

1988 HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND EXPENDITURES SURVEY

GOVERNMENT OF AMERICAN SAMOA

Analytical Report

by

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INTRODUCTION

American Samoa is an unincorporated territory of the United States since 1900. American Samoa consist of seven islands, namely Tutuila and Aunu'u; Tau, Olosega and Ofu making up the Manu'a group; Swains Island which is about 200 miles north of Tutuila, and Rose Island, an uninhabited coral atoll.

American Samoa became important because of its naturally protected deep harbor. The establishment of a coal station on Tutuila offered local jobs and also attracted neighboring islanders who came looking for jobs. When the Navy Administration ended, the migration pattern changed as people moved to Hawai'i. Young men and women continued to migrate to the states to join the armed forces, attend school, get better employment, or to be with relatives who preceded them. In recent years, higher salaries and better socio-economic conditions in American Samoa have again attracted new immigrants from the neighboring islands.

The complexity of development planning and decision making processes requires continuous collection and analysis of social and economic information about American Samoa's population. While the United States conducts censuses every ten years, the absence of any current population survey program required the Office of Economic Development and Planning to develop a household survey program to collect intercensal data to obtain social and economic indicators. This survey program began in 1977 with a 10 percent random sample of households, and continued with a stratified household expenditures survey in 1982. The government did not tabulate either survey except some basic analytical tables published in the American Samoa Statistical Digest series.

The main goal of the 1982 Expenditure survey was to develop new weights for the Consumer Price Index originally set up in 1974. However, these data also showed significant level of special household expenditures or expenses which directly relate to the cultural/traditional values of our society. These expenses are a significant part of all Samoan household expenditures, although Westerners do not consider them family needs. The nature of these special expenditures showed the impact of the fa'a-Samoa in some measurable forms. These data serve as baseline for the 1988 household income, expenditure and labor force survey, the basis of this analysis.

The biggest project of the household survey program was the 20 percent household survey conducted in 1985. Three government agencies worked together to plan and develop this survey, with technical help provided by the South Pacific Commission. Again, very little analysis was done then; however, the Census Bureau helped develop a report on the 1985 survey.

The 1988 Household Income and Expenditures and labor force survey of American Samoa (HIES) was a joint effort of the Development Planning Office and the Department of Human Resources. The Research and Statistics Section of the Development Planning Office coordinated the survey.

OBJECTIVES:

The 1988 household income, expenditures and labor force survey:

1. Obtained data on labor force participation of persons 15 years old and over; employment status and economic activities of those people, and their industry and occupation; for those not working, the reason for not working and whether they were looking for work during the survey period; and, the level of unemployment in 1988. The data will help formulate policies and programs for human resources development and create employment.

2. Household expenditures for developing new weights for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) survey, and provide information for formulating national accounts, gross territorial product, and other economic indicators; personal and household income distributions by level and type of income show wealth and poverty.

In addition, basic demographic characteristics such as household relationship, age and sex update the demographic profile of the territory. Family consumption on the basis of expenditures for food and groceries help test family nutritional patterns and needs.

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

As in the 1985 survey, the 1988 survey excluded Manu'a District to save money; Manu'a is about 5 percent of American Samoa's population. Also, the selected sample of households in

Tutuila should provide a representative picture of all households in the territory, and, because of differences in economic conditions in Manu'a, the survey only measured conditions on Tutuila. The survey covered 10 percent of Tutuila's households with only territorial level estimates being generated.

The survey started during the last week of May, 1988 using two different questionnaire forms (shown in Appendix I):

1. The main questionnaire collected basic demographic data, labor force participation of those aged 15 years and over, income data by type of income source, regular expenditures, and major expenditures.

2. A second questionnaire recorded daily household expenditures for each of two weeks.

SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS

The Research and Statistics Section of the Economic Development and Planning Office (EDPO) stratified the sample survey - a 10 percent sample for demographic and socio-economic items and a 5 percent sample for diary records. EDPO updated the topographic maps of households in the 1985 survey using new residential listings the Permit Notification and Review System provided. A simple random sample selected the households.

Enumerators visited each selected household and completed the main questionnaire. Then, enumerators picked a member from each of half the selected households to record all purchases made by all members of the household each day. The enumerator checked to make sure that the people correctly filled the forms, and exchanged first for second week diaries.

PROCESSING

Enumerators collected the completed questionnaires and weekly diary records and returned them to the Development Planning Office for editing and coding. After coding, data entry began. The EDPO used the Enable database with build-in range checks for data entry on an IBM compatible computer. Database structure and definitions defined skip patterns for variables requiring age limits and other dependent variables.

