

Appendix 36: Summary of the Major Differences between the 1995 and Earlier Surveys

OVERVIEW

The 1995 NLS Surveys of Mature and Young Women were designed to collect information about work history, changes in marital status, and other life events that occurred since the last time the respondent was interviewed. The 1995 survey collected information from 2,711 members of the mature women cohort, or 53.3 percent of the original respondents. In the young women cohort, 3,019 respondents, or 58.5 percent of the original sample, participated in the survey.

Two important changes for the women's cohorts were introduced in the 1995 survey. First, this was the first time respondents were surveyed using a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) instead of a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. Second, the interviews for both cohorts were conducted during the same field period using the same instrument. The young and mature women cohorts of the NLS will continue to be surveyed every two years.

The 1995 survey generally collected the same core information as in previous years. Respondents provided labor force and work history information, as well as completing modules on education, health, income, assets, training, pensions, husband's work experiences, and geographic mobility.

However, some differences exist between the 1995 survey and the 1992 survey of mature women and 1993 survey of young women. First, we eliminated the separate household record card since it was more efficient to collect all the necessary household information during the CAPI interview.

Second, the current labor force status and work history sections were revised. The questions on current labor force status were altered to reflect 1994 changes to the Current Population Survey and to make the women's surveys more comparable to the NLSY79. The respondent's work history and husband's or partner's work history sections were modeled after the NLSY79 to take advantage of CAPI's ability to create a more complete work history.

Third, the employer supplement sections administered to both cohorts in 1995 included a number of pension questions that were new for young women. These questions were based on those asked of the mature women in 1992.

Fourth, the health section continued the core questions on disabilities, health conditions, and health insurance from previous years. In addition, new questions on menopausal status and activities in daily living were addressed to both cohorts. The mature and young women also answered questions about their automobile driving habits in the last 12 months.

Finally, the family background section contained a number of new questions. Respondents from both cohorts who were widowed since the last interview date were asked about the health needs of their spouses during the last year of life and about their financial situation after their spouse's death. Additionally, all mature women were asked about their ethnic background; young women who did not answer this question in 1993 also reported their ethnicity.

DIFFERENCES IN DATA CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

In addition to the differences in the substantive content of the instrument, there are also some differences in the content and structure of the data in the 1995 survey.

Identifying Employers

The conventions for linking each work history question to the appropriate employer name changed with the introduction of the employer name roster in the 1995 CAPI instrument. Prior to the 1995 survey the titles of the work history questions contained the words “current or last job,” “current or last dual job,” “1st most recent job intrvng,” “2nd most recent job intrvng,” and so on. These descriptive phrases were used to indicate which job was being referred to in each question. For example, the question with the title “TIME UNIT OF RATE OF PAY AT 1ST MOST RECENT JOB INTRVNG 71” indicates that the data in this item contain pay rate information for the non-current employer with the stop date closest to the date of the interview. This is to be distinguished from the question titled “TIME UNIT OF RATE OF PAY AT CURRENT JOB 71,” which refers to the current employer.

In 1995 these titles and identifying conventions were not used. Instead, the employer-related questions in the work history sections are indexed to correspond to a specific line number in the employer name roster. Thus, the series of question about time unit for the rate of pay are assigned labels such as “TIME UNIT OF RATE OF PAY, 95 JOB #01” and “TIME UNIT OF RATE OF PAY, 95 JOB #02.” In these examples the jobs referred to are the employer names listed in the first and second lines of the employer roster, respectively (i.e., RES-EMPL-ROST1 and RES-EMPL-ROST2).

Identifying the CPS Employer

The CPS employer is defined as the current employer or the non-current employer with the most recent stop date. (The CAPI program filled in the date of the interview as the stop date for employers the respondent was working for on the day she was interviewed.) If two or more jobs have the same stop date, then the job with the most hours worked per week is identified as the CPS job.

In the past it was easy to identify the questions that pertained to the CPS job because the titles always included the word “current” or the words “current or last job.” For example, question 12A from 1991 (R12388.) is labeled “RATE OF PAY OF CURRENT OR LAST JOB” indicating this is the rate of pay for the job defined as the CPS employer. In the 1995 survey, however, these titles were not used, and employers were instead identified by the line number they occupied in the employer name roster. Thus, every question pertaining to the first employer in the roster always includes “#01” or “job #01” in its title. In addition, unlike in the past, in 1995 the CPS job was identified only after the names and dates of all jobs had been obtained. Since the employer names in the job roster were sorted by stop date, the CPS job is often first employer name listed. However, the CPS job is stored in a line other than line number 1 for about 15% of the cases that had an employer with activity since the last interview date. Therefore, in 1995 it is not possible to identify the questions corresponding to the CPS employer by simply looking at the titles of the work history questions.

