

Metrics

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1 Metrics: labeling factors and exploring scales

Report explains how the response categories from NLSY97 questionnaire are labeled and demonstrates application of labeled factors in data operations and graphing.

1.1 Data In

Initial point of departure - the [databox](#) of the selected sample, described in the [Methods](#) chapter. This [databox](#) corresponds to the dataset **dsL** produced by [Derive_dsL_from_Extract](#) report.

```
dsL<-readRDS("./Data/Derived/dsL.rds")
dsL<- dsL[dsL$sample==1,] # cross-sample only
```

1.2 Labeling Factor Levels

Review of the item reference [cards](#) shows that initially, all items were recorded on some discrete scale, either counting occasions or assigning an integer to a category of response. However, data were saved as numerical values or integers

```
ds<- dsL[,1:(ncol(dsL)/2)]# selects the first half of variables
str(ds)
```

```
'data.frame': 101220 obs. of 30 variables:
 $ sample      : int  1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
 $ id          : int  1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
 $ sex         : int  2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 ...
 $ race        : int  4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 ...
 $ bmonth      : int  9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 ...
 $ byear       : int 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 ...
 $ attendPR    : int  7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 ...
 $ relprefPR   : int 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 ...
 $ relraisedPR : int 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 ...
 $ year        : int 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 ...
 $ agemon      : num 190 206 219 231 243 256 266 279 290 302 ...
 $ ageyear     : num 15 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 ...
 $ famrel      : num NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
```

```

$ attend      : num  NA NA NA 1 6 2 1 1 1 1 ...
$ values      : num  NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 0 NA ...
$ todo        : num  NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 1 NA ...
$ obeyed      : num  NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 0 NA ...
$ pray        : num  NA NA NA NA NA 0 NA NA 0 NA ...
$ decisions   : num  NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 1 NA ...
$ relpref     : num  NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA 21 NA ...
$ bornagain   : num  NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ faith       : num  NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ calm        : num  NA NA NA 3 NA 4 NA 4 NA 4 ...
$ blue        : num  NA NA NA 3 NA 2 NA 1 NA 1 ...
$ happy       : num  NA NA NA 3 NA 3 NA 4 NA 4 ...
$ depressed   : num  NA NA NA 3 NA 2 NA 1 NA 1 ...
$ nervous     : num  NA NA NA 3 NA 1 NA 1 NA 1 ...
$ tv          : num  NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA NA NA ...
$ computer    : num  NA NA NA NA NA 5 NA NA NA NA ...
$ internet    : num  NA NA NA NA NA NA 1 0 1 1 ...

```

[LabelingFactorLevels.R](#) sourced at the end of [Derive_dsL_from_Extract](#) matches numeric values with response labels from the questionnaire and adds to **dsL** copies of the variables, saved as labeled factors. For estimations routines such as `lm4` or graphing functions such as `ggplot`, the data type (string, numeric, factor) is a meaningful input, so a quick access to both formats frequently proves useful. It is convenient to think that **dsL** contains only

```
ncol(dsL)/2
```

```
[1] 30
```

variables, but each of them has a double, a labeled factor.

```
str(dsL)
```

```

'data.frame':  101220 obs. of  60 variables:
 $ sample      : int   1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
 $ id          : int   1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
 $ sex         : int   2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 ...
 $ race        : int   4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 ...
 $ bmonth      : int   9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 ...
 $ byear       : int  1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 1981 ...
 $ attendPR    : int   7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 ...
 $ relprefPR   : int  21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 ...
 $ relraisedPR : int  21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 ...
 $ year        : int  1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 ...
 $ agemon      : num  190 206 219 231 243 256 266 279 290 302 ...
 $ ageyear     : num   15 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 ...
 $ famrel      : num   NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
 $ attend      : num   NA NA NA 1 6 2 1 1 1 1 ...
 $ values      : num   NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 0 NA ...
 $ todo        : num   NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 1 NA ...
 $ obeyed      : num   NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 0 NA ...
 $ pray        : num   NA NA NA NA NA 0 NA NA 0 NA ...
 $ decisions   : num   NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 1 NA ...
 $ relpref     : num   NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA 21 NA ...

