
Subject: Re: why weights cannot be used to test for relationship like regression
Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Thu, 10 Mar 2016 14:14:41 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Following is a response from Senior DHS Stata Specialist, Tom Pullum:

I believe you have been looking at the Guide to DHS Statistics, which advises against the use of weights in statistical models. I apologize for the confusion. This is an outdated recommendation.

The current advice is that weights should be used for models, calculation of rates, percentages, means, etc.--that is, for everything. The Guide to DHS Statistics is being gradually updated, and that old advice is being changed.

I think there are two reasons why that recommendation got into the Guide in the first place. One is that many economists are opposed to the use of weights. They have their reasons, and I respect their reasons, but do not believe they apply to DHS data, most of which is used for descriptive purposes. The second reason is that until a few years ago (I would say less than 20 years ago) computer software could not be relied upon to use weights correctly in the calculation of standard errors. There was a time when SPSS and Stata, for example, gave different results when you would have expected the same results. Fortunately, such discrepancies have been eliminated. Stata, for example, can be relied on to give the correct robust standard errors, adjusted for strata and clusters as well as weights.