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Subject: Missing data for C-section variable (m17) for births prior to the most recent  
Posted by [sagedoesdata](#) on Sat, 19 Dec 2020 19:05:19 GMT

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Hello DHS Community! I am analyzing Indonesia DHS individual-coded data from years 2002-3, 2007, 2012, and 2017. The program I use is STATA.

I want to analyze C-section data. I am using variable m17. For the last birth, m17\_1, this data is very straightforward. However, for previous births, m17\_2 through m17\_6, there is very significant missing data.

For the 2017 dataset, there are initially 49627 observations, with 34313 observations missing for m17\_1. After dropping all observations for individuals with no births (drop if v208 == 0) there are only 43 missing values remaining for m17\_1 and 15314 useful values of "yes" or "no". However, for m17\_2 (next to last births), there remain 13084 missing values, and only 2273 useful values. Information from other variables bidx\_02 (birth number) report that there were 10601 next to last births total in the dataset. Why are there almost 8000 missing values? What do these missing values mean in the context of the C-section data? What should I do to perform a proper analysis?

In addition, in the sample survey listed in Appendix F of the DHS Indonesia 2017 report, it says that cesarean section data (Question 432) was only collected for the last birth and next to last birth. Why does the data then also include m17\_3 through m17\_6, including data up to five births prior to the most recent? Can I perform a valid analysis on births prior to the last birth?

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