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of the indirect effect is due to the influence of the various control variables. This process of theory testing is probably best explained with an example. Furthermore the income distribution is a little more varied among males than females as indicated by the differences in the standard deviation figures. Mobile cell phones further... the mean score of a distribution expressed in standard deviation units. Use stamps rather than a business reply system to produce a greater sense of personalisation, confidence level, indicates how likely it is that the population parameter will lie within the range specified by the confidence interval. The reasoning that long questionnaires increase the burden on respondents and this leads to increased reluctance to participate and thus leads to non-response. The final point to note about the model in Figure 17.3 is the error term (e5). Relatively 10 is 10 (81 + 19) the most happy third. We would therefore adopt the conservative position and assume that the population correlation is zero. Respondent comments on questions are often available. Sometimes these dimensions themselves can be further subdivided into some more specific subdimensions. A change could occur due to the passing of time, be a result of being measured at Time 1, or be caused by a whole set of other possibilities, and Newby, H. 18 Interpret each of the following sets of results a b c d Correlation -0.45 0.15 0.64 0.24 0.05 Significance 0.001 0.001 0.37 0.05 0.66 19 In the above question why might the correlation of 0.64 be non-significant but the much weaker correlation of 0.15 be significant? In such cases we would simply try to get a wide variety of people in the sample without being too concerned about whether each type was represented in its correct proportion. The problem is not so much in using existing In his study of suicide Durkheim (1970) developed a social explanation for why people suicide based on inducing a common factor that underlay a set of different facts. Postal self-administered questionnaires While telephone and face-to-face interviews are administered by a trained interviewer, postal surveys are self-administered. The use of internet samples of the fact that internet samples are unlikely, at the present stage, to be representative of the general population does not mean that they have no value or future. A close examination of the pattern of correlations shows that certain... www.stat.uc.edu/~west/jahvahl/Regression. ELABORATION CHECKLIST 1 What is your independent variable (X) and your dependent variable (Y)? Although the discussion of research designs has been limited to two groups this is not a requirement. Where the agree-disagree format is needed ensure Sets of response alternatives The sites below provide a very useful set of response wordings with a varying number of response categories for questions where the response categories can be ranked from high to low in some respect. Suppose we have two groups of people as in Table 13.7. Despite the same mean the distribution of the ages in the two groups is vastly different, the mean being a more adequate summary in group A than in group B. It would probably involve interviewers travelling long distances just for one interview. To survey a large area it is best to use either another sampling strategy (see the outline of multistage cluster sampling), or another method of collecting the data such as mail questionnaires, telephone surveys or internet-based surveys. In Figure 15.3 there is a general pattern that the more years of tertiary education a person has completed the higher their income. The line in the graph is called a regression line or the line of best fit. There is the problem of acquiescence—the tendency to agree with a statement regardless of its content—and the problem of social desirability—the tendency to provide the respectable rather than the true response. There is some disagreement about what to do in this situation. Interval estimates In Chapter 13 the logic and use of interval estimates was outlined in relation to univariate analysis. e On the basis of the information in Table 5e, calculate: i the unweighted factor-based scale score for the individual whose scores are provided, ii the weighted factor-based scale score, iii the factor scale score. Please visit my site and make use of these links. Once again we can think in terms of statistical significance and interval estimates. Relatively few (no more than 5 or 6) since each bar is divided into blocks with each... categories go together depends in part on the purposes for which you are using the variable. 1 Careful route planning by the interviewer is required to minimise the time and expense of travelling. reference category; the omitted category in dummy regression but which the regression coefficients of the dummy variables are compared. c To see if sons get on better with their fathers than do daughters. Thus, in Figure 14.4 the first bar represents those with a great deal of interest in politics. These same statistics are also available for online analysis. Social Research - 15/22/03/2:09 PM Page 292 292 7 B if a b c Part IV Analysing survey data iv Do the groups display equality of variance? 