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Imputation of Test Scores in the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88)

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Imputation of Test Scores

in the

National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88)

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Prepared for:

U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement National Center for Education Statistics

September 2001

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) is the only current National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dataset that contains scores from cognitive tests given to the same set of students across multiple points in time. The resulting longitudinal test data offer the possibility of researching cognitive gains from middle school through high school—an attractive feature. However, as is inevitable in any survey, cognitive test data are missing for some individuals in each round; the problem is more severe in the second follow up (F2) than in the earlier rounds. Therefore, NCES decided to use imputation to reduce the bias caused by nonresponse.

This study involved a two-step process for implementing this imputation. The first step, as described in chapter 2, was to conduct a simulation study to evaluate two different imputation procedures currently used at NCES: a model-based random imputation method called PROC IMPUTE and a within-class random hot-deck imputation. In our simulation study, we first examined and selected a range of auxiliary variables that are conceptually and empirically related to the F2 test scores, and then we imputed the Item Response Theory (IRT) theta scores in math and reading. The findings of the simulation study confirmed that PROC IMPUTE performed better (Hu and Salvucci 1999). The second step, as described in chapter 3, involved using PROC IMPUTE to impute missing F2 cognitive test scores in four subject areas: math, science, reading, and history/citizenship/geography. The results provide end users with complete cognitive test data for both cross-sectional and longitudinal research with the F2 data or the base-year through the second follow-up (BY–F2) panel data. As a future step, other measurement scales (proficiency scores, standardized scores, and the number right scores) may be subsequently converted using the theta scores.

BACKGROUND

In NELS:88, the respondents' cognitive ability and the growth (cognitive gains) from 8th through 12th grades at the group and individual levels were measured by a calibrated scale based on Item Response Theory (IRT). This calibration process requires that items are relatively unifactorial across grades in each subject area; that is, with the same dominant factor underlying all test forms in a given subject, say, math (Rock and Pollack 1995). There should be a common set of "anchor" items across adjacent forms, and most content areas should be represented in all grade forms. In NELS:88, the increasingly difficult levels from 8th through 12th grades were created by raising the problem-solving demands in the existing content areas and adding new content in the later forms, especially at 12th grade.

IRT assumes that a test taker's probability of answering an item correctly is a function of his or her ability and one or more characteristics of the test item itself. The three-parameter IRT logistic model uses the pattern of right, wrong, and omitted responses to the items administered in a test form, and the difficulty, discriminating ability, and "guess-ability" of each item, to place each test taker at a particular point, q (theta), on a continuous ability scale. The probability of a correct answer (called the theta score) on item *i* can be expressed as:

$$P_{i}(\boldsymbol{q}) = c_{i} + \frac{(1 - c_{i})}{1 + e^{-1.702a_{i}(\boldsymbol{q} - b_{i})}},$$

where q is the ability of the test taker, a_i is discrimination of item i, or how well the item distinguishes between ability levels at a particular point, b_i is the difficulty of item i, and c_i is the "guess-ability" of item i.

A computer program is used to calculate the marginal maximum-likelihood estimates of the IRT parameters that best fit test takers' responses (Muraki and Bock 1991). To assess the models' match with the test data, one compares the IRT-estimated parameters with the actual proportion of correct answers to a test item for test takers grouped by ability. If the IRT-estimated curves and the actual data points match closely, then the theoretical model represents the data accurately. After the parameters for a set of test items are calibrated on the same scale as the test takers' ability estimates, a test taker's probability of a correct answer to each item in the test battery can be estimated, even for items that were not administered to the test taker. Theta scores can be used to derive other test scores: the IRT-estimated number correct score in a subject area is the sum of the probabilities of correct answers for the items in the area.

<u>NELS:88 nonresponse issues</u>: Nonresponse is always a concern in survey data, and some cases in the NELS:88 cognitive test data are missing in each round due to absence, nonparticipation, or results that were unscorable because of too many unattempted test items. This missingness problem is more severe for math theta scores in F2 (22.9 percent missing scores) than in the earlier two rounds of tests (3.7 percent and 6.0 percent missing scores for the base-year (BY) and the first follow up (F1), respectively), as shown in table 1.

Test missing status	missing status Number of students		n math theta	scores
		BY	F1	F2
Completed all tests	11,832	46.16	51.53	54.80
Missing BY only	415 (BY: total missing 610)		48.86	51.94
Missing F1 only	444 (F1: total missing 995)	42.60		49.40
Missing F2 only	3,117 (F2: total missing 3,775)	43.96	48.62	
Missing BY and F1	23			44.63
Missing BY and F2	130		44.73	
Missing F1 and F2	486	40.09		
Missing all tests	42			

Table 1	1. Number	of students	and mean	math scores	by test	t missing	status
1 40010 2		or searches	and mean		~J 0000		Sector

-- = missing

Note: The above information is based on the total BY–F2 panel of 16,489 students.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88).

