Data Description
2015 Consumption and Activities Mail Survey (CAMS)
Version 1.0

1. Introduction

In the fall of 2015, questionnaires assessing individual activities and household patterns of consumption were mailed to a sub sample of the Health and Retirement Study (HRS). The 2015 Consumption and Activities Mail Survey (CAMS), was a continuation of the longitudinal CAMS that started in 2001. For further information about CAMS see the HRS website, documentation, data descriptions and "off-year" studies: http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu.

The HRS is funded under a cooperative agreement between the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. The HRS is designed to study labor force, health, and family transitions of the U.S. population aged 51 and older, and the impact of those transitions on economic resources, claims on structured programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and informal assistance and transfers to and from family members.

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) provided funding (U01 AG009740) for the 2015 CAMS. The CAMS survey was conducted by the Survey Research Center (SRC), at the Institute for Social Research (ISR), at the University of Michigan.

By receiving the dataset, you agree to use it for research and statistical purposes only and make no effort to identify respondents.   In addition, you agree to send us a copy of publications you produce based on the data. See Obtaining the Data (at the end of this document for additional details).

1A.   The Sample Interviewed in the 2015 HRS CAMS.

In the fall of 2015, CAMS questionnaires were mailed to a sub-sample of HRS respondents (n=8,039). The sample consisted of everyone included in the 2013 CAMS (unless they were deceased or permanently removed from the HRS sample). New spouses of the 2013 CAMS sample respondents were included (even if they did not participate in the 2013 CAMS). Of the 8,039 questionnaires, 5,628 were "full" and 2,411 were "partial" questionnaires. The 2015 CAMS data file contains 5,423 records.

A total of 5,423 questionnaires were returned and of those 3,737 were the "full" version (Sections A,B,C) and 1,686 were the "partial" version (Section A). The simple response rate is 67.5% for the total sample across both versions of the questionnaire. The response rate for the "full" questionnaire is 66.4% and for the partial version the response rate is 69.9%.

For information about prior samples and response rates for the CAMS please see the CAMS data description from 2013:
http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/modules/meta/2013/cams/desc/2013Camsdd.pdf

1B.   2015 HRS CAMS Sections

As indicated earlier, there were two versions of CAMS questionnaires in 2015. The "full" version contained three sections:

Section A   Activities
Section B   Consumption
Section C   Demographics

Section A, Activities, was designed to measure and identify the nature of individual activities, their quantity and their quality. The activities component of the CAMS allows for describing activity patterns and permits the investigation of different types of activities and how specific types of activities are affected by health, family and economic transitions in later life and, in turn, how activities affect health and well-being.

Section B, Consumption, was designed to obtain information about the level and pattern of expenditures of sampled households. The consumption questions of the CAMS, coupled with the panel data of the HRS, allows for assessing a variety of important practical and theoretical issues, including how consumption patterns are affected by health, wealth, retirement and public and private supports.

The "partial" version of the 2015 questionnaire contained Section A, only.

1C.   Changes in 2015 HRS CAMS Questions

One new question C2B was added to the 2015 CAMS. The following is how the variable for C2B appears in the 2015 CAMS codebook.

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===========================================
C2B_15      C2B. OWN OR RENT HOUSE
       Section: C    Level: Respondent     Type: Numeric   Width: 1  Decimals: 0

       Do you (and/or your husband/wife/partner) own or rent the home or apartment you
       live in? (If you live part of the year in another home or apartment, please
       answer for the one in which you spend most of the year.)
       (Check one.)