10 Is the question too precise? One way of increasing acceptance rates and providing more information about the study is to send an advance letter three to five days before phoning. The format and content of the letter would Social Research - 08/22/03/2:08 PM Page 139 Chapter 8 Administering questionnaires are similar to that for the initial mail questionnaire. Social Research - Endmatter 22/01/03 2:10 PM Page 357 Glossary codebook: a listing of the contents of a data file that identifies the characteristics of each variable. Another excellent interactive regression and correlation simulator. These ten groups are called deciles. Correlation coefficients are a class descriptive statistics. One way around this problem is to use analysis techniques that allow us to control for a whole set of background variables simultaneously without running into the problem of small sample sizes. These two processes are not alternative ways of arriving at good theories but represent two stages with different starting points (see Figure 2.1). 16 How will you handle missing data? PsycInfo Contains citations and summaries of journal articles, book chapters, books reports and dissertations in psychology and psychological aspects of related disciplines (1984 onwards). 1 2 4 3 1 0 20 10 7 Interpretation Very highly traditionalist Moderate Very non-traditionalist An illustration of scale scores... that this is the case, the two groups should be identical before the treatment. Theories can help us pose challenging questions and to be aware of certain problems. We should acknowledge that data collection and analysis are affected by our values and that this may cause us to fall short of the ideal of full and thorough analysis. That is, make sure that the code you allocate is different from a valid code (i.e. one which represents an actual answer to the question). The later versions of SPSS also provide an excellent 'results' coach which will take you step-by-step through your output explaining how to read it and what to watch out for. Do people who divorce seem to be those who marry at a younger age? SCALING CHECKLIST 1 What variables do you want to scale? The principles of multistage cluster sampling can be applied to other contexts where there are no easily available sampling frames. What might the partial coefficient be if: a The test variable is an intervening variable which completely accounts for the zero-order relationship? Figure 14.5 is relatively easy to read, path coefficients. To clarify the idea of the direct and indirect paths and the relative importance of each path, it is helpful to think of the arrows as water pipes of varying diameters depending on the size of the path coefficient (p32 is 'wider' than p31). For nominal and ordinal variables with two categories we can calculate an interval estimate. If the survey involves downloading and opening files you will need to be able to assure respondents that the file is virus free. Was the scale unidimensional and had the questions been answered reliably? Social Research - 15/22/03/2:09 PM Page 212 Univariate analysis This chapter is divided into two main sections. If so, in what direction? The mode is very dependent on how the categories of a variable have been collapsed. Computer-based questionnaires can prevent answers that do not conform to the instructions. Interaction affects operating. OR correlation/rct/htl/simcalc (part of simstat) www.simstat.com/simstwt.htm A spreadsheet-based calculator for calculating... the range of statistics available is provided in Nie et al. 61 Research sheds some light on the effect of informed consent on participation in social surveys. 9 Do any of the variables need to be standardised? This is illustrated in graph c in Figure 15.6 to say that the relationship is strong simply means that if we predict an extra \$300 for each year of education we can be fairly certain that this prediction will hold up in reality. Furthermore, providing details about the study—especially detailed information about the study design, the hypotheses and theories being tested—can distort responses and undermine the validity of the findings. The trouble with using the 0.05 level is that this can be too easy a test of the null hypothesis of no difference: we might reject the assumption of no difference between the categories (i.e. 50/50 split) in the population when there really is no difference (the split really is 50/50). Lists online of Sage Publications. List three variables or concepts for which single item indicators would be adequate and three for which multiple indicators would be more appropriate. An analogy for a scale score is a student's marks in a subject. We should rigorously test our scales and evaluate the validity and reliability of our variables. There is an enormous variety of statistics from which you may choose for univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses. The choice of statistic depends on a range of considerations, a few of which have been discussed in this chapter. This comparison is the same as comparing the column per cent across columns (within a row) in a cross-tabulation. Social Research - Endmatter 22/01/03 2:10 PM Page 359 Glossary eigenvalue: the eigenvalue is a statistic obtained in factor analysis and is a measure that attaches to factors. It is up to us to first define what we mean by the concept and then develop indicators. Computer-based questionnaires can prevent answers that do not conform to the instructions. Interaction affects operating. OR correlation/rct/htl/simcalc (part of simstat) www.simstat.com/simstwt.htm A spreadsheet-based calculator for calculating... the method of converting scores to titles varies between computer packages. e What skills are available (e.g. telephone interviewers, programmers etc)? It is not difficult to analyse and report results in ways that distort the underlying patterns. Similarly, an incomplete sampling frame that omitted certain types of population members (e.g. a list of university students that excluded part-time enrolments) would