

Some components of the survey ask you to answer questions that help assess your financial knowledge. You may use whatever approaches you would like to answer these questions. At the end of the survey, you will be able to see your performance on these questions and how it compares to that of a nationally representative sample.

At the end of the survey, you will also have an opportunity to provide comments to the researchers and request the results of the study when they become available.

Section 1 (of 6): Background Information

[BI-1]

Including yourself, how many people are currently living in your household?

[BI-2]

Please take a moment to think about your current financial matters and decisions.

[BI-3]

In your household, who typically handles the financial matters?

- ☐ I do
- ☐ Someone else
- ☐ Someone else and I equally share responsibility
- ☐ I prefer not to say

[BI-4]

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school graduate or the equivalent
- ☐ Some college but no degree
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor’s degree (e.g., BA, AB, BS)
- ☐ Master’s degree (e.g., MA, MS, MEng, Med, MSW, MBA)
- ☐ Professional school degree (e.g., MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)

-
- ☐ Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD)
 - ☐ I prefer not to say

[BI-5]

Which category represents the total combined income of all members of your household during the past 12 months? This includes money from jobs, net income from business, farm or rent, pension, dividends, interest, social security payments and any other money income received by members of your household who are 15 years of age or older.

- ☐ Less than \$40,000
- ☐ \$40,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$59,999
- ☐ \$60,000 to \$69,999
- ☐ \$70,000 to \$84,999
- ☐ \$85,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$114,999
- ☐ \$115,000 to \$129,999
- ☐ \$130,000 to \$144,999
- ☐ \$145,000 to \$159,999
- ☐ \$160,000 to \$174,999
- ☐ \$175,000 to \$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000 to \$224,999
- ☐ \$225,000 to \$249,999
- ☐ \$250,000 or more
- ☐ I prefer not to say

Section 2 (of 6): Hypothetical Payment Choices

Next are some questions that ask you when you would prefer to receive payments. These are not real payments, but please answer the questions as if they were. There are four sets of five questions each. The timing of the payments differs in each set, and the amounts of money differ in each question.

For each of these situations, we would like to know which you would choose. There is no “right” answer, but please think carefully about which option is more appealing to you.

[Next page]

[Block A]

In the following set of questions the payment today is the same in each situation. The payment in 12 months is different in each situation.

[Next page]

Suppose you were given the choice between the following:

- Receiving a payment **today**
- Receiving a different payment **in 12 months**

[A-1]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$153.80 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A17

-
- ☐ \$153.80 **in 12 months** → go to question A2

[A-2]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$125.40 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A10
☐ \$125.40 **in 12 months** → go to question A3

[A-3]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$112.40 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A7
☐ \$112.40 **in 12 months** → go to question A4

[A-4]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$106.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A6
☐ \$106.10 **in 12 months** → go to question A5

[A-5]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$103.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$103.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-6]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$109.20 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$109.20 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-7]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$118.80 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A8
☐ \$118.80 **in 12 months** → go to question A9

[A-8]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$122.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$122.10 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-9]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$115.60 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$115.60 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-10]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$139.20 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A14
☐ \$139.20 **in 12 months** → go to question A11

[A-11]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$132.30 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A13

-
- ☐ \$132.30 **in 12 months** → go to question A12

[A-12]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$128.80 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$128.80 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-13]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$135.70 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$135.70 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-14]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$146.40 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A16
☐ \$146.40 **in 12 months** → go to question A15

[A-15]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$142.80 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$142.80 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-16]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$150.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$150.10 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-17]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$185.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A18
☐ \$185.00 **in 12 months** → go to question A25

[A-18]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$201.60 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A22
☐ \$201.60 **in 12 months** → go to question A19

[A-19]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$193.20 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A20
☐ \$193.20 **in 12 months** → go to question A21

[A-20]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$197.40 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$197.40 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-21]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$189.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block

-
- ☐ \$189.10 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-22]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$210.30 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A23
☐ \$210.30 **in 12 months** → go to question A24

[A-23]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$214.60 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$214.60 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-24]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$205.90 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$205.90 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-25]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$169.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A29
☐ \$169 **in 12 months** → go to question A26

[A-26]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$161.30 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A28
☐ \$161.30 **in 12 months** → go to question A27

[A-27]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$157.50 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$157.50 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-28]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$165.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$165.10 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-29]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$176.90 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → go to question A31
☐ \$176.90 **in 12 months** → go to question A30

[A-30]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$172.90 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$172.90 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[A-31]

Would you rather receive \$100.00 today or \$180.90 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$100.00 **today** → skip to next block
☐ \$180.90 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[Block C]

We will now present a new set of questions. The payment **today** is the same in each situation. The payment in **6 months** is different in each situation.

