

Psych Labs: Impression Formation Experiment Project

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Purpose of this Project: After completing this project, you should have a better understanding of the ways that outside information (including stories in the media) can influence your attitudes. A second goal is to help you understand how psychologists test hypotheses about the impact of one variable (the independent variable) on another variable (the dependent variable).

Experiment Instructions: Before you begin the experiment, you need to have the Impression Formation Data Sheet. Your instructor will provide the link to launch the online experiment itself, which will take about 10-15 minutes. The experiment presents 27 events involving members of two social groups. The events are presented very briefly—in only a sentence or two. Please read the description of each person's behavior carefully, and then indicate how much you would like to meet that person. In many cases you would probably want to know more about the person before making a decision about him or her, but these brief descriptions are intended to be similar to the bits and pieces of information we hear about other people from the media or from our friends. After reading all the descriptions, you will be asked to make some overall ratings about each of the groups.

Data Collection Instructions: At the end of the experiment session, you will see your own individual results. Please copy those results carefully to your data sheet and follow the instructions on the data sheet to plot your results on the appropriate graphs. Your results will be saved automatically in a database so that the pooled results can be used in the statistical analyses.

Statistical Analysis : The statistical analysis looks for differences in ratings for the two groups, testing this question: Does the type of behavior a person engages in have an impact on your attitude toward that person?

Background Readings: In preparation for writing your lab report, please read the background material for this experiment (as assigned by your instructor). These readings will help you understand the purpose of the experiment and what the results tell us.

Instructions for Writing the Lab Report: Before you begin writing the report, you should have 1) the statistical results from the pooled data, 2) guidelines from your instructor in the form of a report worksheet or a set of instructions for writing your report. Be sure to follow the guidelines carefully and be sure that your report is complete and accurate. Attach your individual data sheet to your lab report.