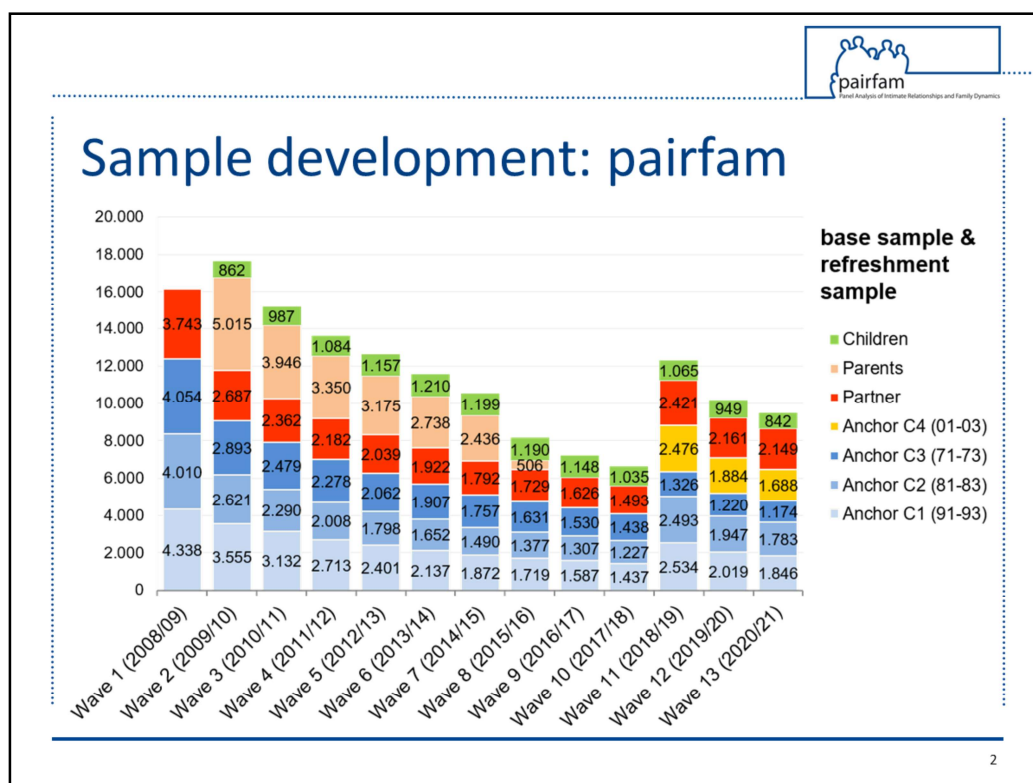pairfam

Tutorial #3

Sample development and response rates

1

pairfam tutorial

3. Sample development and response rates

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This tutorial presents the sample development and response rates of the *pairfam* anchor respondents and their alteri.

Sample development: pairfam

How was the sample development?

Here you can see the total number of participants for the *pairfam* base and refreshment samples for each wave of the study.

The blue columns are the three anchor birth cohorts for the base sample. In wave 1, over 4,000 interviews from each cohort were achieved. Additionally, over 3,700 partner questionnaires were returned (either by mail or to the interviewer). Partners are represented by the red columns.

In wave 2, a total of 5,015 parents (the orange columns) and 862 children (green columns) participated in their respective surveys. In total, over 17,000 respondents took part in the *pairfam* survey in wave 2. Over 5,000 parents seems like a lot; however, response rates for the parent survey were very low. Therefore, the parent survey was discontinued after wave 8.

As is standard in all panel survey, some respondents left the survey in each wave. Respondent numbers therefore declined over the course of the panel to less than 7,000 respondents by wave 10.

In wave 11, the two younger cohorts (anchor respondents born between 1981-1983 and 1991-1993) were refreshed with more respondents, and a new cohort of anchor respondents born between 2001 and 2003, represented by the yellow column, was added to the survey, raising the total number of participating anchor respondents to over 12,000.

