CONVERTING STRING VARIABLES IN THE
OCTOBER HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 1999

Most statistical analyses work only with numeric variables. In the OHS 1999 most of the variables are string variables, although their values are all or mostly numbers. In this case it is necessary to convert these string values into their numeric counterparts.

The Stata destring command provides a method for converting string variables into numeric variables:

destring <variablename>, generate(<newvariablename>) force

In the OHS some variables have a combination of alphabetic and numeric values. In this case it is necessary to convert the alphabetic values to numeric values before destringing the variable. To use the example of the Q3_4BUSU variable in the OHS 1999 dataset:

generate <newvariable>= <originalvariable>

replace <newvariable>="." if <newvariable>=="***"

replace <newvariable>="9999" if <newvariable>=="@@@"

destring <newvariable>, generate(<newvariablename>) force

tab <newvariablename>, missing

DataFirst

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