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Research Report

SOEP-Core v39 - CHILDL (formerly BIOAGEL): Content description of the dataset with respondents, topics, and development

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SOEP Survey Papers
Series D - Variable Descriptions and Coding

SOEP-Core v39 – CHILDL (Formerly BIOAGEL): Content Description of the Dataset with Respondents, Topics, and Development

Paulina Mertinkat and Jana Nebelin

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SOEP-Core v39 – CHILDL (Formerly BIOAGEL): Content Description of the Dataset with Respondents, Topics, and Development

By Paulina Mertinkat & Jana Nebelin

1 Introduction

The **CHILDL** data file is generated using information collected in the “Mother & Child” and “Parent & Child” questionnaires, as well as the “Childhood” questionnaires. These questionnaires were given to our SOEP families (samples A-Q), as well as parents from the samples of the Families in Germany (FiD) study, of our IAB-SOEP migration samples and the IAB-BAMF-SOEP refugee samples. The data covers a period from 2003 until 2022 and provides data on different stages of development of children.

The “Mother & Child” & “Parent & Child” questionnaires are part of a series designed for specific cohorts of children living in SOEP households. They address various stages of life history, including the fetal phase, birth, preschool and primary school. By gathering detailed information in age-based questionnaires and for different survey years, the data files allow us to track and monitor future generations within the SOEP.

The following documentation is divided into four additional sections. Section 2 elaborates on the respondents of the instruments, including relevant statistics. Section 3 outlines the questionnaires. Section 4 provides an overview of the topics addressed in the questionnaires. In the [SOEP Companion](#) see Survey Design > SOEP Questionnaires > Parent and Child Questionnaires with a list of correspondence between the former BIOAGEL dataset and the **CHILDL** dataset as well as an overview about used questionnaires and instruments.

The different questionnaire types historically focused on age-specific questions, while also including many comparable questions across various age groups. Since 2022, the previous five separate questionnaires for distinct age groups have been replaced by a single questionnaire that is filtered based on the child's age. Another significant change introduced in 2022 is the shift from targeting specific cohorts, such as parents of children aged newborn to one year, three, six, eight, and ten years old, to offering a shorter, unified questionnaire for parents of all children from newborns to eleven-year-olds. To ensure a comprehensive and seamless data collection process, all variables from the “Mother & Child” and “Parent & Child” questionnaires are now consolidated into a single dataset, **CHILDL**.

Starting with the v34 data distribution, all available data was provided in BIOAGEL. The separate bioage data files were no longer part of the data distribution. Since v39 data distribution **CHILDL** replaced BIOAGEL. To make handling easier for users of the dataset BIOAGEL a list of correspondence is available in the SOEP Companion.

Please note that an error occurred during the transformation from BIOAGEL to CHILDL some cases from the FiD samples have been lost. V40 will contain these cases again.

2 Respondents

Nearly all questionnaires (“Mother & Child” or “Parents & Child”) were answered by one of the parents or caretakers. Particularly the questionnaire for newborns should be answered until now by the mother, because of questions concerning pregnancy. In rare instances where the mother was unable to do so, the father stepped in for this questionnaire concerning newborns. Only one questionnaire “Parents & Child”, was explicitly provided to both parents.

The respondents’ personal ID number, indicating whether the respondent is the father, mother or another caretaker, is recorded in the variable PIDE in the **CHILDL** data set. Note that while the parents are the primary respondents, the data is organized under the child’s unchanging personal ID number (PID). Throughout the survey period from 2003 to 2022, the dataset encompasses information on 21,330 distinct children between 0 and 11 years old. Based on the questionnaire sent to both parents and the longitudinal cohort survey, there is a total of 51,212 observations of these 21,330 children. In the initial round in 2003, 318 questionnaires were completed; by 2022, the number had increased almost tenfold, with 3,280 observations recorded. Table 1 shows the number of observations per year.

