

## Writing Up Your Questionnaire Report

Soc 357  
Fall 2006

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## Writing up your research

- You can choose to write up your findings separately or in a group
- Every individual **must** write a group process report, **AND HAND IT IN SEPARATELY**, regardless of whether you write the paper in a group or by yourself

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## A Note on Format

- Please make sure to include **the same subject headings** listed in the instructions
- Please **label each subsection** with the appropriate letter (by request of our grader)

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## General Principles

- Your report should be detailed enough so that somebody else could replicate your entire process
- If you think you could have done something better, you must
  1. State what it was
  2. State how you would fix it

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## Writing up Sampling

- Describe WHEN, WHERE and HOW you selected your subjects
- Think about the coverage & biases in your sample; discuss differences among team members
- Discuss external validity – how representative of the general population
- Evaluate – was it well done (given limitations of course)? What would you have done differently?

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## Remember!

- **Bias** vs. **subjectivity** – subjectivity refers to someone's personal view; bias refers to some non-random element of a sample (systematic exclusion of some people or groups from the sample) OR to question wording that is likely to systematically exclude a particular response

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## Writing up Variables

- Descriptions of every variable: were your measures valid? Would you change the questions?
- “Discuss problems”
  - Question wording/type – E.g. Religion
  - Issue of **low variability**; discuss whether you think this is due to:
    1. Actual presence in the population
    2. Bias in the sample
    3. Bias in the question

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## Evaluating Validity of Index

- Be sure that you understand and can describe how the DV Index was created:

$$DV\_Index = DV1 + DV2 + DV3 + DV4 + \dots$$

Each person's score on the Dependent Variable Index is the SUM of all his/her answers to the DV questions

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## Evaluating Validity of Index

### Part A: Frequencies

- “Discuss variability problems” =
  - Low variability on some items in your index
  - Whether some items have very different distributions from each other

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## Evaluating Validity of Index

### Part B: Open-ended question

- How did you categorize it/sort answers?
- Did it work on giving you an overall idea of the person's opinion?
- Did it elicit information that was **not** captured by your DV Index items?

\*\* If possible, give examples from answers to illustrate certain points

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## Evaluating Validity of Index

### Part C: Compare Open Question results with DV Index

- If you coded the answers to the open-ended question, were they statistically associated with the DV Index?
- IF you coded it on a scale, are the two correlated?
- IF you coded it into categories, are there differences between the mean scores in each category?

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## Evaluating Validity of Index

### Part D: Correlations & Reliability Analysis

Explain:

1. Whether all your items have medium-strong positive correlations with each other
2. If not, why not – question wording, different idea, biased sample?
3. Whether removing any of the items from the index would improve the Coefficient Alpha of your index.

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## Part 4: Results

### A. Index

1. Discuss in general the results of your index – which items worked well, which didn't, and why you think this was the case

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### B. Hypothesis Testing

2. Prepare a **bivariate statistical table** to show the relationship between your most interesting independent variable and the dependent variable index. *Interesting does not necessarily mean statistically significant!*

- Prepare a difference of means table, or a correlation matrix
- Write a paragraph discussing your statistical results saying what they show and whether your hypothesis is confirmed, disconfirmed, or inconclusive.

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### Example: Difference of Means Table

Gender	Eating Habits Index Mean Score
Men	32.26
Women	40.40

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## Example: Correlation Matrix

	War Attitudes Index
Age	
Correlation	.452
Significance	.045

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## Hypothesis Testing!

- **Inconclusive** vs. **disconfirmed** results – inconclusive means predicted direction, but weak association; if you have zero association, your hypothesis is **disconfirmed**; if you have association in the wrong direction, your hypothesis is **disconfirmed**.

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## Goals for Today

- Discuss each part of the report with your group
- You don't have to agree on how to interpret everything

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## Correlation Between Open Question & DV Index

Iraq War Attitudes Questionnaire:  
*Open Ended Question: Coded Attitudes along a continuum of Agree(1) to Disagree(5)*

Correlations

		DV_Index	Open 1
DV_Index	Pearson Correlation	1	.573**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008
	N	20	20
Open 1	Pearson Correlation	.573**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	
	N	20	20

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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## Difference of Means for Open Question Categories & DV\_Index

Report

### Organic Foods Questionnaire

- Index measures how much people are into organic food  
 - Compare mean Index scores for each category of the independent variable

Open1	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
1.000	16.4000	5	2.60768
2.000	19.3000	20	2.25015
2.500	24.0000	2	1.41421
3.000	21.8000	5	1.64317
3.500	20.5000	2	.70711
4.000	27.0000	1	.
5.000	23.0000	2	2.82843
Total	19.9730	37	3.05038

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