

Using Advance Notices to Increase Telephone Survey Cooperation

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Advance Letters and caller-id

- Results from a meta-analysis of advance letter papers
 - Experiments mainly done in the U.S.
- Nationwide Caller ID study with different samples (list and RDD)
- Theoretical background: an advance notice underscore the legitimacy of a survey, take away suspicion, communicate the value of the survey, and evoke the principles of social exchange, thereby positively influencing response

Variables in Meta-analysis

- Outcome variables:
 - Effect of advance letter
 - Log Odds-ratio

$$LOR = \ln \left(\frac{p_{Eresp} / p_{Enonresp}}{p_{Cresp} / p_{Cnonresp}} \right)$$

- Cooperation rate (AAPOR COOP1)
- Response rate (AAPOR RR1)

Main Results

- Advance letters *do* work
 - Summary of 29 independent studies with 40 experimental conditions
 - Average *increase* in Cooperation Rate from 64.4% to 75.2% (10.8 % points)
 - Average *increase* in Response Rate from 58.3% to 65.9% (7.6 % points)
 - Huge *variability* between studies in effect advance letter
- Fail-safe N: Coop $N_{FS}=4822$, Resp $N_{FS}=2132$

Research Question

- Can the systematic differences between studies in effect of advance letter be explained by
 - Study characteristics?
 - Methodological differences
 - Other study differences
 - Advance letter characteristics?

Response Rate

Significant Predictors (a)

- **No** significant methodological characteristics
 - (No effect at all of publication type, publication year, design quality, et cetera...)
 - Which is good news (no bias)

Response Rate

Significant Predictors (b)

- Study characteristics
 - Lists vs. RDD ($\beta = +.47$)
 - ($p = .00$; $N = 29$)
 - Nr. Contact Attempts Needed
 - $\beta = -.89$ ($p = .00$, $N = 5$)
- Advance letter characteristics
 - Tit4Tat ($\beta = .50$)
 - ($p = .00$, $N = 23$)

A closer look at RDD vs. Lists

RDD	COOP1	RR1
CONTROL	57.5%	47.4%
EXPERIMENT.	62.8%	51.4%
Lists		
CONTROL	68.0%	61.8%
EXPERIMENT.	80.6%	70.8%

Summary

- Advance letter helps, especially cooperation, but also response rate
- Effect is larger with List samples (vs. RDD) and with refusal conversion
- Letter content matters little
 - Using tit-for-tat, incentive help
 - Language adaptation is negative (decreases Coop rate)
 - As implemented implies *opposite of* personalization
- but
 - some letter characteristics do not differentiate between studies, e.g. almost *all* use authority
 - you must have *something* in that letter

Caller-ID study

- *OUT OF AREA*
- *GALLUP*
- *GALLUP POLL*

Caller ID ownership

- In 1992, 3% of household had caller ID
- In 1995 this figure stood at 10%
- By 2000, 45% of households owned caller ID (Tuckel, 1996, 2001)
- In 2003 the Pew Center estimated a caller ID penetration rate of 53%
- Household income is not a good predictor of caller ID ownership
- Relatively more African-Americans than whites (73% vs. 47%) have caller ID

Caller ID usage

- The Pew Center study did not find evidence that the usage of call screening devices in itself “undermines the reliability of survey research”
- More African Americans (34% vs. 24%) always use it for screening calls
- Young people (18-29) are most likely to use it for screening calls (41% always screen) compared to a 12% of those aged 65+
- In the NHES, the average number of call attempts for households who screen calls was 5.1 compared to 4.5 for household who do not screen calls (Roth et al, 2002)

