

Student Learning Module
Investigating Children in Poverty

Learning Objectives

Skill

After the completion of this module, the learner should be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to state a hypothesis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of both the dependent and independent variable.
- Demonstrate how to create a cross-tabulation using both frequencies and percentages.
- Examine and use web resources to explore possible policy implications of data findings in this module.

Substance

- Explain how each of the following variables is related to child poverty within the United States: Race, Age, Family Type, Family Size, and Immigrant Status.
- Explain what is meant by the term feminization of poverty.
- Demonstrate an effective use of the sociological imagination.

Learner's name _____

Learner Pre-Assessment

Before beginning this module, take a few minutes to respond to the following questions:

1. What is meant by the term feminization of poverty?
2. Do you think family types are related to the child poverty issues? Why or Why not?
3. Do you think there are racial differences in the numbers of children experiencing poverty? Why or Why not?
4. How comfortable are you with numerical information? Please circle which best describes you.
 - Not Comfortable
 - Somewhat Comfortable
 - Comfortable
 - Very Comfortable
 - Extremely Comfortable

A Brief Introduction to the Topic:

By now you are familiar with definitions of poverty in this course as well as some of the theoretical explanations for poverty. According to your textbook, over 12 million children in this country live below the poverty line. Both conservatives and liberals in the United States have named various causes ranging from family breakdown to increasing unemployment. In this module, you will have the opportunity to explore the relationship between race, age, family type, family size, and immigrant status with child poverty in the United States. You will need to use your sociological imagination and sociological toolbox in order to complete this module.

For this assignment, you will be using the following dataset within WebCHIP: CHLDPOV9.DAT. This data set is a collection of information based on children in the United States in 1990. The ages ranged from 0 to 17.

You can access WebCHIP through the SSDAN website. Use these instructions:

1. <http://www.ssdan.net/datacounts/data/>
2. From there, click "Browse" on the left sidebar. Find "census1990" in the drop-down box and select it.
3. Scroll down through the list of data sets until you find "CHLDPOV9.DAT". Highlight and click "submit." This will bring up the data set in the WebCHIP program and it is ready for analysis.
4. You can also click [here](#) to open the dataset in WebCHIP.

Before we begin, let's take a closer look at the data. Use the Marginals function in WebCHIP and let's examine the data for each variable.

Please complete the following information:

1. What percentage of children are white? _____
2. What percentage of children live in married coupled homes? _____
3. What percentage of children are ages 0-5? _____
4. What percentage of children are Native born? _____
5. What percentage of children live in a family with 2 people? _____
6. What percentage of children live in poverty? _____

Investigating Relationship #1 RACE

If you as a researcher used various theories on poverty and you believe that some racial groups might have more children in poverty than other racial groups, what hypothesis would you be examining?

STATE HYPOTHESIS 1: _____

(Remember your rules on how to state a hypothesis).

In the above hypothesis:

What would be your independent variable? _____

Why? _____

 _____.

What would be your dependent variable? _____
 Why? _____

 _____.

CREATE A PERCENT DOWN CROSS TAB TO EXAMINE YOUR HYPOTHESIS

FILL IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE INDICATING PERCENTS

		Race					
		NL White	Black	Latino	Asian	American Indian	Other
Poverty Status	Comfortable						
	Middle						
	Near Poor						
	Poverty						
	Column Total						

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 1

In examining the above table, explain the relationship that seems to exist between race and child poverty

 _____.

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 2:

Overall, do you seem to be on the right track with your hypothesis? Why or Why not?

Investigating Relationship #2 Native or Foreign Born

If you are a researcher who expects that foreign born children may experience more poverty than native born children, what hypothesis are you specifically examining?

STATE HYPOTHESIS 2: _____
(Remember your rules on how to state a hypothesis).

In the above hypothesis:

What would be your independent variable? _____
Why? _____
_____.

Now, try examining the relationship by creating a percent down cross-tabulation. Please place percentage data below.

