Data Analysis Assignment 1
COMM 7370 | Spring 2026

Setup

1) Find the journal article below and download the codebook from OSF (link available in paper). The data can be downloaded from Canvas (`humor-data.csv`). In this assignment, you will recreate three of the variables (`mirth`, `need for humor`, and `engagement intentions`) from the article. We will use these variables to examine some differences and relationships.

   Yeo, S. K., Su, L. Y.-F., Cacciatore, M. A., Zhang, J. S., & McKasy, M. (2023). The differential effects of humor on three scientific issues: Global warming, artificial intelligence, and microbiomes. *International Journal of Science Education, Part B, 13*(1), 59–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/21548455.2022.2123259

2) To start, load the following packages in R.

   - `tidyverse`
   - `summarytools`
   - `rstatix`

3) Read the data into R. Answer the following questions as comments in your R script.

   a) How many observations are there in this dataset?
   b) How many variables are in the dataset?

4) How many respondents are at least 18 years old and consented to participate in the study (**Hint:** Look for the consent question in the codebook)? If necessary, create a new object in your R environment that contains only respondents who are at least 18 years old and consented to participate in the study.

5) These data come from an experiment–read about the experimental design in Yeo *et al.* (2023). Then, examine a frequency distribution of the variable, `issue`. Based on the frequency distribution of `issue` and the information in the Yeo *et al.* (2023), what does the variable `issue` describe?

6) Next, examine a frequency distribution of the variables, `gwhumor`, `aihumor`, and `mhumor`. Using the frequency distributions and the information from Yeo *et al.* (2023), explain what these variables, `gwhumor`, `aihumor`, and `mhumor`, describe.

7) Now you will create some new variables from existing columns in the dataframe. Create a new variable called `mirth` by averaging the existing variables, `Q86_1`, `Q86_2`, `Q86_3`, `Q86_4`, and `Q86_7`. Before creating the variable, read about the concept of mirth in Yeo *et al.* (2023). Each respondent in the dataframe should have their own score for `mirth`. Include commands in your R script to run a frequency distribution of `mirth`.

   a) What is the mean value of `mirth` for the whole dataframe?
   b) What is the mean value of `mirth` among respondents who were exposed to the issue of microbiomes?
   c) What is the mean value of `mirth` among respondents who were exposed to the issue of artificial intelligence?
   d) What is the mean value of `mirth` among respondents who were exposed to the issue of global warming?

8) Next, we will test whether the experimental conditions had an effect on mirth for the three issues.

   a) Identify the dependent variable. Be sure to write this down as a comment in your R script.
   b) Identify the independent variables (**Hint:** Refer to your answer to Question 6).
   c) Identify and conduct the inferential statistical test(s) that you will use to determine whether there are differences in mean levels of `mirth` between the experimental conditions for each issue. **Note:** You should conduct three statistical tests, which will each result in a test statistic and a *p*-value. Be sure to note the test statistic and *p*-value for each test in your R script.
   d) Are the mean levels of `mirth` statistically different for each of the three issues (**Hint:** Refer to your notes on inferential statistics to determine how to tell if your statistical test is significant)? Describe your results for each issue.
   e) Re-create the individual graphs in Figure 3 in Yeo *et al.* (2023).

9) Now, we will create another new variable, `engage`. This variable captures participants' intentions to engage with the Twitter conversation (see Yeo *et al.*, 2023). `engage` is created by averaging participants' scores to the following three question items: (i) "I would like the original tweet," (ii) "I would retweet the original tweet," and (iii) "I would share the original tweet."

   a) What are the columns that correspond to these three question items called in the dataframe (**Hint:** Look in the codebook for these statements)?
   b) Create the variable `engage`.
   c) What is the mean value of `engage`?
   d) What is the standard deviation of engage?

10) Now, we want to know how mirth is related to participants' intentions to engage with the content they saw.

   a) What statistical test might you use to examine this relationship? State this clearly in your R script.
   b) Conduct the statistical test.
   c) Describe the results of your test. Remember to report a test statistic and *p*-value. Are they significant? If so, what is the value of the test statistic? What does this coefficient mean?

11) Next, we want to create a variable that captures participants' *need for humor (NFH)*. This concept is a human trait that "defines one's tendency and inclination toward experiencing humor from others and being a source of humor or generating it" (Yeo *et al.*, 2023, p. 65).

    a) Based on the *Measures* section of Yeo *et al.* (2023), how many question items were used to construct the variable that measures need for humor (`NFH`)?

    b) The 12 items used to create this variable are listed in the codebook as Q8 and Q9. Use these to create a new variable, `NFH`. Average the items together to create `NFH`.

    c) What is the mean and standard deviation of `NFH`?

12) Form a hypothesis about how `mirth` and `need for humor` are related. Test your hypothesis using the appropriate statistical test. Be sure to report the results (test statistic, *p*-value) of your test. Describe your results and interpret what they mean.

Submission

Submit your R script (named `Assignment-#_FirstName-LastName.R`) to Canvas.

Your R script should:

1) Include commands and functions that are necessary to address all the questions in the assignment.
2) Contain comments that answer the questions in the assignment.
3) Run in its entirety without errors.

> **!** Important
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> These standards apply to all submissions in this course that require R scripts. You should follow these instructions for preparation, naming, and saving of your R script for all of your individual lab assignments.