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(*Survey Methodology #2010-06*)

**Wave 8 Adult Well-Being Topical Module –
Cognitive Interview Results and Recommendations**

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Bureau of the Census
Washington, DC 20233-0001

October 15, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR Kurt Bauman
Population Division

From: Jeff Moore *JM*
Center for Survey Methods Research/Statistical Research Division

Subject: Wave 8 Adult Well-Being Topical Module — Cognitive Interview
Results and Recommendations

Attached is a very abbreviated item-by-item summary of the results of the cognitive interview investigation that Karen Bogen and Julia Klein Griffiths carried out on the Wave 8 Adult Well-Being topical module, and my recommendations for changes to address the problems that emerged. In general, the interviews revealed few major problems with the module, and nothing that doesn't have a pretty clear "fix."

Two of the recommendations are based less on any evidence of respondents' difficulties during the interviews than on the experiences and opinions of the interviewers and myself. I recommend placing the various "SATLIV" screens in the immediate context of the well-being dimensions to which they refer — SATLIV1 and SATLIV2 with the housing questions, SATLIV3 and SATLIV4 with the crime questions, etc. There are two objective benefits of these moves: first, it eliminates the need for all of the extra words that are used to reintroduce the concepts in the current version of the module; and second, it solves the problem (which the cognitive interviews did reveal on several occasions) of respondents having no concrete notion of what they were assessing when asked to rate the "other aspects" of their neighborhood in SATLIV5 and SATLIV6. Another rationale, however, is the interviewers' and my sense that the recommended ordering simply makes more sense, and offers a more rational and natural "flow" to the instrument.

The second recommendation that does not follow directly from the cognitive interviews is to eliminate MEET1, because, as I have argued before, it is likely to seem rude and badgering to respondents to say "no" to MEET1 (that they have NOT failed to meet any essential expenses in the past 12 months) and still be subjected to an extensive series of questions about expenses they might not have met. My sense from observing SIPP (and other) interviews is that the repeated asking of seemingly unnecessary questions is extremely irritating to respondents, and is certainly an important contributor to the survey's attrition problems. The fact that none of our respondents uttered a complaint does not negate this concern. The cognitive interview setting is simply a very poor environment for such sentiments to emerge, with its "guest" respondents, whose task is to focus on individual items (at the expense of the interview sequence, which is repeatedly interrupted), and who may well assume, as one respondent told us, that any perceived interview glitches simply reflect the fact that we are testing an as-yet-imperfect questionnaire.

I hope you find these comments and recommendations useful for improving the module. I would of course be happy to discuss with you any aspect of this report and my recommendations.

Attachment

cc:

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10/16/97

Wave 8 Adult Well-Being Topical Module — Cognitive Interview Results and Recommendations

>CONSDUR<

Which of the following items do you currently have in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT) that are in working condition?

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD AA. If necessary, read the response options.)

- (1) Washing machine
- (2) Clothes dryer
- (3) Dishwasher
- (4) Refrigerator
- (5) Food freezer (separate from refrigerator)
- (6) Color television
- (7) Gas or electric stove (with or without oven)
- (8) Microwave oven
- (9) Videocassette recorder (VCR)
- (10) Air conditioner (central or room)
- (11) Personal computer
- (12) Telephone

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

"Food freezer (separate from refrigerator)" is a little ambiguous — do you mean a freezer compartment separate from the refrigerator space, or a separate appliance altogether? I assume it's the latter, but several Rs reported a freezer, even though it was clearly a part of a single refrigerator/freezer appliance.

Recommendation:

Emphasize the intent by adding the modifier "free-standing" or "stand-alone" to the response option (and the flashcard):

→ (5) Stand-alone food freezer (separate from refrigerator)

>CDBLDG1<

You didn't list a washing machine in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT). Is there a washing machine in your BUILDING provided for your use?

>CDBLDG2<

You didn't list a dryer in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT). Is there a dryer in your BUILDING provided for your use?

>CDBLDG4<

You didn't list a refrigerator in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT). Is there a refrigerator in your BUILDING provided for your use?

>CDBLDG7<

You didn't list a stove in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT). Is there a stove in your BUILDING provided for your use?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No major problems.

Recommendation:

No change to screens CDBLDG1 through CDBLDG7.

>CDBLDG12<

You didn't list a telephone in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT). Is there a telephone in your BUILDING provided for your use?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Both respondents who said "yes" in response to CDBLDG12 went on to clarify that they were talking about pay phones, suggesting that they weren't sure whether pay phones were "in scope." Another respondent initially said "no" to CDBLDG12, but when probed revealed that there was a pay phone in the building.