Table 1: Number of observations in each survey year

Surveyyear	Number of observations	Surveyyear	Number of observations	Surveyyear	Number of observations
2003	318	2010	5,498	2017	4,225
2004	247	2011	4,312	2018	3,983
2005	504	2012	4,217	2019	3,624
2006	456	2013	4,169	2020	3,221
2007	442	2014	3,407	2021	1,522
2008	668	2015	3,307	2022	3,280
2009	592	2016	3,220		

3 Questionnaires

The SOEP is a household panel, thus all members of an household are important for the survey. The SOEP provides information from cradle to barre. The parent child questionnaires covers the beginning of life of some of our participants. Over the time different questionnaires to parents were introduced. Table 2 gives an overview about different instruments for cohorts and samples, as well as addressed respondents and the year they were implemented.

Table 2: Overview of instruments, corresponding classification by age and respondents

Name of the instrument	Classification by Age	Addressed respondents	First Wave
Mother & Child (Newborns)	0-1 years old	Mothers	2003
Parent & Child (2-3-year-olds)	2-3 years old	Only one of the parents	2005
Parent & Child (5-6-year-olds)	5-6 years old	Only one of the parents	2008
Parents & Child (7-8 years olds)	7-8 years old	Both parents	2010
Parent & Child (9-10-year-olds)	9-10 years old	Only one of the parents	2012
Parent & Child (FiD)	0-10 years old	Only one of the parents	2010
Childhood (0-11-year-olds) (IAB-BAMF-SOEP)	0-10 years old	Only one of the parents	2017
Childhood (0-11-year-olds)	0-11 years old	Only one of the parents	2022

In 2003, the SOEP started to ask parents, mostly mothers, about their newborn children in the *Newborn Questionnaire*. Following the introduction of a questionnaire for parents of for two- and three-year-old children in 2005 and for four- and five-year-old children in 2008, the number of completed questionnaires increased. The implementation of a questionnaire for parents of children eight and 10 years old, combined with the integration of the first parent-child questionnaires from the FiD in 2010, increased the number of personal ID numbers (PIDs) to around 5,500, marking 2010 as the year with the highest number of completed child questionnaires.

In 2017, an integrated cohort-specific instrument for parents which is part of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP refugee samples was implemented. In 2022, SOEP discarded the subdivision into different questionnaires and instead introduced one questionnaire *CHILDHOOD*. This is an integrated, shortened and uniform version which asks all parents of children between the ages of 0 and 11 following different filters in the instrument to do justice to the different ages of the children. Between 2012 and 2022 the number of completed questionnaires varied but always exceeded 1,500 with an average of 4,200.

In the following there is a more detailed of different instruments with the year of introduction in the first brackets and name of the input dataset in second brackets. In the dataset CHILDL the variable *instrument* identifies the questionnaire the information was generated. Next to this the variable *inputdataset* also helps to identify the different sources of the survey.

Mother & Child Questionnaire (2003) for mothers of 0–1-year-old children (\$muki)

The questionnaire was given to all women who gave birth or whose non-biological child turned 1 year in the survey year. It contained questions about the pregnancy, childbirth, childcare situation, and health of the newborn child.

Parent & Child Questionnaire (2005) for parents of 2-3-year-old children (\$muki2)

The questionnaire was given to all mothers whose child turned three in the survey year and included questions about childcare, health and a battery of items on the personality that is supposed to be answered in comparison to children of the same age. Furthermore, mothers were asked to assess their children's adaptive behavior and skills in the areas of communication, everyday life, motor development and social relations

Parent & Child Questionnaire (2008) for parents of 5-6-year-olds (\$muki3)

The questionnaire was given to mothers whose child turned six in the survey year. It included similar questions as Muki B and additional items on the personality scale questions and questions on joint activities with children.

Parents & Child Questionnaire (2010) for both parents of 7-8-year-old children (\$elt)

The questionnaire was given to parents whose child turned eight in the survey year. It is the only cohort-specific instrument that was supposed to be completed by both parents. Questions focused on parenting goals, parenting styles and roles in parenting and further referred to parent's aspirations and expectations for their children's level of school completion.