The sample weighting adjustment cannot fully solve the problem resulting from survey nonresponse, neither in theory nor in practice (Rubin 1996). Specifically, the bias generated by missing cognitive scores cannot be corrected by the NELS:88 sampling weights because the weights were constructed to remedy unit nonresponse, not item nonresponse (Ingels et al. 1994, p. 70). In fact, the joint impact of item nonresponse to cognitive tests and unit nonresponse on NELS:88 tends to damage the data quality to a potentially dangerous extent. The weighted percentage of students who took all four cognitive tests in all three waves of the survey was 65 percent of the eligible core panel sample (see Rock and Pollack 1995, table 1.1, p. 2).

In addition, Rock and Pollack (1995, pp. 53–56) demonstrated that the missingness pattern of F2 test scores across demographic subgroups was not completely at random. Our tabulation of the BY–F2 panel data confirms this. Table 2 presents a comparison of the rate of missing F2 test scores for some basic demographic subgroups of students in the BY–F2 panel who completed all three tests and those who missed the F2 test. It shows that minority students and students in the lowest socioeconomic (SES) quartile were more likely than others to miss the test. Thus, NELS:88 estimates of academic performance based on the available cases could be biased.

		Number who completed all 3 tests in BY–F2 panel	Number of students with F2 test score available	Percent of BY-F2 panel with missing F2 test scores	Mean of F2 math test scores
TOTAL		16,489	12,714	22.9%	54.5
Sex	Male Female	8,349 8,140	6,430 6,284	23.0% 22.8%	53.9 55.1
Race/ Ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black, Hispanic,	12,657	9,935	21.5%	56.1
2	Indian	3,823	2,773	27.5%	48.6
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	4,121	2,989	27.5%	47.8
	2nd quartile	4,095	3,187	22.2%	52.2
	3rd quartile	4,147	3,260	21.4%	55.5
	Highest quartile	4,125	3,278	20.5%	61.8

 Table 2. Number of students and mean math theta scores by sex, race/ethnicity, and SES quartile

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88).

The gain measure, which is of critical utility in NELS:88 longitudinal research, is thus built upon test data with high levels of item nonresponse. To assure NELS:88 data quality, strategies other than weighting are needed to address the item nonresponse problem. Imputation of missing test scores is one viable strategy.

It is feasible to impute F2 cognitive test scores because a great deal of information is available to reasonably predict the missing scores. This information includes student sociodemographic background, school experience (e.g., coursework, ability and curriculum program placements, and enrichment activity participation), self-reported achievement level, and available scores in other subjects. Furthermore, the general pattern in which such predictive variables relate to achievement is known in the educational research literature. We developed our imputation models based on such knowledge. (Our approach to NELS:88 cognitive test score imputations could be applicable to similar problems likely to arise in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies (ECLS), conducted by NCES, which will also include multiple rounds of cognitive tests.)

CHAPTER 2 SIMULATION STUDY COMPARING THE PROC IMPUTE AND HOT-DECK IMPUTATION METHODS

Our simulation study compared PROC IMPUTE and the hot-deck
imputation method by imputing the F2 IRT-estimated theta scores in math and
reading. To impute missing test scores in a given subject, we used information
from available tests in other subjects, student demographic and
socioeconomic background, academic coursework, and self-reported grade
point averages. We also compared the imputed F2 test scores with BY and
F1 test scores in a given subject. We used three criteria to compare the
accuracy of the two sets of imputations: the average imputing error, the
variance, and the mean bias.

APPROACH We decided to impute the IRT-estimated theta scores since theta scores are the original estimates of the test takers' probability of correctly answering items in a given set of test items.

As mentioned previously, the F2 missing test scores were not "missing completely at random" (MCAR) as defined by Little and Rubin (1987). That is, the cases that did not have scorable tests in F2 were systematically different from the cases that had completed the three tests in a variety of auxiliary variables, including background and schooling (see table 2 and Rock and Pollack 1995, pp. 53–56). Such non-MCAR missingness patterns call for imputation based on information for a subsample that had completed test scores but shared attributes with the missing cases. Our first step, therefore, was to examine a range of candidate variables in order to select the best auxiliary variables; that is, those which were related to test missingness.

