

How We Can Use Our Data

And How We Can Not

Units of Analysis

- Individual information requests
- Individual "pieces" of pollution control information

What can we do with these units?

We can describe:

- How many?
- What type?
- When?
- How did we ask, etc.?

We can test hypotheses:

- What factors predict whether we got information or not

I. Describing

Descriptive statistics

- Totals and counts
 - e.g. 5 requests were made on standard setting processes
- Fractions and percentages
 - e.g. 50% of requests were not fulfilled
- Averages* (mode, median, mean)
 - e.g. The most requested type of information was...
- Ranges
 - e.g. The response time was between 5 and 45 days.
- Distribution
 - e.g. Appeals averaged around 30 days, with 60% taking between 20 and 35 days.

II. Association

Dependent Variable

For FOI requests:

- Were they fulfilled

For Individual Pieces of Pollution Control Information

- Were they fulfilled
- Was the quality good (did we assess?)

Independent Variables

See list - two types

- Coded
- Need to be "re-coded"

Discussion

Take a look at the list.

What do we want to test?

Do we have hypotheses?

What variables are missing?