Introduction to the 2018 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

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What is SIPP?

- SIPP is a series of national survey conducted by U.S. Census Bureau

- The purposes of SIPP is to provide accurate and comprehensive information on economic well-being of the American individuals and families

- SIPP focuses on:
  - the distribution of income and economic resources of individuals and families
  - the extent to which people and family participate in government assistance programs
  - family and social contexts of individuals and families
  - the interactions among the constructs above

History of SIPP

- The fist SIPP survey was conducted in October 1983

- Before SIPP, researches relied on March Supplement of Current Population Survey (CPS) to understand economic well-being of individuals and families

- CPS, designed as a survey of labor force participation of U.S. population, has its limitation to understand the economic well-being of individuals and families
  - very long recall period (i.e., a 4-8-4 design)
  - inadequately measures of irregular sources of income, government program participation, and changes in family structure
  - respondents are followed for only 16 months

History of SIPP (Cont.)

- CPS would have become too huge to manage if it had been designed to overcome these limitations of studying economic well-being. Thus, SIPP was designed as an independent survey

- To date, SIPP surveys have been conducted in 16 panels. The 2018 SIPP panel is the latest one and will cover a four-year time period from January 2018 to December 2021

- Census Bureau redesigned the 2014 SIPP study to save costs, reduce respondent burden, and still maintain data quality. These changes include (1) sampling a smaller number of households; (2) interviewing respondents one time, rather than four times, a year; and (3) changing the reference period of survey questions from four months to one year

- The SIPP panels from 2018 to 2025 will all be conducted using the study design initiated in the 2014 SIPP panel
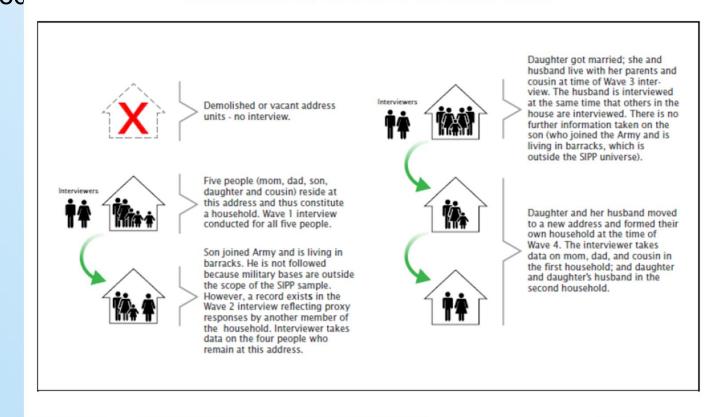
Study Design of 2018 SIPP

- Target population is U.S. non-institutionalized civilians aged 15 and over

- Sampling frame is created from files of 2010 Decennial Census, Master Address File (MAF), and U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence

- A two-stage stratified sampling is used to select households. The first stage selects one or more contiguous counties (Primary Sampling Unites) from the sampling frame. The second stage divides addresses with PSUs into two strata: One with high concentration of low-income households and the other with low concentration of low-income households. Addresses from the strata with high concentration of low-income households were oversampled

Study Design of 2018 SIPP (Cont.)

- Following rules in 2014 SIPP: Respondents of the sampled households and people who later co-reside in the same households were followed

FIGURE 2-1. EXAMPLES OF SIPP FOLLOWING RULES

Demolished or vacant address units - no interview.

Five people (mom, dad, son, daughter and cousin) reside at this address and thus constitute a household. Wave 1 interview conducted for all five people.

Son joined Army and is living in barracks. He is not followed because military bases are outside the scope of the SIPP sample. However, a record exists in the Wave 2 interview reflecting proxy responses by another member of the household. Interviewer takes data on the four people who remain at this address.

Daughter got married; she and husband live with her parents and cousin at time of Wave 3 interview. The husband is interviewed at the same time that others in the house are interviewed. There is no further information taken on the son (who joined the Army and is living in barracks, which is outside the SIPP universe).

Daughter and her husband moved to a new address and formed their own household at the time of Wave 4. The interviewer takes data on mom, dad, and cousin in the first household; and daughter and daughter's husband in the second household.