Recommendation:

At a minimum, CDBLDG12 presents a training issue — interviewers need to be aware that pay telephones are to be reported (or explicitly told that they are NOT). Assuming that pay phones are "in scope," that fact should probably be made clear in the question:

→ >CDBLDG12<

You didn't list a telephone in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT). Is there at least a pay telephone in your BUILDING provided for your use?

>ROOMS<

The next set of questions are about your (HOUSE/APARTMENT), crime in your neighborhood, and other aspects of your neighborhood. First, I will ask about your (HOUSE/APARTMENT).

Excluding bathrooms, how many rooms are there in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT)?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Most respondents gave no evidence of any difficulty with this item, but the cognitive interviews did reveal several fairly common misreporting tendencies -- (1) to include bathrooms, despite the explicit "exclude" instruction; (2) to report only bedrooms, for reasons that I can't fathom, although maybe because that's such a common and important characteristic real-estate-wise?; and (3) to exclude kitchens, which was a complete surprise to me -- so much so that I argued for eliminating an "include kitchens" instruction from an earlier draft of the module. There is also evidence that, especially for people in large-ish homes, the number of rooms in their home is not something they carry around in their heads -- they have to generate the number, often via taking a mental/visual "tour" of their residence. This process seems to divert attention from the bathroom exclusion.

Recommendation:

Reinstate the "include kitchen" instruction, emphasize the desire to include all rooms (not just bedrooms), and split the reporting task into two parts to obtain a total-excluding-bathrooms room count:

- (a) Including your kitchen, how many rooms are there in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT), in total?
(b) How many of those rooms are bathrooms?

>HOUSE1<

Are any of the following conditions present in this (HOUSE/APARTMENT)?

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD BB and read the response options)

- (1) Areas of peeling paint or broken plaster
- (2) Holes or cracks in the walls or ceiling of your home, or cracks wider than the edge of a dime
- (3) A toilet, hot water heater, or other plumbing that doesn't work
- (4) Exposed electrical wires in the finished areas of your home
- (5) A leaking roof or ceiling
- (6) Broken windows — that is, broken glass or windows that can't shut
- (7) Holes in the floor big enough for someone to catch their foot on
- (8) Problem with pests such as rats, mice, roaches, or other insects

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems. Interviewers were often cut off from reading the whole list — they'd read the first couple, by which time Rs had read ahead and said "None of those," or "My roof leaks, but that's it."

Recommendation:

No change.

>HOUSE2<

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about your satisfaction with certain aspects of your housing. Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied, with the following:

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD CC. If necessary, read the response options.)

- (1) The general state of repair of your home
- (2) The amount of room or space your home has
- (3) The furnishings in your home
- (4) The warmth of your home in winter
- (5) The coolness of your home in summer
- (6) The amount of privacy your home offers

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

(1) Respondents who have only lived in their home for a short time are likely to have no information on which to base an answer to 4 or 5, leading to nonresponse of some sort. Is it important analytically to distinguish this from other types of nonresponse (e.g., nonresponse due to inability to apply the scale)?

Recommendation:

Consider adding a "haven't lived here long enough to tell" response option.

Reordering recommendation:

Move SATLIV1 and SATLIV2 (each very slightly modified) to follow HOUSE2:

→ >SATLIV1<

Overall, how satisfied are you with your (HOUSE/APARTMENT)?

(READ IF NECESSARY: Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?)

- (1) Very satisfied -- Skip to CRIME1
- (2) Somewhat satisfied
- (3) Somewhat dissatisfied
- (4) Very dissatisfied

>SATLIV2<

Are conditions in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT) undesirable enough that you would like to move?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

>CRIME1<

The next few questions are about crime in your area and things you have done to protect yourself from crime.

Is there any area right around your home — that is, within a mile — where you would be afraid to walk alone at night?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Recommendation:

No change.

>CRIME2<

In the past month, have you done any of the following because you thought you might be unsafe?

- (1) Stayed in your home at certain times?
- (2) Taken someone with you or traveled with other people when going out into your neighborhood?
- (3) Carried anything to protect yourself?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Recommendation:

No change.

>CRIME3<

We are interested in finding out if people do anything in particular to keep thieves or intruders out of their homes.