be biased if our population definition included part-time students. The category for which we do not create a dummy variable becomes a baseline against which we compare regression coefficients for the other categories. X Y Alternatively our interest might be to discover the consequences of the increased divorce rate. For example, take a person who earns \$50 000 a year. Variables for a number of different types of crime could be created and the values for those WEB POINTER 6.2 The British Household Panel Survey with data sets form at least seven waves. random sample: a form of probability sample in which all population units have a known probability of selection. Creative thinker Intuitive thinker Logical thinker I don't think much at all Children I Are you a parent? With PRE-based correlations (Goodman and Kruskal's Tau, gamma, Kendall's Tau and Tau, Somer's d) approximations of the standard error can be computed for these statistics. The first is to separate identifying information from a respondent's answers. (2240) Social Research - 07/22/03/2:08 PM Page 94 7 Constructing questionnaires Questionnaires are the most common method of collecting survey data. This chapter outlines how to: 1. Construct a questionnaire to suit your work; 2. Prepare the wording of questions to be asked; 3. Identify the format of questions to be asked; 4. Prepare the building scales; 5. Check the questionnaire for errors; 6. Prepare the building scales; 7. Prepare the building scales; 8. Prepare the building scales; 9. Prepare the building scales; 10. Prepare the building scales; 11. Prepare the building scales; 12. Prepare the building scales; 13. Prepare the building scales; 14. Prepare the building scales; 15. Prepare the building scales; 16. 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web pointers and tables BOXES 2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5 4.1 4.2 5.1 6.1 Durkheim's suicide as an example of inductive reasoning Gender differences and religion— plausible explanations Stages in testing a theory Urbanism and extended families— propositions to test a theory Urbanism and extended family ties— developing a conceptual model of social capital SES of indicators of concept Guidelines for providing informed consent Using a table of random numbers 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5 1.6 1.7 1.8 1.9 2.0 2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6 2.7 2.8 2.9 3.0 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5 3.6 3.7 3.8 3.9 4.0 4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5 4.6 4.7 4.8 4.9 5.0 5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5 5.6 5.7 5.8 5.9 6.0 6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5 6.6 6.7 6.8 6.9 7.0 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5 7.6 7.7 7.8 7.9 8.0 8.1 8.2 8.3 8.4 8.5 8.6 8.7 8.8 8.9 9.0 9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5 9.6 9.7 9.8 9.9 10.0 10.1 10.2 10.3 10.4 10.5 11.1 11.2 11.3 11.4 11.5 11.6 11.7 11.8 11.9 12.0 12.1 12.2 12.3 12.4 12.5 12.6 12.7 12.8 12.9 13.0 13.1 13.2 13.3 13.4 13.5 13.6 13.7 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method. If a table reflects a clear correlation (positive or negative) for linear measures of association (i.e. circle one) then the measure of association will be (circle one) 10. If there is a non-linear relationship between two ordinal variables which measure of association would you use? 18 What method would you employ to construct scales from the factor analysis? 4 Aspect: Does our interest in divorce centre on the divorce rate, divorce laws, problems with property and custody, attitudes to divorce, ways in which people adjust to divorce or something else? EXERCISES 1 & 2 a Briefly interpret the following set of tables. The sites below contain free evaluation copies of these packages. Can use observation. Some research is not all that interested in working out what proportion of the population gives a particular response but rather in obtaining an idea of the range of responses or ideas that people have. slope: the slope of the regression line. The difference between these two methods can be illustrated using a question about the qualities people think are important in children. EXERCISES 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 List ten nominal, ten ordinal and ten interval-level variables. De Vaus (2001) elaborates on the logic of the methods of survey analysis and on concepts of causality. If follow up is required then a separate file can be created in which the ID number is attached to personal data. Access to this file can be tightly restricted so as to avoid its misuse. Has both symmetric and asymmetric forms and detects only linear relationships. and Strack F. 11 If so, what is the level of measurement of the variables you will use to build another variable? Thus we get a better ranking of people according to their status and can distinguish between small status variations. This gives the number 20749. Who decides what divisions are important? -78 3525 600 730 -0.03 0.34 0.28 0.32 ns 0.000 0.000 0.000 99 2400 530 550 0.06 0.23 0.13 27 ns 0.000 0.000 0.000 MODELS While analysis can focus on the impact of individual variables it is common also to examine the overall impact of a set of variables and consider their joint impact on the dependent variable. This adjustment is useful when comparing scales that would otherwise have different lower and upper limits. Use the table of random numbers (Table 6.1). For brief but very clear discussions see Johnson, Social Statistics Without Tears (1977); Chapter 7 or Chapter 8 of Loether and McTavish, Descriptive Statistics for Sociologists (1974). An evaluation download is available. 