		Birth Status		
		Native	Foreign	All
Poverty Status	Comfortable			
	Middle			
	Near Poor			
	Poverty			
	Total			

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 3 (See table prior)

In examining the above table, explain the relationship that seems to exist between birth status and child poverty.

_____.

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 4

Overall, do you seem to be on the right track with your hypothesis? Why or why not?

_____.

Investigating Relationship #3 Age of Children

If you as a researcher wanted to investigate whether or not there is a difference in the numbers of younger children who experience poverty versus older children, what would be your specific hypothesis?

STATE HYPOTHESIS 3: _____
(Remember your rules on how to state a hypothesis).

In the above hypothesis:

What would be your independent variable? _____
Why? _____
_____.

What would be your dependent variable? _____

CREATE A PERCENT DOWN CROSSTAB TO EXAMINE YOUR HYPOTHESIS
(Be sure to use percentages)

		Child's Age		
		0 to 5	6 to 17	All
Poverty Status	Comfortable			
	Middle			
	Near Poor			
	Poverty			
Total				

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 5

In examining the above table, explain the relationship that seems to exist between birth status and child poverty. _____
_____.

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 6

Overall, do you seem to be on the right track with your hypothesis? Why or why not?

_____.

Investigating Relationship #4 Family Type

If you as a researcher used various theories on poverty and believed that children living in single-parent homes experience more poverty than children in homes where both parents are present, what hypothesis would you be examining?

STATE HYPOTHESIS 4: _____

(Remember your rules on how to state a hypothesis).

In the above hypothesis:

What would be your independent variable? _____

Why? _____

What would be your dependent variable? _____?

CREATE A PERCENT ACROSS CROSSTAB TO EXAMINE YOUR HYPOTHESIS

		Family		
		MrrdCPL	MaleFam	FemlFaml
Comfortable				
Middle				
Near Poor				
Poverty				
Total				

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 7

1. What is meant by the term feminization of poverty(See your textbook)? _____

2. Is there any evidence for this in the above chart? Explain.

Overall, do you seem to be on the right track with your hypothesis? Why or why not?

Investigating Relationship #5 Number of People in Your Family

Using your sociological imagination and knowledge what do you think the relationship might be between number of people in a family and child poverty? State your hypothesis below with a brief explanation.

STATE HYPOTHESIS 5: _____
 (Remember your rules on how to state a hypothesis).

Why? _____

In the above hypothesis:

What would be your independent variable? _____

Why? _____
 _____.

What would be your dependent variable? _____

CREATE A CROSS TAB TO EXAMINE YOUR HYPOTHESIS

	Family Size					
	2	3	4	5	6	All
Comfortable						
Middle						
Near Poor						
Poverty						
Total						

CRITICAL THINKING MOMENT 8

In examining the above table, explain the relationship that seems to exist between family size and child poverty _____?

Of all the independent variables examined in this exercise, which one seem to explain the most poverty?

Why? _____

 _____.



SOCIAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENT

Congratulations, you finished your data analysis, now it is time to think about what all this means for our society and for creating better solutions to the social problem of Child Poverty.

Go the following websites:

National Center for Children in Poverty

<http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/>

Children's Defense Fund

www.childrensdefense.org/

Spend some time examining some of the suggested programs and policies suggested by these two organizations to assist children in poverty. Please keep in mind some of the data presented in this exercise. Do any of the programs specifically target issues concerning the feminization of poverty? Do any of the programs focus on younger children?

After examining these websites, take some time to answer the following questions. Please type your answers and attach to this sheet. Be prepared to discuss in class.

Question 1: What are some ideas suggested by the National Center for Children Poverty?

Question 2: What are some ideas suggested by the Children's Defense fund?

Question 3: What do you think is needed? Why?

LEARNER'S POST ASSESSMENT

Take a few moments to reflect upon what you have learned in this module:

1. What factors seem to be related to child poverty?

2. What surprised you most about doing this module? Explain

3. How comfortable are you with numerical information? Please circle which best describes you.
 - Not Comfortable
 - Somewhat Comfortable
 - Comfortable
 - Very Comfortable
 - Extremely Comfortable