Selection of Auxiliary Variables

The candidate variables were race/ethnicity, sex, SES, coursework in the target subject areas, advanced academic program placement, F1 and F2 dropout status, early graduation status, and BY and F1 cognitive test scores. To determine their utility in the imputation model, we examined bivariate correlations between these variables and the cognitive test scores in two subject areas, math and reading. We then selected variables that correlated highly with the theta scores. Next we identified important predictors of the cognitive test outcome by fitting regression models. The final regression model reflected test scores that were homogeneous within the imputation classes defined by the covariates.

Simulation Study We studied two imputation techniques, namely, a *model-based imputation* method implemented by computer software called PROC IMPUTE and a *within-class random hot-deck imputation* method. The study included simulating a few levels and patterns of missingness (about 20 percent of the data were made missing) in the NELS:88 BY–F2 panel cases where the BY, F1, and F2 test scores are all nonmissing. We compared statistics derived from the incomplete data with the data after imputing simulated missing cases. Three criteria were used to compare the accuracy of the two types of imputations: the average imputing error, the bias of the variance, and the mean bias.

The relative bias of the variance estimate is defined as

Relative
$$Bias = \frac{(Estimated Var) - (True Var)}{True Var}$$

and the average imputation error is defined as

$$\sqrt{\frac{1}{m}\sum_{i=1}^{m}(y_{i}^{*}-y_{i})^{2}}$$

where *m* is the number of missing values, y_i is the true value which is intentionally set to missing, and y_i^* is the imputed value for the *i*-th missing case. That an imputation method has smaller average imputation errors only implies that the method provides imputations on average closer to the real values. This does not necessarily mean that it gives more accurate estimates for all types of statistics, although that is true in many situations.

Description of
Imputation MethodsWithin-class random hot-deck imputation: Since we understand reasonably
well the factors related to F2 test nonresponse and have data on such factors,
we could assume model-based approaches would probably produce more
accurate imputation than randomization-based approaches if the model
assumptions were satisfied (Hu and Salvucci 1999). Thus, we imputed the
IRT-estimated number of the right score in each subject using F2 cross-
sectional data on student sociodemographic and socioeconomic background,
academic coursework, self-reported grade average point, and available test
scores on subjects other than the one to be imputed.

For the implementation of the within-class random hot-deck imputation method, we first sorted the dataset by the auxiliary variables in order to obtain homogeneous cells called imputation classes. To impute a missing value in a given imputation class, we randomly selected an observed value of the target variable in that class to fill-in for the missing value.

<u>PROC IMPUTE</u>: To overcome the underestimation of variance which is typical in a hot-deck imputation method or a regression-based imputation method, we also added disturbance by using the software package PROC IMPUTE (McLaughlin 1991).

PROC IMPUTE combines the procedures of regression-based and data sampling (often called "hot-deck") methods. Regression involves generating a function, $\hat{y} = f(x_1, x_2, ..., x_p)$, that relates a "target" variable (cognitive test score) to auxiliary variables, then uses the function along with the existing values of the auxiliary variables to compute \hat{y} whenever it is missing. Data sampling involves subsetting the data on the basis of relevant variables and randomly selecting a value for the target variable from an available target variable within the same subset.

PROC IMPUTE considers each variable on the file in turn as a target variable whose missing values are to be filled in, and it uses information on other variables to minimize the error in imputing each target variable. Three steps are taken to impute each variable in PROC IMPUTE.

First, stepwise regression analyses are performed "simultaneously" for each variable. During these analyses, an ordered list of the imputation variables is constructed. The regression analysis for each variable uses as predictors all the complete variables, including the previously imputed variables. The process terminates when there are no more permissible predictors that provide a significant improvement of fit in the prediction of any of the target variables. Second, homogeneous cells (imputation classes) are created for records that have close predicted regression values. Finally, two donors are drawn from the adjacent cells. Each missing record in a given cell is imputed with a weighted average of these two donors with probability proportional to the observed frequencies within the two cells.

PROC IMPUTE runs all the imputation procedures automatically and generates a dataset in which all the records are complete. Imputed data flags are also automatically created by the software and set for each variable; a value of "I" corresponds to imputed values, "R" to reported values, and "A" to skip missing values.

SIMULATION RESULTS

Math Theta ScoreWe used the F2 panel sample members that had nonmissing math theta
scores and nonmissing information for the following auxiliary variables: sex,
race/ethnicity, SES, units in foreign languages, units in physics, BY grade
composites, and teacher's opinion about student attending college. We
selected 1,996 cases, about 20 percent, from the F2 panel members and set
their math theta scores as missing. To simulate the actual missingness pattern,
the rate of missingness across sex, race/ethnicity, and SES quartiles mimicked
that of the actual F2 test missing cases. We used PROC IMPUTE and
random hot-deck to impute these simulated missing cases. The mean and
variance for the math scores were calculated for the following four groups:

- 1. A group of 10,248 cases in the F2 panel that reported the math theta scores and auxiliary variables specified above;
- 2. A group that included the 8,252 cases with actual math theta scores and 1,996 cases with imputed scores using PROC IMPUTE;
- 3. A group that included the 8,252 cases with actual math theta scores and 1,996 cases with imputed scores using the hot-deck method; and
- A group of 8,252 cases with actual math theta scores (the 1,996 cases were deleted as "missing"). This group simulates the current scenario in NELS:88 where there are missing test scores, but no imputation has been used.

