

The NHSDA Report

April 18, 2003

Finding Specific Variables in the NHSDA

Search Tips

- Searches are not case-sensitive.
- Quotation marks are interpreted literally — don't use them.
- Only whole words are matched — no wildcards or partial words.
- Try different forms of the search term or use synonyms (e.g., employ, employment, job, work).
- Be patient. This program searches thousands of variables and, therefore, it is sometimes slow.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive (SAMHDA) contains a search feature for conducting variable-level searches among studies included in the archive's online data analysis system (DAS).¹ This new tool searches the question text and variable and value labels for tens of thousands of variables in order to find variables of interest across many studies. This is helpful for locating variables:

- In studies with large numbers of variables
- When variable names do not intuitively match their content
- When the complete subject matter of a study is unknown

The search tool works in stages, beginning with the studies and then proceeding to the variables. It first identifies every study containing the word(s) of the search term in the question text, value labels, or variable labels. Next, matching variables are listed for a single study or for all studies. For search terms with multiple words, the tool will first generate a list of variables that contain any of the words in the search term (an "OR" search). This list can then be narrowed to only those variables containing all words in the search term (an "AND" search).

The following examples of the variable-level search utility use the 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse.

How to Access SAMHDA Variable-level Search

To access the variable-level search utility:

- Log on to the SAMHDA web site at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SAMHDA>.

- Select either “Download Data” or “Search”.
- Click on “Search for Specific Variables”.
- Enter a search term in the window (Figure 1), select whether to search only SAMHDA studies or all ICPSR studies on the DAS, and hit “Search”.
 - For a listing of studies on the DAS, click on “all studies available for online analysis”.

Examples

Example 1: Single word search

This example looks for studies that include one or more variables with the word “methamphetamine”, using only SAMHDA studies on the DAS (Figure 1).

Figure 2 shows a partial set of study-level search results, which include hypertext links to:

- List matching variables: links to the matching variables in the DAS codebook;
- Study description: the abstract for each study;
- Online analysis: access to the study's initial input screen on the DAS; and
- Browse and download from archive: links to the download page for the ASCII data file, SAS and SPSS data definition statements, and documentation files.

Click on “Find matching variables for all studies” to produce a single page with the matching variables for all studies. The results may display slowly, depending on the number of studies and variables that match the search term.

Select “List matching variables” for the 2001 NHSDA. Figure 3 shows a partial list of variables that contain “methamphetamine” in the question text or labels.

From these results, click on the hypertext links to examine the codebook entry for any of the variables listed (Figure 4). The online codebook provides:

- Variable information such as labels, column locations, missing values, and data type

Figure 1. Input for Variable-level Search.

Search for Specific Variables

(Searches [all studies available for online analysis](#))

methamphetamine

Search SAMHDA Studies on DAS
 Search all ICPSR Studies on DAS

Figure 2. Excerpt from Study-level Search Results.

Search term "methamphetamine" found in the following studies:

- **DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT OUTCOME STUDY**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)
- **DRUG ABUSE WARNING NETWORK, 1997**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)
- **WASHINGTON DC METRO AREA DRUG STUDY, 1991: HOMELESS AND TRANSIENT POPULATION**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)
- **GAMBLING IMPACT AND BEHAVIOR STUDY - ADULT SURVEY**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)
- ⇒ • **NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY ON DRUG ABUSE, 2001**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)
- **NATIONAL PREGNANCY AND HEALTH SURVEY**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)
- **NATIONAL TREATMENT IMPROVEMENT EVALUATION STUDY (NTIES)**
[List matching variables](#) | [Study description](#) | [Online Analysis](#) | [Browse & Download from archive](#)

[Find matching variables in all studies](#)

Figure 3. Partial Variable-level Search Results.

Search term "methamphetamine" found in the following variables:

- **NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY ON DRUG ABUSE, 2001**
 I12MTHRC: [METHAMPHETAMINE RECENCY-DETAILED IMP INDICATOR](#)
 I1MTHRC: [METHAMPHETAMINE - IMPUTATION INDICATOR](#)
 IRMTHAGE: [IMPUTATION-REVISED METHAMPHETAMINE AGE FIRST USE](#)
 IRMTHRC: [METHAMPHETAMINE RECENCY-IMPUTATION REVISED](#)
 IRMTHYFU: [IMPUTATION-REVISED METHAMPHETAMINE YEAR FIRST USE](#)
 METHAGE: [AGE WHEN 1ST USED METHAMPH, DESOXYN, MET](#)
 METHDES: [EVER USED METHAMPHETAMINE, DESOXYN, OR METHEDRINE](#)
 METHDES2: [EVER USED METHAMPHETAMINE, DESOXYN, OR METHEDRINE](#)
 METHMFU: [MONTH OF FIRST METHAMPHETAMINE USE - REC](#)
 METHREC: [TIME SINCE LAST USED METHAMPHETAMINES](#)
 METHYFU: [YEAR OF FIRST METHAMPHETAMINE USE - RECO](#)
 NDTXDG1R: [OTHER DRUG NEEDED TRMT FOR PST 12 MOS - SPECIFY 1](#)
 ⇒ ST19: [HOW LONG SINCE USED METHAMPH, DESOXYN, METHEDRINE](#)
 STIMNEWA: [OTHER STIMULANT - SPECIFY 1](#)
 TXYRNME2: [# TIMES EMER RM FOR TRMT OF ILL DRUGS PST 12 MOS](#)

- A frequency table
- Original question text, if available

To use selected variables in online analysis, click the browser's “back” button until the study-level results page (Figure 2) is displayed, then select “Online analysis” from the study options.

