

Understanding terminology in Animal Personality

Dear researcher,

Do animals have personality? What does it mean when behaviour is repeatable? Whether you have ever worked on these questions or not, we would like to hear your opinion about the terminology used in the field of "animal personality". With this survey, we aim to collect data for a review quantifying the diversity of interpretations of the conceptual and statistical terminologies used in this field. The collected data will be converted to percentages and used for quantitative comparisons.

The survey takes less than 5 minutes and is anonymous – you do not need to register and we do not ask you to provide your name. The summarized results may be published, and answers will ultimately be available to anyone who wants to use them. This project is being conducted by Dr. Alfredo Sánchez-Tójar (Bielefeld University), Dr. Maria Moiron (CEFE-CNRS Montpellier), and Dr. Petri T. Niemelä (LMU Munich).

Please, we would appreciate if you would circulate the link to anyone that could be interested. In the event of any concern or question about this survey, please contact alfredo.tojar@gmail.com.

Thank you very much in advance for your help.

With best wishes,
Alfredo Sánchez-Tójar, Maria Moiron, and Petri Niemelä
***Required**

1. PLEASE CHECK: *

Mark only one oval.

☐ I hereby confirm that I understand the above and that my anonymous answers may be summarised, circulated and published.

Personal Information

2. At what stage of your research career are you? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Master student (or earlier stage)
- ☐ PhD researcher
- ☐ Early-career researcher (i.e., have completed their doctorate degree within the past 5 years)
- ☐ Senior researcher (i.e., have completed their doctorate degree more than 5 years ago)
- ☐ I am not a researcher

3. Have you ever worked or published in questions related to “animal personality”? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes, as a lead, corresponding or senior author
- ☐ Yes, as a co-author
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

4. What country are you currently working in? The country of workplace will be only used to assess the spread of the survey. *

Survey

5. 1. What is your preferred definition of “animal personality”? Please, select the option that applies from the following set of definitions derived from the literature. Otherwise, please, specify yours below. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Consistent between-individual differences in behaviour across time and/or contexts
- ☐ Consistent between-individual differences in whole suites of correlated behaviours across time and/or contexts
- ☐ Between-individual differences in behavioural tendencies across contexts and within-individual consistency over time
- ☐ Variation among individuals in the intercept of their behavioural reaction norm
- ☐ Within-individual and between-individual consistency in behaviours across time and/or ecological contexts
- ☐ Other: _____

6. 2. What does the term “animal personality” represent biologically? If none of the descriptions fits yours, please, specify yours below. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ a) Limited phenotypic plasticity in behavioural expression in a sample of individuals
- ☐ b) Individual differences in average behavioural expression in a sample of individuals
- ☐ c) Both a) and b) are correct
- ☐ d) I do not know the answer
- ☐ Other: _____

7. 3. What does “repeatability” (i.e. the proportion of phenotypic variance explained by individual identity) commonly represent in the field of animal personality? If none of the descriptions fits yours, please, specify yours below. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ a) (Relative) amount of phenotypic plasticity in trait expression in a sample of individuals
- ☐ b) (Relative) amount of individual differences in average trait expression in a sample of individuals
- ☐ c) Both a) and b) are correct
- ☐ d) I do not know the answer
- ☐ Other: _____

8. 4. Does repeatability – as defined in question 3 – provide an estimate of individual (behavioural) consistency and/or predictability? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know

9. 5. What biological interpretation can one make when one only knows that a group of individuals “A” expresses higher repeatability than a group of individuals “B”? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ a) Group “A” expresses less plasticity in their trait expression than group “B”
- ☐ b) Individuals differ more from each other in their average trait expression in group “A” than in group “B”
- ☐ c) Both interpretations a) and b) can be made
- ☐ d) Neither interpretations a) nor b) can be made
- ☐ e) I do not know the answer

10. 6. Have you ever used a single measurement of behaviour(s) per individual when studying animal personality? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ N/A

11. 7. Have you ever used (unpartitioned) phenotypic level data when studying animal personality? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Yes, but I was not aware of it when I used it
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ N/A

12. 8. Which data one generally needs to study animal personality? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ a) A single behavioural measurement per individual
- ☐ b) A single behavioural measurement per individual if the focal behaviour is repeatable
- ☐ c) Repeated behavioural measurements per individual
- ☐ d) Three previous options are correct
- ☐ e) Both b) and c) are correct
- ☐ f) I do not know

13. Please let us know if you have any other comments:

Thank you for filling in this survey!

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