# USING PARADATA TO EXPLORE USERS' PATHWAYS THROUGH WEB SURVEYS

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## Web paradata is a powerful and relatively inexpensive tool for monitoring and evaluating online surveys

Web paradata – information from online surveys including actions taken during the survey process such as: logging on, answering questions, asking for help etc.

Paradata efforts at the Census Bureau
Increase use of paradata and collaboration across areas
Standardization of measures, programs and standards
Use of paradata in conjunction with cognitive testing findings



Limitations of current analysis and measures of web paradata

Messy, unstructured data can obscure findings

Multiple patterns of how respondents use instrument may make aggregate measures difficult to interpret

Relational data-may make interpretation of measures about single questions difficult to interpret

Analysis that considers full path through instrument is a possible solution

- Challenges to analyzing full path
- Non-standard data that is not originally designed for analysis

Large amounts of information for each case

#### Dependent data



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# Qualitative deep dive into a random sample of paradata

- Sample drawn from the 2018 American Community Survey paradata of all cases completed online
- Reformatted data to be able to view pathway through each page of survey instrument
- Started with a loose framework of looking for typical versus atypical patterns
- Examined each pattern qualitatively to find and develop categories of patterns
- Explored ways of visualizing data for individual paths and eventually aggregates of all paths



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field\_char next\_actic Pathways are complexthis is just one portion of one user's pathway

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### Questions you can expect answered in the poster

Question 1- When looking across pathways do we find data issues that may cause problems with the analysis of backing or other behaviors?

- > What do issues look like?
- > How can we identify issues in aggregate data?

> What potential solutions do we have to fix issues?

Question 2-What patterns emerge when looking at backing in web instruments from a whole path perspective?

- > What do these patterns look like
- > What possible problems may these patterns indicate?
- > What potential solutions do we have to fix these issues?



Want to see more visualizations? Come see me at #17 in the E- poster session!

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