In order to make it easier for users to identify the CPS employer for each respondent, CHRR created a rostered variable consisting of 9 items, ECPS-01 through ECPS-09 (R18089. through R18097.). The item ECPS-01 corresponds to the first employer listed in the roster, ECPS-02 is linked to the second employer, and so on. If the employer listed in the first line of the job roster is the CPS employer then ECPS-01 equals 1, otherwise ECPS equals 0. If a respondent’s CPS employer is listed in the second line of the employer roster then ECPS-02 equals 1, and so on.

Although the ECPS roster can be used to identify the line number for every respondent’s CPS employer, it does not permit a straightforward analysis of the CPS employer. For example, suppose a researcher wanted to examine respondents’ satisfaction with the CPS employer. The rostered question RSP-153 asked respondents how much they liked each of their jobs (i.e., a respondent with 3 employers was asked question RSP-153 three times). Since this is a rostered item, RSP-153-ARR-01 refers to employer #01, RSP-153-ARR-02 refers to employer #02, etc. The problem is that evaluations of the CPS job are found in the first item for some respondents, the second item for others, and so on. No single question contains *only* CPS information. The researcher must therefore create a single item that measures satisfaction with the CPS job, and only the CPS job, for each respondent. The SPSS syntax shown in figure 36.1 below creates just such an item for both cohorts; SAS code is shown in figure 36.2.

number. If the employer name matched a name in the cumulative list then the 1995 employer comparison code for that employer was assigned the value that the employer already had in the cumulative list.

The data in Figure 36.3 provide more details about how the employer comparison codes are assigned and interpreted. For example, the 1995 employer comparison code for employer number one (R18153.) equals 4 for case #1696. This means that the employer name appearing in job #01 in 1995 is the same employer name identified as the CPS job in 1985, 1987, an 1993, as indicated by the number 4 in items R10572., R11061., and R15791., respectively. In other words, the employer listed in the first line of the 1995 employer roster is the same employer identified as the CPS job in the 1985, 1987, and 1993 surveys. The situation for case #2232 is simpler to interpret since the one and only employer listed in 1995 is the same employer name that has appeared since the first survey in 1968. Thus, this respondent has worked for the same employer since 1968. Similarly, respondent #2746 has worked for the same employer since 1982. Case #2180 was self-employed in 1982, 1983, and 1985, as indicated by the zero in the employer comparison code for each of those years. A new CPS employer was recorded in 1987 and the respondent was still working for this employer in 1995 (listed in the second line of the 1995 employer roster). Finally, case #3811 has 3 employers listed in 1995, the first of which (R18153.) is the same as the CPS employer first identified in 1969, the second of which (R18154.) is a new employer name, while the third job listed in 1995 (R18155.) was the CPS employer in 1971.

Figure 36.3 Employer Comparison Variables for Selected Young Women Cases

Ref #	Title	Serial Number:				
		1696	2232	2746	2180	3811
R00726.1	COMP EMPR, 68 REV	1.00	1.00	.	1.00	.00
R01356.1	COMP EMPR, 68-69 REV	2.00	1.00	.	2.00	1.00
R02200.1	COMP EMPR, 68-70 REV	2.00	1.00	.	2.00	1.00
R03263.1	COMP EMPR, 68-71 REV	2.00	1.00	.	2.00	2.00
R04100.1	COMP EMPR, 68-72 REV	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
R04944.1	COMP EMPR, 68-73 REV	.	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
R05436.1	COMP EMPR, 68-75 REV	.	1.00	1.00	.	1.00
R05850.1	COMP EMPR, 68-77 REV	3.00	1.00	1.00	.	1.00
R07012.1	COMP EMPR, 68-78 REV	3.00	1.00	1.00	.	1.00
R07538.	COMP EMPR, 68-80 REV	.	1.00	1.00	3.00	1.00
R08010.	COMP EMPR, 68-82 REV	.	1.00	2.00	.00	1.00
R09437.	COMP EMPR, 68-83 REV	.	1.00	2.00	.00	1.00
R10572.	COMP EMPR, 68-85 REV	4.00	1.00	2.00	.00	1.00
R11061.	COMP EMPR, 68-87 REV	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
R12298.	COMP EMPRS, 68-88 REV	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
R13616.	COMP EMPRS, 68-91 REV	4.00	1.00	2.00	5.00	1.00
R15791.	COMP EMPR, 68-93 REV	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
R18153.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #01	4.00	1.00	2.00	.	1.00
R18154.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #02	.	.	.	4.00	3.00
R18155.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #03	.	.	.	.	2.00
R18156.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #04	.	.	.	.	.
R18157.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #05	.	.	.	.	.
R18158.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #06	.	.	.	.	.
R18159.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #07	.	.	.	.	.
R18160.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #08	.	.	.	.	.
R18161.	COMP EMPR (REV) 95 JOB #09	.	.	.	.	.

NEGATIVE VALUES

In the past the mature women and young women's cohorts used negative numbers to represent a variety of different responses. For example, in 1982 respondents were asked if they would be eligible for retirement benefits