(Do you/ Does your household) have a dog for the purpose of keeping thieves or intruders out, or any special DEVICES such as electric timers for lights, or an alarm system?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

The cognitive interviews identified several problems here: (1) Rs found it very difficult to concentrate on anything else once they heard the word "dog" — they often interrupted the question at that point to report whether or not they owned a dog, regardless of its anti-intruder qualities. (2) Having a dog "for the purpose of" keeping out intruders is a very ambiguous concept for most dog owners. This is often seen as a positive aspect of having a pet dog (sometimes this notion seemed to occur to Rs for the very first time during our interview), and may even have partially motivated obtaining a dog in the first place. Does that constitute "for the purpose of" intruder prevention? This needs to be clarified. (3) There was no evidence that Rs thought about anything other than what is specifically mentioned in the question, so that very common precautions — installing deadbolt locks, for example, or window locks, or door/window bars — were not considered when answering the question.

Recommendation:

Split the "dog" part of the question off, and break it into two parts:

→ >CRIME3(1)<

We are interested in finding out if people do anything in particular to keep thieves or intruders out of their homes. (Do you/Does your household) own a dog? [IF YES goto CRIME3(2):]

>CRIME3(2)<

When you got (this/these) dog(s), was it in part to keep your home safe from intruders?

Expand the list of example "devices:"

→ >CRIME3(3)<

(Do you/Does your household) have any special DEVICES to keep thieves or intruders out, such as electric timers for lights, an alarm system, or security bars or special locks on the doors or windows?

>CRIME4<

Do you consider your home very safe from crime, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Recommendation:

No change.

Reordering recommendation:

Move SATLIV3 and SATLIV4 to follow CRIME4:

→ >SATLIV3<

Overall, how satisfied are you with safety from crime where you live?

(READ IF NECESSARY: Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?)

- (1) Very satisfied — Skip to NBRHD1
- (2) Somewhat satisfied
- (3) Somewhat dissatisfied
- (4) Very dissatisfied

>SATLIV4<

Is the threat of crime where you live undesirable enough that you would like to move?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

>NBRHD1<

Now I will ask some questions about general conditions in your neighborhood.

Do you think any of the following conditions are problems in your neighborhood?

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD DD. If necessary, read the response options. Circle answers)

- (1) Street noise or heavy street traffic
- (2) Streets in need of repair
- (3) Trash, litter, or garbage in the streets and lots
- (4) Rundown or abandoned houses or buildings
- (5) Industries, businesses, or other non-residential activities
- (6) Odors, smoke, or gas fumes

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems. Here, too, Rs often read the flashcard and answered the questions without much intervention from the interviewer.

Recommendation:

No change.

>NBRHD2<

How satisfied are you with your relationship with your neighbors?

Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems. Interestingly, a common response was for Rs to be satisfied or very satisfied with a non-relationship with their neighbors (e.g., "I don't know my neighbors," "I don't bother them, they don't bother me," etc.). It apparently doesn't take a "friendly" or even "cordial" relationship for Rs to be satisfied — they're happy with the absence of negative stuff.

Recommendation:

No change.

Reordering recommendation:

Move SATLIV5 and SATLIV6 (each very slightly modified) to follow NBRHD2:

→ >SATLIV5<

Overall, how satisfied are you with your neighborhood?

(READ IF NECESSARY: Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?)

- (1) Very satisfied — Skip to COMM1

- (2) Somewhat satisfied
- (3) Somewhat dissatisfied
- (4) Very dissatisfied

>SATLIV6<

Is your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

>COMM1<

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about your satisfaction with services and facilities in your neighborhood.

Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with each of the following:

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD EE. If necessary, read the response options.)

- (1) **Hospitals, health clinics, and doctors**
- (2) **Parks and recreational facilities**
- (3) **Public transportation**
- (4) **Police services**
- (5) **Fire department services**
- (6) **Safety in local schools**
- (7) **Quality of education in local schools**
- (8) **Education or training opportunities in the community**
- (9) **Neighborhood stores and shopping**

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems. Lots of DK's, especially for 3,5,6, and 7, when people felt they didn't have enough knowledge to answer.

Recommendation:

No change.

Reordering recommendation:

Add a new question (SATLIV7?) to correspond to the other "does it make you want to move?" questions:

→ [If "very satisfied" is marked for all parts of COMM1, skip to MEET1. Otherwise, continue with SATLIV7]

>SATLIV7<

Are the services and facilities in your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

>SATLIV1<

I have asked you about aspects of your (HOUSE/APARTMENT), about being safe from crime and about other aspects of the neighborhood in which you live.