The survey data were completely keyed in by the end of 1988 and were edited and tabulated between January and March, 1989. CONCOR, a computer package developed by the International

Statistical Program Center (ISPC) of the Bureau of Census, edited for range, and inter- and intra-record inconsistencies. CONCOR statements and allocation procedures developed for the 1988 survey appear in Appendix II. The ISPC CENTS package tabulated the data; the statements appear in Appendix III.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the 1988 household income/expenditure and labor force survey is in three sections:

1. Population and Labor Force Information
2. Personal and Household Income
3. Household Expenditures

In general, we provide estimates at the territorial level only, without breaks by district or village. Refusal and non-responses were expected to be high because of the nature of this type of survey. The enumeration was successful, the high level of returns and the good quality of data offsetting bias due to non-response errors. Nevertheless, adjustment for sampling is necessary for meaningful interpretation. Of 4,500 households - the number of households serialized after updating - the 450 selected to represent 10 percent of all households in Tutuila. A total of 425 households returned questionnaires for processing. The other 25 questionnaires were either incomplete or respondents refused to answer. Since less than 10 percent of households responded, the general multiplication factor increased from 10 to 10.59.

This multiplication factor is used throughout the analysis, particularly when dealing with the income and expenditure sections. This factor is not as crucial for demographic and labor force analysis since percentages are used.

POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE

The adjusted population of Tutuila in 1988 was 35,500.¹ The population increased from about 30,500 in 1980 to about 33,600 in the 1985 survey.

The population of Manu'a decreased dramatically in the three decades before the survey, making it more difficult to estimate islands' populations.² Since Manu'a was excluded from the household survey program, the 1980 census data were used to estimate its population for 1988. Using the annual average growth rate of 1.85 percent for the total population from the 1974 - 1980 period, the population of Manu'a for 1988 was estimated at 2,050. Added to the estimated total population of Tutuila, the total population of American Samoa in 1988 was around 37,600.

AGE AND SEX

Text table 1 shows the age and sex of the sampled population. Males continued to outnumber females. The age distributions were similar to those found for previous censuses and survey.

¹In the analysis of demographic characteristics of selected households, both numbers and percents are given. The numbers refer to the sample numbers, while the percentages are based on the sample and are used interactively with the total population for comparisons.

²This procedure may not present a realistic picture for Manu'a since some residents move to Tutuila temporarily for schooling or jobs. Manu'a should probably be included in future surveys.

*** Need to insert new edited table ***

Text Table 1. Age and Sex: 1988

Age Group	Persons			Percent		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total....	2,983	1,544	1,439	100.0	100.0	100.0
0 to 4.....	419	231	188	14.0	15.0	13.1
5 to 9.....	376	214	162	12.6	13.9	11.3
10 to 14.....	317	158	159	10.6	10.2	11.0
15 to 19.....	339	189	150	11.4	12.2	10.4
20 to 24.....	304	134	170	10.2	8.7	11.8
25 to 29.....	251	118	133	8.4	7.6	9.2
30 to 34.....	190	90	100	6.4	5.8	6.9
35 to 39.....	168	90	78	5.6	5.8	5.4
40 to 44.....	147	75	72	4.9	4.9	5.0
45 to 49.....	129	72	57	4.3	4.7	4.0
50 to 54.....	102	56	46	3.4	3.6	3.2
55 to 59.....	78	40	38	2.6	2.6	2.6
60 to 64.....	69	32	37	2.3	2.1	2.6
65 to 69.....	43	21	22	1.4	1.4	1.5
70 to 74.....	26	8	18	0.9	0.5	1.3
75 and over...	25	16	9	0.8	1.0	0.6
Median.....	20.7	19.5	21.8

Source: 1988 HIES, Table .

Note: These are unedited data ...

The population of American Samoa was very young, with about 49 percent below 20 years old, important not just for demographic analysis but also for economic development, educational, human resources and social development programs. Successful educational planning and social development programs contribute to the integration of youth into the work force. Economic development must consider the increasing numbers of high school and college graduates and the effect of migration in developing training programs and jobs.

The median age for both sexes was 20.7 years, a slight increase from 20.2 years in the survey of 1985 and 18.8 years in the 1980 census. The median age for males was lower than females with 19.5 and 21.8, years respectively. Decreasing fertility and selective migration patterns contribute to the increased median age.

RELATIONSHIP

The sample survey enumerated 2,973 persons, 14 percent of whom were householders, with about 80 percent of those householders having a spouse present (Text table 2). About 5 percent of households had parents present, 15 percent had brothers/sisters, while children were about 45 percent of all persons in households. The large number of children and grandchildren in households showed the strength of the aiga 'extended family system'. The percent of other relatives in households also shows family unity, and the responsibility of the aiga to even distant relatives.

