

Descriptive Analysis of American Culture, Values, and Beliefs

Ningxin Li

Abstract

Culture is a term that can be described as many different inter-related meanings according to the characteristics of a group of people who share similar beliefs and values (Datesman & Kearny, 2005). The aim of a quantitative study is to classify and count statistics, and to interpret the data in relation to the research problem under investigation. This research will give a brief overview of the cultural values of Americans. The research process includes collecting variables and evaluating measurements. This research quantitatively examines Americans' culture, values, and beliefs, such as their religious preference, educational choice, preferable number of children, number of hours worked per week, sex values, and family income situations, and to see if these variables represent Americans' views. This research will explore the differences of ideas between Americans and their views towards different issues, as well as to discover facts about their beliefs and preferences in their lives. This analysis will enhance the understanding of shared cultures and promote communication for people who come from different backgrounds.

Keywords: Descriptive analysis, Skewness and Kurtosis, total family income

Descriptive Analysis of American Culture, Values, and Beliefs

American culture and lifestyles can be unique and different from other nations around the world (Datesman, JoAnn,& Kearny, 2005). Culture encompasses many different fields such as their attitudes towards family, education, religious preference, lifestyle, and work ethic. Social Identity Theory indicates that certain groups categorize themselves as one group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity theory emphasizes analyzing the ingroup differences and how people maintain a positive relationship within the culture of society. A social group with different social classes and families would form a sense of self-esteem and self-recognition, as well as having a sense of their roles within the social world (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

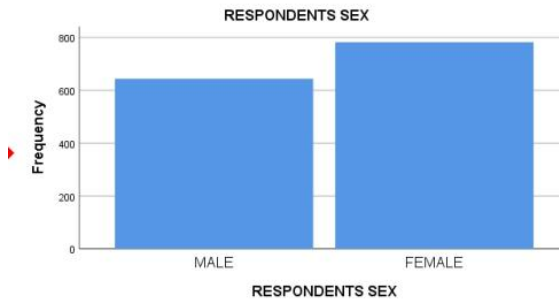
This research of the opinions of Americans is based on General Social Survey. Understanding religious phenomena in the United States was one of the essential knowledges of learning social sciences and cultures (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). Quantitative data gives the researcher a view of details of a larger sample. It is based on discovering facts and the results are clearly shown through objective data. The researcher wants to understand what religious preferences Americans have. What is the highest educational degree an American has? How many children do they have? How many hours do they work per week? This study also tests the family income variable in a quantitative descriptive statistics study. The researcher chooses quantitative descriptive statistics method to provide information about variables and to highlight potential relationships between different variables (Healey, 1990). For example, the researcher will analyze the measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion. Measures of central tendency including analyzing the mean, median, and mode (Healey, 1990). It will enhance the understanding of each variable and the relationships between different variables.

American Values and Beliefs

Variable Name	Level of Measurement	Mode	Median	Mean	Range	Standard Deviation
Sex Religion race	Nominal	2 1 1				
Degree Level of happiness Views of sex before marriage	Ordinal	1 2 4	2 2 3			
hours of work Numbers of children Age Income	Interval/ratio	40 0 48 18	40 2 45 18	42.13 1.86 46.88 16.39	95 8 71 24	14.16 1.639 17.086 5.579

RESPONDENTS SEX

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	644	45.2	45.2	45.2
	FEMALE	782	54.8	54.8	100.0
Total		1426	100.0	100.0	



Statistics

RESPONDENTS SEX

N	Valid	1426
	Missing	0
Mode		2

Data are formed of statistics and were arranged in graphs, tables, and charts. For example, age of Americans is a common demographic question and will be recorded in this research. There was a total 1,426 people who responded to the survey. The data were chosen from the General Social Survey database. Variables included nominal, ordinal, and ratio variables (Healey, 1990). There were numbers of hours people worked last week, number of children, age, highest degree, sex, total family income, religious preference, general happiness, sex before marriage, and race. In this test, the researcher wants to know the relationship between male and female in the United States. The sex variable for the descriptive frequency is one for male, two for female. For the central tendency, the female occurs the most frequently based on mode data. Frequency for females is 782, and frequency for males is 644. The percentage of males is 45.2%, and for females is 54.8%.