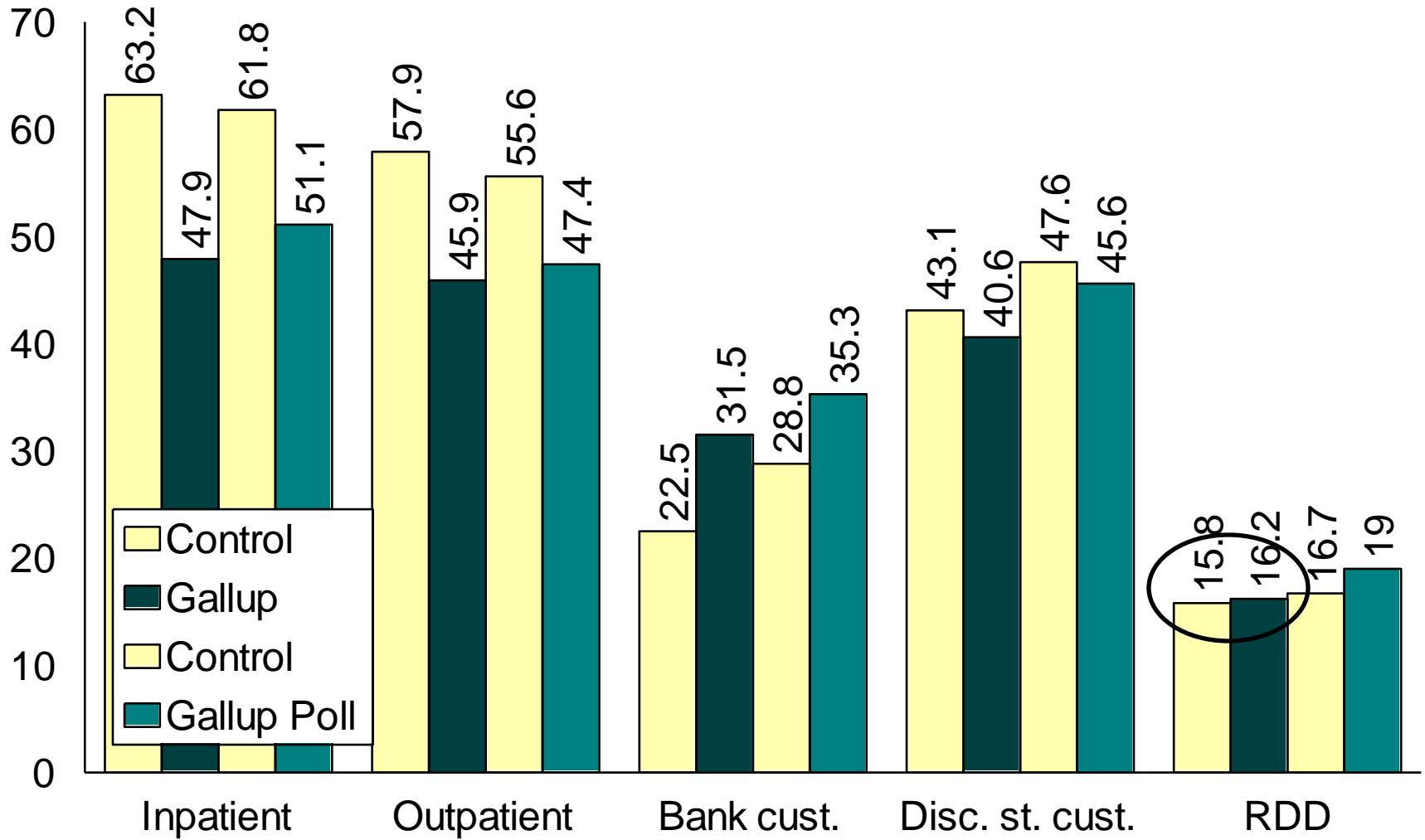
Research hypotheses:

- The caller ID transmission is a “compact form of invitation letter” that should increase the response rate if the company’s name is well known
- Caller ID listing should help to overcome “privacy managers” devices [19% of U.S. households have call blocking or privacy managers devices, Pew Center 2003]

