

THE NICARAGUA HEALTH STUDY

General Description of the Data:

The database established by this project consists of 4,104 interviews of women between 15 and 45 years old in Nicaragua. A stratified random sampling technique was used to collect 3,409 of the interviews; the other 695 interviews are of sisters of the original respondents.

The interview acquires current and retrospective information in four general areas: (1) economic activity of the respondent and other members of the household; (2) fertility and contraceptive behavior; (3) health and nutritional status of family members and use of medical facilities; and (4) other background variables (e.g., marital and migratory status, education, attitudes and intensity of religious observance) of the family, the parents of the respondent and her spouse or male companion.

Waves and Files:

Interviewing was done in three phases, or waves, using different survey instruments. The data from all three waves were originally stored in seven different files. The files have since been appended to one another, so that there is only one actual data file; however, knowledge of the original file number is essential to reading the codebook and interpreting the data. Therefore we refer to file number (contained in variable 2 of all three waves) for identification purposes only.

Wave I interviews were conducted during the summer of 1977 and are of 1,294 women residing in Managua, the largest city of Nicaragua. Households were selected randomly within certain neighborhoods chosen via areal stratification. Once in a household, the woman interviewed was randomly selected from among women 15 to 45 years old, excluding nonworking students. All Wave I interviews are in File 1.

Wave II consists of 2,080 interviews of women residing in small towns and in cities other than Managua, and were conducted during the winter and spring of 1978. Of these, 1,671 women were again randomly chosen from the household of a selected neighborhood or block. The other 409 women are sisters of the Wave I Managua women. The survey instrument used in Wave II was a modified version of the interview used in Wave I. File 2 contains data from the randomly selected women while File 3 contains the data of sisters.

Wave III interviewing was done in the rural areas during the summer and fall of 1978. This was just prior to a time of intense political and social unrest preceding the overthrow of the Somozan government. (Somoza finally left the country in July, 1979.) Seven hundred and thirty interviews were collected; but after conditions in the countryside became dangerous, interviewing was stopped. Three hundred and thirty-four women were interviewed using the same instrument as in Wave II. Of these, 79 were randomly selected respondents (File 4) and 255 were sisters of women previously interviewed (File 5). Finally,

the remaining 396 rural women interviewed lived in households where agrarian activity provided the major source of family income. For these women the Wave III agrarian interview replaced the economic section of the Wave II interview. Three hundred and sixty-five of these women were randomly selected respondents (File 6) and 31 are sisters (File 7).

Table 1

Summary of Waves and Files of the Nicaragua Data Set

Wave I	File 1	Managua	1294
Wave II	File 2	City/Town	1671
Wave II	File 3	City/Town Sister	409
Wave III	File 4	Rural	79
Wave III	File 5	Rural Sister	255
Wave III	File 6	Agrarian	365
Wave III	File 7	Agrarian Sister	31
TOTAL			<hr/> 4104

How to Read the Codebooks:

There are three codebooks, labelled Wave I, Wave II, and Wave III. Wave I codebook describes variables 1 through 700 of the Wave I, File 1 Managua women. Note that there are missing variable numbers scattered

throughout the codebook. For example, there is a variable number 7, but no 8 or 9. The next variable described in the codebook (the uppermost number in the left hand margin) is variable 10. Such missing variable numbers contain a -2 in the data. Exceptions to this are V374, V382, V390 and V398 where we neglected to wipe out these intermediate, working variables. At the end of each record, however, a zero is stored in the data when a particular variable is not applicable to the specific file. V701-V760 in Wave I, File 1 contain zeros.

Wave II codebook describes variables 1 through 500 of Wave II, Files 2-3 and the rural women in Wave III, Files 4-5. Wave II codebook also describes the data for agrarian women in Wave III, Files 6-7, EXCEPT that the economic section, V109 through V211 is not applicable. Again, there are gaps in the variable numbers, for example, V426-V493 contain -2s. V308 in Files 2-7 is an exception to this, where there is extraneous data we neglected to delete. There is also some extraneous data in V496 of Files 4-5 for 261 cases. V496 has good data only for 358 cases which are for spouses of respondents in Files 6-7. V501-V760 contains zeros for Files 2-5 since these variables are not applicable to the specific file.

Wave III codebook, beginning with V501 through V760, describes the economic data for the agrarian women in Files 6-7. For these women, V109-V211 contain -2's.

Table 2

Summary of Variables Across Waves and Files
of the Nicaragua Data Set

	Valid Data	Data Always = -2	Data Always = 0	Extraneous Data (Should be = -2 but isn't)
Wave I File 1	V1-V700	misc. vars. < 700 (See codebook)	V701-V760	V374, V382, V390, V398
Wave II File 2	V1-V500	V426-V493, V495, V496	V501-V760	V308
Wave II File 3	V1-V500	V426-V493, V495, V496	V501-V760	V308
Wave III File 4	V1-V500	V426-V493, V495	V501-V760	V308, V496
Wave III File 5	V1-V500	V426-V493, V495	V501-V760	V308, V496
Wave III File 6	V1-V108 V212-V760	V109-V211, V497, V498	None	V308
Wave III File 7	V1-V108 V212-V760	V109-V211, V497, V498	None	V308

Besides representing missing variable numbers, a -2 also indicates that a question does not apply to the respondent according to the skip logic of the particular interview used. This skip logic is described in the codebook immediately under the text of each question and is enclosed in asterisks (*) to be easily identifiable. For example, in Wave I codebook under V11 is the statement * V7 = 1 *, which means

that respondents with a value of 1 for V7 should skip V11; that is, V11 has a value of -2. Any exceptions to the skip logic are noted as "legal errors" underneath the skip logic statement. Questions that should have been answered by the respondent but were not are assigned a value of -1 to indicate missing, but should have been answered. Legal skips and missing data are the only negative values in this data set.

Some of the variables have implied decimals and are described in the codebook. See for example, V521 in Wave III codebook, where there are two implied decimals so that 1/4 manzana is coded 25.

Table 3

Conventions for Skipped Questions and Missing Data

- 2 = Question does not apply, because of skip logic (see codebooks); OR question does not apply because of file of respondent (see Table 2).
- 1 = Missing data; question applies but was not answered.
- 0 = Value of none in some cases (see codebooks); OR Question does not apply because of file number of respondent (see Table 2).