Group 1 estimates served as the "true scores." Groups 2, 3, and 4 estimates were compared with the true Group 1 estimates to examine if Group 2 (with PROC IMPUTE imputation) did better than Group 3 (with hot-deck imputation) and Group 4 (non-imputed). Table 3 provides the results for average imputation error for the math theta score. Then figure 1 compares the results for the bias of the mean, while table 4 presents the relative bias of the variance for the math theta score. Tables 5 and 6 show, respectively, the mean and standard deviation for the multiple imputation using the PROC IMPUTE and within-class random hot-deck imputation methods. Note that in the race/ethnicity subgroup, whites and Asians were combined because preliminary results had shown that both whites and Asians have on average higher math scores than the other racial/ethnic groups.

About 20 percent of the math scores were imputed using first PROC IMPUTE, and then the random hot-deck imputation method. The average imputation error is consistently lower for PROC IMPUTE than it is for hot-deck in each sociodemographic subgroup, and overall (see table 3).

			Percent of	Average imp	utation error
		Number of	imputed	PROC	
		students	values	IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		10,248	19.5%	13.56	14.50
Sex	Female	5,139	20.2%	13.23	14.51
	Male	5,109	18.8%	13.90	14.49
Race/	White and Asian	8,196	19.0%	13.58	14.32
ethnicity	Black, Hispanic,	2,052	21.3%	13.49	15.10
	Indian				
SES	Lowest quartile	2,176	20.3%	13.82	14.34
	2nd quartile	2,596	19.7%	14.16	14.98
	3rd quartile	2,734	19.3%	12.77	14.18
	Highest quartile	2,742	18.8%	13.51	14.47

Table 3. Percentage of missing values and average imputation error for math score

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Figure 1 shows the bias of the mean after using PROC IMPUTE and the random hot-deck imputation method, as well as the bias of the mean for the incomplete math score without any imputation. No one of the three methods shows a consistent improvement in the mean bias across the sociodemographic subgroups or overall.





Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Table 4 shows that the relative bias of the variance is consistently smaller for PROC IMPUTE than it is for hot-deck and the non-imputed group, in each of the sociodemographic subgroups of study, and overall, with the exception of the highest quartile of the SES subgroup.

		Relative bias of variance		
		Non-imputed	PROC IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		0.055	0.001	0.060
Sex	Female	-0.005	0.053	0.069
	Male	0.010	0.061	0.056
Race/ethnicity	White and Asian	0.018	0.059	0.068
	Black, Hispanic, Indian	0.021	0.046	0.076
SES	Lowest quartile	-0.003	0.036	0.051
	2nd quartile	0.009	0.053	0.049
	3rd quartile	0.005	0.062	0.076
	Highest quartile	-0.021	0.002	-0.009

Table 4. Comparison of relative bias of variance for math theta score

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Table 5 presents the resulting mean for a set of five imputations on the math theta score using the PROC IMPUTE and within-class random hot-deck imputation method. As we can see, the multiple imputation means based on the PROC IMPUTE method are consistently closer to the true means than are the means based on the within-class random hot-deck imputation method. This observation is valid for each of the study's sociodemographic subgroups, and overall.

Table 5. Comparison of mean for multiple imputation for math theta score

			Mean bias	
		True	PROC IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		55.16	55.17	55.27
Sex	Female	54.59	54.60	54.86
	Male	55.74	55.74	55.69
Race/ethnicity	White and Asian	56.62	56.62	56.76
	Black, Hispanic,			
	Indian	49.36	49.37	49.35
SES	Lowest quartile	48.78	48.79	48.62
	2nd quartile	52.65	52.64	52.54
	3rd quartile	55.88	55.87	56.09
	Highest quartile	61.90	61.91	62.32

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

With a set of five imputations on the math theta score using the PROC IMPUTE and within-class random hot-deck imputation methods, we calculated the resulting standard deviations (see table 6). From table 6, it is clear that the multiple imputation standard deviations based on the PROC IMPUTE method are consistently closer to the true standard deviations than are the standard deviations based on the within-class random hot-deck imputation method. This held true for all the sociodemographic subgroups of study.