[Next page]

Suppose you were given the choice between the following:

- Receiving a payment **today**
- Receiving a different payment **in 6 months**

[C-1]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$230.70 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C17
- ☐ \$230.70 **in 6 months** → go to question C2

[C-2]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$188.10 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C10
- ☐ \$188.10 **in 6 months** → go to question C3

[C-3]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$168.60 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C7
- ☐ \$168.60 **in 6 months** → go to question C4

[C-4]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$159.20 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C6 in 6 months
- ☐ (b) \$159.20 **in 6 months** → go to question C5

[C-5]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$154.50 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$154.50 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-6]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$163.80 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$163.80 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-7]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$178.20 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C8
- ☐ \$178.20 **in 6 months** → go to question C9

[C-8]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$183.20 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$183.20 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-9]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$173.40 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$173.40 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-10]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$208.80 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C14
- ☐ \$208.80 **in 6 months** → go to question C11

[C-11]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$198.50 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C13
- ☐ \$198.50 **in 6 months** → go to question C12

[C-12]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$193.20 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$193.20 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-13]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$203.60 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$203.60 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-14]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$219.60 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C16
- ☐ \$219.60 **in 6 months** → go to question C15

[C-15]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$214.20 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$214.20 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-16]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$225.20 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$225.20 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-17]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$277.50 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C18
- ☐ \$277.50 **in 6 months** → go to question C25

[C-18]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$302.40 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C22
- ☐ \$302.40 **in 6 months** → go to question C19

[C-19]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$289.80 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C20
- ☐ \$289.80 **in 6 months** → go to question C21

[C-20]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$296.10 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$296.10 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-21]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$283.70 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$283.70 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-22]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$315.50 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C23
- ☐ \$315.50 **in 6 months** → go to question C24

[C-23]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$321.90 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$321.90 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-24]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$308.90 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$308.90 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-25]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$253.50 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C29
- ☐ \$253.50 **in 6 months** → go to question C26

[C-26]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$242.00 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C28
- ☐ \$242.00 **in 6 months** → go to question C27

[C-27]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$236.30 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$236.30 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-28]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$247.70 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$247.70 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-29]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$265.40 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → go to question C31
- ☐ \$265.40 **in 6 months** → go to question C30

[C-30]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$259.40 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$259.40 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[C-31]

Would you rather receive \$150.00 **today** or \$271.40 in 6 months ?

- ☐ \$150.00 **today** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$271.40 **in 6 months** → skip to next block

[Block B]

We will now present a new set of questions. The payment in **12 months** is the same in each situation. The payment **in 24 months** is different in each situation.

[Next page]

Suppose you were given the choice between the following:

- Receiving a payment in **12 months**
- Receiving a different payment **in 24 months**

[B-1]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$184.60 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → go to question B17
- ☐ \$184.60 **in 24 months** → go to question B2

[B-2]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$150.50 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → go to question B10
- ☐ \$150.50 **in 24 months** → go to question B3

[B-3]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$134.90 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → go to question B7
- ☐ \$134.90 **in 24 months** → go to question B4

[B-4]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$127.30 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → go to question B6
- ☐ \$127.30 **in 24 months** → go to question B5

[B-5]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$123.60 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$123.60 **in 24 months** → skip to next block

[B-6]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$131.00 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$131.00 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-7]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$142.60 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B8
- ☐ \$142.60 **in 24 months**→ go to question B9

[B-8]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$146.50 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$146.50 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-9]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$138.70 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$138.70 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-10]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$167.00 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B14
- ☐ \$167.00 **in 24 months**→ go to question B11

[B-11]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$158.80 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B13
- ☐ \$158.80 **in 24 months**→ go to question B12

[B-12]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$154.60 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$154.60 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-13]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$162.80 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$162.80 **in 24 months** → skip to next block

[B-14]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$175.70 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B16
- ☐ \$175.70 **in 24 months**→ go to question B15

[B-15]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$171.40 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$171.40 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-16]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$180.10 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$180.10 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-17]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$220.00 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B18
- ☐ \$220.00 **in 24 months**→ go to question B25

[B-18]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$241.90 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B22
- ☐ \$241.90 **in 24 months**→ go to question B19

[B-19]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$231.80 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B20
- ☐ \$231.80 **in 24 months**→ go to question B21

[B-20]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$236.90 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$236.90 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-21]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$226.90 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$226.90 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-22]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$252.40 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B23
- ☐ \$252.40 **in 24 months**→ go to question B24

