Welcome!

Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE) Methods Symposium
Technical Help:
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CE_WORKSHOP_HELP@bls.gov
**Agenda**

**1:00-2:00 p.m.  Session I**

Welcome and CE Redesign Update - *Laura Erhard*

Navigating a Pandemic: Adjusting CE Field Data Collection During COVID-19 - *John Gloster and Alicia Walker, U.S. Census Bureau*

An Examination of Nonresponse Bias in the Consumer Expenditure Surveys During the COVID-19 Period - *Stephen Ash, Division of Price Statistical Methods*

**2:00-2:15 p.m.  Break**

**2:15-3:15 p.m.  Session II**

COVID-19's Effect on the Consumer Expenditure Surveys' Estimates - *Bryan Rigg and Brett Creech*

COVID-19 Protocol Changes and Consumer Expenditure Diary Reporting in 2020 - *Brett McBride and Nikki Graf, Ph.D.*

Consumer Expenditure Interview Survey: Data Quality Assessment Pre vs. Post COVID-19 - *David Biagas, Ph.D., Office of Survey Methods Research*
Consumer Expenditure Survey: Redesign Update

Laura Erhard
Survey Methods Symposium
July 20, 2021
Outline

- Brief overview of CE and the Gemini Redesign project
- Results from the online diary test
- Updates on the Streamlined Questionnaire
- Future research
Current CE Design

- 4 waves of personal interviews
- 3 month recall
- Large or recurring expenditures

- 2 one-week household paper* diaries
- Contemporaneous recall
- Small, frequently purchased items

Consumer Expenditure Survey Estimates
Gemini Redesign Plan

2013: Redesign Plan approved

2015: Proof of Concept Test complete

2016: Incentives Test complete

2020: Large Scale Feasibility Online Diary Test (LSF) complete

2022: Online Diary Implementation

2023 onwards: Phased Implementation of Streamlined Questionnaire

You are here!
Design Elements for Implementation

- Online diary
- Streamlined interview (less detailed expenditure categories)
- Record use
- Select incentives
Design Elements being Postponed

- Single sample design
- Two visits per wave
- Two waves, a year apart
Online Diaries
Online Diary: Large Scale Feasibility Test (LSF)

- Sample size: 2500 addresses
- Field period: October 2019-April 2020
- Pre-notification postcard sent out in advance of the advance letter
- Advance letter with $5 cash incentive by priority mail for half the sample (incentive experiment)
- Two interviewer visits to household, one for diary placement and one for pickup
- Push to online diary if the household respondent is eligible based on screening questions, if they refuse or are ineligible-- they get paper diaries
- Automated email reminders and two calls by interviewer during the diary keeping period to remind respondents to login and enter expenses
- Recall tab in the CAPI instrument for interviewer to record additional expenses reported by respondent at pickup
Highlights from the analysis
Summary of LSF results

- Final LSF response rate was 41.8%, which is lower than the production diary (46.0%)
  - Potential test effect “Diaries placed too late” (+3.1%)
  - LSF data had a higher proportion of cases removed due to editing (+2.1%)
- About 37% of the completed diaries were online, the rest were paper
  - Online respondents were younger, higher education, homeowners, larger households
- Incentive and advance postcards had no impact on response rate
- Mean total expenditure reported was lower than production diary, driven by differences in the “Other” category of expenditures
- Higher and allocation of expenses in LSF compared to the production diary.
Recommendations from preliminary analysis

- FRs need more training on the online diary; placement and pickup procedures need to be clarified
- Allow for an explicit option for paper placement for online eligibles in the instrument Access and training for online diary help desk.
- Recall: discuss with Census to find the best way to pick up recall with online diaries
- A printed user guide needed with a flap to gather receipts
- Customizing the username and password may not be needed
- Develop better screening for online diary
Online Diary next steps

- Continued evaluation of differences between production and LSF
- Evaluate the results from the contingency use of the online diary in production
- Recommendations for full implementation protocols
- Implementation in July 2022
- Continuous improvement
  - autosuggest feature, prompts, trip based diary
  - more use of receipts
  - self-administration test
Streamlined Questionnaire
Streamlined questionnaire features

- Reduce the level of detail: aggregate to the extent possible
- Records focus: facilitate the use of records, including a records path for certain groups of questions and records incentives
- Question order/sections: some changes to the order and section organization
CEQ: Streamlined Questionnaire

- The streamlined CAPI instrument with a record-focus will not be field tested, but will go through cognitive testing and expert review before being put into production in a phased implementation starting in 2023, in conjunction with the development of the revised processing system.

- Major sections with few or no changes will be released in the first phase in 2023 along with the revised processing system for those sections. Requirements for these sections are ready. Sections with more extensive changes will be released in subsequent years.
Streamlined Questionnaire Sections

- Demographics (no changes)
- Housing characteristics
- Rented housing
- Owned homes - records path
- Utilities and Fuels - records path, records emphasis
- Household services
- Home improvement and repairs
- Household furnishings and equipment
- Vehicles - records path
- Transportation
- Computers and Electronics
- Hobbies, Sports, and Recreation
- Family care and education
- Clothing, jewelry and watches
- Health Insurance - records emphasis
- Medical Services and Equipment - records emphasis
- Other Insurance - records emphasis
- Professional services
- Trips
- Events
- Contributions
- Expense patterns for selected goods and services
- Extended Recall for outlet data collection
- Work Experience and Income (no changes)
- Assets and Liabilities (no changes)
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- Transportation - April 2023
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Upcoming Changes to Interview Survey

2021:
- We have reduced content including replacing detailed clothing questions with fewer high level questions about spending on clothes.

2023: Three sections have major changes
- A new Family Care and Education section will include questions on childcare, education, school meals, and adult care
- The section on Expense Patterns will include questions on grocery expenses, alcohol and tobacco, food away from home and gifts
- The section on Transportation will include questions on vehicle operating expenses and public transportation
https://www.bls.gov/cex/geminiproject.htm
Laura Erhard
Chief, Research and Program Development
Division of Consumer Expenditure Surveys
202-691-5119
Erhard.Laura@bls.gov