^		^	Standard Deviation	
		True	PROC IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		10.27	10.28	10.52
Sex	Female	9.92	9.94	10.15
	Male	10.58	10.59	10.86
Race/ethnicity	White and Asian	10.03	10.05	10.28
	Black, Hispanic, Indian	9.09	9.11	9.30
SES	Lowest quartile	8.69	8.72	8.82
	2nd quartile	9.40	9.42	9.64
	3rd quartile	9.31	9.32	9.49
	Highest quartile	8.96	8.96	9.02

Table 6. Comparison of standard deviation for multiple imputation math theta score

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Reading Theta Score For the reading cognitive test score simulation study, we used the F2 panel sample members that had nonmissing reading theta scores and nonmissing auxiliary variables. The auxiliary variables considered here were sex, race/ethnicity, SES, units in foreign languages, units in reading, units in chemistry, grade composites from base-year, and teacher's opinion about student attending college. We selected 2,017 cases, about 20 percent, from the F2 panel members and set their reading theta scores as missing. We used PROC IMPUTE and random hot-deck to impute these simulated missing cases. The mean and variance for the reading scores were calculated for the following four groups:

- (1) a group of 10,249 cases in the F2 panel that reported the reading theta scores and auxiliary variables specified above;
- (2) a group of 8,232 cases with actual reading theta scores and 2,017 cases with imputed scores using PROC IMPUTE;
- (3) a group of 8,232 cases with actual reading theta scores and 2,017 cases with imputed scores using the hot-deck method; and
- (4) a group of 8,232 cases with actual reading theta scores.

Table 7 provides the calculated average imputation error for the reading theta score, figure 2 displays the calculated bias of the mean, and table 8 presents the calculated relative bias of the variance for the reading theta scores when non-imputed and when imputed using PROC IMPUTE and random hot-deck. Table 9 shows the mean for a set of five imputations using the PROC IMPUTE and within-class random hot-deck imputation methods, and table 10 shows the corresponding standard deviations. Note that, unlike the math test score, the race/ethnicity variable here is categorized by whites on one hand and the other racial/ethnic groups on the other hand.

As in the simulation of math theta scores, around 20 percent of the reading scores were set to missing and imputed using first the PROC IMPUTE and then the random hot-deck imputation methods. The average imputation error is consistently lower for PROC IMPUTE than it is for hot-deck, in each sociodemographic subgroup, and overall (see table 7).

		Number of	Percent of	Average imp	utation error
		students	values	IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		10,249	19.7%	13.86	14.70
Sex	Female Male	5,144 5,105	20.0% 19.4%	13.86 13.85	14.50 14.90
Race/ ethnicity	White Asian, Black,	7,594	19.3%	13.63	14.48
	Hispanic, Indian	2,655	20.8%	14.44	15.27
SES	Lowest quartile	2,178	20.0%	14.36	14.69
	2nd quartile	2,594	19.5%	14.14	15.66
	3rd quartile	2,738	20.2%	13.51	14.27
	Highest quartile	2,739	19.1%	13.51	14.19

Table 7. Percentage of missing values and average imputation error for reading score

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

In figure 2, note that the bias of the mean for female reading theta score is zero for PROC IMPUTE. Nevertheless, the bias of the mean does not show that any particular method is consistently better across all sociodemographic subgroups.



Figure 2. Comparison of bias of the mean for reading theta score

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

However, the relative bias of the variance is consistently smaller for PROC IMPUTE than it is for the hot-deck and the non-imputed groups, in each sociodemographic subgroup, and overall, with the exception of the third and fourth quartile of the socioeconomic status subgroup (see table 8).

		Relative bias of variance				
		Non-imputed	PROC IMPUTE	Hot-deck		
TOTAL		0.034	-0.009	0.037		
Sex	Female	0.005	0.035	0.031		
	Male	-0.015	0.028	0.039		
Race/ethnicity	White	-0.001	0.035	0.038		
	Asian, Black,					
	Hispanic, Indian	0.004	0.038	0.035		
SES	Lowest quartile	0.021	0.024	0.030		
	2nd quartile	-0.003	0.035	0.021		
	3rd quartile	-0.036	0.018	0.029		
	Highest quartile	-0.038	-0.011	-0.002		

Table 8. Comparison of relative bias of variance for reading theta score	Table 8.	Compa	arison of	relative	bias of	variance	for rea	nding t	heta sco	re
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Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Table 9 provides the mean for multiple imputation on the reading theta score using the PROC IMPUTE and within-class random hot-deck imputation method. In most of the sociodemographic subgroups of study, and overall, the multiple imputation means based on the PROC IMPUTE method are closer to the true means than are the means based on the within-class random hot-deck imputation method.

