Color’s Impact on Short-Term Memory

Participants: $N = 50$, $n = 25$

Test Materials: Qualtrics Survey

Procedure:
1. Participants viewed a string of different shapes in the same color saturation for three-seconds each, either colored or greyscale. The shapes were circle (C), square (S), triangle (T).
2. The study began by randomly showing three shapes for three seconds each, then increased the number of shapes viewed in each consecutive trial by one, up to nine shapes. Participants who received the test in color were assigned to the experimental group.
3. Scoring was based on the final, longest correctly identified string of shapes in one condition. For example, if a participant incorrectly remembered the order of the shapes in the string of 7 shapes, but correctly remembered the order in the string of 8 shapes, their final score was 8. Participants did not receive both conditions, however scoring criteria was identical in both groups.

Results:

Mean Score vs. Group Condition

Discussion:
- Participants administered a colored test scored 2 points lower on average.
- Color may have distracted participants rather than aiding memory.
- The addition of color does affect attention and memory, supporting previous research.
- Future studies may research how perception of light and specific colors impact attention and memory.

References