DemoDiff subsample

Demographic Differences in Life Course Dynamics in Eastern and Western Germany:

» Max-Planck-Institute for Demographic Research
» Compatible supplementary sample of anchor respondents and partners living in Eastern Germany
» Multi-actor design: Anchor respondents & their partners
» Cohorts: 1971-73, 1981-83
» Questionnaire largely identical to pairfam

What is the *DemoDiff* subsample?

DemoDiff stands for Demographic Differences in Life Course Dynamics in Eastern and Western Germany.

It was a project initiated by researchers at the Max-Planck-Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock.

Their goal was to achieve an oversampling of respondents living in Eastern Germany to facilitate analyses comparing East and West German residents.

Although *DemoDiff* also followed a multi-actor design, only partners of anchor respondents were interviewed as alteri respondents, not the parents or children.

Furthermore, only the two older cohorts (1971-1973 and 1981-1983) were sampled.

The questionnaire, however, was largely identical to *pairfam*, making *DemoDiff* a compatible supplementary sample of anchor respondents and partners living in Eastern Germany.
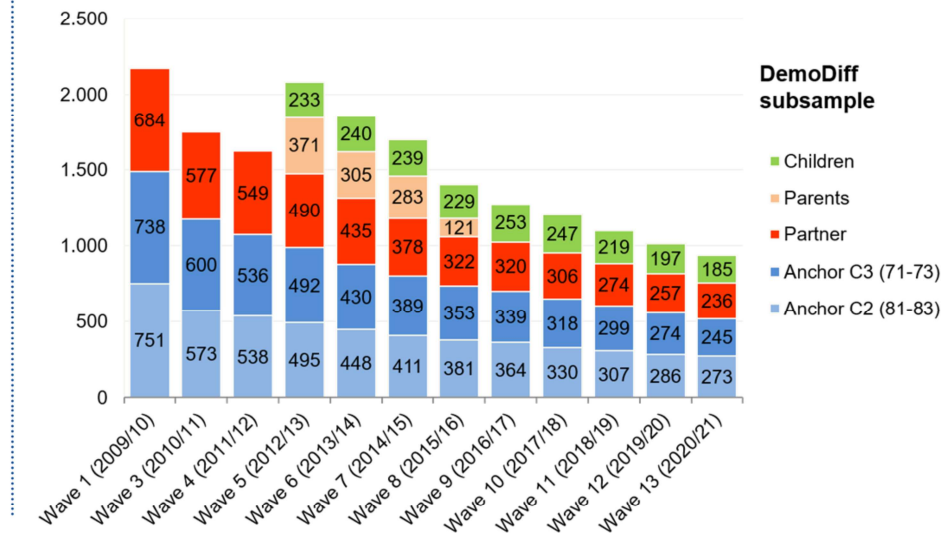
**What about sample development of the *DemoDiff* sample?**

Again, the blue columns represent the anchor respondents and the red columns the partners.

DemoDiff began with over 2,000 respondents in wave 1.

Wave 2 is missing, which will be explained in more detail in the next tutorial.

From wave 5 on, the *DemoDiff* subsample was fully integrated into the *pairfam* sample, and the parents and children of (former) *DemoDiff* anchor respondents were also surveyed.

Attrition rate: Anchor survey
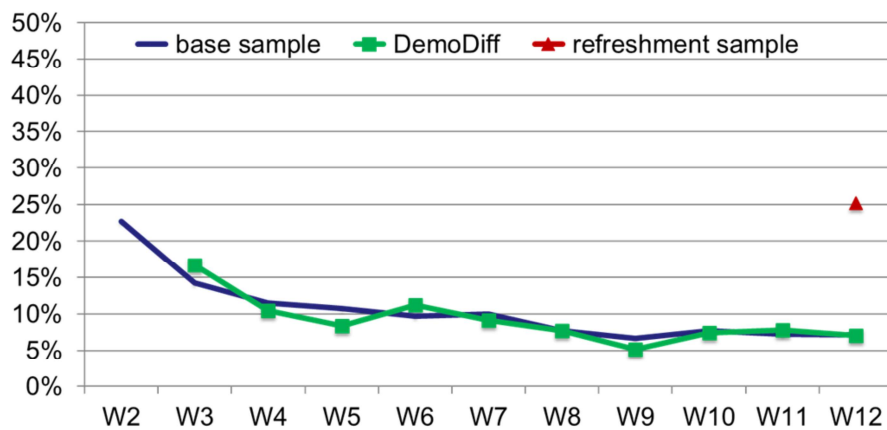
**What were the attrition rates for anchor respondents in each wave?**