[B-23]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$257.50 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$257.50 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-24]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$247.10 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ skip to next block
- ☐ \$247.10 **in 24 months**→ skip to next block

[B-25]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$202.80 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months**→ go to question B29
- ☐ \$202.80 **in 24 months**→ go to question B26

[B-26]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$193.60 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → go to question B28
- ☐ \$193.60 **in 24 months** → go to question B27

[B-27]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$189.00 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$189.00 **in 24 months** → skip to next block

[B-28]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$198.10 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$198.10 **in 24 months** → skip to next block

[B-29]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$212.30 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → go to question B31
- ☐ \$212.30 **in 24 months** → go to question B30

[B-30]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$207.50 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$207.50 **in 24 months** → skip to next block

[B-31]

Would you rather receive \$120.00 in 12 months or \$217.10 in 24 months?

- ☐ \$120.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$217.10 **in 24 months** → skip to next block

[Block D]

We will now present the last set of questions for this part of the survey. The payment in 6 months is the same in each situation. The payment in 12 months is different in each situation.

[Next page]

Suppose you were given the choice between the following:

- Receiving a payment **in 6 months**
- Receiving a different payment **in 12 months**

[D-1]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$248.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D17
- ☐ \$248.10 **in 12 months** → go to question D2

[D-2]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$224.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D10
- ☐ \$224.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D3

[D-3]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$212.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D7
- ☐ \$212.10 **in 12 months** → go to question D4

[D-4]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$206.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D6
- ☐ \$206.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D5

[D-5]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$203.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$203.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-6]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$209.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$209.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-7]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$218.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D8
- ☐ \$218.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D9

[D-8]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$221.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$221.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-9]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$215.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$215.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-10]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$235.90 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D14
- ☐ \$235.90 **in 12 months** → go to question D11

[D-11]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$230.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D13
- ☐ \$230.10 **in 12 months** → go to question D12

[D-12]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$227.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$227.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-13]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$233.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 in 6 months → skip to next block
- ☐ \$233.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-14]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$242.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D16
- ☐ \$242.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D15

[D-15]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$239.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$239.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-16]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$245.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$245.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-17]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$270.80 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D18
- ☐ \$270.80 **in 12 months** → go to question D25

[D-18]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$284.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D22
- ☐ \$284.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D19

[D-19]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$278.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D20
- ☐ \$278.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D21

[D-20]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$281.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$281.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-21]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$275.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$275.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-22]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$290.10 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D23
- ☐ \$290.10 **in 12 months** → go to question D24

[D-23]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$293.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$293.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-24]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$287.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$287.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-25]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$260.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D29
- ☐ \$260.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D26

[D-26]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$254.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D28
- ☐ \$254.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D27

[D-27]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$251.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$251.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-28]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$257.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$257.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-29]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$266.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → go to question D31
- ☐ \$266.00 **in 12 months** → go to question D30

[D-30]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$263.00 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$263.00 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

[D-31]

Would you rather receive \$200.00 in 6 months or \$267.90 in 12 months?

- ☐ \$200.00 **in 6 months** → skip to next block
- ☐ \$267.90 **in 12 months** → skip to next block

Section 3 (of 6): Hypothetical Investment Questions – Part One

This portion of the survey has 3 financial questions. Each question will describe a financial asset, and ask you about its value over time. You may use whatever approaches you would like to answer these questions.

At the end of the survey, we will provide the answers to these questions and the performance of other Americans for selected questions so you can see how your answers compare!

Some of the questions are more difficult, but please always provide your best guess. Your responses are valued!

[Next page]

[HIQ-1]

An asset has an initial value of **\$100** and grows at an interest rate of **10%** each year. How much do you think this asset is worth after **20** years?

[Next page]

[HIQ-2]

An asset has an initial value of **\$100** and grows at an interest rate of **5%** each year. How much do you think this asset is worth after **50** years?

[Next page]

[HIQ-3]

An asset has an initial value of **\$100** and grows at an interest rate of **7%** each year. How much do you think this asset is worth after **30** years?

[Next page]

Phew! That was a lot.

You are helping to inform public policy discussion on saving decisions of Americans.

Now let's get back to the rest of the survey.

[Next page]

Section 4 (of 6): Financial Knowledge Questions

We will now ask you a series of questions about financial knowledge. Please answer these to the best of your ability. *At the end of the survey, we will provide the answers to these questions and the performance of other Americans for selected questions so you can see how your answers compare!*

[Next page]

[FK-1]

Imagine that the interest rate on your savings account was 1% per year and inflation was 2% per year. After 1 year, how much would you be able to buy with the money in this account?

