Writing With Style

APA Style Made Easy

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Chapter 5

The Results Section

Report of data analysis

- Accurate
- Unbiased
- Complete
- Insightful

- Order should be based on order of presentation of hypotheses

Do not

- Omit findings that are unfortunate for the story you wanted to tell.
- Discuss the findings.
- Vary sentence construction for similar statistical reporting.

Do report

- Numerical value for the statistic
- Degrees of freedom
- Exact *p* value
- Effect size
- Direction of effect
- Per cell sample sizes, means, and standard deviations

More on *p*

- Exact value to 2 or 3 decimal places
- If less than .001 then $p < .001$
- If your output says probability is .000, that is a rounded off value. Report it as $p < .001$

STATISTICS IN YOUR SENTENCES

t test

The mean something (*M* = ##.##, *SD* = #.##) was significantly higher than the mean something else (*M* = ##.##, *SD* = #.##), *t* (df) = #.##, *p* = .###.

Or *p* < .001.

NOTES

- Italic *t*, *M*, *SD*, *p*
- Direction of effect indicated
- Specific means identified
- Values reported to 2 decimal places (except *p*)
- Spaces on either side of = and <

Chi-square results

There was a significant relationship between this and that, χ^2 (1, *N* = ##) = ##.##, *p* = .###.

NOTES

- Italic *N* and *p* but not Greek chi
- Degrees of freedom and sample size in parentheses
- Values reported to 2 decimal places (except *p*)
- Spaces on either side of = and <

ANOVA

A one-way ANOVA comparing the mean something for the three groups was significant, F (2, ##) = #.##, MSE = #.##, p = .###, η^2 = .##.

NOTES

- Italic *F*, *MSE*, *p* but not Greek letter
- Direction of effect missing?
  - Instead report post hoc test that will include means and standard deviations

Factorial ANOVA

A 2 (first IV) × 2 (second IV) ANOVA was computed with some DV as the dependent variable. The main effect for the first IV was significant, F (2, ##) = #.##, MSE = #.##, p = .###, η^2 = .##. The mean some DV for a certain group (M = ##.##, SD = #.##) was significantly higher than the mean some DV for the other group (M = ##.##, SD = #.##). NOW DO THE SAME FOR THE SECOND IV. THEN THE INTERACTION: The First IV × Second IV interaction was significant, F (2, ##) = #.##, MSE = #.##, p = .###, η^2 = .##. IF SIGNIFICANT, THIS INTERACTION NEEDS TO BE EXPLAINED HERE BUT NOT DISCUSSED.

Notes for factorial ANOVA

- Same stuff about italics and spaces and decimal places as for previous stats
- Use multiplication sign × in the symbol menu rather than the letter X when you are using it for the word *by*
- Variables begin with lower-case letters except in the interaction format

Correlation

- The correlation between some variable and some other one was significant, $r = -.32$, $p < .001$.
- Pearson correlations were computed among blah blah variables. See Table 1 for complete correlation matrix.

NOTES

- Same rules for italics, spaces, and decimal places as before.
- The minus sign for the *r* value tells the reader it was negative → no need to say anything more here. (If positive, no plus sign needed.)
- Pearson is someone's name – start with upper-case letter.

STATISTICS IN TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables vs. figures

- Tables have rows and columns.
- Figures can be graphs, flow charts, photos, line drawings, whatever. This presentation has a focus on graphs.

Rules common to both tables and graphs

- Place items near each other if they are intended to be compared.
- Labels should be close to the items they refer to.
- Keep the font large enough to read easily.
- Abbreviations should be obvious or explained in a note.
- Single line spacing is permitted if it enhances clarity.
- Number them in the order in which they occur in the text — but one series of numbers for tables and another for figures.

Tables get titles, figures get captions

- Indicate what variables are contained in a general way.
- Include enough information so that the reader can browse the article but still understand the tables and figures without reading the article closely.

Tables

Table 1

The Title Should Be Here in Italics

The whole table goes here

Note. Optional here.