```

```

$ bornagain : num NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ faith : num NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ calm : num NA NA NA 3 NA 4 NA 4 NA 4 ...
$ blue : num NA NA NA 3 NA 2 NA 1 NA 1 ...
$ happy : num NA NA NA 3 NA 3 NA 4 NA 4 ...
$ depressed : num NA NA NA 3 NA 2 NA 1 NA 1 ...
$ nervous : num NA NA NA 3 NA 1 NA 1 NA 1 ...
$ tv : num NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA NA NA ...
$ computer : num NA NA NA NA NA 5 NA NA NA NA ...
$ internet : num NA NA NA NA NA NA 1 0 1 1 ...
$ sampleF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "Cross-Sectional"<...: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
$ idF : Factor w/ 8984 levels "1","2","3","4",...: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
$ sexF : Ord.factor w/ 3 levels "Male"<"Female"<...: 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 ...
$ raceF : Ord.factor w/ 4 levels "Black"<"Hispanic"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ bmonthF : Ord.factor w/ 12 levels "Jan"<"Feb"<"Mar"<...: 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 ...
$ byearF : Factor w/ 5 levels "1980","1981",...: 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 ...
$ attendPRF : Ord.factor w/ 8 levels "Never"<"Once or Twice"<...: 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 ...
$ relprefPRF : Ord.factor w/ 33 levels "Catholic"<"Baptist"<...: 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 ...
$ relraisedPRF : Ord.factor w/ 33 levels "Catholic"<"Baptist"<...: 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 21 ...
$ yearF : Factor w/ 15 levels "1997","1998",...: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ...
$ agemonF : Factor w/ 244 levels "146","147","148",...: 45 61 74 86 98 111 121 134 145 157 ...
$ ageyearF : Factor w/ 21 levels "12","13","14",...: 4 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 ...
$ famrelF : Factor w/ 8 levels "0","1","2","3",...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ attendF : Ord.factor w/ 8 levels "Never"<"Once or Twice"<...: NA NA NA 1 6 2 1 1 1 1 ...
$ valuesF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "FALSE/less Religious"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA 1 NA ...
$ todoF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "FALSE/less Religious"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA 2 NA ...
$ obeyedF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "FALSE/less Religious"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA 1 NA ...
$ prayF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "FALSE/less Religious"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 1 NA NA 1 NA ...
$ decisionsF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "FALSE/less Religious"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA 2 NA ...
$ relprefF : Ord.factor w/ 33 levels "Catholic"<"Baptist"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA 21 NA ...
$ bornagainF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "NO"<"YES": NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ faithF : Ord.factor w/ 5 levels "Exrtremely"<"Very"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ calmF : Ord.factor w/ 4 levels "All of the time"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ blueF : Ord.factor w/ 4 levels "All of the time"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ happyF : Ord.factor w/ 4 levels "All of the time"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ depressedF : Ord.factor w/ 4 levels "All of the time"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ nervousF : Ord.factor w/ 4 levels "All of the time"<...: NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA ...
$ tvF : Ord.factor w/ 6 levels "less than 2"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 2 NA NA NA NA ...
$ computerF : Ord.factor w/ 6 levels "None"<"less than 1"<...: NA NA NA NA NA 5 NA NA NA NA ...
$ internetF : Ord.factor w/ 2 levels "No"<"Yes": NA NA NA NA NA NA 2 1 2 2 ...

```

This give a certain flexibility to assemble needed dataset quickly and have access to factor labels. One can alternate between the raw metric and labeled factor by adding “F” suffix to the end of the variable name:

```

selectCols<-c("year","id","byear","attend","attendF") # select the columns with these names
ds<-dsL[,selectCols] # select all rows for the columns listed selectCols
print(ds[ds$id==1,]) # print all available data for respondent with ID 1

```

	year	id	byear	attend	attendF
1	1997	1	1981	NA	<NA>
2	1998	1	1981	NA	<NA>
3	1999	1	1981	NA	<NA>
4	2000	1	1981	1	Never

5	2001	1	1981	6	About once/week
6	2002	1	1981	2	Once or Twice
7	2003	1	1981	1	Never
8	2004	1	1981	1	Never
9	2005	1	1981	1	Never
10	2006	1	1981	1	Never
11	2007	1	1981	1	Never
12	2008	1	1981	1	Never
13	2009	1	1981	1	Never
14	2010	1	1981	1	Never
15	2011	1	1981	1	Never

Having quick access to factor labels will be especially useful during graph production. For the grammar rules of operations with relevant data see [Data Manipulation Guide](#).

1.3 Time metrics : Age, Period, Cohort

NSLY97 sample includes individuals from five cohorts, born between 1980 and 1984. The following graphics shows how birth cohort, age of respondents, and round of observation are related in NSLY97.

There are several indicators of age in NSLY97 that vary in precision. Birth cohort (**byear**) is the most general one, it was recorded once. Two age variables were recorded at each interview: age at the time of the interview in months (**agemon**) and in years (**ageyear**). Those are not derivatives of each other, but are closely related. The variable **ageyear** records the full number of years a respondent reached at the time of the interview. Due to difficulties of administering the survey, time intervals between the waves could differ. For example, for one person **id** = 25 the age was recorded as 21 years for both 2003 and 2004 (see **ageyear**). However, when you examine age in months (**agemon**) you can see this rounding issue disappears once a more precise scale is used. To avoid this potentially confusing peculiarity, age in years will be calculated as (**age** = **year** - **byear**) or as (**ageALT** = **agemon**/12).

```
ds<-dsL[dsL$year %in% c(2000:2011),c('id',"byear","year","attend","ageyear","agemon")]
ds<- ds[ds$id %in% c(25),]
ds$age<-ds$year-ds$byear
ds$ageALT<- ds$agemon/12
print(ds)
```

	id	byear	year	attend	ageyear	agemon	age	ageALT
364	25	1983	2000	5	17	214	17	17.83
365	25	1983	2001	7	18	226	18	18.83
366	25	1983	2002	7	19	236	19	19.67
367	25	1983	2003	2	21	254	20	21.17
368	25	1983	2004	7	21	261	21	21.75
369	25	1983	2005	5	22	272	22	22.67
370	25	1983	2006	7	23	284	23	23.67
371	25	1983	2007	5	24	295	24	24.58
372	25	1983	2008	7	25	307	25	25.58
373	25	1983	2009	7	26	319	26	26.58
374	25	1983	2010	7	27	332	27	27.67
375	25	1983	2011	7	28	342	28	28.50