			Mean Bias	
		True	PROC IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		53.71	53.78	53.88
Sex	Female	54.82	54.85	55.10
	Male	52.59	52.70	52.66
Race/ethnicity	White	54.86	54.90	55.04
	Asian, Black, Hispanic, Indian	50.41	50.58	50.57
SES	Lowest quartile	47.99	48.03	47.90
	2nd quartile	51.49	51.58	51.55
	3rd quartile	54.33	54.36	54.46
	Highest quartile	59.74	59.84	60.27

Table 9. Comparison of mean for multiple imputation for reading theta score

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

With a set of five imputations on the math theta score using the PROC IMPUTE and within-class random hot-deck imputation methods, we calculated the resulting standard deviations (see table 10). It is clear that the multiple imputation standard deviations based on the PROC IMPUTE method are consistently closer to the true standard deviations than are the standard deviations based on the within-class random hot-deck imputation method. This held true for all the sociodemographic subgroups of study.

			Standard deviation	
		True	PROC IMPUTE	Hot-deck
TOTAL		10.61	10.59	10.78
Sex	Female	10.17	10.17	10.31
	Male	10.92	10.89	11.10
Race/ethnicity	White	10.33	10.32	10.51
-	Asian, Black,			
	Hispanic, Indian	10.71	10.69	10.86
SES	Lowest quartile	9.43	9.43	9.53
	2nd quartile	10.05	10.04	10.23
	3rd quartile	10.06	10.01	10.15
	Highest quartile	9.29	9.23	9.28

Table 10. Comparison of standard deviation for	• multiple imputation reading theta score
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Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

CONCLUSION OF THE SIMULATION STUDY

Using PROC IMPUTE to impute the missing math and reading cognitive test scores produced better results than using the random hot-deck imputation method or no imputation in the simulation study that we conducted using NELS:88 second follow-up (F2) data. We therefore chose PROC IMPUTE as our method of imputing the NELS:88 theta scores in the second part of this project. Those results are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 IMPUTATION OF NELS:88 2ND FOLLOW-UP THETA SCORES USING PROC IMPUTE

The results of the simulation study described in the previous chapter showed that PROC IMPUTE was the appropriate choice of imputation techniques for imputing the missing test score for the second follow-up in the NELS:88. It generated the "best" scores based on the criteria used; that is, PROC IMPUTE was the method with the least average imputing error and mean bias and with the least distortion in variance. Hence, in this chapter, we used PROC IMPUTE to impute the missing test scores in the four tested F2 subject areas: math, science, reading, and history/ citizenship/geography.

Math Theta Score We used PROC IMPUTE to impute the 3,775 missing cases for the math theta score. We started by using the full BY–F2 panel sample members and the following auxiliary variables:

- from F2—sex, race/ethnicity, SES, units in foreign languages, units in math, units in geometry, units in chemistry, and units in physics;
- from F1—the teacher's opinion about whether the student will go to college or not, number of course the student took in geometry, and math theta score; and
- from BY—grade composite variable and math theta score.

We then computed the overall mean and standard deviation for the math theta, and also the mean and standard deviation for the math theta score across sex, race/ethnicity, and SES quartiles. Those were compared for the following two groups:

- 1. A group of 12,714 cases in the BY–F2 panel that reported the math theta scores; and
- 2. A group that included the 12,714 cases with actual math theta scores and 3,775 cases with imputed scores using PROC IMPUTE.

The mean and standard deviation of the math theta score for both groups defined above are shown in tables 11 and 12, respectively.

		Number of students		Mean math t	heta score
			With missing		PROC
		Overall	math score	Non-imputed	IMPUTE
TOTAL		16,489	3,775	54.50	53.79
Sex	Female	8,349	1,919	53.90	53.30
	Male	8,140	1,856	55.10	54.30
Race/ ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black Hispanic	12,657	2,722	56.13	55.57
cunnerty	Indian	3,823	1,050	48.64	47.92
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	4,121	1,132	47.84	47.33
	2nd quartile	4,095	908	52.23	51.57
	3rd quartile	4,147	887	55.52	54.90
	Highest quartile	4,125	847	61.76	61.35

Table 11. Comparison of mean for math theta score before and after imputation

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

mipt					
		Number of students SD math theta		eta score	
		W/nonmissing math score	W/missing math score	Non-imputed	PROC IMPUTE
TOTAL		12,714	3,775	10.50	10.69
Sex	Female Male	6,430 6,284	1,919 1,856	10.21 10.76	10.37 10.99
Race/ ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black, Hispanic,	9,935	2,722	10.28	10.49
	Indian	2,773	1,050	9.10	9.11
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	2,989	1,132	8.72	8.75
	2nd quartile	3,187	908	9.43	9.61
	3rd quartile	3,260	887	9.45	9.68
	Highest quartile	3,278	847	9.17	9.45