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ (do it this way if you do it)

Tables

- No vertical lines
- Horizontal lines before and after, and between column headers and data — not between rows of data
- Line up decimal points vertically
- Every column needs a heading
- Means need standard deviations
- Look at journals and/or APA manual for samples before trying at home

Graphs

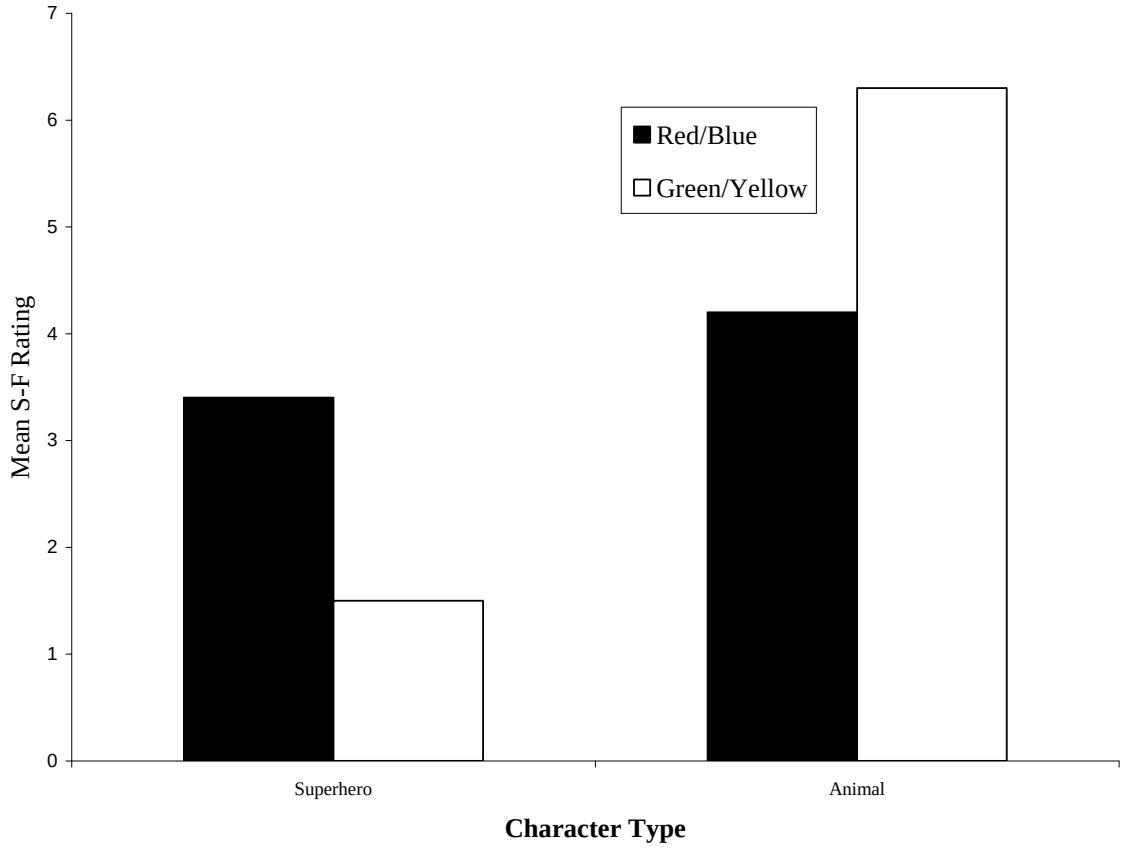

Figure 2. Mean ratings on the sensitive and friendly scale as a function of character type and color combination.

Graphs

- Figure caption is below the figure. Note italics situation. Also, it ends with a period even if it is not a sentence.
- IV on *x*-axis and DV on *y*-axis (which is the shorter one)
- Label axes
- No color — only black and white (not even gray!) Try diagonal stripes if you need a third bar, and for line graphs, differentiate plot points, not lines.

Graphs

- Legend goes inside the graph area
- No box around the graph
- No gridlines

ODDS AND ENDS

- Letter symbols are italicized.
- Greek letters not.
- Letters that are abbreviations (like *M*) belong only in parentheses.
- Use spaces between symbols and within equations.

- Number words vs. numerals
  - Use numerals for 10 and above; words for nine and below
  - BUT
    - Never begin a sentence with a numeral
    - Use numerals for units of measure: 5 days, 5 cm
    - Use numerals for scales: 7-point scale
  - AND
    - Use the symbol % when preceded by a numeral: 13%
    - Use the word when preceded by a word: two percent

- Use metric units
- Use a zero before a decimal point rather than nothing — unless nothing is all it can ever be:

  $p = .056$ $M = 0.12$
- Round to 2 decimal points except for exact *p*, which can be 3
- Look up abbreviations for measurements and prefer them to words (cm is better than centimeters)
  - Leave a space between the number and that abbreviation: 2 cm

- Word your sentences so that statistical results follow a comma rather than appear within parentheses.
- Use math symbols as math symbols — not as words.
  - No: The mean equaled 6.12
  - Yes: The mean was 6.12
  - Yes: (*M* = 6.12)