
Chapter 18—Lifetime

18.3. KEY LIFETIME STUDY**18.3.1. Xu et al. (2010)—Deaths: Final Data for 2007**

Xu et al. (2010) used information compiled from death certificates filed in the 50 states of the United States and District of Columbia and calculated life expectancy for various population groups born between 1940 and 2007. “Life expectancy at birth represents the average number of years that a group of infants would live if the group was to experience throughout life the age-specific death rates present in the year of birth” (Xu et al., 2010).

Table 18-3 shows life expectancy data by sex, age, and race (i.e., Whites and Blacks). Although data for other ethnic groups were collected, they were not considered as reliable because of inconsistencies between the race reported in the death certificates and in the censuses and surveys. Data for 2007 show that the life expectancy for an average person born in the United States is 77.9 years (Xu et al., 2010). The average life expectancy for males in 2007 was 75.4 years and 80.4 years for females. Whereas the gap between males and females was about 7 years in 1970, it has now narrowed to about 5 years. Table 18-3 also indicates that life expectancy for White males and females is consistently longer than for Black males and females. Table 18-4 presents data for the expectation of life for persons at a specific age in year 2007 (Xu et al., 2010). The advantages of this study are that it is representative of the United States and provides life expectancy data based on death certificates and calculations of death rates. A disadvantage is that the data were averaged by sex and race—but only for Blacks and Whites.

18.4. RELEVANT LIFETIME STUDY**18.4.1. U.S. Census Bureau (2008)—U.S. Population Projections: Projected Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2010 to 2050**

Statistical data on life expectancy are published annually by the U.S. Department of Commerce in the publication, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Data are collected for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The *Statistical Abstract of the United States* has been published by the U.S. Census Bureau since 1878 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The U.S. Census Bureau (2008) computed life expectancy projections for 2010 through 2050, by decade. This analysis uses historical mortality trend data collected by the National Center for Health Statistics and applies forecast models to estimate projected life

expectancy at birth. These data are provided, by sex and race in Table 18-5.

The advantage of this survey is that it is representative of the United States, and it provides projections by sex and race. A disadvantage is that life expectancy estimates are based on future projections.

18.5. REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER 18

- U.S. Census Bureau. (2008). U.S. population projections: Table 10. Projected life expectancy at birth by sex, race, and Hispanic origin for the United States: 2010 to 2050. (NP2008-T10). Washington, DC. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/summarytables.html>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). The 2010 statistical abstract. <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2010>.
- Xu, JQ; Kochanek, KD; Murphy, SL; Tejada-Vera, B. (2010). Deaths: Final Data for 2007. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr58/nvsr58_19.pdf.