

CLUTTER NEVER BOTHERED ME ANYWAY: ENVIRONMENT SENSITIVITY PREDICTS (DIS)ORGANIZATION IN PERSONAL SPACE

Mona J.H. Zhu & Evan F. Risko | Cognition and Natural Behaviour Lab | University of Waterloo – Department of Psychology

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Object organization is thought to improve task performance and overall task efficiency^{1, 2}
- ▶ Personality factors such as trait-level conscientiousness are known to influence the extent to which individuals engage in organization in their personal spaces³
- ▶ It is unknown whether other factors also independently contribute to individual differences in spatial organization
- ▶ We examine the relation between individuals' self-reported sensitivity to the environment (cognitive and affective) and the degree of perceived disorganization in their environment

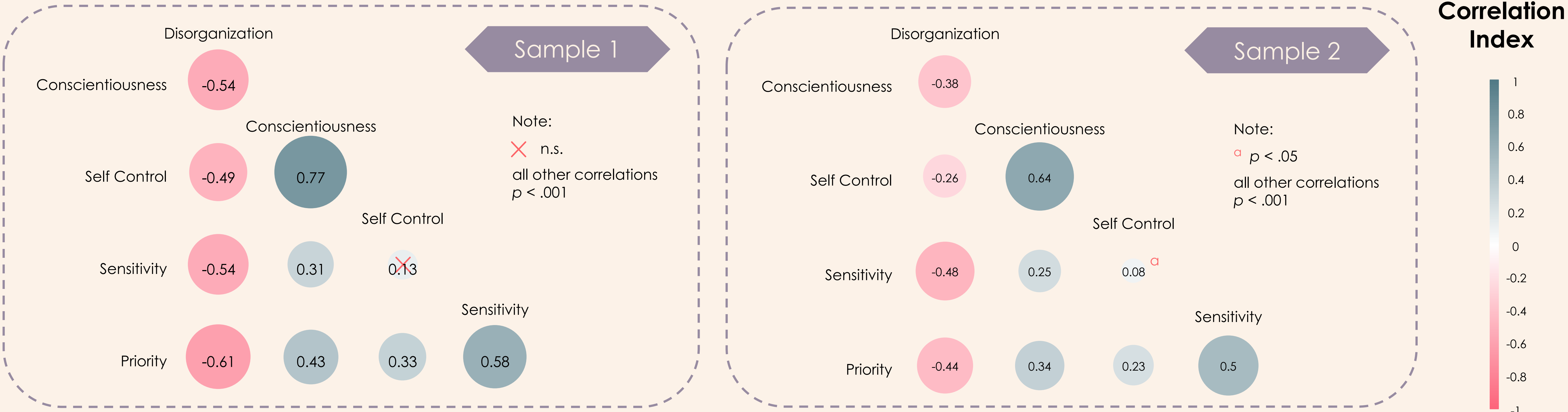
METHODS

Sample 1: Mechanical Turk workers (n = 202)
Sample 2: Undergraduate students (n = 679)

Measures:

- ▶ Big Five Inventory⁴ - conscientiousness subscale
- ▶ Brief Self-Control Scale⁵
- ▶ Spatial Organization Questionnaire
- ▶ Environment Sensitivity Scale
 - Sensitivity – “It annoys me when I see clutter in my own space”
 - Priority – “I always prefer other tasks to organizing my space.”

RESULTS



Predictor Variables	Sample 1					Sample 2					
	β	R^2	ΔR^2	F	ΔF	β	R^2	ΔR^2	F	ΔF	
1 Conscientiousness	-.54***	.30***		84.45***		-.38***	.15***		117.49		
2 Conscientiousness	-.41†	.31***	.013†	44.59***	3.62†	-.37***	.15***	.001	58.89***	.40	† $p < .10$
Self Control	-.17***					-.03					* $p < .05$
3 Conscientiousness	-.13	.54***	.23***	57.58***	49.04***	-.19***	.33***	.19***	84.42***	93.78***	** $p < .01$
Self Control	-.26**					-.07†					*** $p < .001$
Sensitivity	-.30***					-.33***					
Priority	-.30***					-.19***					

SUMMARY

- ▶ In addition to trait-level conscientiousness, sensitivity to the physical environment and one's willingness to prioritize organization were also significant predictors of the degree of organization in one's environment
- ▶ The tendency to engage in organization may arise as a result of one's need to exert control over the environment, but it may also be associated with perceived benefits in one's ability to perform well in a given space

REFERENCES

1. Kirsh (1995). *Artificial Intelligence*, 73(1), 31-68.
2. Zhu & Risko (2016). *QJEP*, 69(7), 1255-1264.
3. Gosling, Ko, Mannarelli, & Morris (2002). *JPSP*, 82(3), 379.
4. John & Srivastava (1999). *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research*, 2, 102-138.
5. Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone (2004). *Journal of Personality*, 72(2), 271-324.