Recitation #1

What are good questions for your project?
What are good questions?

• Applied or theory?
  – Applied meaning you are trying to estimate particular parameters
  • Examples: Politeness, opening doors, etc.
  – Theory meaning you are trying to understand a directional effect
  • Examples: Politeness, opening doors, etc.
What are good questions?

• Applied or theory?
  – Applied is more specific, theory is more general
    • Engineering vs. Science
  – “There is nothing more practical than a good theory”
    • Kurt Levin

• At what stage of product development is each more appropriate?
• When is represented sampling more important?
• When is exact implementation more important?
What are good questions?

- Relevant is a good criteria
  - But relevant to who?
  -

- “Big” is a good criteria
  -

- More general (theoretical) questions are likely to be “larger” & more relevant
Ethnics in research

• There have been a lot of cases of abuse
  – Medical cases where they gave people different diseases.
  – Shaking basic beliefs
  – Philip Zimbardo’s jail experiment
  – Stanley Milgram’s Electrical shocking experiment
• The Human subject review board COUHES is the local branch that is in charge of ethical behavior toward subjects
Philip Zimbardo’s jail experiment
Stanley Milgram’s Electrical shocking

• 65% of subjects, ordinary residents of New Haven, were willing to give apparently harmful electric shocks-up to 450 volts-to a pitifully protesting victim, simply because a scientific authority commanded them to, and in spite of the fact that the victim did not do anything to deserve such punishment.
Exercise in generating ideas

• In small groups propose questions you are interested in finding the answers for.

• Practice “armchair” psychology
  – Think of your own weird behavior (and on that of the people around you).
  – Observe, introspect

• Also name 3 “bad” (useless) thins to test
A few interesting projects I

- How long do people wait before pulling out of parking?
A few interesting projects I

- Example: An observation study
  - How long do people wait before pulling out of parking?
  - What does it depend on
  - Whether someone is waiting?
  - Gender?
  - Type of car?
A few interesting projects II

- How long do men take to urinate?
A few interesting projects II

- Example: Manipulations
  - How long do men take to urinate?
    - What is it depending on?
  - When are people more honest?
    - Would a mirror make a difference?
  - Other ideas:
    - Opening doors, pedestrian crossing, etc.
A few interesting projects III

- Example: Surveys (SWB)
  - How happy are you with your life?
    - One year after winning a lottery
    - One year after a bad injury
    - Control group
  - People expect large differences but the differences are small
A few interesting projects IV

• Example: inferences
  – How often do you masturbate?
  – A day / A year

• After that, how happy are you with your love life?
  – measurement problems
SWB

• SWB = Subjective Well Being
• This is a measure of psychological “happiness.”
  – Has many important policy implications (how to invest in environment, education, etc)
  – And also many measurement problems
• Together we will do a cross-religion research on SWB
Task #1

Religion project: “The value of religion”

- Across different religious organisations
- Before the worship and after
  - Between subjects
Steps

• Pick an organization from the list (& mark it)
• Print surveys
• Find out when is their “service.”
• Go there 1.5 hours before
• Ask 10 people the questions (before)
• Wait (and listen)
• Ask people the questions (after)
• Input the data into excel
Samples....
# Data Entry

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