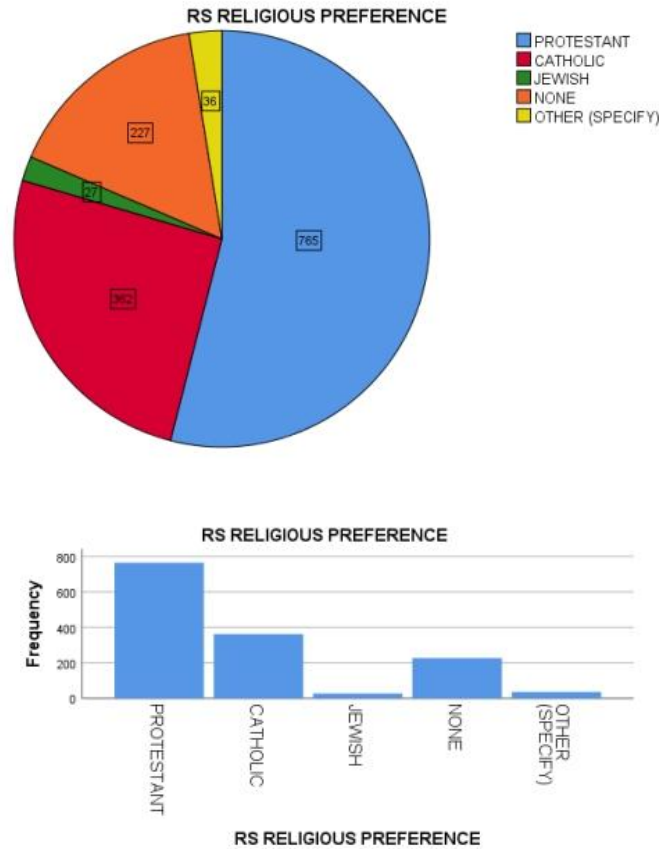
Statistics

RS RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

N	Valid	1417
	Missing	9
Mode		1

RS RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PROTESTANT	765	53.6	54.0	54.0
	CATHOLIC	362	25.4	25.5	79.5
	JEWISH	27	1.9	1.9	81.4
	NONE	227	15.9	16.0	97.5
	OTHER (SPECIFY)	36	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total		1417	99.4	100.0
Missing	NA	9	.6		
Total		1426	100.0		



In the United States, people are from different countries and brought their cultures here. They have all types of religions, and people speak languages from different parts of the world (Datesman, JoAnn & Kearny, 2005). Quantitative research can measure religious variables and give people ideas about who is religious and who is not. The researcher wants to know: What are the religious preferences of typical Americans? When we see the variable of religious preference in the graph, we have variables, such as Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, none, and other. When analyzing the descriptive statistics, the total valid cases are 1,417, missing cases are 9. The mode is 1, which is Protestant. The statistic shows that Protestant has 54%, Catholic has 25.5%, Jewish has 1.9%, none is 16%, and other population is 2.5% respectively.

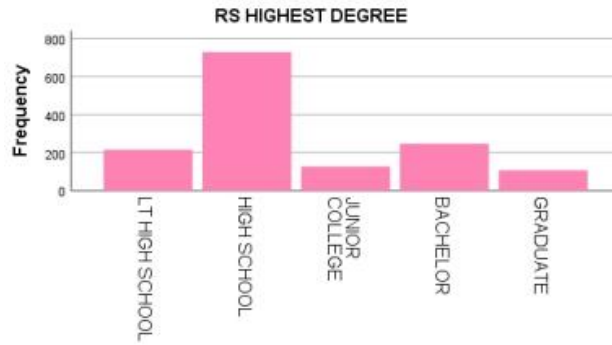
Statistics

RS HIGHEST DEGREE

N	Valid	1425
	Missing	1
Median	1.00	
Mode	1	

RS HIGHEST DEGREE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LT HIGH SCHOOL	216	15.1	15.2	15.2
	HIGH SCHOOL	728	51.1	51.1	66.2
	JUNIOR COLLEGE	127	8.9	8.9	75.2
	BACHELOR	247	17.3	17.3	92.5
	GRADUATE	107	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	1425	99.9	100.0	
Missing	NA	1	.1		
	Total	1426	100.0		



