



Piggyback Surveys with Mixed Mode Designs

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Overview

- Defining piggyback surveys
- Some relevant experiences
- Sample design issues
- Instrument issues
- Operations issues
- Reporting/editing/processing/delivery



Is “Piggyback” the Right Word?

- Survey B “sits on top of” Survey A
 - Sample is derived from Survey A
 - Existence is dependent on Survey A



NASA Dryden Flight Research Center Photo Collection
<http://www.dfrc.nasa.gov/gallery/photo/index.html>
NASA Photo: EC83-27138 Date: 1983 Photo by: NASA

Shuttle Discovery Mated to 747 SCA

Piggyback survey characteristics

- Piggyback surveys are a special subset of an extended interview design
- Involves different respondents
- Often different modes with data linkages
- Survey A is almost always larger than Survey B
- Survey B
 - a standalone sample vs.
 - an augmentation of data about Survey A respondent

Examples in Household and **Establishment** Surveys

- NLTCs/Caregivers Survey (1982)
- MCBS/Home Health Aides-Project Hope (1990s)
- MEPS/Medical Provider Component (1990s-today)
- **ECLS-K/Pre-school programs (1998-1999)**
- **ECLS-B /Fathers/Caregivers (2001-3)**
- **NNHS/Nursing Assistants (2004)**
- **NHHCS/Home Health Aides (2007)**
- NHATS/Caregivers (2011)

Why Piggyback?

- Far more efficient and less costly than a standalone Survey B
 - May be the only way to obtain a sample for Survey B
- May improve data quality or utility of Survey A
- Funding support available

Sample Design Issues

- Population of inference for Survey B – may not fit mode well
- Estimating yield, eligibility rates, response rates across the two samples and modes
- Identifying duplicates in Survey B
 - if duplicates are a large proportion of sample, respondents have negative reactions to multiple approaches
- Ineligibles in Survey B
 - confirmation of selection criteria with Survey B respondent
 - maybe mode related

Instrument and General Design Issues

- Design of the 2 surveys sequential
 - 2 surveys almost always have at least some questions in common
 - Different mode issues often considered after design for Survey A is set
- Survey A questions that identify Survey B respondents are critical link between the 2 surveys
- Time lapse between A and B interviews may affect response rates and data quality
- Anonymity, confidentiality, privacy considerations are often prominent and related to mode and contact approaches

Survey A Operations Issues

- Survey A respondents must be informed about B survey with mode differences made clear
- Survey A respondents must be assured their data will not be shared with Survey B respondents
- Survey A respondents can help
 - identify
 - provide contact info
 - recruit Survey B respondents

Inter-Survey Processing

- Pulling data out of Interview A
- Developing Survey B sample control file
- Editing name, address, phone information about Survey B respondent
- De-duplicating B respondents may be necessary
- Preparing merge files for advance letter mailings
- Transforming data to field B sample in different mode

Survey B Operations Issues

- Timing between advance mailing and first call or follow-up attempts
- Disavowals -- may be mode-related
- Survey B respondents must be assured their data will not be shared with Survey A respondents
- May want to consider returning to A respondent for help tracing or contacting B respondent
- Mode differences may require high level of staff cooperation and collaboration (especially if A and B cross functional units) and cross-training

Post-data collection

- Reconciliation of final dispositions between Samples A and B
 - A must come first
- Data base structure
 - relational/rectangular
 - one file or two
- Variable naming conventions

Closing Remarks

- Piggyback surveys have design and operational complexities that include many mode issues
- Consideration of mode differences is an essential component of piggyback survey design
- Efficiencies and quality gains usually far outweigh the costs of additional complexity and problems posed by mode differences



Thank you!

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