

1943

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Recommended Citation

Akerman, Dorothy; Worster, Mary Ellen; and Henderson, Mack T. (1943) "A Study in the Use of a Graphic Rating Scale," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*, 50(1), 303-308.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol50/iss1/29>

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A STUDY IN THE USE OF A GRAPHIC RATING SCALE

DOROTHY AKERMAN, MARY ELLEN WORSTER, AND MACK T. HENDERSON

PURPOSE

This study was undertaken for the purpose of determining to what extent an individual's self-rating agrees with the ratings his friends give him. In addition, an attempt was made to summarize the personality of an individual from the rating scale data.

PROCEDURE

After much experimentation, a graphic rating scale of fifteen personal traits was constructed. (See Table 1). In order that the rater could check the amount of each trait the subject possessed, the graph for each trait was divided into five degrees, any one of which the rater could choose. Furthermore, these five degrees furnished an opportunity of scoring the rating, a rating of one indicating the most favorable degree of the trait, and a rating of five the most unfavorable. The rating scale was arranged so that the most favorable degree of the traits sometimes was at the extreme left of the graph and sometimes at the extreme right. This helped to eliminate a tendency a rater might have to check only the right side or the left side of the scale. As a means of making the trait to be rated very clear to the rater, descriptive phrases regarding the degrees of each trait were inserted at three different positions on each graph.

Eight college sophomore women and ten college senior women were asked to rate themselves on this scale. Each was also asked to distribute five of these scales to five of his friends so that they might rate the subject's behavior. In order to encourage frankness on the part of those doing the ratings, these scales were distributed in such a way that the friends' ratings could never become known to the individual being rated. This was accomplished by supplying each rater with a self-addressed envelope which was returned to the authors through the college postal system.

The rating on each trait was given a numerical score. The five ratings on each trait made by the friends of the subject were averaged. These averages were then compared with the subject's self-rating, and the differences computed.

These data were also used for the purpose of summarizing in descriptive terms the personality of the subject.

RESULTS

In table 2 are recorded the differences between an individual's self-rating and the average of the ratings given him by his friends. In order to determine whether there were any differences between the ratings of the sophomore women and those of the senior women, the data of table 2 were summarized according to the amount of difference which existed on each trait for each subject between the

friends' average ratings and the self-ratings. If this difference was .8 of a degree or less it was regarded as insignificant. If the difference was greater than .8 of a degree it was regarded as indicating lack of agreement. While this value was determined arbitrarily, it furnished a rough measure for the purpose of summaries.

TABLE 1
PERSONAL RATING SCALE

I.	S. criticizes friend's good fortune.	S. envies friend's good fortune and may at time criticize him.	S. is always pleased with friend's good fortune.
II.	S. is often very "low" and moody.	S. may be either cheerful or melancholy.	S. almost always has a very good disposition—happy and not subject to depression.
III.	S. is always willing to share things with friends.	S. will share some things with some persons.	S. refuses to share his possessions with anyone.
IV.	S. feels at ease with any group and finds it easy to converse with them.	S. is at ease in some groups and usually is able to converse freely.	S. is always uncomfortable in strange groups, under nervous tension and finds it difficult to converse.
V.	S. is always very tactful and careful to avoid hurting others' feelings.	S. is apt to say rude and sarcastic things to persons.	S. never considers other's feelings.
VI.	S. is always very fair and honest in dealings with others.	S. tries to be honest and just, when dealing with other persons.	S. will always lie if he thinks it necessary to gain his point.

