Anthony Damico <ajdamico@gmail.com>

appropriate analysis syntax for PLS data files

Deanne Swan <DSwan@imls.gov>   Thu, Nov 7, 2013 at 12:32 PM
To: LibraryStats <LibraryStats@imls.gov>, "ajdamico@gmail.com" <ajdamico@gmail.com>

Hi Anthony,

I tried to respond to this earlier, but I got a bounce-back message from the server. I will try to answer your concerns here.

The PLS is not a complex survey (although it is great that you were concerned enough to confirm). It is a census of all public libraries, which means that all libraries in the universe are asked (thus, there is no sampling). You will see this codified in the data documentation in Section II.A. Survey Universe. In addition, because there is no sampling and because we get a very high response rate (see data documentation for each year – 97.8% for FY2011), the estimates you get begin to approximate population parameters. Thus, unlike many of the complex surveys in the federal statistical community, you can get population totals for national, state, and local (e.g., county) levels.

In addition, because of the high response rate and large universe, the precision of the estimates are very high. Note: This also means you should use caution when calculating inferential statistics. When I estimate models using this data, I usually set a high criterion level, often alpha = .001, because of the precision and power present in the dataset.

To summarize, the PLS is not a complex survey. Thus, there are not clusters, strata, or weights for oversampling needed to adjust estimates. Following from that, there are also no design effects or standard errors provided.

Thank you for your interest in our data. If you have additional questions, please feel free to follow-up with me.

Best,

Deanne

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