The attrition rate presented corrects for temporary drop-outs. Therefore, attrition rates can only be computed up to the penultimate wave. The blue line represents the *pairfam* base sample, the green line the *DemoDiff* sub-sample, and the red triangle represents the refreshment sample.

In wave 2, the attrition rate for the base sample was relatively high at 23%. In the next waves, attrition rates decreased, first to 15, then 10%, and from wave 8 on, it remained relatively stable at 7 to 8% in each wave.

The attrition rate in the second interview for the *DemoDiff* sample was lower than in the *pairfam* base sample at about 16%. It also declined over the course of the following waves to 6-8%, comparable to the *pairfam* base sample.

The attrition rate of the refreshment sample was roughly 25% in wave 12, higher than in wave 2 for the *pairfam* original sample. This may in part be due to the interview mode switch to CATI in spring 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
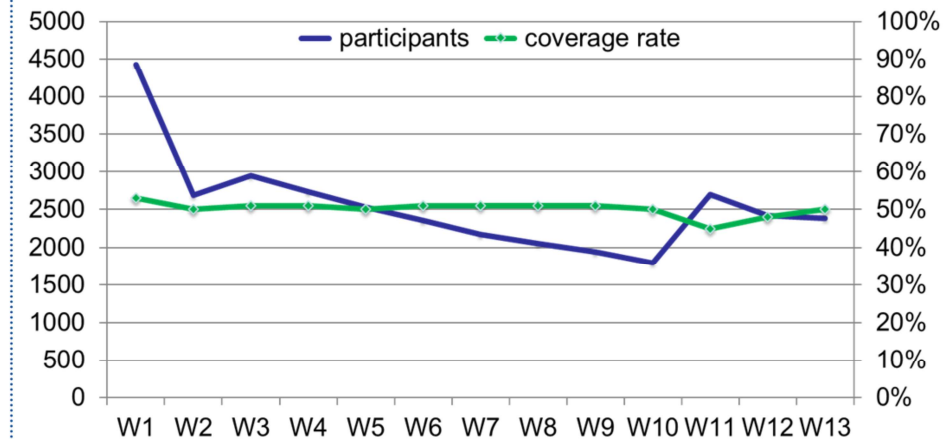
What about coverage rates from the alteri surveys?

In the following slides, the blue line represents the number of participants, while the green line illustrates the coverage rate. The coverage rate is the percentage of potential respondents who actually participated in our study. We distinguish the coverage from the response rate as participation in the alteri surveys was not only conditional on the alteri's response but also on anchor consent to interview their alteri. The number of participants is shown on the left and the coverage rate is shown on the right of the y-axis.

As you can see, coverage rates of the partner survey remained relatively stable at about 50% throughout the entire panel.

The number of participants dropped from almost 4,500 respondents in wave 1 to 2,600 respondents in the second wave due to the high attrition rate of the anchor base sample and the fact that the *DemoDiff* sample skipped wave 2.

In wave 3, numbers were slightly higher as *DemoDiff* respondents were again included.

In the following waves, the number of participants in the partner survey diminished according to the number of anchor respondents, and was boosted again in wave 11 due to the refreshment sample.

