

Programming an Employment Event History Calendar in the Panel Study of Income Dynamics

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The Panel Study of Income Dynamics is a nationally representative longitudinal study of approximately 8000 U.S. families. The PSID was one of the first large scale studies to prototype and field an electronic Event History Calendar instrument. We have been collecting employment and labor force participation histories in a version of an EHC since 2003. The original PSID employment EHC was written in Visual Basic with an Access database as the back end. Since 2007, we have successfully experimented with programming a retrospective health history calendar in VB and calling it from the Blaise DEP. The calendar data is then written directly back to the Blaise bdb using a Dynamic Link Library. Our challenge for the 2009 data collection was to rework the Employment EHC into this new format. By incorporating the EHC data collection into the main instrument, we have successfully moved from five separate data collection applications to one bmi.

This paper will discuss the development of the new employment EHC, specifically how we incorporated a number of checks and warnings to the interviewers in order to meet the complex requirements of collecting information about employment and labor force participation.