HW1 Poli 101

Terrorism, Education, and Ideology

1

Using the PPIC January 2016 data set contains Q30, an ordinal indicator for use as our DV, measuring whether terrorism and security are perceived to be a problem in California. The question wording is "On another topic, how much of a problem is terrorism and security in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?" to measure fear of terrorism. Missing Values are declared for respondents who say that they don't know (8) or refuse to answer (9), because these amount to less than 1% of the responses and cannot be reasonably combined with another response.

2.

In the frequency distribution of Q30 it is clear that there is considerable variation across respondents as to their perception of terrorism.

How much of a problem is Terrorism?

	Valid Percent
big problem	41.5
somewhat of a problem	35.9
not much of a problem	22.5
Total	1690

Source: PPIC Jan 2016

The most common (modal) response is that terrorism and security are a "big problem" with somewhat fewer saying it is "somewhat of a problem", and fewer still that it "not much of a problem". This slight positive skew (.34) is not a problem. And the negative values of the

kurtosis score (-1.3) shows that responses are not concentrated in a particular response category and the distribution is flatter than a bell curve. The median response is that there is somewhat of a problem regarding to terrorism and security. Overall Q30 seems to be appropriate for further analysis.

3.

Our first independent variable is the respondent's highest grade of school completed, to measure respondent's level of education as measured by question D7. This is an ordinal measure ranging from some high school or less to post-graduate training. Missing values are declared for the 2% respondents who refused to answer, as unknown level of education does not provide insight into education's effect on the measured dependent variable Q30. It might be considered to include those who refused to respond in the lowest level of education due to respondent embarrassment over low levels of education, but was not done because respondents may be uncomfortable answering at any level of education.

The second independent variable is political ideology, measured by item Q40 which asks respondents about their political leanings "Next, would you consider yourself to be politically…?" The response categories range from very liberal to very conservative, making it an ordinal measure. Missing values include the less than 3% of respondents who answered that they did not know or refused to answer, because such responses are unhelpful in measuring the effect of political ideology on concern over terrorism.

4

We expect that as level of education increases fear of terrorism will decrease because terrorism does not rank highly in terms of frequency of killing in America, and we believe that as education increases so does knowledge of the realities of a terrorist threat, hence perceived threat will decrease with increased levels of education.

We hypothesize that as respondents move from liberal leaning towards conservative leaning perceived threat of terrorism will increase, because conservatives tend to approve of the War on Terror more than liberals.

5

Perceiving Terrorism & Security as a problem (Q30) by Education (D7)

How much a problem is Terrorism & Security?	Less than HS	HS Grad	Some College	College Grad	Post Grad
big problem	68.2%	48.1%	39.6%	35.2%	26.8%
somewhat a [problem	20.2%	36.0%	39.1%	36.3%	43.0%
not much a problem	11.6%	15.9%	21.2%	28.4%	30.3%
N=	198	308	396	443	314

Tauc =.211

Source: PPIC Jan 2016 Survey

Over two-thirds of the survey respondents who have some high school or less (68.2%) see terrorism as a big problem. And reading across the top row of the table shows that this percentage shrinks steadily as education increases to 48%, 40, 35 and finally 28% among those with a post graduate education. A similar progression, only in the opposite direction is evident in the bottom row of the table with just under 12% of in the lowest category of education seeing

terrorism and security issues as not much of a problem while 30% of those most educated grouo feel this way. Tau-c is used to measure strength of association, because both variables are ordinal, and there are more categories on the independent variable than the dependent, making a rectangular (5 column by 3 row) table. The tau-c measure of association is .211, which shows that there is a weak to moderate positive association between the variables.

Perceiving Terrorism & Security as a problem (Q30) by Ideology (Q40)

How much a problem is Terrorism & Security?	Very Liberal	Somewhat Liberal	Middle of the Road	Somewhat Conservative	Very Conservative
big problems	26.0%	26.8%	42.9%	52.2%	63.4%
somewhat a [problem	30.7%	45.0%	36.8%	34.4%	26.7%
not much a problem	43.3%	28.2%	20.3%	13.4%	9.9%
N=	231	351	517	358	191

Tauc = -.262

Source: PPIC Jan 2016 Survey

As expected, it can be seen in the second cross tabulation between Q30 and Q40 that more conservative resondents are more likely to believe that terrorism is a big problem, and that liberal respondents are more likely see terrorism as not much of a problem. This can be seen in the second cross tabulation's column percentages. Among those who identify as very liberal 26% responded that terrorism was a big problem, while 43.3% believe it is not much of a problem. In contrast, among respondents who identify as very conservative, 63.4% believe that terrorism is a big problem, while 9.9% believe it is not much of a problem. We again used the tau-c to measure strength of association, because both variables were ordinal, and the

crosstabulation is rectangular. The tau-c measure shows that there is a moderately strong negative association between variables, at -.262 meaning that if a respondent is liberal they are less likely to see terror as a big problem.

6.

This first cross tabulation supports our view that respondent with lower education levels are more likely to see terror as a problem, which may be caused by lack of knowledge surrounding the frequency of terrorist attacks in America and California specifically.

This second rosstabulation allows us to claim that because conservatives are more accepting of the war on terror, they are more likely to believe that terrorism in California is a big problem.

7.

The independent variable political ideology or leaning is a better predictor of concern over terrorism and security than is level of education. This can be seen in the stronger measure of association for political leaning than for level of education. This stronger measure of association may be caused by the underlying political ideologies of various levels of education, for example a respondent who had some post graduate education may also identify as very conservative.

8.

Syntax

```
frequency variables=d7 q40 q30
   /statistics mode median skew kurtosis.

missing values q30 (8,9).
missing values d7 (9).

crosstabs
  /tables=q30 BY d7
 /cells=column count
 /statistics ctau.

missing values q40 (8,9).
missing values q30 (8,9).
Crosstabs tables = q30 by q40
   /cells = column count
  /statistics = ctau
```