
Subject: "na-" Variables

Posted by [IHME](#) on Thu, 31 Aug 2023 18:30:12 GMT

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Hi,

One of our researchers is using the Senegal Continuous DHS 2018 data files and was curious about the use of "na-" in variable labels (see attached image). This appears before a number of variables in the men's and women's files, but we're particularly interested in the questions related to smoking. The questionnaire does not include any tobacco questions aside from one inquiring whether someone in the household smokes.

Can you provide more information about what "na-" means in this context?

Thank you!

File Attachments

1) [SEN2018NA.png](#), downloaded 373 times

Subject: Re: "na-" Variables

Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Fri, 01 Sep 2023 13:42:47 GMT

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Following is a response from Senior DHS staff member, Tom Pullum:

"na" is an acronym for "Not Applicable". If it is included in the variable label in the data file, it means all cases for that variable are coded with a blank (or a dot in Stata). The questions required for that variable were omitted from the questionnaire.

Sometimes such a variable is simply dropped from the data file, but it is actually more helpful, especially for variables that often ARE included in a survey, to have explicit information that the variable is empty.

Subject: Re: "na-" Variables

Posted by [IHME](#) on Fri, 01 Sep 2023 15:10:19 GMT

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Thanks Bridgette and Tom for this response, that is very helpful to know.