- ☐ More than today
- ☐ Exactly the same
- ☐ Less than today

[FK-2]

Do you think the following statement is true or false? "Buying a single company stock usually provides a safer return than a stock mutual fund."

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

[FK-3]

Suppose you had \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate was 2% per year. After 5 years, how much do you think you would have in the account if you left the money to grow?

-
- ☐ More than \$102
 - ☐ Exactly \$102
 - ☐ Less than \$102

[FK-4]

Do you think the following statement is true or false? “A 15-year mortgage typically requires higher monthly payments than a 30-year mortgage, but the total interest paid over the life of the loan will be less.”

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

[FK-5]

If interest rates fall, what should happen to bond prices?

- ☐ They should rise
- ☐ They should fall
- ☐ They should stay the same
- ☐ There is no relationship between bond prices and the interest rate

[Next page]

[FK-6]

How would you assess your overall financial knowledge?

Assess your agreement with the following questions:

[Left to Right radio buttons 1 to 5 with labels, 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree]

[FK-7]

Compared to others, I am generally willing to give up something today in order to receive a benefit in the future.

[Left to Right radio buttons 1 to 5 with labels, 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree]

[FK-8]

When making financial decisions, I have a good understanding about how compound interest works.

[Left to Right radio buttons 1 to 5 with labels, 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree]

Section 5 (of 6): Hypothetical Investment Questions – Part Two

This portion of the survey has 3 more financial questions. Each question will describe a financial asset, and ask you about its value over time. You may use whatever approaches you would like to answer these questions.

At the end of the survey, we will provide the answers to these questions and the performance of other Americans for selected questions so you can see how your answers compare!

These questions are difficult, but please always provide your best guess. Your response is valued!

[Next page]

[HIQ-4]

An asset has an initial value of **\$100** and grows at an interest rate of **-20% in odd years** (starting with the first), and **at 25% in even years**. How much do you think this asset is worth after **24 years**?

[HIQ-5]

An asset has an initial value of **\$100** and grows at an interest rate of **4% in odd years** (starting with the first), and at **22% in even years**. How much do you think this asset is worth after **24 years**?

[HIQ-6]

An asset has an initial value of **\$100** and grows at an interest rate of **20% in odd years** (starting with the first), and at **2% in even years**. How much do you think this asset is worth after **30 years**?

[HIQ-7]

Did you use any tools or ask for help when answering the hypothetical investment questions? If so, which ones? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Pen/pencil
- ☐ Calculator
- ☐ Spreadsheet
- ☐ Other tool (including specialized online tool)
- ☐ No tools used
- ☐ Asked for help

[Next page]

Section 6 (of 6): Risk and Retirement Questions

Please imagine the following situation: You can choose between a sure payment and a lottery. The lottery gives you an equal chance of receiving \$300 and receiving nothing. Now imagine you had to choose between the lottery and a sure payment.

We will present three different situations. The lottery is the same in all situations. The sure payment is different in every situation.

[Next page]

[R-1]

Which would you prefer: the lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$160 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0 → go to question R-5
- ☐ Sure payment of \$160 → go to question R-2

[R-2]

Which would you prefer: the lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$80 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0 → go to question R-4
- ☐ Sure payment of \$80 → go to question R-3

[R-3]

Which would you prefer: the lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$40 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0 → go to question R-8
- ☐ Sure payment of \$40 → go to question R-8

Which would you prefer: a lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$120 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and \$0 → go to question R-8
- ☐ Sure payment of \$120 → go to question R-8

[R-4]

Which would you prefer: the lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$240 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0 → go to question R-7
- ☐ Sure payment of \$240 → go to question R-6

[R-5]

Which would you prefer: the lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$200 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0 → go to question R-8
- ☐ Sure payment of \$200 → go to question R-8

[R-6]

What would you prefer: the lottery that gives an equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0, or a payment of \$280 for sure?

- ☐ Equal chance of winning \$300 and winning \$0 → go to question R-8
- ☐ Sure payment of \$280 → go to question R-8

[R-7]

Think about your savings in personal retirement accounts from all different sources including:

- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
- Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)
- Keogh Accounts
- 401(k)s, 401(a)s, 403(b)s, 457, etc.

About how much total personal retirement savings do you have from all sources?

[R-8]

When do you expect to retire and how long do you expect it to last?

- (a) Expected retirement age:
- (b) Expected years in retirement:

[R-9]

Before retirement, what average rate of return do you expect you will earn on your investments?
[Open-ended response; error message if non-numbers; allow negative values. Or they can check the radio button, don't know] Don't know.

