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Subject: Suggestion in categorizing preceding birth interval variable (b11)

Posted by [suzzon](#) on Thu, 27 Aug 2015 18:52:49 GMT

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Hello DHS experts,

I am working on the socio-economic inequality of the infant mortality in Bangladesh using data sets of all the BDHS survey from 1993/94 to 2011. I want to use "preceding birth interval" (variable b11) as one of the determinants in my analysis.

In most of the related literatures, I have found that authors excluded the "no preceding births" cases (the missing values of b11) from their analysis/regression models. I have also found a literature where the "no preceding births" cases are added to the highest category of the preceding birth interval variable claiming that both highest category and no preceding births cases have same "biological" meaning. For example, the categories of preceding birth interval variable are coded as (<2 years), (2-3 years) and (4 or more years + "no preceding births").

Excluding the "no preceding births" cases will surely reduce the sample size and I am trying to avoid it. So my question is, is it ok to add the "no preceding births" (the missing values of b11) to highest category of preceding birth interval variable? Or, is it must to exclude the missing values if I want to use preceding birth interval variable in regression analysis? Or, is there any other way to include them in the analysis. Can you suggest me what is/are the appropriate way/s?

Any ideas would be very welcome.

Thanks in advance.

Moin

Note:According to the discussion in the forum, I have already excluded the children born less than a year before the survey as they have not been fully exposed to the risk of infant mortality.

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