

Mathematics of Experimentation (Additional File)

Worked Example of Accuracy and Precision

Syed Arif Kamal*

SF-Growth-and-Imaging Laboratory, Department of Mathematics, University of Karachi; sakamal@uok.edu.pk

A medical student (she just started her clerkship in pediatrics) and a professional anthropometrist, both took MUAC (mid-upper-arm circumference) of right arm of a 7-year-old girl. The data are given below. By computing accuracy and precision, identify medical student/anthropometrist (measurer A or B) — reference value of MUAC is 16.5 cm.

Table 1. Accuracy and Precision Computation of Measurer A (reference value, $R = 16.5$ cm)

i	O_i (cm)	$ O_i $ (cm)	$O_i - \bar{O}$ (cm)	$ O_i - \bar{O} $ (cm)	$O_i - R$ (cm)	$ O_i - R $ (cm)
1	16.4	16.4	-0.26	0.26	-0.1	0.1
2	16.3	16.3	-0.36	0.36	-0.2	0.2
3	16.7	16.7	0.04	0.04	0.2	0.2
4	16.8	16.8	0.14	0.14	0.3	0.3
5	17.1	17.1	0.44	0.44	0.6	0.6
Σ	83.3	83.3		1.24		1.4

Accuracies and precisions of measurers A and B are computed in Tables 1 and 2, respectively.

$$\text{Measurer A: } \bar{O} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N O_i = \frac{83.3}{5} = 16.66 \text{ cm} \bullet \overline{|O|} = \frac{83.3}{5} = 16.66 \text{ cm}$$

$$D = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N |O_i - \bar{O}|}{N-1} = \frac{1.24}{4} = 0.31 \text{ cm} \bullet D_R = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N |O_i - R|}{N-1} = \frac{1.4}{4} = 0.35 \text{ cm}$$

$$A = 100 \left[1 - \frac{D_R}{D_R + \overline{|O|}} \right] = 97.942386832\% \bullet P = 100 \left[1 - \frac{D}{D + \overline{|O|}} \right] = 98.173246907\%$$

$$\text{Measurer B: } \bar{O} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N O_i = \frac{82.5}{5} = 16.5 \text{ cm} \bullet \overline{|O|} = \frac{82.5}{5} = 16.5 \text{ cm}$$



Measuring MUAC of a 7-year-old girl

*Prof. Dr. Syed Arif Kamal (<http://ngds-ku.org/kamal>), PhD (Mathematical Neuroscience), MA (Johns Hopkins, United States), MS (Indiana, United States), Professor, Department of Mathematics (<http://ngds.uok.edu.pk>), University of Karachi (<http://www.uok.edu.pk>), Karachi 75270, Pakistan and Consultant, Guidance, Navigation and Control Laboratories, SUPARCO (Plant), Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission; *Telephones:* +92 21 9926 1300-6 ext. 2380,2293

Table 2. Accuracy and Precision Computation of Measurer B (reference value, $R = 16.5 \text{ cm}$)

i	$O_i \text{ (cm)}$	$ O_i \text{ (cm)}$	$O_i - \bar{O} \text{ (cm)}$	$ O_i - \bar{O} \text{ (cm)}$	$O_i - R \text{ (cm)}$	$ O_i - R \text{ (cm)}$
1	16.5	16.5	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.1
2	16.6	16.6	0.1	0.1	-0.2	0.2
3	16.4	16.4	-0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2
4	16.6	16.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3
5	16.4	16.4	-0.1	0.1	0.6	0.6
Σ	82.5	82.5		0.4		0.4

$$D = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N |O_i - \bar{O}|}{N-1} = \frac{0.4}{4} = 0.1 \text{ cm} \quad \bullet \quad D_R = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N |O_i - R|}{N-1} = \frac{0.4}{4} = 0.1 \text{ cm}$$

$$A = 100 \left[1 - \frac{D_R}{D_R + |O|} \right] = 99.397590362\% \quad \bullet \quad P = 100 \left[1 - \frac{D}{D + |O|} \right] = 99.397590362\%$$

A comparative statement is prepared in Table 3, which shows that measurer B has not only *higher precision* — indicator of good work habits, 99.397590362% as compared to 98.173246907% (measurer A), but also *higher accuracy* — indicator of accessibility to good instruments, 99.397590362% as compared to 97.942386832% (measurer A). According to these results, measurer B seems to be *professional anthropometrist*, whereas measurer A looks like *medical student*.

In case the professional anthropometrist forgot his glasses on the day of measurement, his precision should have been higher, but accuracy might have dropped.

Table 3. Accuracies and Precisions of Measurers A and B

	<i>Accuracy</i>	<i>Precision</i>
Measurer A	97.942386832%	98.173246907%
Measurer B	99.397590362%	99.397590362%

Web address of the main document:

Prof. Dr. Muhammed Rafi and Prof. Dr. Razi Hussin Memorial Lecture: Mathematics of Experimentation
<http://www.ngds-ku.org/Presentations/Physics2.pdf>

Web address of this document:

Additional File (Mathematics of Experimentation): Worked example of Accuracy and Precision
http://www.ngds-ku.org/Presentations/Physics2/Additional_File.pdf