

Introduction to Sociology
SOCI 10100.14 – Spring 2010
Assignment #4: Race and Career Inequalities
Are There Racial Inequalities Present in My Intended Career Path?

In this module you will use employment data from the 2000 Census concerning adult full-time workers (individuals age 25 and older who work at least 35 hours per week). The question you consider concerns overall economic opportunity, as applied to your intended occupation and the extent to which access to opportunity varies by race.

Learning goals:

1. Understand the system that the Bureau of Labor Statistics uses to categorize occupations and how economic opportunity can be quantified within those occupations.
2. Develop capacities to take pre-existing quantitative information and reconfigure it to provide greater depth of knowledge using numeric calculations, prose, and visual presentations of data.
3. Identify the extent to which work opportunity (the number of jobs allocated) and compensation (earnings) can vary on the basis of race.
4. Consider the factors that may account for racial disparities in employment and earnings.

Context for Use:

The exercise is designed for application in Introduction to Sociology, and it can be applied in other undergraduate social science courses that consider issues of work, opportunity, inequality, and race.

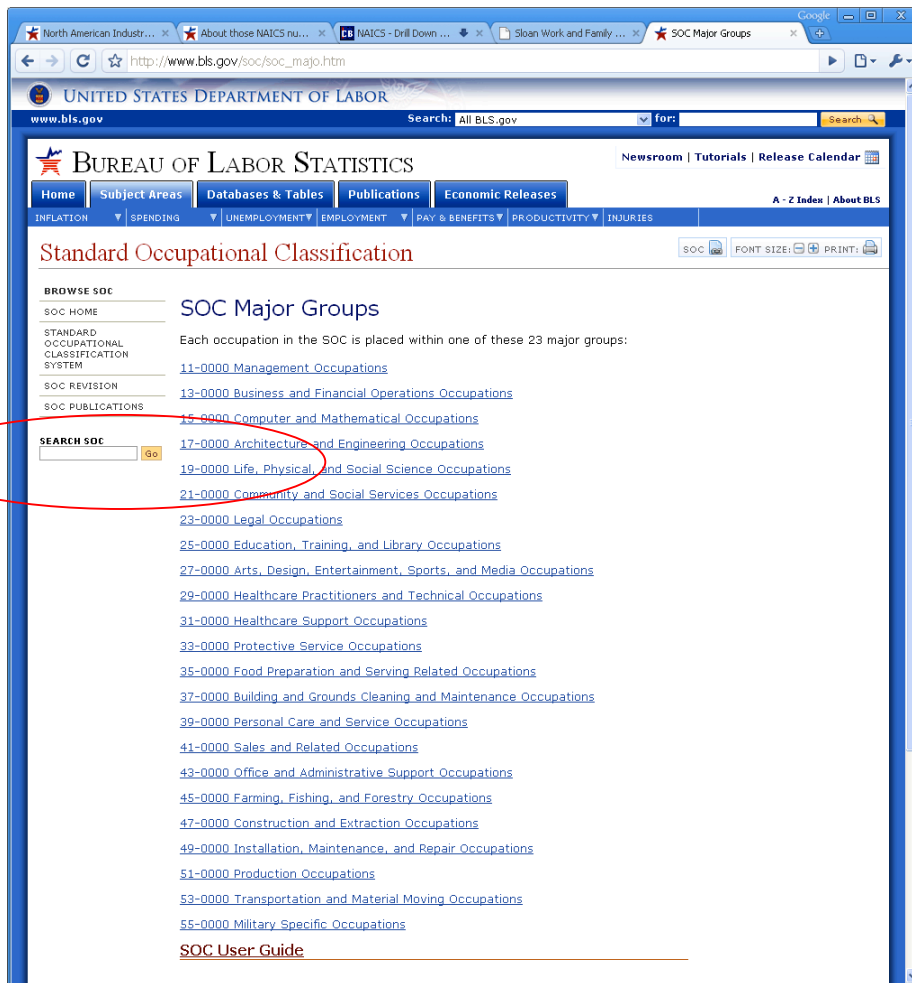
Data Sources:

The Excel file that provides the data for this exercise is available on Blackboard.
SOC_RACE.XLS

Analyzing Inequality and Opportunity in Occupations

Usually, when people think about what they want to do for a living, they think about the tasks they will be performing day in and day out. This is their occupation - a vocation in which workers perform specific types of duties. To track occupations, the Bureau of Labor Statistics uses a taxonomy called the Standard Occupation Classification system (SOC), which organizes jobs around 23 major groups. As Figure 1 shows, each group is identified by an initial 2 digit code, followed by 4 zeros. These additional digits allow for the identification of specific occupations within a broader classification of similar occupations. For example, code 23-0000 is for legal operations, and code 23-2011 is specific to Paralegals and Legal Assistants. Your goal is to find the specific six digit occupation code that best represents your intended line of work, and then use that code to identify how race may play a role in shaping opportunities to enter into that vocation, as well as the economic returns on work. Note, if you are totally flummoxed as to what you will do with your life, you can pick any career you wish, such as the line of work one of your parents pursued.

Figure 1: The Standard Occupational Classification System Page on the Bureau of Labor Statistics



To do this, go to http://www.bls.gov/oes/2001/oes_stru.htm to locate your specific 6 digit SOC code for your intended occupation. You will find that you can click on each major grouping, and you can also search the Bureau of Labor Statistics for keywords that may help you locate the more specific code for your line of work. If you click on any specific 6 digit SOC code, it will bring you to a definition to the types of tasks involved in that occupation.

Once you locate your 6 digit SOC code, use the Excel file SOC RACE (on Blackboard) to locate the information specified in the SOC worksheet (below) Note that you can identify the earnings for Whites, African American, Asians, and (non White) Hispanics by clicking the tabs at the bottom of the screen. The frequency indicates the number of job holders and mean is the average income. The standard deviation is a measure of distribution, and (assuming there is a normal “bell shaped” distribution of incomes) 68% of all jobholders will have an income that is plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean for that occupation.

SOC Race [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Excel

Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Get Started

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E1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	SOC	Frequency	Mean	Std. Dev.			
2	11-1011 Chief Executives	972,533	\$120,395	\$103,595			
3	11-1021 General and Operations Managers	755,754	\$70,593	\$62,691			
4	11-1031 Legislators	7,949	\$60,535	\$48,853			
5	11-2011 Advertising and Promotions Managers	57,106	\$61,542	\$61,862			
6	11-2020 Marketing and Sales Managers	835,042	\$74,373	\$66,007			
7	11-2031 Public Relations Managers	54,159	\$59,170	\$44,896			
8	11-3011 Administrative Services Managers	72,058	\$56,199	\$43,820			
9	11-3021 Computer and Information Systems Managers	262,747	\$75,168	\$51,863			
10	11-3031 Financial Managers	730,108	\$70,069	\$68,000			
11	11-3040 Human Resources Managers	313,782	\$56,994	\$48,045			
12	11-3051 Industrial Production Managers	260,772	\$61,511	\$44,602			
13	11-3061 Purchasing Managers	162,037	\$58,118	\$40,073			
14	11-3071 Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	185,264	\$46,451	\$35,324			
15	11-9011 Farm, Ranch, and Other Agricultural Managers	147,739	\$40,492	\$45,132			
16	11-9012 Farmers and Ranchers	425,736	\$3,799	\$21,228			
17	11-9021 Construction Managers	533,159	\$51,105	\$56,576			
18	11-9030 Education Administrators	480,958	\$53,644	\$37,711			
19	11-9041 Engineering Managers	141,712	\$88,960	\$57,867			