12 What upper and lower limits do you want your final scale to have? The next two columns provide the confidence interval for the income differences between these two age groups. This confidence interval ranges from -\$13,712 to \$2366. If we were using ordinal scales to establish social status how would we code this for a married woman since in our society a married woman tends to take on the status of her husband? While controlling for the test variable recompute the relationship between X and Y. Where response categories can be ordered from high to low there should be the same number of response alternatives either side of what might be considered the neutral position. The quotas are organised so that in terms of the quota characteristics the final sample will be representative. Informed consent Informed consent is a close cousin of voluntary participation. Figure 6.7 Sample bias in internet surveys of households ABS, 2000 Note: Australian household computer ownership and internet access are high by international standards. These electronic face-to-face interviews are called Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI). This instruction will automatically create a new standardised version of the specified variable. Figure 6.7 illustrates the way in which an internet sample of the general population would be biased. That is, on average a year of tertiary education has a 'payoff' of \$5200. 4 (X1 - 1) X) -- -10 -5 0 5 10 0 - 1000 500 0 500 1000 - Total N = 100 X 1 = 45 Given the variance formula this means that Total 3000 3000 s2 = !! = 30 100 Notes: a B This would be the deviation for each person in this age category. type I error: where we reject the null hypothesis where in fact it is true in the population (i.e. there really is Social Research - Edmattar 22/1/03 2:10 PM Page 366 366 █ Glossy no relationship in the population). If a person who earned \$1 million was added to Table 13.6 Per cent 7.3 16.9 21.7 19.8 10.6 3.2 2.2 1.9 83.5 16.5 100.0 Valid per cent Cumulative per cent 8.7 20.2 26.0 23.6 12.7 3.9 2.7 2.3 100.0 8.7 26.9 54.8 78.5 91.2 95.1 97.7 100.0 the mean would be \$108 091. These problems make it difficult to deter. █ 139 mine the reasons for unanswered calls, thus creating complications when calculating response rates. (ed.) Researching Social Life London: Sage Putnam, R. █ Enhancements To make graphs easier to read we can add: █ grid lines █ numbers on bars A test of arithmetic skills deals only with subtraction and does not measure ability at multiplication, addition or division lacks content validity. Without detailing the calculations involved this output indicates a F-test figure of 60.834 with a significance level of 0.000. Collapsing categories Frequently the initial coding of a variable results in more categories than we require or can accommodate for data analysis. Different universities could share the same rating and each university would be treated as a separate variable for analysis purposes (see Figure 7.7). The first row represents the pair of age groups 18-25 and 26-39. The average income difference between them is -\$5673 (18-25-year-olds earn on average this much less than 26-39-year-olds). If we use a theory to validate our measure and then use the (valid!) measure to test the theory we have established nothing. Descriptive research can be very concrete or more abstract: it depends on what we wish to describe. Extracting an initial set of factors The main aim of exploratory factor analysis is to see whether a smaller number of common factors can account for the pattern of correlations between a larger number of variables. Alternatively, a seven-point scale might be used in which 'reduce inflation' is placed at one end and 'reduce unemployment' at the other. It is barely more difficult to report statistical data in such a way as to mislead readers. Social Research - 08 22/1/03 2:08 PM Page 144 144 6 █ Part II Collecting survey data Go to the website www.greenfieldonline.com/ and click on the members area icon (you may have to join but it's free) and then look at some of the online surveys. Also includes additional scripts written in a particular programming language (e.g. Perl, ActiveX). 7 Then look across to the code or value that corresponds to this cumulative percentage. In factor analysis we are testing a causal model in which unknown factors are the independent variables and the individual variables are dependent (see Figure 11.2 for a representation of this). Using the column total will produce a column percentage. In SPSS this would be achieved with the following instructions: COMPUTE WEIGHT0=0, binomial test: a test of statistical significance of a single variable with just two categories. Test Variable Population Sample Test Sig. Table 18.6 Stage in child-rearing cycle by religious orientation: differences in regression estimates for men and women Family stage Single Married, no children Married, children in home Married, children left home (Mean) Church attendance (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) 1.5 0.6 0.7 0.1 (0.8) Scale Belief Commitment Revelation (Mean) 2.0 1.2 1.3 0.6 (0.9) 0.8 0.3 1.0 0.5 (0.9) 0.8 0.9 0.5 -0.1 (0.5) (1.3) (0.8) (0.9) (0.3) (0.8) Social Research - 18 22/1/03 2:10 PM Page 350 350 █ Part IV Analysing survey data Family focus: multiple regression analysis The same type of regression analysis was undertaken to examine the extent to which the different levels of family focus among men and women might account for their different levels of religiousness. We'd like you to rate each job with what we call a feeling thermometer. This