Table 12. Comparison of standard deviation (SD) for math theta score before and after imputation

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Reading Theta Score We used PROC IMPUTE to impute the 3,771 missing cases for the reading theta score. We started by using the full BY–F2 panel sample members and the following auxiliary variables:

- from F2—sex, race/ethnicity, SES, units in foreign languages, and units in chemistry;
- from F1—the teacher's opinion about whether the student will go to college or not, number of course the student took in foreign languages, and reading theta score;
- from BY—grade composite variable and reading theta score.

We then computed the overall mean and standard deviation for the reading theta, and also the mean and standard deviation for the reading theta score across sex, race/ethnicity, and SES quartiles. Those were compared for the following two groups:

- 1. A group of 12,718 cases in the BY–F2 panel that reported the reading theta scores; and
- 2. A group that included the 12,718 cases with actual reading theta scores and 3,771 cases with imputed scores using PROC IMPUTE.

The mean and standard deviation of the reading theta score for both groups defined above are shown in tables 13 and 14, respectively.

		Number of students		Mean reading	theta score	
			With missing		PROC	
		Overall	reading score	Non-imputed	IMPUTE	
TOTAL		16,489	3,771	53.17	52.58	
Sex	Female	8,349	1,913	54.22	53.60	
	Male	8,140	1,858	52.09	51.53	
Race/	White and Asian	12,657	2,717	54.62	54.13	
ethnicity ¹	Black, Hispanic,	2 8 2 2	1.051	47.07	17 15	
	Indian	3,823	1,051	47.97	47.45	
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	4,121	1,135	47.29	46.80	
	2nd quartile	4,095	905	51.11	50.63	
	3rd quartile	4,147	882	54.01	53.59	
	Highest quartile	4,125	848	59.68	59.26	

Table 13. Comparison of mean for reading theta score before and after imputation

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

		Number o	f students	SD reading t	heta score
		W/nonmissing reading score	W/missing reading score	Non-imputed	PROC IMPUTE
TOTAL		12,718	3,771	10.81	10.96
Sex	Female Male	6,436 6,282	1,913 1,858	10.43 11.09	10.66 11.17
Race/ ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black, Hispanic,	9,940	2,717	10.59	10.74
	Indian	2,772	1,051	9.97	10.08
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	2,986	1,135	9.48	9.70
	2nd quartile	3,190	905	10.18	10.29
	3rd quartile	3,265	882	10.17	10.30
	Highest quartile	3,277	848	9.46	9.58

Table 14.	Comparison	of standard	deviation	(SD) f	or reading	theta score	before an	d after
	imputation							

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Science Theta Score	We used PROC IMPUTE to impute the 3,858 missing cases for the science
	theta score. We started by using the full BY-F2 panel sample members and
	the following auxiliary variables:

- from F2—sex, race/ethnicity, SES, units in foreign languages, units in math, units in geometry, units in chemistry, and units in physics;
- from F1—the teacher's opinion about whether the student will go to college or not, number of course the student took in geometry, and science theta score;
- from BY—grade composite variable and science theta score.

We then computed the overall mean and standard deviation for the science theta, and also the mean and standard deviation for the science theta score across sex, race/ethnicity, and SES quartiles. Those were compared for the following two groups:

- 1. A group of 12,631 cases in the BY–F2 panel that reported the science theta scores; and
- 2. A group that included the 12,631 cases with actual science theta scores and 3,858 cases with imputed scores using PROC IMPUTE.

The mean and standard deviation of the science theta score for both groups defined above are shown in tables 15 and 16, respectively.

		Number of students		Mean science	theta score
			With missing		PROC
		Overall	science score	Non-imputed	IMPUTE
TOTAL		16,489	3,858	53.70	52.91
Sex	Female	8,349	1,958	52.09	51.47
	Male	8,140	1,900	55.35	54.39
Race/ ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black, Hispanic,	12,657	2,778	55.50	54.78
·	Indian	3,823	1,077	47.21	46.72
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	4,121	1,159	47.51	46.97
	2nd quartile	4,095	929	51.73	50.95
	3rd quartile	4,147	904	54.87	54.15
	Highest quartile	4,125	865	60.06	59.54

Table 15. Comparison of mean for science the ta score before and after imputation

