**Discussion Questions**

Chapter Two: Organization of Information: Frequency Distributions

Discussion Question #1

At the close of Chapter Two, we presented several frequency distributions which provide summary statistics on several economic and social indicators for Mexicans living in the United States. In each of these frequency distributions, only partial information is displayed. Discuss why this is the case. What are the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing different formats when creating frequency distributions? Why would researchers be motivated to use frequency distributions that present only partial information?

Discussion Question #2

Discuss the characteristics of a rate in light of the definition presented in Chapter Two. Describe some specific research problems and/or study designs that are particularly appropriate for the use of rates. Are there any research problems and/or study designs where the use of rates may be inappropriate? Are you satisfied that the risk set (i.e., the population at risk) adequately and concisely captures the risk of exposure to some event? Why or why not?

Discussion Question #3

Table 2.4 in Chapter Two displays employment status characteristics for three categories of Hispanics in the United States. Discuss why it is often useful to display multiple frequency distributions at once. How may doing this enrich the information being presented, and subsequently enhance the argument of the author(s)?

**Table 2.4** Employment Status of the Foreign-Born Population by Race and Hispanic Ethnicity, 2010 (percentages)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Employment Status*** | ***White Non- Hispanic***  N = ***7,363*** | ***Black Non- Hispanic***  N = ***2,898*** | ***Asian Non- Hispanic***  N = ***8,072*** | ***Hispanic***  N = ***17,162*** |
| Employed | 56.2% | 65.3% | 61.1% | 62.8% |
| Unemployed | 4.5 | 9.3 | 4.8 | 8.0 |
| Not in labor force | 39.3 | 25.4 | 34.2 | 29.2 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100.1% | 100% |

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Statistical Abstract of the United States, Table 589*.

Discussion Question #4

Discuss some explanations for the data in the below table from page 46 in the text.