Source: United States Census Bureau (August 2020) Survey of Income and Program Participation: 2018 Panel Users' Guide. Retrieved from https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/tech-documentation/methodology/2018_SIPP_Users_Guide.pdf

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Content of 2018 SIPP

TABLE 1-1. TOPICS COLLECTED IN THE SURVEY OF INCOME AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Demographic Characteristics	Assets and Liabilities	Program Participation and Income Transfers
Age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin	*Assets:*	Disability income payments
Educational enrollment	Interest-earning assets	EITC and tax filing status
Educational attainment	Other income-generating assets	Energy assistance
Family and household relationships	Other assets	General Assistance (GA)
Language	Retirement accounts	Life insurance retirement income
Marital status and marital history	*Liabilities:*	Lump sum severance pay/retirement plan income
Nativity, citizenship, and parent nativity	Debts secured by assets	Miscellaneous income
Parent mortality	Unsecured debt	'Other' assistance
Residence	*Additional topics:*	Retirement income
	Rent and mortgage payments	School meals
	Utility payments	Social Security – child
		Social Security – self
Employment		Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
Commuting and work schedule	**Health and Well-Being**	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
Earnings	Adult well-being	Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Hours and pay changes	Child care	Support paid
Job characteristics	Child well-being	Support received
Labor force participation	Dependent care expenses	Survivor income benefit
Reasons for not working	Disability	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Time away without pay	Fertility	Unemployment compensation
	Food security	Veterans benefits
	Health care utilization and medical expenditures	Workers' compensation
	Health insurance	

Source: United States Census Bureau (August 2020) Survey of Income and Program Participation: 2018 Panel Users' Guide. Retrieved from https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/tech-documentation/methodology/2018_SIPP_Users_Guide.pdf

Research Questions Using SIPP?

- Examine the eligibility and effectiveness of government programs, for example, studying how many people will be eligible for food stamp if there are changes to the eligibility criteria and how many people will face food insecurity without the food stamp program

- Studying how family and social contexts influence people's income and economic resources and subsequently their participation in government assistance programs, for example, Valle and Perez-Lopez (2020) examines family participation rates in Nutrition Assistance Programs.

- Studying union stability and family relations. For example, Manning, Brown, and Strykers (2016) compare the relationship stability between same-sex and different-sex cohabiting couples
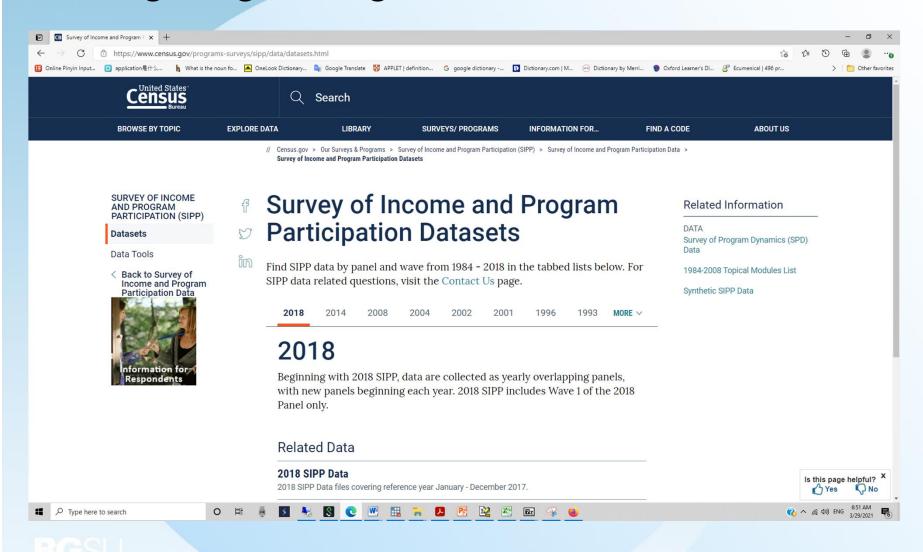
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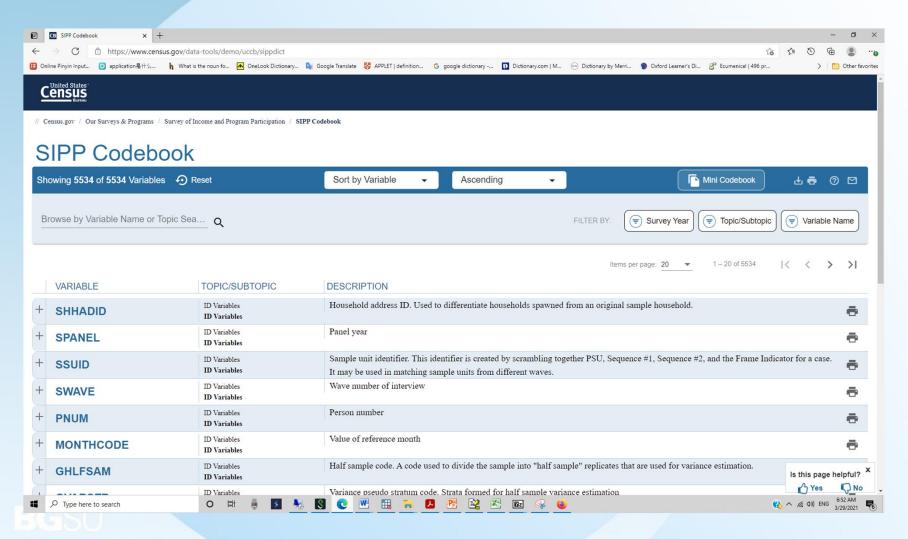# Navigating through the Website of 2018 SIPP

Navigating through the Website of 2018 SIPP

Navigating through the Website of 2018 SIPP

2018 SIPP Data

- Currently, only data from Wave 1 of SIPP 2018 are available

- The primary data file has 763,186 records, 4,942 variables. One of these variables is the final person weight variable (i.e., wpfinwgt)
  - When SIPP data from a particular month are analyzed, the final person weight variable from that particular month should be used
  - When SIPP data from a calendar are analyzed, the final person weight variable from December of that year should be used
  - When the whole panel of SIPP data from analyzed, the final person weight variables from December of each year are combined and averaged to weight the result

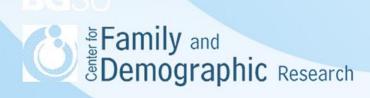- The replicate weights file has 240 replicate weight variables

2018 SIPP Data

Table 1. Select Key ID, Demographic, and Weight Variables

Variable Name	Variable Description
MONTHCODE	Value of reference month
SPANEL	Panel year
SWAVE	Wave number of interview
SSUID	Sample unit identifier. This identifier is created by scrambling together PSU, Sequence #1, Sequence #2, and the Frame Indicator for a case. It may be used in matching sample units across years.
SHHADID	Household address ID. Used to differentiate households spawned from an original sample household.
PNUM	Person number in a household
TAGE	Age as of last birthday
ESEX	Sex of this person
EMS	Marital Status
ERELRP	Household Relationships
WPFINWGT	Final person weight
REPWGT1-REPWGT240	Replicate Weights

2018 SIPP Data

Example	monthcode	spanel	swave	ssuid	shhadid	pnum	tage	esex	ems	erelrpe
1	1	2018	1	11413646518	11	101	35	2: Female	4. Divorced	Child
1	1	2018	1	11413646518	11	102	52	2: Female	1. Married, spouse present	1. Householder with relatives
1	1	2018	1	11413646518	11	103	48	1: Male	1. Married, spouse present	3. Opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse
1	1	2018	1	11413646518	11	104	17	2: Female	6. Never married	Child
2	1	2018	1	28511493318	11	101	67	1	1. Married, spouse present	1. Householder with relatives
2	1	2018	1	28511493318	11	102	63	2	1. Married, spouse present	1. Householder with relatives
2	1	2018	1	28511493318	11	103	7	1	.	8. Grandchild

Replicate Weights for 2018 SIPP

Stata:

- svyset [pweight= wpfinwgt], brrweight(REPWGT1-REPWGT240) fay(.5) vce(brr) mse

Conclusions

- 2018 SIPP offers a unique opportunity to describe and examine how economic well-being change across different family and social contexts

- The format of data is person-month. Thus, it would be better if users are familiar with how to use data in long format

- The sizes of the primary data and replicate weight data files of the Wave I of 2018 SIPP are very big. Users should use computers with enough RAMs or select necessary variables or observations when analyzing 2018 SIPP data

- 2018 SIPP over-samples low-income households. Thus, uses should remember weighting their analyses

- SIPP website provides latest information about data, codebooks, user guides, notes, and corrections. Thus, SIPP website is the first place you should look before starting your SIPP analyses

- If you have any questions about 2018 SIPP, please feel free to contact me at wuh@bgsu.edu.