Overall, how satisfied are you with your (HOUSE/APARTMENT) itself?

(READ IF NECESSARY: Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?)

>SATLIV2<

As things stand now, are conditions in your (HOUSE/APARTMENT) undesirable enough that you would like to move?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Reordering recommendation:

As noted earlier, move these two items to follow directly the housing quality questions, HOUSE1 and HOUSE2. This will eliminate the need for the excess words at the beginning of SATLIV1 re-introducing the concepts already reported on, and will give respondents a more obvious and consistent context in which to consider their assessments.

>SATLIV3<

Overall, how satisfied are you with safety from crime where you live?

(READ IF NECESSARY: Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?)

>SATLIV4<

Is the threat of crime where you live undesirable enough that you would like to move?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Reordering recommendation:

As noted earlier, move these two items to follow directly the crime questions, CRIME1 through CRIME4. This will eliminate the need for the excess words at the beginning of SATLIV1 re-introducing the concepts already reported on, and will give respondents a more obvious and consistent context in which to consider their assessments

>SATLIV5<

Overall, how satisfied are you with other aspects of your neighborhood?

(READ IF NECESSARY: Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very

dissatisfied?)

>SATLIV6<

Are these other aspects of your neighborhood undesirable enough that you would like to move?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

These questions proved very confusing for respondents — they generally had no idea what “other aspects” of their neighborhood were being referred to, and often returned to and simply restated their feelings about crime, the nearest thoughts at hand.

Reordering recommendation:

As noted earlier, move these two items to follow directly the neighborhood conditions questions, NBRHD1 and NBRHD2. The current context-free placement of these items gives respondents virtually no guidance concerning what things to consider in making an overall judgment about their neighborhood; moving them provides the necessary context.

>MEET1<

Next are questions about difficulties people sometimes have in meeting their essential household expenses for such things as mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, or important medical care. During the past 12 months, has there been a time when [YOU/YOUR HOUSEHOLD] didn't meet all your essential expenses?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Recommendation:

Save the introductory sentence, but eliminate the question portion of this item. It is rude and badgering to ignore respondents' “no” replies to MEET1 (indicating that they have NOT failed to meet any essential expenses in the past 12 months) and continue to subject them to an extensive series of questions about expenses they might not have met. Another possible option would be to keep MEET1 and use it as a screener to MEET2 parts (1) through (5). (It clearly should not be used as a screener to all parts of MEET2; several respondents said “no” to MEET1 and “yes” to MEET2(6) and/or (7).)

>MEET2<

In the past 12 months, was there any time when [you/anyone in your household] experienced the following:

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD FF and read the response options.)

(1) Did (you/anyone in your household) NOT pay the full amount of the rent or mortgage?

No --- Skip to (2)

Yes -- >GETHELP1<

>GETHELP1<

When (YOU/YOUR HOUSEHOLD) had this problem, did any person or organization help?

No --- Skip to (2)
Yes ----->WHOHELP1<

>WHOHELP1<

Who was that? (Check all that apply)

- (1) Family member/relative.
- (2) Friend or neighbor.
- (3) Church or social service agency.
- (4) Other _____

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems — for this specific item in the MEET2 series.

Recommendation:

The format of the MEET2 series is awkward for an interviewer-administered instrument — a question stem, followed by a fairly long and quite possibly interrupted list, by the end of which the question stem is likely to have been forgotten. This format leads to the need for frequent interviewer “repairs” in later parts of the question. A more easily readable sequence would start as follows:

→ >MEET2<

- (1) **Next are questions about difficulties people sometimes have in meeting their essential household expenses for such things as mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, or important medical care. In the past 12 months, was there any time when [you/anyone in your household] did NOT pay the full amount of the rent or mortgage?**

No --- Skip to (3)

Yes -- >GETHELP1<

Note also: (1) The rewording of the various parts of MEET2 into readable, stand-alone questions eliminates the need for Flashcard FF. The cognitive interviewers often found the flashcard to be a distraction in situations where the GETHELP1 and WHOHELP1 followups were called for. (2) A “no” response should skip to MEET2(3), bypassing MEET2(2). It does not make sense to ask about evictions among people who have always paid the full amount of their rent/mortgage.