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| VII. | S. condemns and criticizes persons whose actions he does not approve. | S. will tolerate actions of which he disapproves. | S. is always very tolerant of the actions of others. |
| VIII. | S. is seldom friendly with those who are outside of his own groups or clique. | Occasionally S. accepts friends, other than those of his own group. | S. is friendly with everyone. |
| IX. | S. is always modest about his personal achievements. | S. is more often modest than otherwise about his personal achievements. | S. is quite vain about his personal achievements. |
| X. | S. makes snap judgments and does not investigate the two sides to every question. | S. may or may not be careful in his judgments. | S. gives due consideration to both sides of every question. |
| XI. | S. must always be with others in order to be happy. | S. likes seclusion at times, but is just as content with others. | S. finds more satisfaction in being to himself, and, therefore, spends most of his time alone. |
| XII. | S. is calm and deliberate on all occasions. | Part of the time S. is impulsive, but just as often he is well controlled. | S. gets upset at the slightest provocation. |
| XIII. | S. is always neat in his personal appearance. | S. is not necessarily slovenly in his personal appearance, but should be neater in some aspects. | S. is very unkempt and slovenly in his dress and grooming, and there is much need for improvement. |

XIV. S. is always sure of his ability to accomplish tasks.	S. is fairly capable of estimating his own ability.	S. lacks any confidence as to what he can accomplish.
XV. S. always has a goal in mind and is striving to attain that goal.	S. may have a goal in mind, but does not do much to accomplish that end.	S. has no particular objective in mind and spends a lot of useless effort.

Of the 120 traits rated for the *sophomore women*, 75 or 62% showed differences of .8 of a degree or less. Of the 150 traits rated for the *senior women*, 108 or 72% showed a difference of .8 of a degree or less. These data may also be stated differently. Of the 120 traits prepared for the *sophomore women*, 45 or 37% showed a difference of more than .8 of a degree. Of the 150 traits prepared for the *senior women* only 42 traits, or 28%, showed a difference of more than .8 of a degree. This would seem to indicate that the self-ratings of the senior women agree with the judgments of their friends to a greater extent than did the sophomore self-ratings. It is possible that the senior women with their greater training and experience can observe more accurately their own behavior in terms of the ways others observe their behavior.

As an example of how these data may be used in preparing a descriptive summary of an individual, we present the following representative efforts.

S, a sophomore woman, is usually pleased with others' good fortune; she is quite careful to avoid hurting others, although at times she may say unkind things. She refuses to share her possessions with anyone; she may be dishonest if it will be to her advantage. S is apt to confine her friendships to her own group, and is inclined to find more satisfaction in being to herself. S is a calm and a deliberate individual, not often subject to impulsive action. She may have a goal in mind but does very little to reach that goal. The biggest difference between self-rating and the average rating of others came on the point of sharing possessions with others. S reports herself as willing to share some things with some persons; others say that she refuses to share with anyone. S rated herself below average on having a goal in mind and attempting to attain that goal; others rated her above average.

Another sophomore woman is friendly with almost everyone. She is willing to share her things with her friends. S is careful to be tactful and is always honest in dealings with other persons. S usually gives due consideration to both sides of every question and is quite calm and deliberate in her action. S is quite capable of estimating

her own ability S was rated by others as being fairly modest about her personal achievements, but S rated herself as having a tendency to be vain about her personal achievements. In most instances the subject did not rate herself as high in these traits as did the other raters.