Parent & Child Questionnaire (2012) for mothers of 9-10-year-old children (\$muki5)

The questionnaire was given to mothers whose child turned ten in the survey year. It contained similar questions as Muki D on questions on parental involvement and parent's aspirations and expectations for children's educational attainment and further referred to friends and leisure activities.

Childhood Questionnaire (2022) for one of the parents of 0-11-year-old children (\$soepcore*)

The questionnaire is given to one of the parents about every child between 0 and 11. It contains a short version of the previous questionnaires. There are two kinds of the questionnaire, one with extra questions for the IAB-BAMF-SOEP refugee samples.

Additional Questionnaire Types for other samples

Parent & Child Questionnaires (2010-2013) for parents of FiD-Samples (integrated in \$muki* or "f" as prefix)

Up to 6 questionnaires were available for the Fid samples. Here too, specific cohorts were surveyed and each cohort received a separate questionnaire. These were largely identical, differing only in age-specific questions.

Childhood Questionnaire (2017-2021) for parents' part of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey of refugees with children of newborn in this year, children becoming three, six, eight and ten in this year. (\$mk)

The questionnaire was given to parents of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP samples. Same age groups like the "Mother & Child" and "Parent & Child" questionnaires were addressed. It contained some questions from these questionnaires and questions especially for refugees.

Table 3 mentions the number of children in each questionnaire type and in total. Due to the different cohorts the last 20 years and the recent switch to all ages, the range of total amount of observations of different ages differs from 289 (seven year olds) to almost 12,800 observations of 10 year olds.

Table 3: Number of children in each questionnaire type differentiated by age

Age/ Questionnaire	Newborn	3 years old	6 years old	8 years old	10 years old	Parent & Child (FiD)	Childhood (IAB-BAMF-SOEP)	Childhood	Total
-3								60	60
0	1,200					861	762	119	2,942
1	3,498					1,046	863	246	5,653
2	3					2,189		232	2,424
3	1	4,552				2,690	1,153	245	8,641
4								307	307
5								304	304
6			5,041			2,040	1,147	304	8,532
7								289	289
8			1	8,588		3,140	828	281	12,838
9								294	294
10				2	4,998	2,151	1,178	292	8,621
11								307	307

Due to the different questionnaire design over the years, a child can have a maximum of 8 observations. Parental participation in all 5 questionnaires, for 7-8 year old children, 2 questionnaires and one observation for 2022. As seen in table 4: 37 children have reached this maximum. One observation is available for the majority of the children. Two observations are available for almost 4,500 children.

Table 4: Overview of instruments, corresponding classification by age and respondents

Number of observations	Number of Children	Number of Children in Percent
1	9,009	42.2
2	4,482	21.0
3	2,985	14.0
4	2,044	9.6
5	1,230	5.8
6	1,139	5.3
7	404	1.9
8	37	0.2

4 Topics

The CHILDL data contain information that can be differentiated in the following 7 blocks:

Topic blocks	Examples of subtopics
Survey Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hour, day and month of the interview - Interview duration - Interviewer ID - Type of interview
Household information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original household number - Gender - Birthday, birth month and birth year - Language spoken at home
Pregnancy and birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pregnancy unplanned or planned - Physical and mental well-being in the last trimester of pregnancy - Conception method - Place of delivery - Birth weight, length and head circumference - Physical and mental well-being in the first 3 months after birth - Hospital stays in the first 3 months after birth - Duration of breastfeeding
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General health condition - Concerns about health - Current height and weight - Disorders, disabilities, and illnesses - Amount and duration of hospital stays in the last 12 months - Amount of doctor visits in the last 3 months
Personality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behavior compared to peers - Behavior today - Child's abilities
Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint activities with the primary caregiver in the last 14 days - Watching TV alone - Frequency of leisure activities - Activities outside the family - Activities within the school - Care givers
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hopes and expectations for school graduation - Last grade received in German and Math - Good relationship with other students - Duration of schooling abroad - School type in Germany - School costs - Attitude towards school - School contact - School sponsor/ authority