enabled us to estimate the scores of people on each of the religious scales after the effects of other variables had been controlled. edn) Beverly Hills: Sage Frankel, M.R. and Frankel, L.R. (1987) 'Fifty Years of Survey Sampling in the United States' Public Opinion Quarterly 51, 4, 127-138 Freeman, L.C. (1965) Elementary Applied Statistics New York: Wiley Fukuyama, F. If someone's father had thirteen years of education, how much education would you estimate they would have? Finally, a word of caution about regression coefficients. They are asymmetrical: they will be different according to which variable is independent. The size of the standard error is affected by sample size and the variance of individual variables. In this case, men and women do differ, so there is an association (see Table 14.2). She then reviews ways in which several of these sub-dimensions have been measured and points to the problems of various measures. To convert this number to a percentage we perform the calculation 15509ta101 x 100/110. This task is easily accomplished by computer packages such as SPSS. Example Do people who divorce marry at a younger age than those who do not divorce? vi If you more than two groups will you use an F-test? c Evaluate the existing indicators: i appropriate for the method of data collection to be used? It is no simple task to know what particular observations might be indicating at a more general level. 1999 2000 2001 Figure 6.9 A data grid N of robberies N of assaults N of frauds N of rapes ... What would you do on the basis of these? Even if this means you use many screens it does not make the questionnaire look 'thicker' or longer and therefore does not make the questionnaire appear more onerous. But in many cases there is an alternative: data collected by other people or agencies can often be appropriately used to address the research question at hand. 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Decide on a definition Having listed types of definitions or delineated the most common elements of definitions, we need to decide on which definition to use. We might opt for an existing one, create a new one, choose a classic definition or use a more contemporary one. Another site, found in a similar way, included an article that reviewed different types of definitions and measures of social capital: Journal databases Finally, I searched the Sociological Abstracts online database. You are aware that you are obliged by the law to report any instance where you suspect that child abuse may be taking place. There is no right or wrong approach. CHECKLIST FOR BIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF INTERVAL VARIABLES 1 2 3 4 5 6 What is the level of measurement of the independent and dependent variables? Presenting cross-tabulations The basic principle in presenting readable tables is to provide only the information necessary for accurate interpretation: avoid cluttering tables. Pre-survey contact Preparing the envelopes Since the first task is to get the respondent to open the envelope, it is important to personalise it and avoid making it look like advertising. Thus someone who had completed year 10 would normally have completed eleven years of schooling and thus their education code was recorded to reflect this. This can be done for each level of education, thus producing an approximation to an interval scale. But such compulsion would encounter ethical problems regarding voluntary participation. Although we can ask the person who provides the mail questionnaire to pass it to the appropriate person, we cannot be sure that this happens. Place 1 in the box next to the most important issue, 2 next to the second most important issue and so on. Rather than focusing on sex role socialisation, some people draw attention to the different roles and the different position occupied by men and women in society. We called this a structural location explanation. 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That is, we might continue to say that the population split is 50/50 when in fact it is not. This is particularly likely with small samples. summated scale: a scale formed by adding together scores for each sample member across a number of related variables. Table 15.12 summarises these characteristics. Somers' d: a correlation coefficient for two ordinal variables. We may want to know whether marital breakdown is more common among such families than in the population overall. Commitment or salience: two questions were used: 'How important is God in your life?' Respondents were asked where, on a scale of one to ten, they would place themselves. If you were interested in behaviour you would formulate a question to establish what people do. To be statistical we can do this by simply extending the bivariate regression formula of 'Y = a + bX into ^ X5 = a + b1X1 + b2X2 + b3X3 + b4X4 etc. Because of the personal contact involved, both telephone and particularly face-to-face interviews encounter fewer difficulties with boring questions. For example, the following item would not be very good: 'I never think about the future at all.' It would be better to develop a less extreme question such as: 'It's all very well to develop plans for the future but the first priority should be the here and now.' The process of constructing the rough, initial scales is illustrated in Box 11.1. Ask a group of people, who are similar to those to whom we finally want to give the questions, to answer these draft questions. Had we chosen Catholics as the baseline in the above example we would have obtained the same final estimates. 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