Coverage rate: Child survey
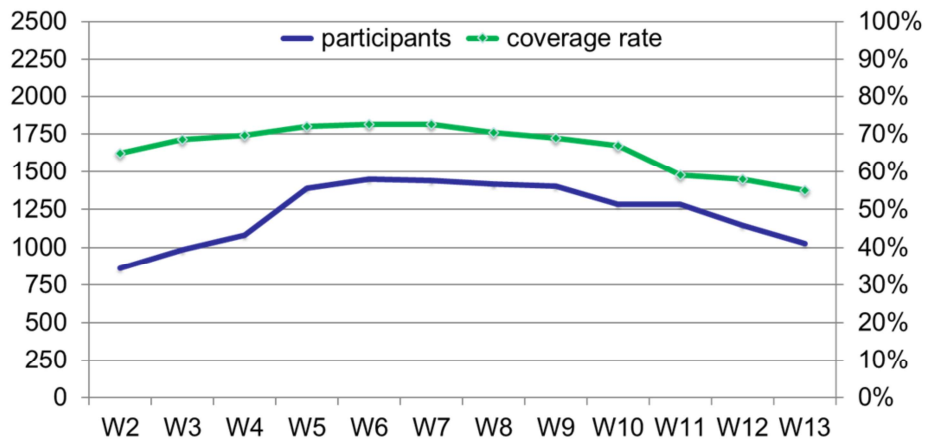
The coverage rate for the child survey, represented again by the green line, was relatively high - about 70%.

In the last three waves, the coverage rate dropped slightly, mainly due to a lower coverage rate in the refreshment sample.

The child survey began in wave 2 with one "focus child" from each anchor respondent.

In the following waves, multiple children from the same household were recruited. More children grew into the age range of 8 to 15 years over the course of the panel and were able to enter the survey.

Moreover, starting with wave 5, children of the *DemoDiff* subsample were also interviewed.

In wave 2, the number of child interviews started out at 862 and grew steadily over the following waves to reach its highest point in wave 6 with 1,450 interviews.

In the final waves of the panel, the number of child participants decreased again. In wave 13, a total of 1,027 children were interviewed.

Coverage rate: Parenting survey (anchor)
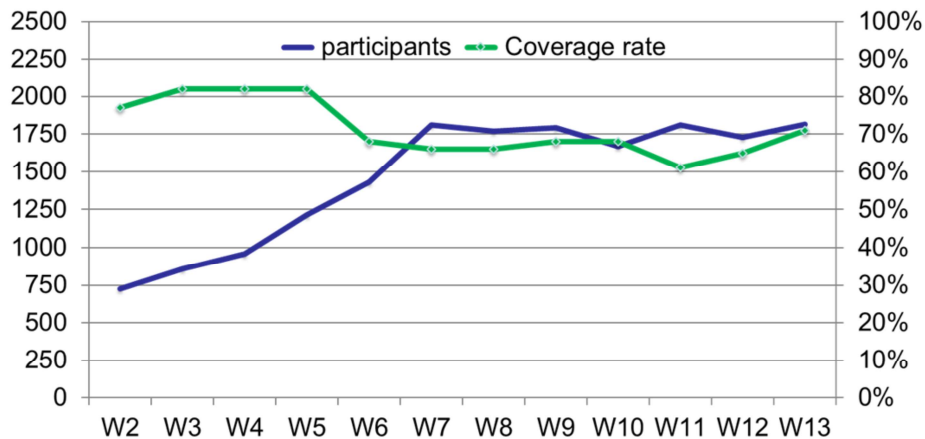
Coverage rates for the anchor parenting survey were also relatively high. In the first years after its introduction, the coverage rate remained very high at around 80%.

Up until wave 5, only anchors who consented to their children being interviewed as part of the child survey were asked to fill out the parenting questionnaire. From wave 6 onwards, the range was expanded to include all possible focus children, whether the anchor respondent had consented to them being interviewed or not.

Furthermore, respondents were asked to fill out parenting questionnaires for all biological and/or adopted children between the ages of 8 and 15 who did not live in their household, but to whom they had contact.

Coverage rates therefore dropped to 68% in wave 6, remaining relatively stable up to wave 10.