This research also tests Americans’ highest level of education. The median of the distribution is 1, the valid number of cases are 1,425, and the missing data value is 1. The mode 1 is associated with the population of those with a high school diploma. When looking at the frequency, 216 is for less than high school degree, 728 is for high school students, 127 is for junior college, 247 is for bachelor’s degree, and 107 is for graduate degree.

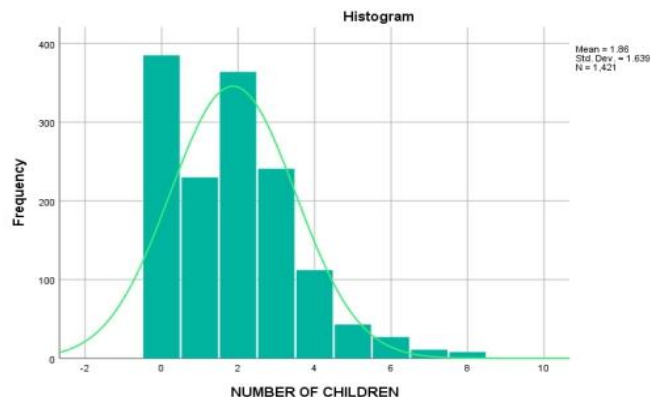
Statistics

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

N	Valid	Missing
	1421	5
Mean	1.86	
Median	2.00	
Mode	0	
Std. Deviation	1.639	
Variance	2.686	
Skewness	.864	
Std. Error of Skewness	.065	
Kurtosis	.776	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.130	
Range	8	

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	385	27.0	27.1	27.1
1	230	16.1	16.2	43.3
2	364	25.5	25.6	68.9
3	241	16.9	17.0	85.9
4	112	7.9	7.9	93.7
5	43	3.0	3.0	96.8
6	27	1.9	1.9	98.7
7	11	.8	.8	99.4
EIGHT OR MORE	8	.6	.6	100.0
Total	1421	99.6	100.0	
Missing DK NA	5	.4		
Total	1426	100.0		

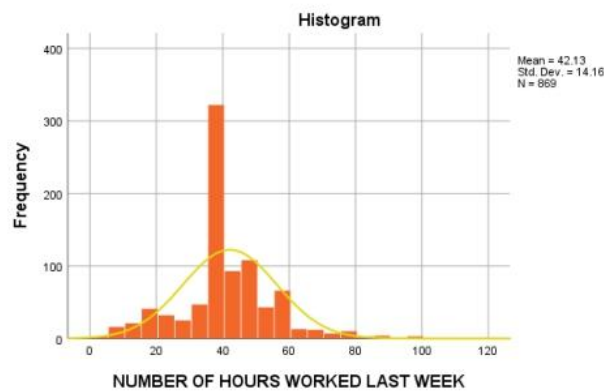


Americans' view about the ideal number of children in a family might have changed over the years. Quantitative descriptive study illustrates the logical links between numbers (Field, 2018). This test shows how many children an American has. For this test, the total valid cases are 1,421, missing cases are 5. In addition, the mean is 1.86, the median is 2, and the mode is 0. The variance is 2,686 and the range is 8. The indicator for the central tendency will be used to analyze the mean, median, and mode for the distribution. For the dispersion, the researcher will analyze standard deviation, variance, range, and choose Skewness and Kurtosis for data analysis. It shows that the histogram is a positive skew and a positive Kurtosis.

Statistics

NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED LAST WEEK

N	Valid	869
	Missing	557
Mean		42.13
Median		40.00
Mode		40
Std. Deviation		14.160
Variance		200.508
Range		95
Minimum		3
Maximum		98
Percentiles	25	38.00
	50	40.00
	75	50.00



Average Hours Per Week Worked in the United States

Histograms provide a clear representation of the frequency of the data. Frequency is how often the variables occurs (Healey, 1990). Americans have a sense of pride in being responsible for themselves and know that other people also expect them to be independent (Datesman, JoAnn & Kearny, 2005). The previous study shows that Americans work more in the industrialized world, and workforce participation in the United States has increased, which means that Americans have to work longer hours so that they could gain more income (Isidore & Luhby, 2015). Despite Americans belief that spending time with their friends and family and being with other people is important in their culture, Americans are hard workers and understand their roles in a career and their ability to participate in society. This test is to investigate how many hours Americans worked within a week and the average amount of hours. This histogram shows the different number of hours Americans worked within a week. There are 869 valid cases and 557 missing cases. The mean is 42.13, the median is 40, the mode is 40, the standard deviation is 14.16, and the range is 95. The frequency distribution shows that there was one person who worked 3 hours, 8 people who worked 10 hours, 27 individuals who worked 20 hours, and 278 people who worked 40 hours.

Statistics

		GENERAL HAPPINESS	SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE
N	Valid	961	603
	Missing	465	823
Mean		1.79	2.93
Median		2.00	3.00
Mode		2	4
Std. Deviation		.652	1.252
Variance		.425	1.568
Range		2	3
Minimum		1	1
Maximum		3	4
Percentiles	25	1.00	2.00
	50	2.00	3.00
	75	2.00	4.00

GENERAL HAPPINESS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VERY HAPPY	324	22.7	33.7	33.7
	PRETTY HAPPY	512	35.9	53.3	87.0
	NOT TOO HAPPY	125	8.8	13.0	100.0
	Total	961	67.4	100.0	
Missing	NAP	462	32.4		
	DK	3	.2		
	Total	465	32.6		
Total		1426	100.0		

Americans might have different lifestyles and ways of considering happiness. American people believe in freedom of choice. They are mostly friendly and like to say, “Good morning” or “How are you doing” as a greeting in a communication. For the variable of general happiness, the mean is 1.79, the median is 2, and the mode is 2. There were 324 people who responded that they were very happy, 521 people who responded that they were pretty happy, and 125 people who responded that they were not too happy. The highest percentage is 53.3% of people, who indicated that they were pretty happy.

SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ALWAYS WRONG	150	10.5	24.9	24.9
	ALMST ALWAYS WRG	46	3.2	7.6	32.5
	SOMETIMES WRONG	106	7.4	17.6	50.1
	NOT WRONG AT ALL	301	21.1	49.9	100.0
	Total	603	42.3	100.0	
Missing	NAP	806	56.5		
	DK	13	.9		
	NA	4	.3		
	Total	823	57.7		
Total		1426	100.0		



In addition, for the variable of sex before marriage, the mean is 2.93, the median is 3, and the mode is 4. There were 150 people who responded that sex before marriage was always wrong, 46 indicated that it was almost always wrong, 106 indicated that it was sometimes wrong, and 301 people indicated that sex before marriage was not wrong at all. However, the highest population of 49.9% believed that sex before marriage was not wrong at all.

Also, when people who have different backgrounds interact with each other, their culture became more diverse, while differences such as income standard and age should be used as the basis for interacting with others (Tajfel, 1981).

