

Reporting the C-score

The C-score reflects a participant's ability to rate arguments pro and contra a certain moral decision in regard to the arguments' moral quality instead of in regard to their opinion agreement or other criteria, in short: their *moral competence*. ... [more](#)

The general reader is more interested in the participants' *moral competence* rather than in their "C-score". The C-score is more interesting for the specialist. Please remember (and mention in your report) that the official definition of moral competence is much broader:

The ability to solve conflicts and problems on the basis of moral principles through thinking and discussion instead of through violence, deceit or bowing down to others.

The C-scores ranges from 0 to 100. If your calculations resulted in negative C-scores or C-scores larger than 100, you must have made a mistake.

If you calculate C-scores for each dilemma story in order to study participants' moral segmentation, you should get higher C-score for these dilemma stories because of mathematical reasons. If these scores are lower you must check your computer program for mistakes. You can check them easily by using the [sample data on this web-site](#).

In a the typical report you will tell the reader the raw C-scores, e.g., **C = 14.5**. You may not report more than one digit after the period/comma.

When you report scores for groups, you should report both mean and median scores. The report of the variance or standard deviation is optional. Some editors of journals require this. But it is not always necessary. You may also report the inter-quartile range (Q75 - Q25) and the smallest and the highest score, even if your research question does not require this. Readers may be interested to compare your findings with other findings in that respect.

When reporting and displaying the C-score they do not need to be categorized as I had suggested earlier. Yet you *can* categorize them in a way which serves your research question.

For this I suggest these conventions, which I and others have adopted (see Lind, 2016):

0,0 to 4,9	No moral competence. The reason: In typical studies with less than 20 participants in the analytical cells (e.g., men, old people, etc.) random response fluctuation might be so high that a participants with no moral competence gets a C-score higher than 0. However, if you analyze data from a study with larger cell sizes ($N > 20$) you may reduce the upper limit for "no competence" and interpret even C-scores of 2 and more as "a little moral competence." The reason: The larger the sample, the freer are your data from random error. This convention is based on experience. An exact determination of these limits is not possible. Note: if several studies find the same small C-score or small C-score difference, you can report this with more confidence.
5,0 to 9,9	Some, but very low moral competence.
10,0 - 19,9	Low moral competence. Less moral competence than seems to be need for choosing moral options in a dilemma situation (see Lind, 2016).
20,0 - 29,9	Sufficient moral competence. Enough moral competence for choosing moral options in many dilemma situation if the "prize" is not too high. (Hypothesis; no studies available yet)
30,0 to 100	High to very high moral competence. (Hypothesis; no studies available yet)

In **graphs**, the C-score should, if possible, be always depicted on the vertical y-axis on a scale starting from 0 and ranging to 40 or more, if higher mean scores have been found. At least the scale must start from "0", so that the reader has a better chance to see the degree of moral competence in your study on a first glance. Do not spread the C-scores artificially by reducing the depicted scale range (e.g., from 10 to 20).