In waves 11 and 12, coverage rates were slightly lower, mainly due to lower coverage rates in the refreshment sample.

The number of completed parenting questionnaires was roughly 750 in wave 2, reaching its highest point in wave 7 with over 1,800 parenting questionnaires returned, remaining relatively stable up to wave 13.

Coverage rate: Parenting survey (partner)
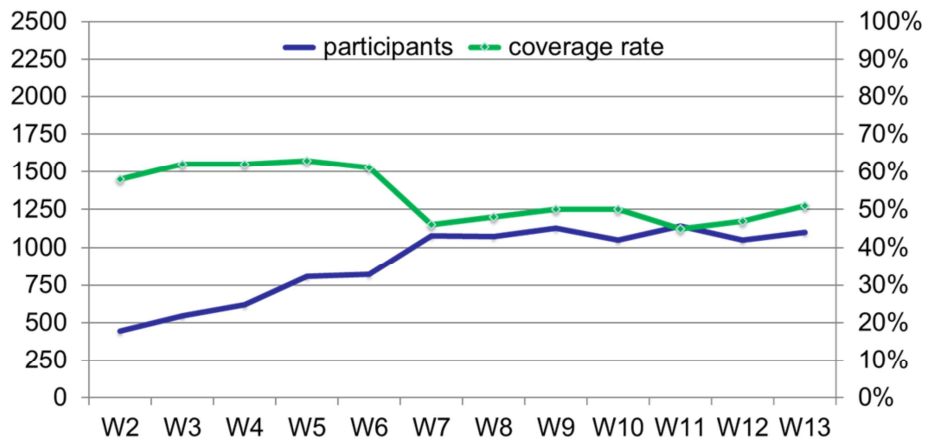
The total number of participants and coverage rates are both lower for partners who were asked to fill out the parenting questionnaire.

In the first waves after its introduction, coverage rates for partners were about 60%.

The change in selection criteria for the parenting questionnaire was implemented one wave later for partners – in wave 7.

Therefore, the coverage rates in wave 7 dropped to between 45 and 50%.

The number of returned questionnaires grew from 447 in wave 2 to 1,128 in wave 9. In wave 13, 1,100 questionnaires were returned.
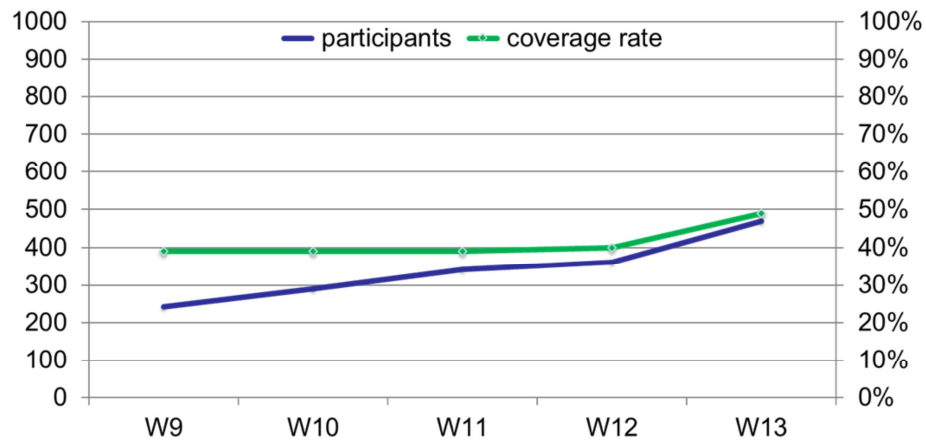
Coverage rate: PAYA survey (anchor)
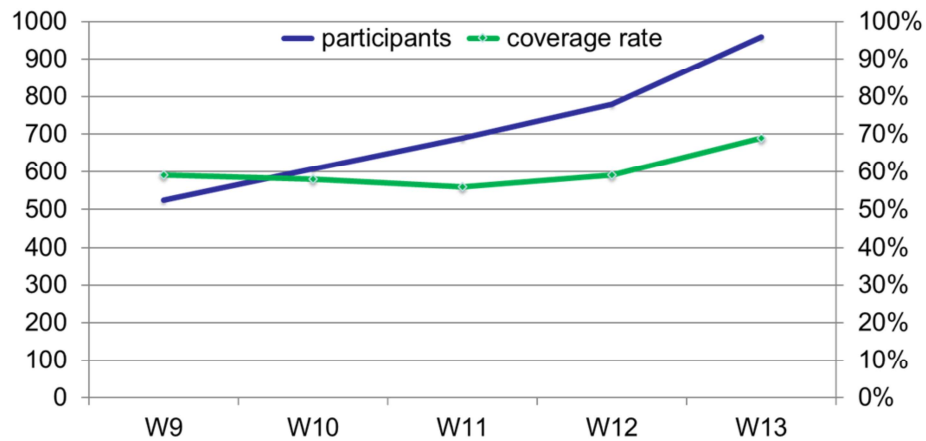
The coverage rates for anchor respondents to the PAYA survey remained stable at roughly 60% since its introduction. In wave 13, the coverage rate increased to 69%.

