CONTENT OF CURRENT QUESTIONNAIRE

PSID collects a wide variety of information each wave that when combined with the CDS and TA interviews creates unique analytic opportunities. Content of the current PSID questionnaire includes the following:

- Employment
- Wages
- Income
- Expenditures
- Wealth
- Mortgage distress & foreclosures
- Pensions
- Philanthropy
- Education
- Marriage & fertility
- Health status
- Health behaviors
- Health insurance
- Program participation
- Computer use
- Housing characteristics

PSID SAMPLE

The original PSID consisted of a national sample. An oversample of low-income families was included to provide adequate sample sizes for investigating poverty related issues. Roughly 18,000 individuals living in 5,000 households were members of the original 1968 sample.

All 1968 sample members have the PSID “gene,” and they are followed and interviewed in all subsequent waves across their entire lives, regardless of where they live. All individuals born to or adopted by somebody with the PSID “gene” acquires the gene themselves, and therefore are interviewed and followed. As a result, when children in PSID families grow up and form their own independent households, they are interviewed.

In 1997/1999, a sample of 511 immigrant families was added to enhance representativeness. Using weights provided by the PSID, it has been shown that the PSID sample continues to closely resemble the national population even after almost 50 years of interviewing.

STUDY DIRECTION AND OVERSIGHT

The PSID is directed by faculty at the University of Michigan, with data collection carried out by the Institute for Social Research. An external Board of Overseers, which consists of leading scientists from various disciplines, provides scientific input and monitors the project.

Director: Charles Brown
Associate Directors: Vicki Freedman and Narayan Sastry
Assistant Director: Katherine McGonagle

SPONSORSHIP

PSID is sponsored by: the National Science Foundation, the National Institute on Aging, the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute on Health and Human Development, the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

PSID.org

DATA ON FOOD AND NUTRITION
INFORMATION ON FOOD & NUTRITION

With nearly 50 years of data on the same families and their descendants, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) is the world’s longest running nationally representative household panel survey. PSID gathers data on the family as a whole and on individuals residing within the family. Information is currently collected on roughly 24,000 individuals living in 10,000 families.

Questions about food expenditures and food assistance have been a core topic of the PSID since its inception in 1968. Food assistance has been expanded in more recent waves to encompass new government food assistance programs. Special content on food security and nutritional knowledge is available for some waves. The value of these data has grown with the addition of health as a core topical domain starting in 1999. In addition, substantial information on food, nutrition, and health was collected from PSID families in the original 3-wave Child Development Supplement (CDS: 1997, 2002/03, 2007/08). In 2014, another generation of PSID families provided this information in the new CDS which follows more than 5,000 children in 3,000-plus families.

Food Expenditures

The PSID has collected information about how much is spent on food in most waves since 1968. Annual amounts spent on food eaten “at home” and food eaten out have been collected in most every wave. Amounts spent on having food delivered was collected in 1968, and in every wave since 1994.

Food Consumption & Obesity

Both the original (1997-2008) and new (2014) Child Development Supplements have collected detailed information about the types of food children eat for breakfast, during school, and for snacks; the frequency of family meals; family rules about eating; and food security. The CDS has considerable information on health behaviors including exercise and sleep habits. Height and weight measurements are available in the CDS for children and their caregivers, and in the PSID for both heads and spouses (in 1986 and every wave since 1999).

Food Assistance

Information on food stamp program participation has been collected in most every wave since 1968. Additional questions specific to the food stamp program were added in 1999 on number and identity of family members receiving benefits, and benefit amounts. In 2003, a special series of questions was asked about reasons for leaving the food stamp program, even for one month. Questions about other government-sponsored food programs in child and adult day care centers started in 1999. In 2001, questions about WIC participation and the receipt of free or reduced-cost breakfasts and lunches for family members were added, and many of these questions continue to be collected. In 2003 and 2005, a series of questions was added about food assistance received from non-governmental sources such as family, friends, churches, and community groups.

Food Security

A version of the U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module developed by ERS-USDA was collected between 1999 and 2003, and again starting in 2015. The module was also included in the new CDS (2014). These questions ask about various levels of food security such as worries about having enough food and enough healthy food, cutting back to conserve food, and running out of money to buy food, for example.

These data allow the food security status of each family to be defined along a continuum extending from high food security to very low food security.

Nutritional Knowledge

A special supplement was added to PSID in 1999 to assess awareness of governmental outreach in the area of the “food pyramid,” “the 5 a day program,” and “dietary guidelines for Americans.” This supplement included questions on the perceived importance of maintaining a healthy diet and body weight, knowledge of health impacts of certain foods and health behaviors, and sources of nutritional knowledge and health.

DATA ACCESS: PSID.org

All waves of the PSID and study supplements are accessible via the PSID Data Center, which provides:

- Automatic merges of all waves of data
- Customized codebooks and datasets in a variety of formats including SAS, Stata, SPSS, Excel, and text
- Instructional webinars and tutorials, bibliographies, technical papers, and user documentation

Some types of PSID data are available only under a restricted contract. These include: geospatial data down to block-level; mortality data from the National Death Index; assisted housing matched to HUD data; Medicare claims; and educational characteristics linked to the National Center for Education Statistics data.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH AREAS

- Four decades of data allow study of connections between social, economic, and food-related behaviors and outcomes for different populations across business cycles and policy changes
- Data collected over the life course allow study of how early experiences affect later-life outcomes, e.g., the effect of food stamps, WIC, and school lunch programs on adult health and earnings
- The genealogic panel allow comparisons of family members from different generations and research on the effects of parental and grandparental experiences and behaviors on those of current generations
- The effect of changes in food stamp program participation and other government-sponsored programs on various outcomes such as food security and obesity can be tracked over time
- Data on food expenditures, consumption, income, and wealth can be combined with data on health to understand the effects of socioeconomic status on life course health including obesity
- Lifetime and intergenerational participation in food assistance programs can be estimated