

Mackinnon, S. P., Jordan, C., & Wilson, A. (2009). *Physical similarity and seating preference: Aggregation by glasses-wearing status*. Poster presented at the 70th annual convention of the Canadian Psychological Association at the Westin Hotel in Montreal, QC, June 13, 2009.

Abstract

There has been a long history of seating preference studies using observational methods. Generally speaking, prior research has found significant aggregation by sex and skin color in naturalistic seating patterns. That is, women prefer to sit by women, white people by other white people, and so on. The current research posits that this phenomenon extends more generally to other physical traits beyond sex and skin color. In particular, it was hypothesized that significant aggregation would occur by glasses-wearing status. Utilizing a statistical formula developed by Kruskal & Wallace (1966), the current research shows that glasses-wearers tend to sit beside other glasses wearers and away from non-glasses wearers more frequently than could be expected by chance alone using observations from a computer lab (21 separate observations; N = 361) and first year university classrooms (17 classrooms; N = 2170). Prior friendship was also examined as a potential moderating factor of this effect in the classroom sample; however, the results of this analysis are somewhat mixed.