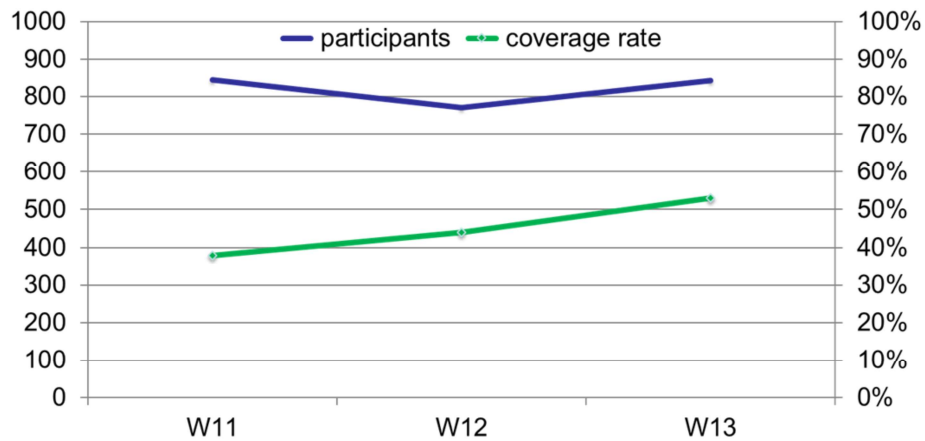The number of returned questionnaires grew from 524 in wave 9 to 960 in wave 13.

Again, coverage rates for partners to the PAYA survey were lower – at about 40%. In wave 13, the coverage rate reached 49%.

The number of returned questionnaires increased from 242 in wave 9 to 469 in wave 13.
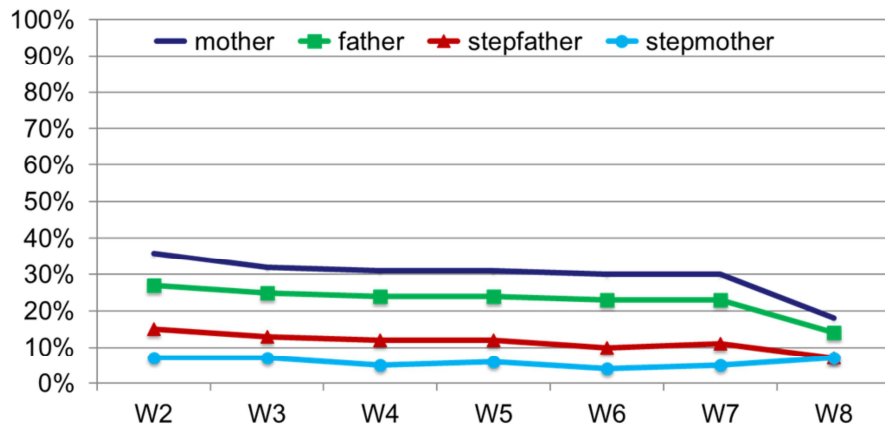
Coverage rate: Parenting U6 survey (partner)

The parenting U6 survey was only distributed to partners in waves 11 to 13.

