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How to read a Cross Tabulation Table

Cross tabulation tables are contingency tables that analyze the relationship between two or more variables. Using cross tabs we can compare the percentages of responses within a particular category (variable) such as “access to mental health” and see if there is a difference between Cuesta and Cal Poly students for example.

Crosstab sig

		college2		Total	
		cal poly	cuesta		
Access to Mental Health Services	yes	Count	70	42	112
		% within mental	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
		% within college2	87.5%	57.5%	73.2%
	no	Count	10	31	41
		% within mental	24.4%	75.6%	100.0%
		% within college2	12.5%	42.5%	26.8%
Total	Count	80	73	153	
	% within mental	52.3%	47.7%	100.0%	
	% within college2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

This means that 62.5% of those who responded “yes” to the question about access to mental health services were from Cal Poly

42.5% of Cuesta students responded “no” to the question about reasonable access to mental health services

Using the chart above we see the statement “access to mental health services” in the left hand column and “yes” in the first row and “no” in the second row; we also see “Cal Poly”, “Cuesta” and “Total” across the top. If we look at the percentage below “Cal Poly” and to the right of “% within mental” we see the percentage 62.5. This means that 62.5% of those who responded “yes” to the question about access to mental health services were from Cal Poly, and if you look in the column under Cuesta, you can see that 37.5% of those who responded “yes” to the question were from Cuesta. Correspondingly, of those who responded “no” to the question, 24.4% were from Cal Poly and 75.6% were from Cuesta.

In this example, we can look at Cal Poly and Cuesta students separately and see if there is a difference in whether or not the women responded differently to the question about access to mental health services: for Cal Poly and beside “yes” and below “% within college2” we see 87.5% and beside “no” and below “% within college2” we see 12.5%. This means that 87.5% of Cal Poly students who responded to the question responded “yes” and 12.5% responded “no.” Correspondingly, 57.5% of Cuesta students who responded to this question responded “yes” and 42.5% responded “no”. Cuesta students responded that they did not have access to mental health services at 3.4 times the rate of Cal Poly students (42.5% vs 12.5%).