>MEET2<

- (2) **(Were you/Was your household) evicted from your home/apartment for not paying the rent or mortgage?**

No --- Skip to (3)

Yes -- >GETHELP1< (and possibly >WHOHELP1<)

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems, although the interviewers and a few respondents found it very strange for the instrument to be so careful with the “home/apartment” fill, as if we were interested in whether they had been evicted from the residence in which we located them (which would be quite an unlikely circumstance). Also — as noted above, this question is inappropriate for people who report (via a “no” to MEET2(1)) that they’ve always paid their rent/mortgage in full.

Recommendation:

Skip MEET2(2) if MEET2(1) is “no.” Hard-code the more general “home,” to emphasize that we’re interested in any eviction experience within the reference period, regardless of where it happened. Re-establish the response task details (especially the reference period) — with the new skip sequence, MEET2(2) will always be separated from

the MEET2(1) introduction by at least one interruption (GETHELP1, and possibly WHOHELP1 as well):

→ >MEET2<

[Ask MEET2(2) if MEET2(1) ≠ "no"]

- (2) **At any time in the past 12 months, (were you/was your household) evicted from your home for not paying the rent or mortgage?**

>MEET2<

- (3) **didn't pay the full amount of the gas, oil, or electricity bills?**

No --- Skip to (4)

Yes -->GETHELP1< (and possibly WHOHELP1<)

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

This screen is simply not scripted in a manner that can be read by an interviewer without some modification.

Recommendation:

Reword as a brief, readable question, with a followup, full question fill to be used if the MEET2 sequence has been interrupted by a "yes" response to MEET2(2). Note also that a "no" response should skip to MEET2(5), bypassing MEET2(4), since again it does not make sense to ask about loss of utility services among people who have always paid the full amounts on their utility bills:

→ >MEET2<

- (3) **How about not paying the full amount of your gas, oil, or electricity bills? (Was there a time in the past 12 months when that happened to (you/your household)?)**

No --- Skip to (5)

Yes -->GETHELP1< (and possibly WHOHELP1<)

>MEET2<

- (4) **had service turned off by the gas or electric company, or the oil company would not deliver oil?**

No --- Skip to (5)

Yes -->GETHELP1< (and possibly >WHOHELP1<)

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Again, this screen is not scripted in a manner that can be read in an interviewer-administered interview, and it uses language ("or the oil company would not deliver oil") that is both stilted and not parallel with the rest of the sentence.

Recommendation:

Skip MEET2(4) if MEET2(3) is "no." Reword as a readable question, again with a fill to be used if the reference period was not re-invoked in MEET2(3) or if the MEET2 sequence has been interrupted by a "yes" response to MEET2(3):

→ >MEET2<

[Ask MEET2(4) if MEET2(3) ≠ "no"]

- (4) **(In the past 12 months, did/Did) (you/your household) have service turned off by the gas or electric company, or delivery service stopped by the oil company?**

>MEET2<

(5) had service disconnected by the telephone company because payments were not made?

No --- Skip to (6)

Yes -- >GETHELP1< (and possibly >WHOHELP1<)

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Again, this screen is not scripted in a manner that can be read in an interviewer-administered interview, and it also uses stilted, unnatural language ("... because payments were not made").

Recommendation:

Reword as a readable question, again with a fill to be used if the reference period was not re-invoked in MEET2(4) or if the MEET2 sequence has been interrupted by a "yes" response to MEET2(4) :

→ >MEET2<

(5) (In the past 12 months, was/Was) your telephone service disconnected because the phone bill wasn't paid?

>MEET2<

(6) needed to see a doctor or go to the hospital but didn't go?

No --- Skip to (7)

Yes -- >GETHELP1< (and possibly >WHOHELP1<)

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

This screen is not scripted in a manner that can be read in an interviewer-administered interview. Also, it (and especially the following "dentist" screen) evoked many reports of failure to seek medical attention when it was in some sense needed, although these events were not generally due to lack of funds. Rather, they were more often seen as unpleasant activities, and simply avoided or put off.

Recommendation:

Reword as a readable question, again with a fill to be used if the reference period was not re-invoked in MEET2(5) or if the MEET2 sequence has been interrupted by a "yes" response to MEET2(5). Also reword to emphasize the economic basis of the event (assuming that is the intent of the item):

→ >MEET2<

(6) (In the past 12 months/...) Was there a time when (you/anyone in your household) needed to see a doctor or go to the hospital but didn't go because you couldn't afford it?

>MEET2<

(7) needed to see a dentist but didn't go?