The aiga system has survived to remain strong for decades. However, with the widespread use of modern technology and the rapid exposure to Western living conditions, interpretations and adaptations of the system by younger generations have somewhat changed. Yet, the roles of individuals to the aiga remain stable, even when relatives and families move abroad. The much higher percentage of other relatives in Samoa households shows the responsibilities of the families to their relatives.

Text Table 2. Household Relationship by Sex: 1988

Relationship	Number			Percent		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Total.....	2,973	1,537	1,436	100.0	100.0	100.0
Householder.....	427	365	62	14.4	23.7	4.3
Spouse.....	340	10	330	11.4	0.7	23.0
Child.....	1,326	705	621	44.6	45.9	43.2
Parent.....	22	6	16	0.7	0.4	1.1
Brother/Sister..	61	27	34	2.1	1.8	2.4
Other Relatives..	738	399	339	24.8	26.0	23.6
Non Relatives...	59	25	34	2.0	1.6	2.4

Source: 1988 HIES, table .

THE LABOR FORCE:

One of the survey goals was to check labor force status in the territory, particularly unemployment, because of questions raised by the very low unemployment level seen in the 1980

census. The labor force and employment questions determined those employed in the reference week, hours of work, those absent from work due to illness or on vacation, and those who were looking for work in the last four weeks. In the 1988 survey, each person reported labor force status in the week before the survey. If the person worked, the enumerator skipped to the occupation and other labor force items; if the person was not working, the enumerator requested the reason for not working. For those who did not work in the week before the survey, the survey asked whether the person was looking for work in the previous week, the reference period being different from that used in the census.

The 1980 census determined the unemployment rate to be only 2 percent, with the number not in the labor force being very large. A separate paper assesses the problems in measuring labor force participation in that census (Filiga and Levin, manuscript). Increasing numbers of immigrants to the territory require employment. However, immigration policies make wage employment unobtainable for many migrants. Although they could be involved in subsistence activities, the 1980 census recorded very few people engaged in subsistence activities only.

In 1988, 56 percent of the population 15 years and over was in the labor force; almost 63 percent of the males and 49 percent of the females were in the labor force (Text Table 3). Although more males were employed in 1988, more males were also unemployed. In fact, while 14.6 percent of the total population 15 years and over were unemployed, 15.8 percent of the males were in this category, compared to only 13.1 percent of the females. Of course, this "only 13 percent" is still unacceptably high by most Western economic standards.

Text Table 3. Labor Force Participation by Sex: 1988

Labor Force Participation	Total	Males	Females
Total 15 years and over...	1,811	911	900
In the labor force.....	1,015	571	444
Percent.....	56.0	62.7	49.3
Employed.....	867	481	386
Unemployed.....	148	90	58
Percent.....	14.6	15.8	13.1
Not in the labor force.....	796	340	456

SOURCE: 1988 HIES, Table .

Although almost 63 percent of the males 15 years and over were in the labor force in 1988, the distribution varied considerably by age (Text Table 4). Only 14 percent of males less than 20 years old were in the labor force, part of them still being in school, and others so recently having left school, that they were not yet in the labor force. The percentage in the labor force for 20 to 24 year old males was higher - more than half were in the labor force - but the proportion increased to more than 4 in every 5 males for persons 25 to 54. After the latter age, the percent in the labor force began to decrease, partly because of retirement, and partly because of the effects of the traditional lifestyle, the older people having become adults when most people were still doing subsistence.

Text Table 4. Male Labor Force Participation by Age: 1988

Labor Force Status	Age Group							
	Total	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Males 16 yrs & over.	911	161	134	208	164	127	72	45
In the labor force.....	571	23	76	169	142	103	48	10
Percent.....	62.7	14.3	56.7	81.3	86.6	81.1	66.7	22.2
Employed.....	481	11	53	133	126	101	48	9
Unemployed.....	90	12	23	36	16	2	0	1
Percent.....	15.8	52.2	30.3	21.3	11.3	1.9	0.0	10.0
Not in the labor force..	340	138	58	39	22	24	24	35

SOURCE: 1988 HIES, Tables

Essentially, a direct relationship exists between age for males and unemployment - that is, the older the male, the less likely to be unemployed (except the oldest age group.) More than half of all males 15 to 19 were unemployed, compared to only 3 in 10 of those 20 to 24, and 2 in every 10 for 25 to 34 years old.

The trend for female labor force participation was similar to that of the males, but the percentages were smaller (Text Table). By 35 to 44 years old, 7 in every 10 females were in the labor force. Female unemployment was similar to the males, again, mostly being less than the males of the same age group.