

Naturalistic Observations

Due at the Start of Lab: Paper 1

Rationale for Today's Lab Session

In today's lab session, you will gain skills in implementing a naturalistic observation study. Naturalistic observations are commonly used in psychology research. These research skills are also applicable to a range of applied contexts: conducting observational ratings of a child for a school-based assessment, evaluating the job performance of students or employees, and conducting mental health assessments of adults. Moreover, most people attempt to draw informal conclusions based on observations in a range of day-to-day contexts.

Objectives

- Organize into teams of 1-3 people
- Work with the lab instructor to develop measures and a data collection plan for the lab assignment (see subsequent pages for examples)
- Your team will need to collect and analyze a small amount of data, either during the lab session or another time

Dismissal

- The lab instructor can dismiss students after reviewing their measures and discussing their data collection plan

Sample Rating Scales

It can be very difficult to observe people and rate them reliably. Make sure your scales are clear and specific so that anyone could use them to rate someone. Usually it helps to give the construct a name and a short definition. Then, number points on a scale, give them anchors (e.g. "Average"), and describe the rating classification with a description.

Here are several examples...

1. Social dominance.

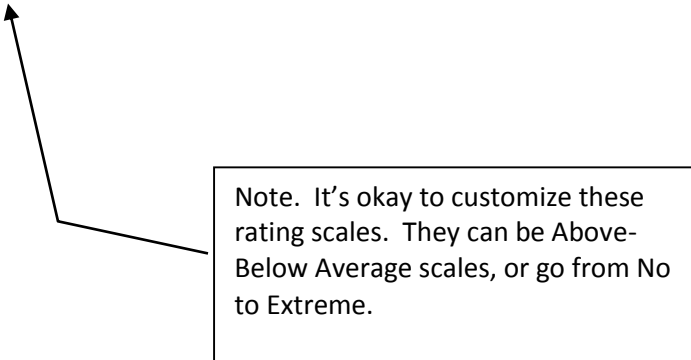
Social dominance refers to the tendency to take power in a situation. People who are dominant tend to be outgoing and bold; they show leadership. People who lack dominance are followers; they are meek and deferent, often described as pushovers.

1	Extremely Above Average	Always takes leadership roles. Appears bossy. Annoys others due to controlling nature. Requires compliance.
2	Somewhat Above Average	Provides some leadership but does not appear bossy. Takes charge but is respectful of others.
3	Average	Sometimes leads. Sometimes follows. Appears equally comfortable in either position.
4	Somewhat Below Average	Prefers others to lead but contributes to goals by providing suggestions. Would be uncomfortable in a leadership role.
5	Extremely Below Average	Never takes leadership roles. Does anything anyone says. Appears uncomfortable in group. Requires constant direction.

2. Quickness.

Quickness refers to the tendency to rush from one situation to another. People who are quick become impatient easily, walk at a fast pace, and cut in front of others. People who are not quick move very slowly and are frequently passed by others.

1	No quickness	Appears lethargic, perhaps depressed. No motivation or inspiration to do anything. When walking, passed by everyone. Gets in the way of others.
2	Mild quickness	Moves very slowly but does not appear to be depressed or have any major mobility problems. Sometimes causes congestion.
3	Modest quickness	Moves at a normal pace.
4	High quickness	Appears quicker than most people. In somewhat of a hurry. Slightly impatient.
5	Extreme quickness	Appears in an extreme hurry. Highly impatient. Rushes in front of other people. Cuts people off. Annoys others.



Note. It's okay to customize these rating scales. They can be Above-Below Average scales, or go from No to Extreme.

3. Trendiness.

Trendiness refers to the tendency to follow social fads. People who are trendy are highly concerned with appearance. They have to have the newest and best things. They appear fashionable. Their clothing and personal items are often expensive.

1	Extremely Above Average	Spends much time on personal appearance. Flaunts personal devices, such as cell phone, jewelry, mp3 player, or PDA. New shoes. Expensive clothing.
2	Somewhat Above Average	Somewhat concerned with personal appearance. Clothing has minimal wear. Discrete with personal items but may be talking on cell phone or using mp3 player.
3	Average	Appears presentable. Clothing in good order. Would not be described as trendy, but fits in well with others.
4	Somewhat Below Average	Lack of concern for personal appearance. Clothing may be slightly worn out, or out of date with current trends.
5	Extremely Below Average	Clothing appears dirty. Hair and clothing highly unkempt. Shoes very worn out. No expensive personal items. May not have showered recently.

APA Style Guide

Correlation (Significant, $p < .05$)

Note: Include the correlation, p -value, a description of the direction (more, less, positively, negatively, directly, inversely, etc.), and a description of the effect size (e.g., near-zero/marginal, small/slight, medium/moderate/modest, strong/large/sizeable). If the finding might be confusing to a non-statistician, include a second sentence explaining the finding in simpler terms.

Participants who were more neurotic reported exercising moderately less often, which was statistically significant, $r = -.35$, $p = .02$.

Quarterbacks who were taller had marginally better completion rates, $r = .09$, $p = .04$. Thus, tall quarterback throw completed (caught) passes more often than short quarterbacks.

Anxiety and depression were strongly positively correlated ($r = .71$, $p = .007$). Therefore, it could be difficult to distinguish between whether someone's primary diagnosis should be an anxiety disorder or a mood disorder.

Correlation (Non-Significant, $p > .05$)

Age was not significantly associated with income ($r = .13$, $p = .23$), political views ($r = .01$, $p = .99$), or vocabulary ($r = .06$, $p = .62$).

The present study failed to find an association between wealth and happiness, $r = .08$, $p = .64$.