Background to the "Fast food" SPSS data file:

This handout provides background information for the "fast food" questionnaire study that was originally provided by the STARS project. I've modified their data file slightly In the original study, and hence in the background information provided below, the first variable in the data was called "Avpermonth". It contained data on whether people ate once, twice, 3-4 times,5-6 times or 7 times or more. Thus the measure of people's fast-food purchasing behaviour was categorical in nature. All you could do with these data is count how many individuals fell into each of these categories. For educational purposes, I wanted a variable in the SPSS file that was truly numerical in nature, so that students could calculate means, modes, standard deviations, standard errors, etc. Consequently I've replaced "Avpermonth" with "Purchases", fictional data showing how many fast food purchases each person made in the previous month. This modified data file is available on my website, at

www.sussex.ac.uk/Users/grahamh/teaching06

It's called FastFood MY VERSION.sav, not FastFood.sav as written in the background information below.

Graham Hole, September 2006.

Fast Food – Who can do without It?

Introduction

According to the book *Fast Food Nation* by American journalist Eric Schlosser, America is the world's number one consumer of fast food, fuelling a market estimated to be worth $120 billion a year.

Britons consume more fast food than any other Europeans, with the number of fast food restaurants in the UK having doubled between 1984 and 1993.

Large chains such as McDonalds, KFC and Burger King have become household names and are a common sight on most high streets. They now appear in entertainment complexes, airports, hospitals and even schools. Their powerful brand image is maintained through extensive advertising on TV, in cinemas, on roadside billboards and elsewhere. Critics argue that these top brands deliberately target their marketing at children, with a view to getting them hooked for life on fast food and guaranteeing the future success of the industry.

It is generally thought that fast food is the domain of young people. Certainly fast food outlets are a popular meeting place for teenagers and students, but in fact many older people find it a cheap and convenient substitute for home cooking.

Recent concern over obesity, food poisoning and BSE ("mad cow disease") has forced the industry to address issues of food quality and nutrition more seriously. Fast food meals are typically high in calories, fat, sodium and cholesterol, which are known to increase the risk of obesity and diabetes. There have been several high-profile court cases in the United States where overweight people have sued fast food companies for allegedly knowingly supplying products that caused obesity and illness.

The trend towards healthier eating has caused some fast food giants to revise their menus, offering vegetarian meals, salads and other healthy options. With the market in a state of change the need for up-to-date market research is increasing. As the market leaders sense a fall in their popularity, they are keen to monitor and respond to trends in customer behaviour.

The survey

The dataset provided here is derived from a very large consumer survey conducted by market researchers at Millward Brown (http://www.millwardbrown.com). The survey was carried out using a CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing) methodology. Random digit telephone numbers were dialled and the person answering was asked "Do you buy fast food nowadays?". Only those responding "Yes" were then surveyed.

This dataset consists of the responses of 200 males and 200 females, aged between 15 and 70, selected at random from the complete survey. The original survey included a series of questions seeking the respondent's opinion on each individual fast food brand, leading to hundreds of columns of data, some of which are commercially sensitive. These have been omitted here in favour of an overall market view.

For each respondent the information recorded is, and the 34 variable names used within the Excel and SPSS data files (*FastFood.xls* and *FastFood.sav*) are:

Description	Variable Name	
	Excel	SPSS
Average number of fast food purchases per month (Less than once, Once, Twice, 3 to 4 times, 5 to 6 times, 7 or more times)	All fast food / month	Avpermonth
Age (15-17, 18-24, 25-35, 36-54, 55-70)	Age	Age
Sex (Male, Female)	Sex	Sex
Internet use (User, Non-user)	Internet	Internet
Region lived in (South, Midlands, North)	Region	Region
Household income bracket (Lower, Mid, Upper)	Household income *	Householdincome *
Educational background (Secondary, Tech college, Graduate, Postgraduate, Don't know)	Education	Education
Brand importance (Not, Quite, Very, Don't know)	Brand importance	Brandimportance
Personal influence (Part, Main)	Per influence	Perinfluence
Kid influence (Yes, No)	Kid influence	Kidinfluence
Brand first mentioned (Burger King, Domino Pizza, KFC, Little Chef, McDonalds, Pizza Express, Pizza Hut, Starbucks, Wimpy, Other, Don't know)	First mention	Firstmention
Brand last bought (Burger King, Domino Pizza, KFC, Little Chef, McDonalds, Pizza Express, Pizza Hut, Starbucks, Wimpy, Other, Don't know)	Last bought	Lastbought
Read national newspapers (Not at all, Occasionally, Regularly)	Read nat. newspaper	Readnatnewspaper
Pass billboard (Not at all, Occasionally, Regularly)	Pass billboards *	Passbillboards **
Listen to radio (Not at all, Occasionally, Regularly)	Listen to radio	Listentoradio
Go to movies (Not at all, Occasionally, Regularly)	Go to movies	Gotomovies
Watch TV news (Yes, No)	Watch TV news	TVnews
Watch TV soaps (Yes, No)	Watch TV soaps	TVsoaps
Watch TV sport (Yes, No)	Watch TV sport	TVsport
Watch morning TV (Yes, No)	Watch morning TV	morningTV
Watch TV chat (Yes, No)	Watch TV chat	TVchat
Watch TV quiz (Yes, No)	Watch TV quiz	TVquiz
Watch TV drama (Yes, No)	Watch TV drama	TVdrama
Watch TV gardening (Yes, No)	Watch TV garden	TVgarden
Watch TV cooking (Yes, No)	Watch TV cooking	TVcooking
Watch TV comedy (Yes, No)	Watch TV comedy	TVcomedy
Watch TV documentaries (Yes, No)	Watch TV documentary	TVdocumentary
Watch TV films (Yes, No)	Watch TV films	TVfilms
Watch reality TV (Yes, No)	Watch TV reality	TVreality

Description	Variable Name	
	Excel	SPSS
Watch TV current affairs (Yes, No)	*Watch TV cur aff*	*TVcuraff*
Watch TV music shows (Yes, No)	*Watch TV music*	*TVmusic*
TV hours watched during week (Under 1, 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 5, 5 to 10, Over 10, Don't know)	*TV hours weekday*	*TVhrswkday*
TV hours watched at weekend (Under 1, 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 5, 5 to 10, Over 10, Don't know)	*TV hours weekend*	*TVhrswkend*
Respondent ID	*ID*	*ID*

* Missing values are indicated by an asterisk
** This missing value is indicated by a 9

Reference

Schlosser, E. (2002). *Fast Food Nation*. Penguin.

Acknowledgement