

Religion and Views on Homosexuality

Both at the local and the national level, homosexuality is being increasingly discussed in public forums. In these discussions, it is difficult to ignore the role religion has in shaping many individuals' viewpoints on this topic. Here we will explore national survey data from the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) to see how religion affects respondents' views towards homosexuality.

If you find yourself lost at any point, look to the instructions on the right.

Open your web browser and go to the homepage for the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA).

First, let's find some survey questions in the ARDA's datasets that ask respondents about their views on homosexuality. Search for the word "homosexual" or "homosexuality."

1. You may find several questions that fit your search criteria, but find a variable with the name HOMO BK (these are short-hand names of questions that were asked in surveys). What does this question ask?

2. What is the name of the survey that this question was asked in? Hint: The name of the survey is to the right of the question's short-hand name.

Let's learn some more about this survey.

3. How many people participated in this survey? (Hint: People are often referred to as "cases" in datasets.)

Open your web browser.

Go to www.thearda.com

Click on "Data Archive" in the main menu.

Click on the "Search Archive" tab.

Search for "homosexual."

Click on the name of the survey and it will take you to a description of the survey.

4. Is this a national, regional, or local survey?

OK, now that we know more about the survey that we are looking at, let's go back to the question you had found earlier. Click on "Search" tab and find the variable. After you find it again, click on the variable name to bring up a basic table of responses.

5. What **percent** responded that they would "Favor" the action proposed in this question?

Before we analyze this question further, let's formulate a hypothesis. What do you think the relationship between church attendance and responding in favor to this question will be? In other words, do you think responses in favor of this question will increase, decrease, or stay the same as church attendance increases?

6. Write your hypothesis:

Fill in the following table to test your hypothesis about church attendance and responses to the question.

7. Fill in the following table for those responding in the "Favor" category (percentages):

| | Never | Less than Once a Month | Less than Once a Week | Once a Week or More |
|------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| % in Favor | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Note: You could also click on the "Codebook" tab, which lists every variable in the survey, but this could be time consuming if the survey has many questions.

Click on "Analyze Results" below the question.

Scroll down to view the tables.

8. Was your hypothesis supported?

9. Take a look at the other tables for this question. Of the variables provided, which seems to have the strongest relationship with this question? That is, what seems to make the biggest difference in a person's response to this question?

You should now have a basic understanding of how to locate variables of interest and how to look at the graphs and tables. It is now your turn to explore data on your own. Continuing with the topic of views on homosexuality, find a different survey question among the ARDA's datasets. After finding the question that interests you, analyze the results and find an interesting table. **Print out this table and attach it to this learning module.**

Click on "Data Archive" in the main menu.

Use the "Search Archive" tab.

Explain what you found below:

10. What is the survey question you chose to analyze?

11. What survey was this question a part of?

12. Why did you find this table interesting or surprising? Explain what it shows about the relationship between the two variables:
