

The Census Project

Learning Objectives

Skill

After using this module, students will gain skills in:

- Using software to access and analyze census data
- Identifying independent and dependent variables
- Employing control variables
- Forming testable hypotheses using quantitative data
- Quantitative writing
- Learning how to construct, read, and interpret bivariate tables displaying frequencies and percentages

Substance

- Use the elaboration model to analyze the census data from the SSDAN website.

Structure of the paper

1. Introduce the dataset being used, the name of the dataset, and all variables in the dataset.
2. Identify the dependent, independent, and control variables. Discuss why there is a relationship between the dependent and independent variables, and why you think the control variable may explain at least part of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Find at least three references in the literature to support your argument.
3. Report the frequency distribution of the three variables first. Follow the elaboration model approach to analyze the relationships between the dependent and independent variables with the control variable taken into account.
4. Provide tables and describe the results in the text.
5. Summarize and discuss the results.

SSDAN Handout

Website

You can access WebCHIP through the SSDAN website. Use these instructions:

1. Go to <http://www.ssdan.net/webchip/webchip4>
2. From there, click the “select dataset” dropdown menu on the left sidebar. Find in the drop-down box your desired data set and select it. Example: census2000 (Census 2000 data). Below the drop down menu, a field will populate with a description of the data set as well as a list of possible variables.
3. Select the specific variables you will be looking at by clicking the drop down menus labeled “row” and “column” and select the variables you desire in their respective and corresponding positions.
4. Click on the button labeled with the specific type of chart or table that is desired. For example, if a Frequency table with the variables is desired, select the “Frequency” button. This will populate the field on the right with the respective table or graph.

Analysis

- Use the “frequency” function to see a frequency distribution of all variables
- Create a Percent Down cross-tabulation with the dependent variable as the “Row Variable” and the independent variable as the “Column Variable”. (Example: Pick “Pov” under “Row Variable” and “Gender” under “Column Variable”).
- Use the “Control” function to introduce a control variable by checking the adjacent box to the left of the variable name.