       ............................................................
        2342      1. Own (or buying)
         753      2. Rent
         102      3. Live rent-free with relative/employer/friend
          29      4. Live w. relative (not free or not known if rent free)
          45      5. Assisted Living; Retirement home/complex/community; Group
                     home/ Foster home; Nursing home
          12      7. Other
        2140    Blank.  Inap/Missing
```

The bold text for codes 4 and 5 indicates codes that were added during data processing when the comments in the "Other" category were reviewed. The 4 and 5 code frames do not appear in 2015 CAMS questionnaire.

1D. File Structure

The 2015 HRS CAMS Final Release (Version 1) data are at the respondent level. Respondent-level files contain questions that were asked of all respondents about themselves or their household (or were answered by a proxy for the respondent if the respondent was not able to fill out the questionnaire). The data file contains one record for each respondent or proxy who filled out and returned a 2015 Activities and Consumption questionnaire.

Each section of 2015 HRS CAMS contains a question asking who answered the survey questions (A45, B48, and C5). Therefore, analysts can determine if the respondent to whom the questionnaire was sent completed the questionnaire, or if the spouse or partner of the respondent, or some other proxy completed the questionnaire.

The data file is called CAMS15_R, loosely translated as: Consumption and Activities Mail Survey 2015, with the "_R" designating the file is at the respondent level.

The CAMS15_R data file contains 5,423 cases (including those who answered the "full" questionnaire and those who answered the "partial" questionnaire) and 196 variables. The primary Identification variables (IDs) are:

HHID   HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFIER
PN   PERSON NUMBER

Secondary Identification variables are:

OSUBHH   2014 SUB HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
OPN_SP   2014 SPOUSE/PARTNER PERSON NUMBER

Records in the data files are sorted in order by HHID and PN. The variable PN refers to the respondent to whom the questionnaire was mailed. The variable OPN_SP is the person number of the respondent's spouse/partner from the HRS 2014 core data. Identification variables in the HRS 2015 CAMS Final Release are stored in character format. For further information about HRS identification variables and merging data, see the Data Description for the HRS 2002 Core.

1E. Data Quality

Recoded or Constructed variables:
Most of the variables in the 2015 CAMS data mirror the questions in the CAMS questionnaire. However, questions that allowed for multiple mentions have been

recoded. Respondents were instructed to check "all that apply" for A36, B42, B44, and C1. These questions have been recoded into one variable for each mention (for example B42M1, B42M2, etc).

We have added several variables (B7d, B8d, B18d, B19d, B20d, B21d and B22d) to indicate where respondents have combined amounts for either property or utility costs. For example, when respondents reported that electricity was combined with their water and heating costs, the amount in B20_15 includes water and heat for these respondents and B21 and B22 are left blank.

Consistency:
The data will have some inconsistency. Respondents did not always follow the correct skip patterns and in most instances their "incorrect" answers were preserved. Likewise, there were times when respondents interpreted question in different ways. For example, a few respondents answered the percentage amount in two different ways for question B41A. "Suppose next year you were to find your household with 20% more income than normal, what would you do with the extra income?" Some of the respondents gave amounts that add up to 20%, while others gave percentage amounts that add up to 100%.

Extreme values and missing data:
While cleaning the data, when extreme or unlikely values were encountered, the hard copies of the questionnaires were checked to determine if errors were introduced during the data entry process. If the respondent reported the extreme value, the extreme value appears unchanged in the data. For example, at question A45, if a respondent reported that it took 0 minutes to complete Section A, a zero will appear in the data; conversely, if a respondent reported that it took three hours (i.e., 180 minutes) to complete the section, then 180 minutes will appear in the data. Likewise, at questions like A5 ("sleeping and napping last week"), respondents might report 0 hours, while others might report doing so for 163 hours. The exception to the rules above is that we top-coded the following variables:

A1-A20, A34, A35a, A36a, A37a (hours per week):
if $xxx > 168$ then $xxx = 168$

A21-A33, A35b, A37b (hours per month):
if $xxx > 730$ then $xxx = 730$

A35c, A37c (hours in the last year):
if $xxx > 8760$ then $A35c = 8760$
if $xxx > 8760$ then $A37c = 8760$

A38, A39 (days in the last 12 months):
if $A38 > 365$ then $A38 = 365$
if $A39 > 365$ then $A39 = 365$

When respondents did not provide an answer to a question, their answers were treated as missing. There are no codes for "don't know" or "refused". Instead, codes of "9" (or

"99", etc. depending on the variable width) have been used to designate "answer not given" when respondents did not answer a lead in question or when a lead-in question was answered, but they did not provide answers to the follow-up question(s). An example would be in the "purchased or leased a car" (B1), where respondents do not provide the "make" of the car (B1a). In the prior example, respondents were coded as "99" or "answer not given." Respondents, for whom the question was inapplicable, are coded as blank or dot.

2.   Distribution Files

The following extensions are used for the six different types of distribution files:

.DA for data files,
.SAS for SAS program statements,
.SPS for SPSS program statements,
.DO for Stata DO statements,
.DCT for Stata dictionary statements, and
.TXT for codebook files.

For example,

CAMS15_R.DA contains ASCII data from Sections A, B, and C.
CAMS15_R.SAS contains corresponding SAS program statements,
CAMS15_R.SPS contains corresponding SPSS program statements,
CAMS15_R.DO contains corresponding Stata DO statements,