No --- Skip to HELP1

Yes -- >GETHELP1< (and possibly >WHOHELP1<)

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

This screen is not scripted in a manner that can be read in an interviewer-administered interview. The "yes" responses to this item (which were fairly common) were almost always NOT due to lack of funds; rather, they were more often seen as unpleasant activities, and simply avoided or put off.

Recommendation:

Reword as a readable question, again with a fill to be used if the reference period was not re-invoked in MEET2(6) or if the MEET2 sequence has been interrupted by a "yes" response to MEET2(6). Also reword (as in MEET2(6) to emphasize the economic basis of the event (assuming that is the intent of the item):

→ >MEET2<

- (7) (In the past 12 months/...) Was there a time when (you/anyone in your household) needed to see a dentist but didn't go because you couldn't afford it?

>HELP1<

Please look at Flashcard GG for these next three questions.

If (you/your household) had a problem with which you needed help, for example, sickness or moving, how much help would you expect to get from family living nearby?

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD GG. If necessary, read the response options.)

- (1) All of the help needed
- (2) Most of the help needed
- (3) Very little of the help needed
- (4) No help

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Several respondents had minor difficulty with this item. Most commonly, those without family "living nearby" did not want to simply answer "none" without offering an explanation. Only one respondent, when asked to describe the sorts of problems she was thinking about, gave any evidence of considering any problem other than those specifically mentioned — "sickness or moving" is not seen as a small subset of possible problems, but rather as the full array of problems to think about.

Recommendation:

Consider expanding the listed examples, possibly as follows:

→ >HELP1<

Please look at Flashcard GG for these next three questions.

If (you/your household) had a problem with which you needed help, for example, sickness or moving or money problems, how much help would you expect to get from family living nearby?

>HELP2<

If (you/your household) had a problem with which you needed help, how much help would you expect to get from friends?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Recommendation:

No change.

>HELP3<

If (you/your household) had a problem with which you needed help, how much help would you expect to get from other people in the community besides family and friends, such as a social service agency or a church?

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

No important problems.

Recommendation:

No change.

>FOOD1<

Getting enough food can also be a problem for some people. Which of the following statements best describes the amount of food eaten in your household:

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD HH. If necessary, read the response options.)

- (1) Enough of the kinds of food you want to eat — END
- (2) Enough but not always the KINDS of food you want to eat — END
- (3) Sometimes not enough to eat
- (4) Often not enough to eat

Don't know/Refused — END

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Respondents often asked to have this question repeated — it was simply very difficult for them to comprehend in a single reading. There was some tendency for children's (and occasionally adults') finicky tastes to affect responses to this item — e.g., the respondent cooks food that not all members of the household are fond of — and there was also a tendency for respondents to be somewhat confused about distinctions between the kinds of food one "wants" to eat and the kinds of food one should eat. For many reasons, then, reports of "not always [having] the KINDS of food you want to eat" are not necessarily indicators of economic/well-being issues. Is it important analytically to distinguish the causes of not always having the desired kinds of food?

Recommendation:

No change (but analysts need to guard against misinterpreting response option (2) as an indicator of some economic need).

>FOOD2<

In which of the last four months did (you/anyone in your household) NOT have enough to eat?

- (1) April
 - (2) May
 - (3) June
 - (4) July
 - (5) None of the above -- August
 - (6) None of the above -- before April
-

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Very few respondents faced this question, but those who did appeared to have no important problems with it.

Recommendation:

No change.

>FOOD3<

Here are some reasons why people don't always have enough to eat. For each of these, please tell me whether it applies to (you/anyone in your household).

(Note to FR: Show FLASHCARD II. If necessary, read the response options.)

- (1) Not enough money for food
- (2) Too hard to get to the store
- (3) On a diet
- (4) No working stove available
- (5) Not able to cook or eat because of health problems

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Again, very few respondents faced this question, but those who did appeared to have no important problems with it.

Recommendation:

No change.

>FOOD4<

Now, please think about the last 30 days. On about how many days during the last 30 days were (you/your household) unable to have a meal because you did not have money or food stamps to get food?

_____ Number of days / DK/R

None — END

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

Again, the very few respondents who answered this question appeared to have no important problems with it.

Recommendation:

No change.

>FOOD5<

About how much more money would (you/your household) have needed last month to feed (yourself/everyone) adequately throughout the month?

==> \$_____00

(N) None

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS:

One of the two respondents who was asked this question did not feel that more money would have been necessary to have adequate food, just "better planning and foresight." The other respondent provided a dollar amount with no

apparent difficulty.

Recommendation:
No change.