Coverage rates were about 40%, increasing to 53% in wave 13.

A total of 844 questionnaires were returned in wave 11, 770 in wave 12, and 842 in wave 13.

Coverage rate: Parent survey

As mentioned earlier in this tutorial, the coverage rates for the parent survey were quite low.

The purple line represents coverage rates for mothers - about 30%.

Coverage rates for fathers are represented by the green line - about 25%.

Stepfathers are represented by the red line and coverage rates of roughly 12%, while stepmothers had the lowest coverage rates of about 6%.

In an attempt to boost coverage rates to the parent survey in wave 8, the questionnaire was re-focused on grandchildren.

Unfortunately, this change backfired and coverage rates dropped even lower.

The parent survey was therefore discontinued after wave 8.

Step-ups: Former CAPI children

» Focus children that turned 16/17 "grew" into the anchor sample since wave 4

- Standard anchor CAPI

- Transition module: Retrospective information at first interview

» High response rate: 82% - 96% per wave

» Attrition rate: 15% - 19%

» Few partner interviews

» Separate data sets, as data do not match the pairfam cohort concept

And what about sample development and response rates for *step-up* respondents?

As a reminder, "step-ups" are former focus children that turned 16 or 17 and grew into the anchor sample from wave 4 onward.

In addition to the standard CAPI interview, they also received a transition module including retrospective information in their first interviews as anchor respondents.

Response rates were high, between 82 and 96% in each wave.

Attrition rates were between 15 and 19%.

Only few *step-up* partner interviews were completed, mostly due to the fact that *step-up* respondents are young and most did not report being in a serious relationship.

Data from *step-up* respondents and their partners are stored in separate data sets in a different folder, as they do not conform to the original *pairfam* cohort concept.
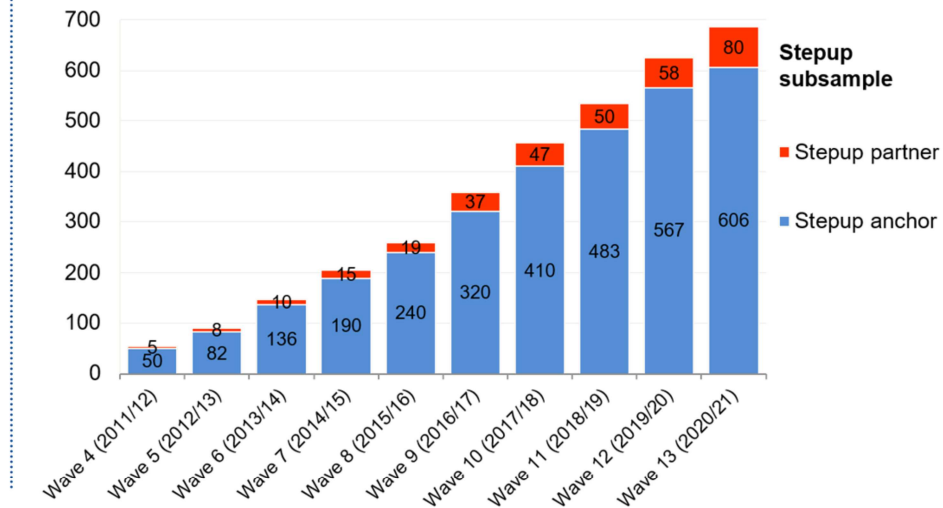
As more and more children grew out of the child survey and into the anchor survey as step-up respondents, this sample grew every wave.

While only 50 new anchor respondents and 5 partners were interviewed in wave 4, a total of 606 step-up respondents plus 80 partners were interviewed in wave 13.

This was the third tutorial covering sample development and response rates.

The next one will give you a description of all available data sets included in the *pairfam* Scientific Use File.