

APPENDIX 15

DECISION CRITERIA FOR CONSTRUCTION OF VARIABLES FOR DATES LAST ATTENDED SCHOOL

This appendix consists of a general description of the decision criteria for constructing the following nine variables:

- Age Last Attended, 1966
- Month Last Attended, 19XX *
- Year Last Attended, 19XX *
- * Created for 1967, 1968, 1969 and 1970.

The primary inputs to the process consisted of the responses of not-enrolled respondents each survey year to:

- a) 1966, Item 5 ("How old were you when you last attended regular school?")
- b) 1967 through 1970, Item 1 ("When were you last enrolled?")
(generated a month-and-year response)

Due to a very large number of apparent inconsistencies among the primary inputs, as well as between these and other items, the construction process consisted of a series of three steps, as follows. However please note that both the original (new data) entries and the constructed items are retained on the data file.

I) Internal consistency

Year responses to (b) above were examined for inconsistencies, defined here as non-equal values for successive surveys during which no apparent enrollment has intervened. Most-frequent responses and earliest responses were selected to override other inconsistent responses.

Among those apparently leaving school after 1966 and who may have been enrolled between survey dates (in college), the apparently inconsistent responses corresponding to such possible intermittent enrollment were retained.

Month responses to (b) above were revised in connection with revisions based on year responses. Beyond this, most-frequent responses were selected to override other inconsistent responses, and in the absence of this, "6" was chosen when it occurred, and in the absence of this, the 1967 response was selected.

The "Age at Last Attendance" (refers to 1966 survey only) was revised in cases where "Date of Last Attendance" (from subsequent surveys) appeared to refer to the same event (that is, that the respondent had left school prior to the 1966 survey and had not returned) but did not correspond to the date obtained by inference from the "age" response. In such cases, the "age" response was revised to agree with the date responses.

II) External consistency

Dates were further hand-edited in cases where the date response from one survey was found to be prior to the date of any earlier survey at which the respondent was currently enrolled (note: this frequently involved changing only the month portion of the date response -to 12- on the assumption that the date which was provided referred to the beginning of a term as opposed to the end of the last term).

III) Final hand-editing

A lengthy series of other special cases -- each covering some apparent inconsistency but each affecting relatively few cases -- were handled by hand edit process.