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Midlife in the United States (MIDUS 2), 2004-2006

Documentation of Occupation and Industry Coding in MIDUS 2

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Documentation of Occupation and Industry Coding in MIDUS 2 Project 1 (Survey)

The original M1 dataset included many variables relating to occupation and industry data. To achieve a degree of parity between the M1 and M2 datasets, similar procedures were used to derive occupation/industry variables in M2. This document explains the processes used in M2 and, where helpful, juxtaposes these with M1.

1. Coding qualitative occupation and industry data.

Respondent occupation and industry codes are derived from a series of questions—including three open-ended questions—in the M2 P1 Phone interview. The same questions are asked to determine the Respondent's current and past occupation, and his or her spouse's current/past occupation, so each case has three potential occupation and industry codes associated with it.

B9. What kind of business or company is this?

B10. What is your job title?

B11. What are YOUR most important activities or duties?

The University of Wisconsin Survey Center (UWSC) employs a staff of occupation and industry coders trained to use the 1990 Alphabetic Index of Industries and Occupations. Interviewers are trained to prompt respondents for enough information to determine occupation and industry status. Coders typically work in pairs, double-coding each other's work. Supervisors review all codes that do not agree, and later meet with individual coders to review discrepancies. Coders are trained to use hard-copies of the 1990 Alphabetic Index, the Alphabetic Index of Military Occupations, and the Production Coder Manual published by the Bureau of the Census, but the majority of coding is completed using software developed by UWSC staff. This software searches a database of occupation and industry titles and returns all titles that match the search parameters. The resulting titles and codes are sorted by group and displayed graphically, allowing coders to quickly review all variations on a given title. This program was designed for use with UWSC CATI projects, where interviewers are trained to probe for specific information related to all jobs.

For both M1 and M2 datasets, Census classification codes were used to create 501 occupation categories. M2 used the 1990 Census classification scheme; M1 relied on the 1980 Census classification to produce the same variables. For both datasets, these 501 categories were aggregated into nine major occupation groups and 12 major industry groups, all of which were derived by consulting the relevant Census Industrial and Occupational Classification Codes.

(The 1990 census classification system can be reviewed here: http://www.bls.gov/nls/quex/r1/y97r1cbka1.pdf).

Each 1990 occupation code was used to link to two datasets containing a number of additional variables which are briefly described below. Both datasets use occupation codes as the merge variable.

UPDATED 11-03-2020: A new Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) variable was added to the M2 dataset (B1PSOC) that links 1990 Census codes to 2010 SOC codes.

2. Occupational Status Scores.

In a process which paralleled that used in M1, measures of socioeconomic status (Duncan SEI and logit scores) were added to the M2 data, and were derived from a dataset created by Hauser and Warren (1996). Each of 9 variables (3 sets of overall, male, and female indexes) in Hauser and Warrens' dataset contain 501 values which correspond to the 501 occupational categories in the 1990 Census classification scheme. Using the occupation variables derived from the 1990 occupation codes to facilitate merging, these data were incorporated into the M2 dataset.

(For full data and documentation of the Hauser and Warrens study, see ftp://elaine.ssc.wisc.edu/pub/hauser/).

3. Deleted occupational measures from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

Although the M1 dataset included additional Occupational variables derived from a dataset created by England and Kilbourne (1988) (which consisted of 63 variables providing average scores on selected variables from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles for the 1980 Census), these variables ***were not added*** to the M2 data. The reasons for not including them in M2 were that England & Kilbournes' data has not been updated to use 1990 Census codes, and investigators with expertise in occupation research conceded that these measures were not frequently used in M1.

(For full data and documentation or the England and Kilbourne study, see http://www.icpsr.umich.edu, use the site's search function to find study # 8942)