TABLE 2—DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SELF-RATINGS AND THE AVERAGE OF FIVE FRIENDS' RATINGS

		Traits														
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV
SOPH WOMEN																
S 1.....	.2	3.0	1.6	.4	.4	.4	3.0	.2	0.0	1.2	.6	2.8	1.0	1.2	.6	
S 2.....	.6	1.2	1.6	.8	.6	2.0	.6	.9	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.0	1.6	0.0	
S 3.....	.6	.2	.4	.2	.7	.8	1.9	1.4	.4	.6	0.0	1.4	2.2	1.0	.2	
S 4.....	.6	.4	1.1	.5	.3	.1	.3	.4	2.1	1.2	.2	.5	1.4	1.5	.2	
S 5.....	1.7	.6	2.2	.4	.5	1.3	.1	.9	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.8	.9	2.1	.9	
S 6.....	.2	1.0	.3	.3	.5	.5	0.0	.1	1.2	1.1	.5	.3	.6	.3	1.0	
S 7.....	.4	.6	.4	.8	.4	.7	.7	1.9	1.1	.9	.1	.2	.3	.9	.1	
S 8.....	.6	.7	.4	.5	0.0	1.1	.4	.5	1.5	.6	.6	.2	.6	.8	.1	
SENIOR WOMEN																
S 1.....	.6	.8	.2	.7	.7	.9	.2	.2	1.2	1.0	.5	.2	.9	.3	.5	
S 2.....	.6	1.4	1.7	1.8	0.0	1.7	.2	.2	.2	.9	1.1	.6	.4	.8	.7	
S 3.....	.4	.5	.1	1.3	.8	.7	.8	1.4	.4	.6	.4	.2	1.0	1.5	.5	
S 4.....	1.0	2.1	.2	.3	.3	.8	0.0	.4	.3	.4	.9	.5	0.0	1.2	.5	
S 5.....	.8	.4	0.0	.2	.8	.4	.2	1.4	.8	.2	0.0	.6	.4	.6	.8	
S 6.....	.6	1.7	.4	1.3	.7	1.7	.6	1.0	1.2	.2	.3	.4	2.0	.5	.1	
S 7.....	.4	.3	1.2	.7	.4	1.0	1.8	.2	.4	.5	.4	.3	.9	1.1	.1	
S 8.....	1.5	.3	0.0	1.3	.8	1.4	.7	.5	1.1	.2	.8	1.0	.4	.6	.8	
S 9.....	.2	.2	.7	.6	.2	1.2	.7	.8	.4	.8	1.0	1.4	0.0	.4	.2	
S 10.....	1.0	1.3	.8	.4	.6	1.2	.2	.8	.6	1.1	.1	.1	.8	.4	.3	

As a third example, S is always pleased with friends' good fortune; she is always willing to share things with friends. S is very tactful and careful not to hurt anyone's feelings. S tries at all times to be perfectly fair in dealing with others. She is usually cheerful, but at times can feel very blue. S is not always too modest about her personal achievements, but she is very capable of estimating her own abilities and she always has a goal in mind and is doing everything possible to reach that goal.

S, who is a senior woman, may upon occasion accept friends outside of her own group; she finds it relatively easy to converse with people. She may at times act upon an impulse. Most of the time S has a very good disposition. S tries to be fair and honest in her dealings with others; she is not apt to be rude or sarcastic. She is generally glad of others' good fortune, and is usually tolerant of others' actions, even though she does not approve of them. S is quite capable of knowing her ability and having confidence in that ability. Others do not consider S overly friendly, however S rated herself as being friendly with almost everyone. There were only slight variations in the rest of the traits.

S, a senior woman, is always pleased with others' good fortune; she is almost always willing to share things with others. S is tolerant of the actions of others almost without exception. She is very fair and honest in her dealings with others. S is usually friendly toward everyone; she enjoys being with others but is just as happy when by herself. She is quite at ease in strange groups and converses easily. S is always calm and deliberate. She always has a goal in mind and is constantly striving to attain that goal, yet she is always very modest about her personal achievements. In only two instances, modesty and judgment, were the differences between the self-rating and the average rating of others more than one point.

This senior woman usually has a good disposition. She does not have to be with others in order to be happy, and perhaps finds more satisfaction in being alone. She is very unwilling to share her things with others; she is tolerant of the actions of others. S is quite calm and deliberate, not giving way to impulses. S is fairly capable of knowing her own ability, and she is always trying to reach the goal she has set up. Others consider S as always having a good disposition, but S says she often feels "low" and moody. S was rated as usually being fair and honest in dealings with others while she rated herself as only trying to be honest.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The average ratings of the subjects friends and the self-ratings show much agreement. There was more agreement, however, among the senior women's ratings than was found among the sophomore women's ratings.

2. This rating scale can be used to describe the personality of an individual.

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