Landmark Event Reporting in the 2010 Survey of Income and Program Participation Event History Calendar

Brianne M. Hillmer, Lindsay M. Monte, and Jason Fields, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau

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Introduction

Research Purpose

1. Assess landmark reporting in Survey of Income and Program Participation Event History Calendar (SIPP-EHC)
2. Ascertain the utility of the landmarks for accurate data collection

About the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

- Nationally-representative, longitudinal panel survey administered by the US Census Bureau[1]
- Produces monthly data on income, program participation and household demographic characteristics
- Program eligibility and participation often occur in short subannual "spells," monthly data are critical for evaluating program participation and income
  - A **spell** is a period of time when a circumstance was present in a respondent's life (e.g. a period of time when a respondent had work for pay, received program benefits, lived at an address).

SIPP Development and the 2010 SIPP-EHC

- Key Design Changes
  - Move from three interviews a year with 4-month reference periods to interviewing once a year
  - Implement an "Event History Calendar" (EHC) for data collection
    - complements the structure of human memory by exploiting the links between the timing of events in a respondent's life
    - a more flexible interview approach that encourages active dialog with respondents to help elicit an autobiographical "story"
    - Facilitates data collection over the longer recall period
  - Sample Design for the 2010 SIPP-EHC
    - 8000 households interviewed in 10 states
    - Limited to high-poverty strata
    - Able to be compared to areas and response in 2008 Panel SIPP

Analytic Approach

- Read and code each reported landmark into a descriptive domain
- Determine how coded landmarks compare to data from parallel domains in the EHC
- Evaluate the possible redundancy of landmark data collection
  1. What is the overlap between EHC Domain data and landmark data?
  2. Does this additional information garnered via landmarks facilitate data collection in the EHC?

[1] *The population represented is the civilian, non-institutionalized population living in the US*

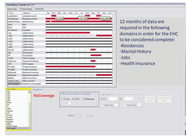
Landmarks & the EHC

About Landmark Collection

- As the first element of EHC data collection, respondents were asked to provide landmarks or "important events" that might serve as "memory anchors" over the past calendar year. Actual landmark intro text:

- Up to 12 one-month events could be recorded in the landmarks domain of the calendar
- The description of the landmark event was recorded in a free-text field with a character length of 40.

An Example of a Completed Event History Calendar


12 months of data are inquired in the following domains in order for the EHC to be filled complete:
-Residences
-Marital History
-Jobs
-Health Insurance
-Income
-Program/Health Ins
-Education
-Fertility
-Assets
-Expenditures
-Health Status
-Health Care
-Disability
-Fertility
-Pregnancy
-Marriage
-Divorce
-Fertility
-Pregnancy
-Marriage
-Divorce
-Fertility
-Pregnancy
-Marriage
-Divorce