Example 2: Multiple-word search (“OR” search)

For some concepts (e.g., binge drinking during pregnancy), the data in a single study may not appear in same variable. To search for studies containing this combination, enter the words of the search term separated by a space (e.g., binge pregnant). The return is a list of

studies that include both “binge” AND “pregnant” in the question text or labels of any variables. The 1995–2001 NHSDAs meet these search criteria. From the choice of actions available, select “List matching variables” for the 2001 NHSDA.

With a multiple-word search, the initial results will include variables that contain any of the words in the search term (in this example, “binge” OR “pregnant”) (Figure 5). Narrow the search results by applying an “AND” search as shown in Example 3.

Follow the hypertext links to review the codebook entries for variables of interest. To conduct an analysis based on these results, access the DAS, select the year of the study and statistical program, and enter the variable names (e.g., a crosstabulation of PREGNANT by BINGEDRK).

Example 3: Multiple-word search term (“AND” search)

This example searches for “marijuana recency”. The initial study-level search finds 19 studies containing both of these words. Select “List matching variables” for the 2001 NHSDA. The variable-level “OR” search matches numerous variables for “marijuana” OR “recency”. Next, select “Narrow results with an AND search.” This yields 3 variables (Figure 6). The broader results are still accessible either by clicking the browser’s “back” button or by selecting “Show all results with an OR search”.

Additional Information

For additional information about the variable-level search utility, the DAS, or the databases publicly available from the archive, email: samhda@icpsr.umich.edu or phone toll-free (888) 741-7242.

Notes

¹The archive is supported by the Office of Applied Studies at SAMHSA through a subcontract with the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago (NORC) and is based at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan. SAMHDA and Computing and Network Services (CNS) staff at ICPSR developed the variable-level search utility. The DAS is based on the Survey Documentation and Analysis (SDA) software developed at the Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program (CSM) at the University of California at Berkeley.

Figure 4. Example of Online Codebook Entry for Matched Variable.

ST19 HOW LONG SINCE USED METHAMPH, DESOXYN, METHEDRINE			
Text of this Question or Item			
(ST19) How long has it been since you last used Methamphetamine, Desoxyn, or Methedrine?			
Percent	N	Value	Label
7.7	161	1	Within the past 30 days-that is, since DATEFILL
14.2	297	2	More than 30 days ago but within the past 12 mos
78.2	1,640	3	More than 12 months ago
	13	94	DON'T KNOW
	7	97	REFUSED
	53,443	98	BLANK (NO ANSWER)
100.0	55,561		Total
Properties			
Data type:	numeric		
Missing-data codes:	81-*		
Record/columns:	1/1612-1613		

Figure 5. Multiple-word Search Results Using “OR” Search.

Narrow results with an AND search.

Search terms “binge” OR “pregnant” found in the following variables:

- NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY ON DRUG ABUSE, 2001
 - ⇒ BINGEDRK: [BINGE ALCOHOL USE PAST 30 DAYS](#)
 - BINGEHVY: [LEVEL OF ALCOHOL USE PAST MONTH](#)
 - HVYDRK2: [HEAVY ALCOHOL USE PAST 30 DAYS](#)
 - LFSCHWH2: [WHY YOU LEFT SCHOOL](#)
 - PREG: [PREGNANT FEMALES AGED 12-44](#)
 - PREG2: [PREGNANCY STATUS OF FEMALES AGED 12-44](#)
 - ⇒ PREGNANT: [ARE YOU PREGNANT](#)
 - TRIMEST: [CURRENT TRIMESTER OF PREGNANCY - FEMALES AGE 12-44](#)
 - YMEABING: [HAD AN EATING BINGE PAST 12 MONTHS](#)

Figure 6. Multiple-word Search Results Using “AND” Search.

Show all results with an OR search.

Search terms “marijuana” AND “recency” found in the following variables:

- NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY ON DRUG ABUSE, 2001
 - I12MJRC: [MARIJUANA RECENCY-DETAILED IMPUTATION INDICATOR](#)
 - I1MJRC: [MARIJUANA RECENCY - IMPUTATION INDICATOR](#)
 - IRMJRC: [MARIJUANA RECENCY - IMPUTATION REVISED](#)

The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The 2001 data are based on information obtained from 69,000 persons aged 12 or older, including approximately 23,000 youths aged 12 to 17. The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their place of residence.

The NHSDA Report is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies (OAS), SAMHSA, and by RTI in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.



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