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

Inputation					
		Number of students		SD science tl	heta score
		W/nonmissing	W/missing	NT • 4 1	PROC
		science score	science score	Non-imputed	IMPUIE
TOTAL		12,631	3,858	10.64	10.82
Sex	Female	6,391	1,958	10.06	10.21
	Male	6,240	1,900	10.97	11.22
Race/ ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black, Hispanic,	9,879	2,778	10.23	10.49
	Indian	2,746	1,077	9.50	9.50
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	2,962	1,159	9.27	9.29
	2nd quartile	3,166	929	9.76	9.87
	3rd quartile	3,243	904	9.88	10.13
	Highest quartile	3,260	865	9.52	9.87

Table 16. Comparison of standard deviation (SD) for science theta score before and after imputation

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

History/cit	izenship/
geography	Theta
Score	

We used PROC IMPUTE to impute the 3,917 missing cases for the history/citizenship/geography theta score. We started by using the full BY–F2 panel sample members and the following auxiliary variables:

- from F2—sex, race/ethnicity, SES, units in foreign languages, units in math, units in geometry, units in chemistry, and units in physics;
- from F1—the teacher's opinion about whether the student will go to college or not, number of course the student took in foreign languages, number of course the student took in geometry, and history/citizenship/geography theta score;
- from BY—grade composite variable and history/citizenship/ geography theta score.

We then computed the overall mean and standard deviation for the history/citizenship/geography theta, and also the mean and standard deviation for the history/citizenship/geography theta score across sex, race/ethnicity, and SES quartiles. Those were compared for the following two groups:

- 1. A group of 12,572 cases in the BY–F2 panel that reported the history/citizenship/geography theta scores; and
- 2. A group that included the 12,572 cases with actual history/citizenship/geography theta scores and 3,917 cases with imputed scores using PROC IMPUTE.

The mean and standard deviation of the history/citizenship/geography theta score for both groups defined above are shown in tables 17 and 18, respectively.

Inputation					
		Number of students		Mean history	theta score
		Overall	With missing		PROC
			history score	Non-imputed	IMPUTE
TOTAL		16,489	3,917	55.41	54.76
Sex	Female	8,349	1,983	54.58	54.08
	Male	8,140	1,934	56.27	55.45
Race/	White and Asian	12,657	2,820	56.71	56.18
ethnicity ¹	Black, Hispanic,				
·	Indian	3,823	1,094	50.74	50.05
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	4,121	1,180	49.72	49.31
	2nd quartile	4,095	943	53.53	53.00
	3rd quartile	4,147	921	56.25	55.68
	Highest quartile	4,125	872	61.56	61.03

Table 17. Comparison of mean for history/citizenship/geography theta score before and after imputation

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

		Number of students		SD history theta score	
		W/nonmissing W/missing			PROC
		history score	history score	Non-imputed	IMPUTE
TOTAL		12,572	3,917	9.92	10.09
Sex	Female	6,366	1,983	9.46	9.63
	Male	6,206	1,934	10.30	10.49
Race/ ethnicity ¹	White and Asian Black, Hispanic,	9,837	2,820	9.73	9.90
·	Indian	2,729	1,094	9.16	9.23
\mathbf{SES}^2	Lowest quartile	2,941	1,180	8.73	8.89
	2nd quartile	3,152	943	9.09	9.32
	3rd quartile	3,226	921	9.17	9.37
	Highest quartile	3,253	872	8.78	8.97

Table 18.	Comparison of stan	dard deviation (SD) for	history/citizen	ship/geography	theta score
	before and after imp	outation				

¹There are 9 cases with missing data on race/ethnicity.

² There is 1 case with missing data on SES.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), original and imputed data.

CONCLUSION The SES variable is associated with the race/ethnicity variable (with Pearson chi-squared p-value=0.0001). As seen in figure 3, as the SES quartile increases, the proportion of minorities in that SES quartile decreases. Also the proportion of minorities that have missing values for each subject theta score is higher than the corresponding proportion of minorities that have nonmissing values for that given subject, as shown in figure 4.

Since the mean theta score increases for each subject as the socioeconomic status quartile increases, we would expect (as is the case in tables 11, 13, 15, and 17) the mean theta score to be slightly lower after imputation than before imputation. That is, the higher proportion of minority students with missing test scores have a slightly lower overall average test score after imputation.

Figure 3. Percentage of racial/ethnic subgroups by socioeconomic status for all F2 panel respondents



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), imputed data.

Figure 4. Percentage of racial/ethnic subgroups by missing status for all F2 panel respondents



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), imputed data.

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2001-05	Using TIMSS to Analyze Correlates of Performance Variation in Mathematics	Patrick Gonzales
2001-07	A Comparison of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). the Third	Arnold Goldstein
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