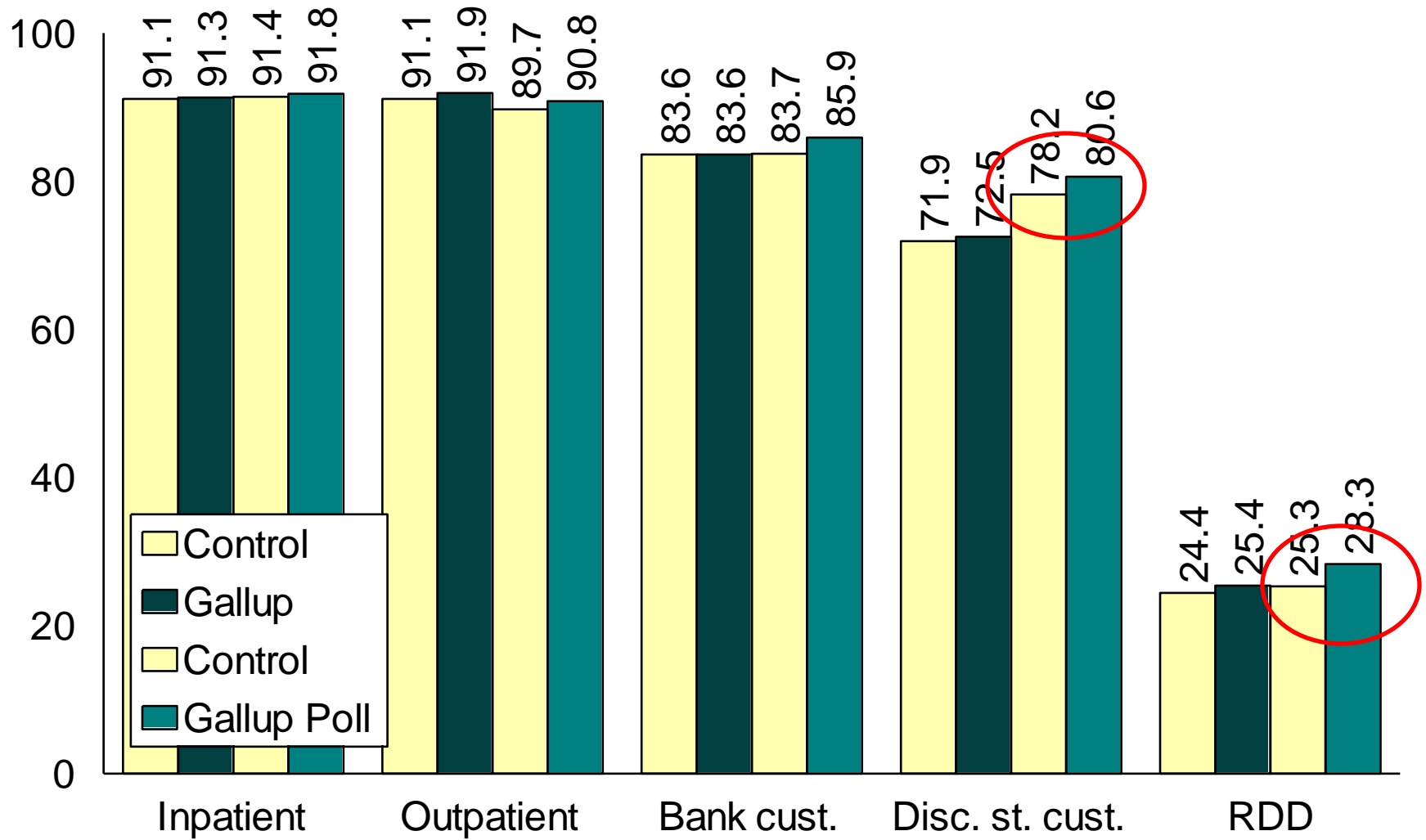
2003 study design

- Control condition: no caller ID sent (*OUT OF AREA*); February 8th – March 7th
- Exper. Cond. A: *GALLUP* sent as caller ID information; March 8th – April 4th
- Exper. Cond. B: *GALLUP POLL* sent as caller ID information; March 8th – April 4th
- 4 list sample surveys (customer lists)
- 1 RDD survey with respondent selection using the Kish grid

