Research Methods
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GSS Assignment

The General Social Survey (GSS) is a database of surveys given in the United States. You will be using the GSS to do secondary data analysis. Your end product for this assignment should be a 2-3 page paper and a 4-6 minute presentation. Before you begin, please read the FAQs on the GSS: http://www3.norc.org/GSS+Website/FAQs/

Next, from the homepage, please look at the four links under “Documentation” and the “Browse Variables” Link under “Data”: http://www3.norc.org/GSS+Website/

Guided Activity:

We are going to practice using the crosstabulation function of this website. Pick a dependent and independent variable from the list below. Enter this website: http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/hsda?setupfile=harcsda&datasetname=gss10&ui=1

Click the button that says “Open Extra Codebook Window.”

Check frequencies or crosstabulation and hit start. Enter your independent variable as the column variable and your dependent variable as your row variable. Then, run the table. Refer to the Codebook to see what each question means. What do you see?

List of variables from the GSS that can be used as dependent variables:
Mustwork - When you work extra hours on your main job, is it mandatory?
Chngtme - How often are you allowed to change your starting and quitting times on a daily basis?
Wrkhome - How often do you work at home as part of your job?
Famwkoff - How hard is it to take time off during your work to take care of personal or family matters?
Wkvsfam - How often do the demands of your job interfere with your family life?
Famvswk - How often do the demands of your family interfere with your work on the job?
Secondwk - Do you have any jobs besides your main job or do any other work for pay?
Workfast - Agree/Disagree (My job requires that I work very fast)
Workdiff - Agree/Disagree (I get to do a number of different things on my job)
Lotofsay - Agree/Disagree (I have a lot of say about what happens on my job)
Wktopsat - Agree/Disagree (My main satisfaction in life comes from work)
Respect - Agree/Disagree (At the place where I work, I am treated with respect)
Wkdecide - In your job, how often do you take part with others in making decisions that affect you?
Satjob1 - All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job?

List of variables from the GSS that can be used as independent variables only:
Marital - Marital status
Childs - Number of children
Degree - Highest degree
Sex - Sex
Race - Race
Babies - Household members less than 6 years old

Research Report:

Using the codebook, elect five to be your dependent variables (what you want to explain). Next, you will select three to five additional variables that will serve as your independent variables (the causes). After you have selected your variables, you are to formulate hypotheses (predictions) based on how you think these variables might be related to one another. Do not perform any analyses before writing your hypotheses.

Here is what your paper must contain:

1. Introduction (about ½ page in length):
   Describe the GSS generally. Discuss your research method (secondary analysis). Provide a list of the independent and dependent variables you used in your analyses. Briefly explain why you selected these variables. For example, are they more timely or important issues facing working couples than the other variables?

2. Hypotheses (½ page in length):
   In this section, describe how your independent variables are related to your dependent variables. Be sure to explain why you believe each variable is related (and how) to your dependent variable. You must develop a hypothesis for each relationship for a total of five. Note: For your analyses, be sure to enter your independent variables as the column variables and your dependent variables as your row variables.

3. Results (about 1 page in length):
   You need to report a few things here: For each hypothesis, provide a general summary of the cross-tabulation table and explain whether or not your hypothesis is supported. Be sure to do this for each hypothesis.

4. Theoretical Explanation (about 1 page in length):
   Here you will provide a theoretical explanation of your findings using two sociological theorists, regardless of whether or not your hypotheses were supported. In other words, what accounts for the relationships or lack of relationships among your variables?

5. References:
   Include a reference section that contains a listing of all of the sources you used.