**Class Activities**

Chapter Ten: Relationships Between Two Variables: Cross Tabulation

Activity #1 (Group or individual)

Have students search the archives of a selected magazine or newspaper. Ask students to choose two articles that include a bivariate table with an independent variable, a dependent variable, and a control variable. Ask students to percentage the tables and use the percentage difference method to determine the strength of the relationship. Students can summarize the findings by answering the following questions:

a) Do the articles specifically identify independent and dependent variables? Although articles may not use this terminology, students should be able to identify these variables.

b) In the text of the article, is the discussion of the table accurate and complete? Are the differences between categories large or small enough to support the author(s)’conclusions?

c) How could the presentation of the table have been improved?

Activity #2 (Group or individual)

Have students search the archives of an academic journal. Ask students to choose two articles that include a bivariate table with an independent variable, a dependent variable, and a control variable. Ask students to percentage the tables and use the percentage difference method to determine the strength of the relationship. Students can summarize the findings by answering the following questions:

a) Do the articles specifically identify independent and dependent variables? Although articles may not use this terminology, students should be able to identify these variables.

b) In the text of the article, is the discussion of the table accurate and complete? Are the differences between categories large or small enough to support the author(s)’ conclusions?

c) Could the presentation of the table have been improved?

Activity #3 (Group or individual)

Suppose we are interested in comparing two sets of beliefs where the categories are hierarchical (e.g., do not believe, believe, believe strongly). Have students use either GSS or Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (<http://religions.pewforum.org>) data sources to locate variables of interest. Ask students to construct a bivariate table based on their variables of interest. Students should be able to percentage the table and explain their results using the percentage difference method discussed in Chapter Ten. Ask students to come together as a class and discuss some of the limitations of analyzing attitudinal data. Are these variables problematic? Why or why not?

Activity #4 (Individual)

Have students examine Table 10.4 and Table 10.6 and answer the following about each table:

a) List the independent variable, the dependent variable, and the level of measurement of each.

b) Assess whether or not there is a relationship and, if applicable, the direction of the relationship

c) Summarize the relationship between the two variables using statistics by starting with the high values and low values

d) Are there any factors that may have influenced the relationship but were excluded from the table(s)?

Activity #5 (Group or individual)

Table 10.10 and Table 10.11 provide good examples of how scale variables can be appropriately used in a bivariate table. Have students examine the recoding that occurred for the tables. Ask students to develop a bivariate table that has recoded scale variables. It may be useful to provide students with examples of scale variables that can be recoded, such as income, weight, exam scores, etc.