CAMS15_R.DCT contains corresponding Stata dictionary statements, and
CAMS15_R.TXT contains the ASCII codebook.

The 2015 HRS CAMS Final Release data are provided in ASCII format, with fixed-length records.   Use the associated SAS, SPSS or Stata program statements to read the data into the analysis package of your choice. In addition, you will probably want to download the codebook file (CAMS15_R.TXT) and the data description (this document).

3. Program Statements

3A.   Using the Files with SAS

To create a SAS system file for a particular dataset, two file types must be present for that dataset -- .SAS program statement files and .DA data files.

To create a SAS system file, load the *.SAS file into the SAS Program Editor.

If the *.SAS file is located in "c:\cams2015\sas" and the data file is located in "c:\cams2015\data", you can run the file as is. A SAS system file (*.SAS7BDAT) will be saved to directory "c:\cams2015\sas".

If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SAS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

3B.   Using the Files with SPSS

To create an SPSS system file for a particular dataset, two file types must be present for that dataset -- .SPS program statement files and .DA data files.

To create an SPSS system file, open the *.SPS file in SPSS as an SPSS Syntax File.

If the *.SPS file is located in "c:\cams2015\spss" and the data file is located in "c:\cams2015\DATA", you can run the file as is. An SPSS system file (*.SAV) will be saved to directory "c:\cams2015\spss".

If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SPS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

3C.   Using the Files with Stata

To use Stata with a particular dataset, the following three file types must be present for that dataset -- .DCT files, .DO files, and .DA data files.

Files with the suffix .DA contain the raw data for Stata to read. Files with the suffix .DCT are Stata dictionaries used by Stata to describe the data. Files with the suffix .DO are short Stata programs ("do files") which you may use to read in the data. Load the .DO file into Stata and then submit it.

If the *.DO and *.DCT files are located in "c:\cams2015\stata" and the data file is located in "c:\cams2015\data", you can run the .DO file as is.

If the files are not located in these directories, you must edit the *.DO and *.DCT files to reflect the proper path names before you run the files.

Note that the variable names provided in the .DCT files are uppercase. If you prefer lower case variable names, you may wish to convert the .DCT files to lower case prior to use. You may do this by reading the .DCT file into a text or word processing program and changing the case. For instance in Microsoft Word, Edit, Select All, Format, Change Case, lowercase.

4.   Linking Respondents across Time

4A. Respondent records in the 2015 CAMS Final Release (Version 1.0) can be linked to respondent records from HRS 2014 and prior waves by HHID and PN.

For SAS examples of how to link CAMS data with the HRS Core, or cross-sectional data, please see the 2009 CAMS data description Section 4:

5. Registration and Downloading the Data

5A.   Registration

HRS data are available for free to researchers and analysts at the HRS Web site. In order to obtain public release data, you must first register at our Web site. Once you have completed the registration process, your username and password will be sent to you via e-mail. Your username and password are required to download any data files.

By registering all users, we are able to document for our sponsors the size and diversity of our user community allowing us to continue to collect these important data. Registered users receive user support, information related to errors in the data, future releases, workshops, and publication lists. The information you provide will not be used for any commercial use, and will not be redistributed to third parties.

5B.   Conditions of Use

By registering, you agree to the Conditions of Use governing access to Health and Retirement public release data. You must agree to
- not attempt to identify respondents
- not transfer data to third parties except as specified
- not share your username and password
- include specified citations in work based on HRS data
- provide information to us about publications based on HRS data
- report apparent errors in the HRS data or documentation files
- notify us of changes in your contact information

For more information concerning privacy issues and conditions of use, please read "Conditions of Use for Public Data Files" and "Privacy and Security Notice" at the Public File Download Area of the HRS Web site.

5C.   Publications Based on Data

As part of the data registration process, you agree to include specified citations and to inform HRS of any papers, publications, or presentations based on HRS data. Please send a copy of any publications you produce based on HRS data, with a bibliographical reference, if appropriate, to the address below.

Health and Retirement Study
Attn: Papers and Publications
The Institute for Social Research, Room 3410
P.O. Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI (USA) 48106-1248

Alternately, you may contact us by e-mail at **hrsquestions@umich.edu** with "Attn: Papers and Publications" in the subject line.

6.   If You Need to Know More

This document is intended to serve as a brief overview and to provide guidelines to using the CAMS 2015 Final Release (Version 1.0) data. If you have questions or concerns that are not adequately covered here or on our Web site, please contact us. We will do our best to provide answers.

6A.   HRS Internet Site

Health and Retirement Study public release data and additional information about the study are available on the Internet. To access the data and other relevant information, point your Web browser to the HRS Web site.

http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/

6B.   Contact Information

If you need to contact us, you may do so by one of the methods listed below.

Internet: Help Desk at our Web site
E-mail: hrsquestions@umich.edu

Postal service:
Health and Retirement Study
The Institute for Social Research, Room 3410
The University of Michigan
P.O. Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248
FAX: (734) 647-1186