[R-10]

After retirement, what average rate of return do you expect you will earn on your investments?
[Open-ended response; error message if non-numbers; allow negative values. Or they can check the radio button, don't know] Don't know.

[R-11]

About how much do you plan to spend in retirement each year?

- ☐ Less than 75% of current annual income
- ☐ 75% of current annual income. A simple life, likely in good health. Mortgage may be paid off, and there's little debt and reduced expenses.
- ☐ 85% of current annual income A lifestyle that's similar to today's. Traveling from time to time, enjoying hobbies and volunteering.
- ☐ 95% of current annual income There's more going on now than when working! Perhaps enjoying new hobbies, more travel, and helping family with expenses.

-
- ☐ 105% of current annual income Financially comfortable. Likely to leave a sizeable estate, buy a vacation home or travel abroad.
 - ☐ More than 105% of current annual income
 - ☐ I cannot decide.

[R-12]

How do you see yourself: are you generally a person who is willing to take risks or do you try to avoid taking risks?

[Left to Right radio buttons 1 to 7 with labels, 1 = Fewer options, 7 = More options]

[R-13]

In general, when you are shopping or ordering a meal at a restaurant do you like menus with many different options or do you prefer menus with just a few options? [Left to Right radio buttons 1 to 7 with labels, 1 = Not at all willing to take risks, 7 = Very willing to take risks]

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement on a five-point scale.

[Left to Right radio buttons 1 to 5 with labels, 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree]

[R-14]

As an employer, the Federal Government carefully considers its benefit offerings.

[R-15]

Benefit offerings by the Federal Government are designed to best fit the needs of its employees.

Closing Screens

Thank you for your participation in our survey! Your responses are very valuable to informing public policy discussions about retirement savings.

Before we provide the answers to the hypothetical investment and financial knowledge questions, we would like to ask you for some feedback on the survey.

[R-1]

Is there anything else you would like to tell the researchers about this survey or the topic of the survey? The space below is provided for your comments.

[Next page]

Thank you for your feedback!

[Review Page]

As promised, below are the answers to the hypothetical investment and financial knowledge questions along with the response you selected and the proportion of Americans who provide answers within 10 percent of the correct answer for selected questions.

Hypothetical Investment Questions

[R-1]

An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of 10% each year. What is the value of the asset after 20 years?

Correct response: \$672.75

Your response: \$ [HIQ-1]

31% of Americans give a response between \$605.48 and \$740.03.

[R-2]

An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of 5% each year. What is the value of the asset after 50 years?

Correct response: \$1,146.74

Your response: \$ [HIQ-2]

25% of Americans give a response between \$1032.07 and \$1261.41.

An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of 7% each year. What is the value of the asset after 30 years?

Correct response: \$761.23

Your response: \$ [HIQ-3]

23% of Americans give a response between \$685.11 and \$837.35.

[R-3]

An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of -20% in odd years (starting with the first), and at 25% in even years. What is the value of the asset after 24 years?

Correct response: \$100

Your response: \$ [HIQ-4]

30% of Americans give a response between 90.00 and 110.00.

[R-4]

An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of 4% in odd years (starting with the first), and at 22% in even years. What is the value of the asset after 24 years?

Correct response: \$1,740.68

Your response: \$ [HIQ-5]

You are in the first group to answer this question.

[R-5]

An asset has an initial value of \$100 and grows at an interest rate of 20% in odd years (starting with the first), and at 2% in even years. What is the value of the asset after 30 years?

Correct response: \$2,073.58

Your response: \$ [HIQ-6]

You are in the first group to answer this question.

Financial Knowledge Questions

[R-1]

Imagine that the interest rate on your savings account was 1% per year and inflation was 2% per year. After 1 year, how much would you be able to buy with the money in this account?

Correct response: Less than today

Your response: [FK-1]

64% of Americans answer this correctly.

[R-2]

Do you think the following statement is true or false? "Buying a single company stock usually provides a safer return than a stock mutual fund."

Correct response: False
Your response: [FK-2]
52% of Americans answer this correctly.

[R-3]
Suppose you had \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate was 2% per year. After 5 years, how much do you think you would have in the account if you left the money to grow?
Correct response: More than \$102
Your response: [FK-3]
65% of Americans answer this correctly.

[R-4]
Do you think the following statement is true or false? “A 15-year mortgage typically requires higher monthly payments than a 30-year mortgage, but the total interest paid over the life of the loan will be less.”
Correct response: True
Your response: [FK-4]
70% of Americans answer this correctly.

[R-5]
If interest rates fall, what should happen to bond prices?
Correct response: They should rise
Your response: [FK-5]
21% of Americans answer this correctly.