SOC497/L: SOCIOLOGY RESEARCH METHODS

Recoding

Mini-Lecture & Demo

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Lab Difference

- Last SPSS lab: Computing
  - Combined multiple variables into a new one
  - New variable is a *computation* from old ones
- Next SPSS lab: Recoding
  - Reorganizing the values for *one* variable
  - Changing the *coding* (measurement) for *one*
- Handout for each in Canvas, screenshots
  - "Computing in SPSS" & "Recoding in SPSS"

Three Types of Recoding

- Meaningful thresholds
  - Educ: <9 is no HS; 12 is probably HS
  - Others: Ages you can legally drive, vote, drink
- Convenient clustering
  - Could use histogram (or other graphical) groups
  - Might have some empirical or theoretical concern (such as grouping people of color)
- Consistent cutoffs
  - Could simply clip the sample into even 1/3's, ¼'s, etc.
  - Find the appropriate % in the Cum Percent column

Effect of Recoding

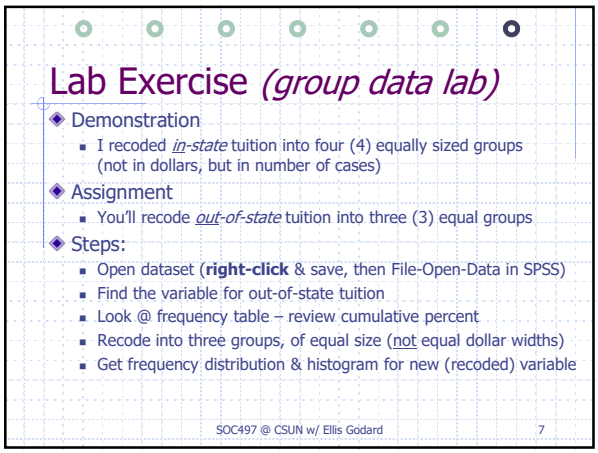
- Reduces the precision
  - Lowers the Level of Measurement (I>O or even O>N)
- Cannot go the other direction
  - Can't get more precision from less
  - From "Didn't make it HS", don't know # of years

Recoding in SPSS (See handout!)

- Transform > Recode *into new variable*
- Pick variable(s) to recode (as in Analyze>Desc>Freq)
- Give each a new name (and ensure "?" is gone)
- Give SPSS instructions on Old & New Values, e.g.
  - 1-8 becomes 1 (for no HS)
  - 9-11 becomes 2 (for some HS)
  - 12 becomes 3 (for HS)
  - 13+ becomes 4 (beyond HS)

Lab Demo

- I'll recode *in-state* tuition into four (4) equally sized groups
  - Not equal dollar ranges, but ranges each w/ the same number of cases
- Steps:
  - Open dataset (**right-click** & save, then File-Open-Data in SPSS)
  - Find the variable for in-state tuition
  - Look @ frequency table – review cumulative percent
    - The first fourth of cases ranges from whatever the lowest value is, to the the value in the row where the cum% is (or is just past) 25
    - The next 4th @ 50%, etc…
  - Recode into four groups, of equal size (not equal dollar widths)
    - See "Recoding in SPSS" handout in Canvas for steps & screenshots
  - Get frequency distribution & histogram for new (recoded) variable


Lab Exercise (group data lab)
Demonstration
I recoded in-state tuition into four (4) equally sized groups (not in dollars, but in number of cases)
Assignment
You'll recode out-of-state tuition into three (3) equal groups
Steps:
Open dataset (right-click & save, then File-Open-Data in SPSS)
Find the variable for out-of-state tuition
Look @ frequency table – review cumulative percent
Recode into three groups, of equal size (not equal dollar widths)
Get frequency distribution & histogram for new (recoded) variable
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