Using Audit Trail Files in the Reengineered SIPP

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The SIPP Mission

The mission of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is to provide a nationally representative sample for evaluating:

- Annual and sub-annual dynamics of income,
- Movements into and out of government transfer programs,
- Family and social context of individuals and households, and
- Interaction between these items





SIPP Survey Design

	Classic SIPP	Reengineered SIPP	
Instrument	DOS-based	Blaise/C#	
Interview Frequency	3 times/year	Annual	
Reference Period	Previous 4 months	Previous year	
Panel Length	2.5-5 years	4 years (planned)	
Universe	Civilian, non-institutional	Civilian, non-institutional	
File Structure	Complex	Simplified	





Goal for Reengineered SIPP

 Maximize the effectiveness of SIPP data collection efforts and data accuracy utilizing all available resources (e.g., paradata)



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Audit Trails

An audit trail is a record of values and movements in the survey instrument, recording the Field Representative's (FR) movement and data entry from the mouse and keyboard

 It records a sequence of information when navigating between answer fields, when an answer is entered, and when certain function keys are used





Example of an Audit Trail File

5/19/2012 12:39 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].KNDWK	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:39 (KEY:)TEXT[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:39 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].KNDWK		
5/19/2012 12:39 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].KNDWK	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:TEXT
5/19/2012 12:39 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].ACTVT	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)TEXT[BACK][BACK][BACK][BACK][BACK]TEXT[BACK]TEXT[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:40 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].ACTVT		
5/19/2012 12:40 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].ACTVT	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:TEXT
5/19/2012 12:40 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].UNION	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)2[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:40 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].UNION		
5/19/2012 12:40 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].UNION	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:2
5/19/2012 12:40 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].CNTRC	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)2[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:40 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].PAYHR1	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)3[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:40 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].PAYHR1		
5/19/2012 12:40 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].PAYHR1	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:3
5/19/2012 12:40 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].PYRAT1	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)8888888[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:40 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].PYRAT1		
5/19/2012 12:40 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].PYRAT1	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:888888
5/19/2012 12:40 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].TAKEHOME1	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)12[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:40 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].TAKEHOME1		
5/19/2012 12:40 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].TAKEHOME1	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:2
5/19/2012 12:40 Enter Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].JOBHRS1	Status:Normal	Value:	
5/19/2012 12:40 (KEY:)8888888[ENTR]			
5/19/2012 12:41 Action:Store Field Data	Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].JOBHRS1		
5/19/2012 12:41 Leave Field:BCore_Middle.BJob1[1].JOBHRS1	Cause:Next Field	Status:Normal	Value:888888

Uses of Audit Trail Files

- Audit trail files can be used to create paradata on such things as:
 - Section timers,
 - Don't know/refused counts,
 - Help screen calls,
 - Checks encountered,
 - Item-level notes utilized, and
 - FRs navigation throughout the instrument.







Data and Method

Data:

Wave 1 of the 2014 panel of SIPP

- Sample included approximately 53,000 households; roughly 30,000 households were interviewed
- Analytic sample: n=29,097 (households)
 - Households ≤ 4 where total interview time is greater than 6 hours were dropped
 - Households ≥ 5 where total interview time is greater than 8 hours were dropped





Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Select Variables from Audit Trail Files

	Total		Range				
Variables	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max		
Total CTRL+D	13.28	15.57	9.00	0	214		
Total CTRL+R	4.45	15.64	0.00	0	385		
Total Help Call Screens (F1)	0.37	0.90	0.00	0	23		
Total Field Case Notes (F7)	0.75	2.80	0.00	0	120		
Total Survey Time (in minutes)	111.93	60.40	98.93	10.75	472.60		
Source: Survey of Income and Program Darticipation (SIDD) 2014 Ways 1							

Source: Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) 2014, Wave 1. *Note*: N=29,097.





Conclusion

- The inclusion of the audit trail files in the reengineered SIPP has enabled researchers to undertake research that was previously impossible with the classic SIPP survey design
 - The average duration of an interview for a household is slightly less than 2 hours
 - Respondents provided more "don't know" rather than "refused" answers to questions in the instrument
 - Help screen calls (F1) and field case notes (F7) are underutilized by FRs; the average is less than one per household



Thank you!

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