

Measuring bivariate relationships – categorical data

Categorical data is much simpler in form than measurement data. This greatly limits what we can do with it in terms of looking for association. However, some of the most important variables in sociology happen to occur in nominal or ordinal form. Racism implies association with race; sexism implies association with gender; if we are to examine these social forces (and others based on nominal or ordinal distinctions), we need to be able to measure categorical association. Two of the three major ways we have to look for association are described in this lecture (the third, chi-square, is examined later in the term).

- Guessing and error
- Measuring the proportional reduction of error: how much is a lot?
- Lambda
 - direction of prediction
 - why can't it be used with ordinal data?
- Gamma and the idea of paired observations
 - direction of relationship