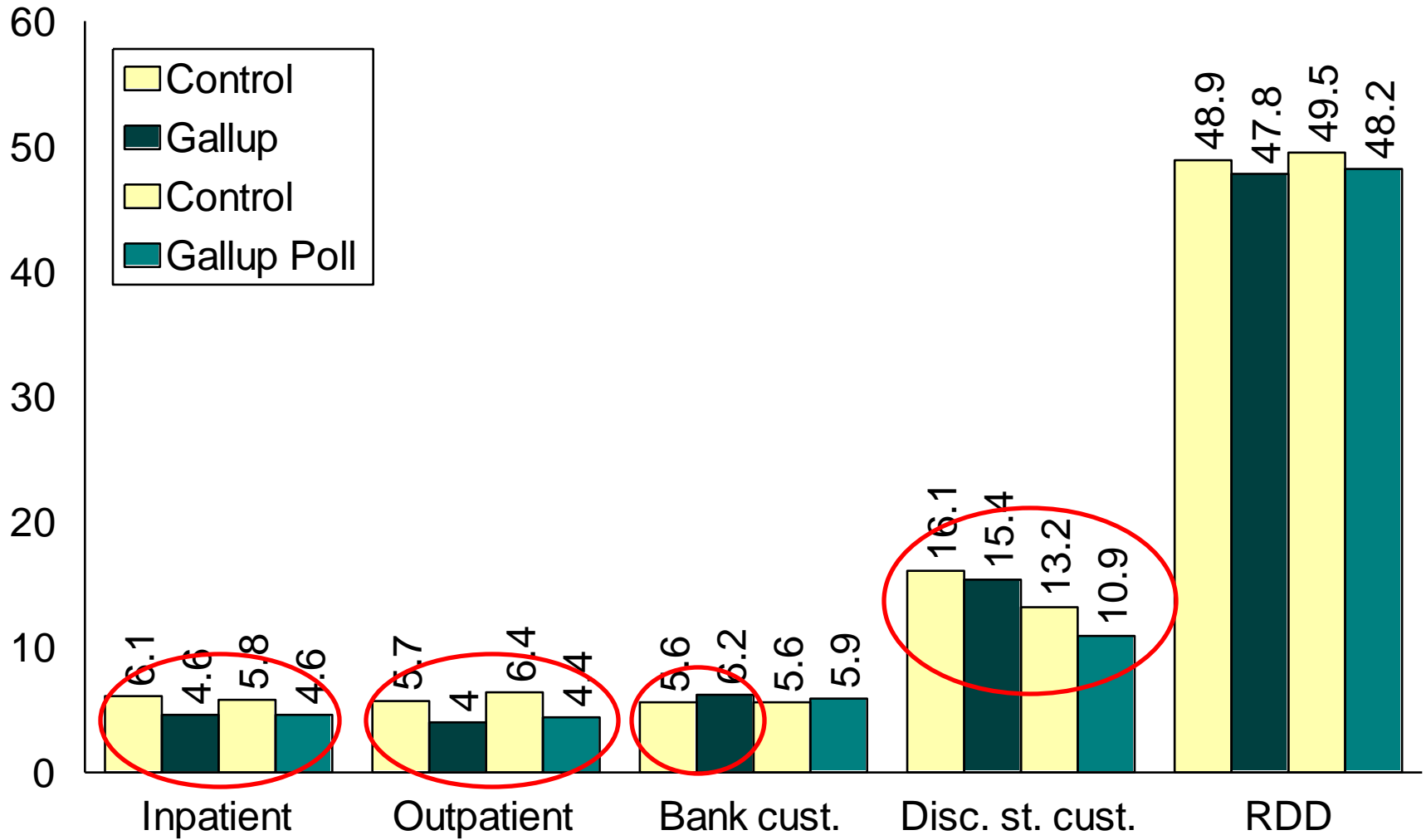
RR1



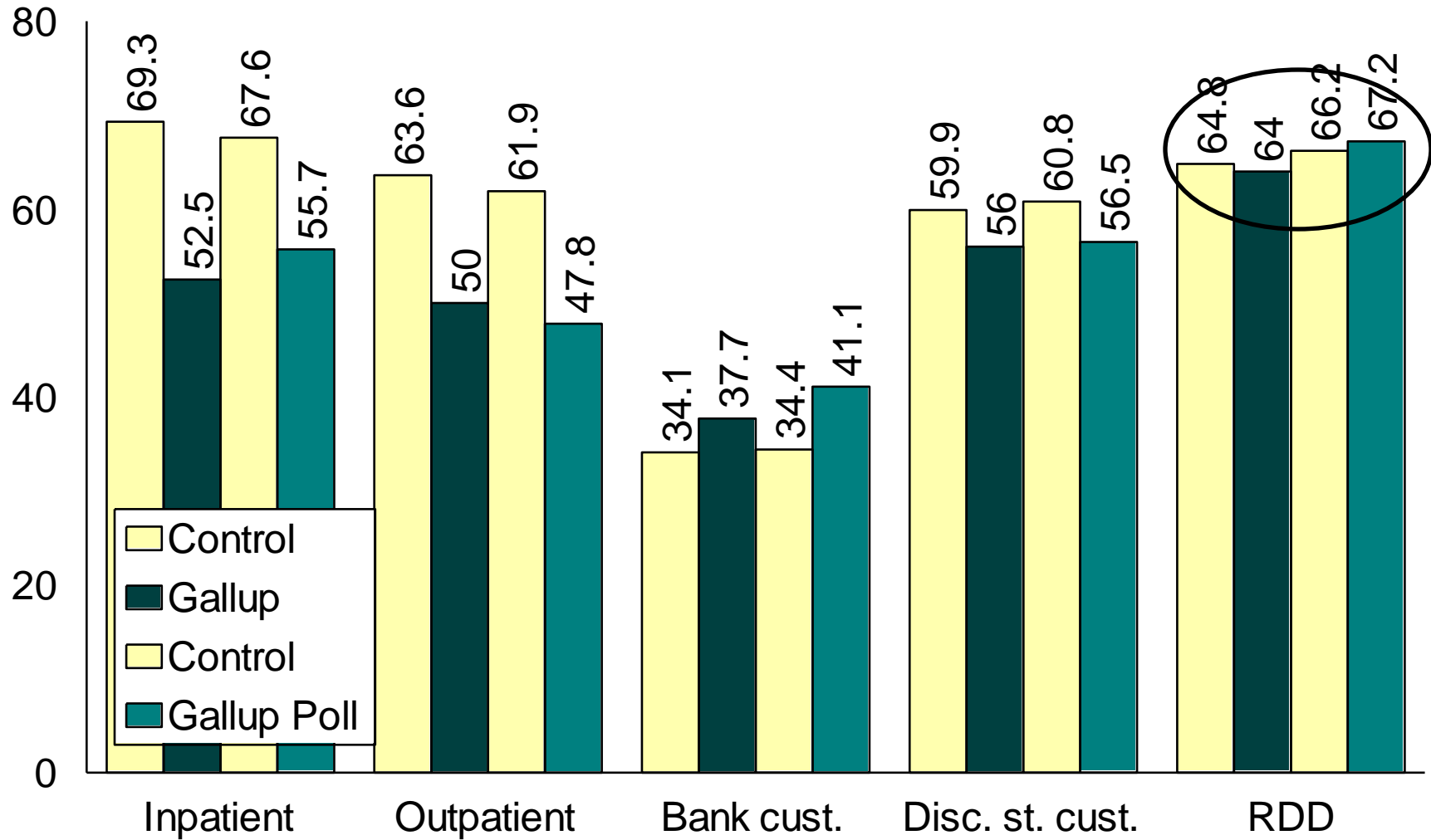
COOP1



REF1

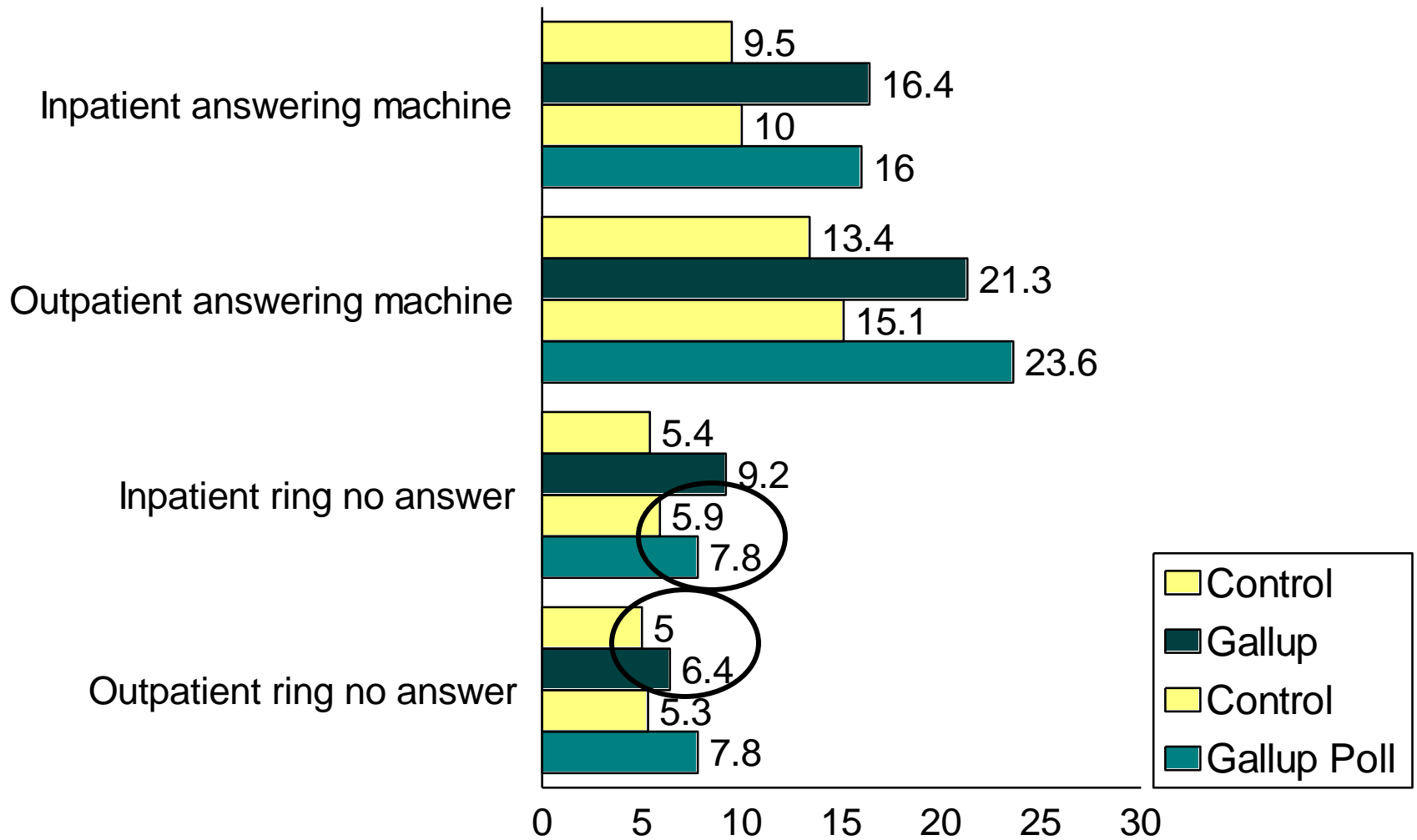


CON1



Answering machine & ring no answer %

Inpatient and outpatient surveys



Discussion

- Caller ID can help to increase RR
- Difficult to generalize results to other companies
- Sometimes caller ID transmission hurts the response rate
- *GALLUP POLL* seems to work better than *GALLUP*
- Caller ID helps to go through privacy managers (e.g. Verizon Anonymous Call Reject)

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- An advance contact can help in increasing response rate and cooperation rate, but at the same time it can hurt them
- Advance letters face the problem of obtaining a **mailable** address (especially for RDD)
- Caller ID problems: no control over the transmission (be short, 11 characters or less)

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