Lab: Crosstabs & Ordinal Tests

Comments

Even though we operate under the assumption here that everyone in this course has been introduced to basic statistical concepts and practices, we make no assumptions about how much everyone remembers about basic statistical concepts and practices. This assignment will continue to encourage you to remember how to do these procedures (or to try them for the first time, if you haven't already been exposed to them.) Lectures, labs, and readings are of course designed to assist you in this learning process, but you might do well to refer to texts and notes from SOC 364 (or whatever others statistics course you've taken) if you run into any confusion.

Instructions

You will be exploring the relationship between two ordinal level variables from the 1996 Survey of American Political Culture. USDECLIN is a variable measuring whether respondents believe that the United States is "in decline" (coded as 1), "holding steady" (2), or "improving" (3). USFUTUR gauges people's responses to the statement that "America's best years are in the future" and is coded 1 for "disagree" and 3 for "agree" (and a value of 2 indicates that the respondent is somewhere in the middle). Take stock of the questions that follow and use SPSS to get the numbers needed to answer them. Submit your output file, with your answers on this sheet.

Questions

1. If someone believes that the United State is in decline overall, what are the chances that that same individual agrees that America's best years are ahead of him/her? How do they compare with the chances that someone who thinks the U.S. is holding steady agrees that America's best years are ahead of her?

2. If you just eyeball it, does it look like there is a relationship between USDECLIN and USFUTUR? If you think there is, what is the nature (shape, form, and strength) of the relationship?

3. Which measure of association does it make sense to use to assess the strength of the relationship between these two variables? On the whole, what do such measures tell you about the relationship?

4. Select one such measure and offer a formal interpretation of its value (from your output). Why did you choose the one that you did?

5. Can you say that there is a relationship between USDECLIN and USFUTUR in the overall U.S. population? Be sure to cite numbers that lead you to that conclusion.

6. What percentage of people jointly hold the belief that the U.S. is in decline and that America's best years are in the future? (This is *not* the same as question 1.) On a theoretical level, what do you make of these people?