

Procedure

Things to do before you leave

- (1) Know the behavior code inside and out, so you don't have to refer to it
- (2) Think about how you are going to record the data: Since you are probably going to be taking notes on your phone in order to remain discreet, it won't be feasible to use a checksheet. However, you should think about ways to make the note-taking easier to do and interpret. Recording things in a consistent order would be helpful. Using consistent abbreviations would also be helpful (y/n for yes/no, etc). You don't need to write down the variable name if it is obvious, but otherwise find an abbreviation that you will remember.

Where and when to observe

Observe at two stores: Do one observation at an organic/specialty grocery store (e.g., Wild oats, Trader Joe's, etc) and one at a regular grocery store or department store that sells groceries (e.g., Smiths, Walmart, Harmons). I know this is a crude distinction, but with too many categories we won't have enough data in each category.

Outside observations: Observe where you can see people leaving the store, but not so close as to be intrusive. Ideally, we would control the time of day, but you can do this whenever it is convenient. Observe outside for 30 minutes at each store.

Inside observations: If you are comfortable observing inside the store, stand where you can observe one of the checkout lines, and observe that line for 15 minutes at each store. If you don't observe inside, then do another 15 minutes outside.

How to observe

Outdoors: We need an unbiased way to choose who to observe. Adapt some version of this, or modify it to suit the situation: If there is a single door, choose the first person you see leaving, then the next observation with the next person you see leaving, etc. If there are several doors, you might select shoppers leaving first from the door on the left, then the one next to that, etc. Record just as they are leaving the store, do not follow them (this is not a continuous focal follow).

You will also record the background information, but that should only need to be done once. That includes the variable for store density, which you can calculate before or after your observations as number of people entering per minute (count for 2 minutes?).

Indoors: Choose the person first in line behind the person who is checking out and observe them for 3 minutes. When they move up, do the same for the person behind them. Continue for 15 minutes. If the person leaves before the 3 minutes is up, just record when they leave (or total time of the observation). If they are still there after 3 minutes, as they probably will be, you can catch up with the background variables until they advance. If this procedure doesn't work, figure out something else, but make it systematic.

During the 3 minutes we could do either a time sampling or a continuous observation, but I am going to suggest the former, as probably easier. Every 30 seconds record the number of feet (use the floor tiles) they are from the person in front of them, and if there is tape, whether they are observing the marked distance or not. This will give you 6 data points for each person on both variables, and we can calculate the fraction of time they are observing the tape and the average number of feet they are from the person in front. You will also be observing their mask usage and demographics, but you only need to record that at the start of

the observation.

If one were to do a continuous observation, where one records the time whenever a change is made in behavior, one might record the time whenever the person transgressed against the tape, or other COVID-related requirements. That would give you a duration measure. If you want to try that to see how it would work, go ahead.

What to observe

Record background (independent) variables for all subjects, indoors and out. The store variables should be identical for every observation at the store except time, so you only need to record those once. Variable names are in italics. for each variable, record as noted. Some are binary (yes/no) others are categorical (solo, dyad, group), some are ordinal (all, some, none), others are continuous (number of feet)

Background variables: Store

1. *day*
2. *time*
3. *store* type and name
4. *density* people leaving per minute (see procedure)
5. policies
 - (a) *sign* store has signs guiding COVID-safe behavior (yes/no)
 - (b) *employee* an employee is at the door correcting/guiding behavior (yes/no)
 - (c) *sanitation* (employees clean/ only supplies for customers / no sanitation)
 - (d) *empl_mask* are employees wearing masks? (all / some /none)

Background variables: Subject

1. *gender* male/ female/ other or NA (not ascertainable)
2. *age* to nearest decile (20s, 30s, 40s...), by eye
3. *group* solo / dyad / group

Dependent variables: Outdoors

1. *mask_out* is the person wearing a mask? (yes/no)
2. *correct_out* if yes, is it worn correctly? (yes/no)
3. *remove* does the person remove it immediately upon exit? (yes/no)

Dependent variables: Indoors (3 min obs, see procedure above)

1. *mask_in* is the person wearing a mask? (yes/no)
2. *correct_in* if yes, is it worn correctly? (yes/no)
3. *distance* number of feet from person in front, to nearest foot. If 12 inch floor tiles are available, use them as a guide, otherwise estimate. Every 30 seconds.
4. *compliance* in compliance with the tape? (yes/no) Every 30 seconds.

Let me know if you see problems with this code. There will no doubt be problems with it, and problems will arise during the observations. Do the best you can, and know that this is why we do pilot studies.