Rule of Thumb for Interpreting the Size of a Correlation Coefficient

Size of Correlation	*Interpretation*
.90 to 1.00 (-.90 to –1.00)	Very high positive (negative) correlation
.70 to .90 (-.70 to -.90)	High positive (negative) correlation
.50 to .70 (-.50 to -.70)	Moderate positive (negative) correlation
.30 to .50 (-.30 to -.50)	Low positive (negative) correlation
.00 to .30 (.00 to -.30)	Little if any correlation

Matrix Showing Correlation Coefficients Appropriate for Scales of Measurement for Variable *X* and Variable *Y*

		VARIABLE X		
		Nominal	Ordinal	Interval/Ratio
VARIABLE Y	Nominal	a. Phi (ϕ) b. *C* coefficient c. Cramer's *V* d. λ and λ_Y	Rank-biserial	Point-biserial
	Ordinal	Rank-biserial	a. Tetrachoric b. Spearman ρ	Biseral
	Interval/Ratio	Point-biserial	Biserial r_b	Pearson *r*

From: Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs (2003). *Applied Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences* (5th ed.).