

Data Description
2003 Internet Survey Final Release (Version 1.0)

1. Introduction

In December 2002, a sub-sample of the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) participated in an Internet based survey developed jointly by the HRS, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research (ISR), at the University of Michigan and the RAND Corporation. The National Institute on Aging at NIH (R01 AG020638) provided funding for the 2003 Internet Survey. The 2003 Internet Survey Final Release (Version 1.0) questionnaire contained several different topical areas including Internet/computers, health problem, disability and work limitations, numeracy items, psychosocial items, expectations, and questions about housing/checking accounts, and stocks. Many of the questions were taken from the HRS survey, the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and from the Current Population Survey (CPS). Completed interviews were obtained from 2,197 HRS respondents.

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 the HRS a copy of any publications you produce based on the data. See Obtaining the Data (at the end of this document for additional details).

2. The Sample Interviewed in the 2003 Internet Survey.

In the fall of 2002, contact letters were sent to 2,697 HRS respondents inviting them to participate in the 2003 Internet Survey. Each respondent was offered \$20.00 to participate in the study. The Internet sub sample was drawn from the HRS 2002 core data, wherein respondents were asked if they had Internet access and if they would be willing to participate in an Internet survey.

From the 4,784 respondents to the HRS 2002 who indicated they had Internet access, 3,497 expressed willingness to participate in an Internet survey. Of the 3,497 respondents who had Internet access and said they were willing to do an Internet interview, 2,697 were contacted for the 2003 Internet Survey (244 of them also completed Module 5 of the 2005 HRS core survey about computers and Internet use), and 800 of 3,497 respondents were assigned to a control group. A total of 2,197 respondents completed the 2003 Internet Survey.

The 2003 Internet Survey Release (Version 1.0) includes data from 2,197 respondents, for a simple response rate of 81.5%. The simple response rate does not adjust for mortality or respondents lost to follow-up.

3. Documentation

3A. Paper version of the 2003 Internet Survey

A paper version of the 2003 Internet Survey questionnaire is provided with the 2003 Internet Survey data. The file is called net2003qnaire. **Questions that are new are color coded in blue. Questions borrowed from the National Health Interview Survey are coded in red. Questions from the Current Population Survey are highlighted in green. Questions in black are from the Health and Retirement Study.**

3B. 2003 Internet Survey Codebook and Data

The codebook file for the 2003 Internet Survey is called net03_r.txt. The 2003 Internet Survey data are at the respondent level. Respondent level files contain question that were asked of all respondents about themselves and/or their household. The data file contains one record for each respondent who completed the 2003 Internet Survey. The 2003 Internet Survey data file is called net03_r.

The variable names in the 2003 Internet Survey data file begin with the letter “I” followed by a number “1” and then the variable name. The variable names in the data file are not the same as what is shown in the “paper version” of the questionnaire. However, we have included a reference in variable labels (where possible) that should make it easy to match a given question with the corresponding variable(s). For example, in the paper version of the questionnaire you will see:

C901_ (C901_) AGE
What is your age?

In the codebook and data, the age variable has been named I1_RAGEY. However, C901 is part of the label in the codebook (see below), which provides a link to the relevant question in the paper version of the questionnaire.

=====
I1_RAGEY

RESPONDENT AGE - C901

Section: I Level: Respondent Type: Numeric Width: 3 Decimals: 0

What is your age?

.....
2192 0-93. Actual Value
5 998. DK (Don't Know)
 Blank. INAP (INAPPLICABLE)

=====
3C. Constructed Variables

Several variables were constructed for the 2003 Internet Survey. Constructed variables will not have a reference in their label to the paper version of the 2003 Internet Survey. For example, the following variable is a constructed variable.

=====

I1_RESPONSORDYESNO

RESPONSE ORDER YES NO

Section: I Level: Respondent Type: Numeric Width: 1 Decimals: 0

.....
1086 1. YES/NO

1111 2. NO/YES

Blank. INAP (INAPPLICABLE)

The order of the response categories for many of the questions in the 2003 Internet Survey was randomized. The above variable is an example of a constructed variable that allows for discerning the order of the response categories, as they were presented, for each respondent. The following is a list of the response order variables that were constructed with a note regarding where they are relevant.

I1_RESPONSORDYESNO -- whenever the response options are YES or NO

I1_RESPONSORDOFTEN -- when the response options are, hardly ever (or never), some of the time, or often (always)

I1_RESPONSEORDONEIN -- when the options are, one in ten, one in one thousand, one in one hundred

I1_RESPONSORDPERC -- when the options are, one percent, ten percent, five percent

I1_RESPONSORDIMP -- when the options are, not at all important, slightly important, fairly important, or very important

I1_RESPONSORDEASY -- when the options are, very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult

I1_RESPONSORDCLEAR -- when the response options are, very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult

In addition, the following variables were constructed for the unfolding bracket variables. They refer to entry points in unfolding bracket questions about assets. They are of interest to those who want to analyze unfolding brackets and anchoring effects.

I1_HACHCKENTRY -- First entry point in the unfolding brackets for checking account

I1_HACHCKENTRY -- First entry point in the unfolding brackets for stock amount

I1_HOMEVAENTRY -- First entry point in unfolding brackets for home value

I1_RISRETENTRY -- First entry point in unfolding brackets question for amount of social security

4. 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,

- net03_r.da contains ASCII data at the respondent level.
- net03_r.sas contains corresponding SAS program statements,
- net03_r.sps contains corresponding SPSS program statements,
- net03_r.do contains corresponding Stata do statements,
- net03_r.dct contains corresponding Stata dictionary statements, and
- net03_r.txt contains the ASCII codebook.

The 2003 Internet Survey 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 (net03_r.txt) and the data description (this document).

5. Program Statements

5A. 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:\net2003\sas" and the data file is located in "c:\net2003\data", you can run the file as is. A SAS system file (*.sas7bdat) will be saved to directory "c:\net2003\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.

5B. 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:\net2003\spss" and the data file is located in "c:\net2003\data", you can run the file as is. An SPSS system file (*.sav) will be saved to directory "c:\net2003\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.

5C. 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:\net2003\stata" and the data file is located in "c:\net2003\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.

6. Registration and Downloading the Data

6A. 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.

6B. 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

- o not attempt to identify respondents
- o not transfer data to third parties except as specified
- o not share your username and password
- o include specified citations in work based on HRS data
- o provide information to us about publications based on HRS data
- o report apparent errors in the HRS data or documentation files
- o 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.

6C. 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 3050
P.O. Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI (USA) 48106-1248

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

7. If You Need to Know More

This document is intended to serve as a brief overview and to provide guidelines to using the 2003 Internet Survey Final Release (Version 1.0) data. We recommend that you also read the data description for the HRS 2002 Final Release (Version 1.0). 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.

7A. 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/>

7B. 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: hrsquest@isr.umich.edu

Postal service:

Health and Retirement Study

The Institute for Social Research, Room 3050

The University of Michigan

P.O. Box 1248

Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248

FAX: (734) 647-1186