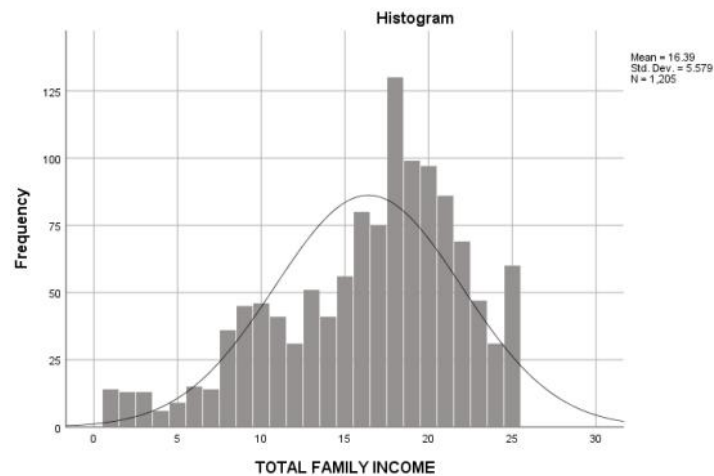
Statistics

TOTAL FAMILY INCOME

N	Valid	1205
	Missing	221
Mean		16.39
Median		18.00
Mode		18
Std. Deviation		5.579
Variance		31.129
Range		24

Total Family Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	UNDER \$1 000	14	1.0	1.2	1.2
	\$1 000 TO 2 999	13	.9	1.1	2.2
	\$3 000 TO 3 999	13	.9	1.1	3.3
	\$4 000 TO 4 999	6	.4	.5	3.8
	\$5 000 TO 5 999	9	.6	.7	4.6
	\$6 000 TO 6 999	15	1.1	1.2	5.8
	\$7 000 TO 7 999	14	1.0	1.2	7.0
	\$8 000 TO 9 999	36	2.5	3.0	10.0
	\$10000 TO 12499	45	3.2	3.7	13.7
	\$12500 TO 14999	46	3.2	3.8	17.5
	\$15000 TO 17499	41	2.9	3.4	20.9
	\$17500 TO 19999	31	2.2	2.6	23.5
	\$20000 TO 22499	51	3.6	4.2	27.7
	\$22500 TO 24999	41	2.9	3.4	31.1
	\$25000 TO 29999	56	3.9	4.6	35.8
	\$30000 TO 34999	80	5.6	6.6	42.4
	\$35000 TO 39999	75	5.3	6.2	48.6
	\$40000 TO 49999	130	9.1	10.8	59.4
	\$50000 TO 59999	99	6.9	8.2	67.6
	\$60000 TO 74999	97	6.8	8.0	75.7
	\$75000 TO \$89999	86	6.0	7.1	82.8
\$90000 TO \$109999	69	4.8	5.7	88.5	
\$110000 TO \$129999	47	3.3	3.9	92.4	
\$130000 TO \$149999	31	2.2	2.6	95.0	
\$150000 OR OVER	60	4.2	5.0	100.0	
	Total	1205	84.5	100.0	
Missing	REFUSED	145	10.2		
	NA	76	5.3		
	Total	221	15.5		
Total		1426	100.0		



This histogram shows that when testing the variable of total family income, there is a total of 1,205 valid cases and 221 missing cases. The mean is 16.39, the median is 18, the mode is 18, the standard deviation is 5.579, and the range is 24. The frequency distribution shows that there were 14 families who had income under \$1,000, 130 families who had income between \$40,000 to \$49,999, 60 families who had income of \$150,000 or over. The highest rate is 10.8% of people with an income of \$40,000 to \$49,999, and there are only 0.5% of people with an income between \$4,000 to \$4,999.

Conclusion

The United States is a diverse country, it was influenced by many different cultures. Many Americans come from different ethnic groups of their ancestors who emigrated from various nations or cultures. Personal values and behaviors reflect the culture of the society, while culture shapes people's understanding of how to express their ideas and view the world around them. People might have personal characteristics towards personal preferences. Individuals also have shared common sense and knowledge that make the group members to agree with each other. Americans believe in understanding the importance of equality of opportunity. Everyone has an equal chance for chasing their dreams and obtaining success. American values were influenced by the ideology of building a democratic nation which truly makes them unique.

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