1.4 Mapping Church Attendance

The focal variable of interest is **attend**, an item measuring church attendance in the current year. The questionnaire recorded the responses on the ordinal scale.

Creating frequency distributions for each of the measurement wave we have:

Missing values are used in the calculation of total responses to show the natural attrition in the study. Assuming that attrition is not significantly associated with the outcome measure, we can remove missing values from the calculation of the total and look at prevalence of endorsements over time.

Tracing the rate of change of prevalence in a line graph, we see more clearly which categories increase over time (e.g. “Never”), which decline (e.g. “About once/week), and which stay relatively stable (e.g. “About twice/month”)

Graphs above shows change in the cross-sectional distribution of responses over the years. Modeling the change in these response frequencies is handled well by Markov models. LCM, however, works with longitudinal data, modeling the trajectory of each individual and treating attendance as a continuous outcome.

To demonstrate mapping of individual trajectories to time, let’s select a dataset that would include personal identifier (**id**), cohort indicator (**byear**), wave of measurement (**year**) and the focal variable of interest - worship attendance (**attend**).

```
ds<-dsL[dsL$year %in% c(2000:2011),c('id','byear','year','attend','attendF')] # select needed variables
print(ds[ds$id==47,])# for a single subject with id=47
```

	id	byear	year	attend	attendF
694	47	1982	2000	5	About twice/month
695	47	1982	2001	2	Once or Twice
696	47	1982	2002	4	About once/month
697	47	1982	2003	2	Once or Twice
698	47	1982	2004	3	Less than once/month
699	47	1982	2005	2	Once or Twice
700	47	1982	2006	2	Once or Twice
701	47	1982	2007	3	Less than once/month
702	47	1982	2008	2	Once or Twice
703	47	1982	2009	1	Never
704	47	1982	2010	1	Never
705	47	1982	2011	1	Never

The view above lists attendance data for subject with id = 47. Mapping his attendance to time we have where vertical dimension maps the outcome value and the horizontal maps the time. There will be a trajectory for each of the

```
cat(length(unique(dsL$id)))
```

6748

subjects in total. Unless specified otherwise, only individuals from the cross-sample will be used in the model to increase external validity.

```
ds<- dsL[dsL$sample==1,]
```

Each of such trajectories imply a story, a life scenario. Why one person grows in his religious involvement, while other declines, or never develops an interest in the first place? To demonstrate how interpretations of trajectories can vary among individuals consider the following scenario.

Attendance trajectories of subjects with **ids** 4, 25, 35, and 47 are plotted in the next graph

Warning: Removed 12 rows containing missing values (geom_path).

Warning: Removed 12 rows containing missing values (geom_point).

The respondent **id**=35 reported attending no worship services in any of the years, while respondent **id**=25 seemed to frequent it, indicating weekly attendance in 8 out of the 12 years. Individual **id**=47 started as a fairly regular attendee of religious services in 2000 (5= “about twice a month”), then gradually declined his involvement to nil in 2009 and on. Respondent **id**=4, on the other hand started off with a rather passive involvement, reporting attended church only “Once or twice” in 2000, maintained a low level of participation throughout the years, only to surge his attendance in 2011. Latent curve models will describe intraindividual trajectories of change, while summarizing the interindividual similarities and trends.

Previous research in religiosity indicated that age might be one of the primary factors explaining interindividual differences in church attendance. To examine the role of age, we change the metric of time from waves of measurement, as in the previous graph, to biological age.

Warning: Removed 12 rows containing missing values (geom_path).

Warning: Removed 12 rows containing missing values (geom_point).

Persons **id** = 35 and **id** = 25 are peers, in 2000 they were both 17. Respondent **id** = 47 is a year older, in 2000 he was 18. The oldest is **id** = 4, who by the last round of measurement in 2011 is 30 years of age. Perhaps, his increased church attendance could be explained by starting a family of his own?

Note that for person **id** = 25 the age was recorded as 21 years for both 2003 and 2004. However, when you examine age in months (**agemon**) you can see this is rounding issue that disappears once a more precise scale is used. To avoid this potentially confusing peculiarity, age in years will be either calculated as (**age** = **year** - **byear**) or as (**ageALT** = **agemon**/12). See “Mime metrics” section of this report for details.