White Black Asian Hispanic

Ready 100%

SOC Race Worksheet and Reflection Questions

Your SOC 6 Digit Code _____

Your SOC Occupation _____

1. The total number of jobs in that occupation occupied by Whites _____
2. The total number of jobs in that occ. occupied by African Americans _____
3. The total number of jobs in that occupation occupied by Asians _____
4. The total number of jobs in that occupation occupied by Hispanics _____
5. **Calculate the percent of jobs in that occupation occupied by Whites** _____
6. **Calculate the percent of jobs occupied by African Americans** _____
7. **Calculate the percent of jobs in that occupation occupied by Asians** _____
8. **Calculate the percent of jobs in that occupation occupied by Hispanics** _____
9. The average wage in that occupation earned by Whites _____
10. The average wage in that occupation earned by African Americans _____
11. The average wage in that occupation earned by Asians _____
12. The average wage in that occupation earned by Hispanics _____
13. **Calculate the ratio of African American's earnings to that of Whites** _____
14. **Calculate the ratio of Asian American's earnings to that of Whites** _____
15. **Calculate the ratio of Hispanic American's earnings to that of Whites** _____

(These ratios should indicate that for every dollar a White person earns, the minority person earns X)

SOC Race Reflection Questions

1. Describe your intended career path and why you plan to pursue that path.
2. Create a pie chart that represents the proportion of workers by race in your intended occupation. The chart should serve both aesthetic and informative concerns – meaning it should have a title, be legible, have a palatable color scheme, etc. You can make this chart in Excel or Powerpoint using the information in the worksheet.
3. Create a bar chart that represents that average earnings and how they vary by race in your intended profession. The chart should serve both aesthetic and informative concerns – meaning it should have a title, be legible, have a palatable color scheme, does not have all of the bars bunched up and lots of empty space, etc. You can make this chart in Excel or Powerpoint using the information in the worksheet.
4. Describe the representation of Whites and racial minorities in your intended profession, as well as any observed disparities in earnings. Did you expect the differences, and the magnitudes of these differences, to exist in the manner evidenced in the data?
5. Offer explanations for why (or why not) racial differences exist in employment in your intended line of work. You are encouraged to consider a variety of social forces and how they may operate in shaping career paths and aspirations.
6. Offer explanations for why (or why not) race differences exist in compensation received in your intended line of work. You are encouraged to consider a variety of social forces and how they may operate in shaping the economic rewards received from work.
7. Reflect backwards and forwards. Did race play a role in shaping your career aspirations? Do you expect race to play a role in the way your career unfolds?

Note – In 2000, this was the racial composition in the United States

Percent NonHisp White	69.1%
Percent African American	12.1%
Percent Asian	3.6%
Percent Hispanic	12.5%

Note –Remember that the data are restricted to full time workers

Grading Rubric

Assignment 5: Race and Career Inequalities Are There Racial Inequalities Present in My Intended Career Path?

Name:

BLS Code reasonably matches intended career path (10 Points):

Evidence Based Analysis Feedback:

Item	Excellent - Student has engaged with the material in a sophisticated and creative way	Good - Student understands the material on a basic level (can repeat/restate ideas)	Weak - Student's understanding is flawed or student did not meet a requirement
Calculation and mathematical operations (20 points)	Correctly done	On the whole, accurate	Numerous fundamental errors
Graphic Representations of Data (20 points)	Graphs are accurate, fully labeled, reasonably scaled and intelligible	Data are converted to graphics but graphs are rudimentary and not publishable	Numerous errors
Interpretation of tables and graphs (20 points)	Correctly explains information and reveals nuanced understanding	On the whole, correctly explains information but may not cover all relevant observations	Incorrectly describes relationships
Analysis and Judgment of Data (20 points)	Reliably makes correct judgments based on the data and considers limitations of data	Judgments are based on data presented	Judgments are not well informed by data
Writing (10 points)	College-appropriate writing/very few errors	In need of some revision/editing	In need of serious revision/not college-appropriate writing

Final grade: