

EDITORIAL

Inaugural Editorial

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The commencement of a new editorial tenure within the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Attitudes and Social Cognition* (*JPSP: ASC*) provides an opportunity for reflection regarding the journal's core mission. We recognize that social psychology is at a crossroads due to competing demands that may have led to reduced submissions and posed challenges for previous editors in filling the journal's pages. Now, *JPSP: ASC* has been allotted more pages to allow for growth during this editorial term. Although this is desirable for the field, it adds to the pressure of identifying articles for publication given the difficulties filling the pages during previous editorial terms. As the premier outlet of social psychology since 1965, *JPSP: ASC* will retain its centrality if we increase submissions and publish more articles, while continuing to strive to communicate methodologically trustworthy, intellectually stimulating, and socially relevant research, in a responsible fashion.

Submitting to *JPSP: ASC* has become unappealing to many because authors face a set of demands that are difficult if not impossible to meet in its entirety. The journal has a history of expecting articles with multiple experiments, testing their

hypotheses in multiple contexts, providing evidence of the psychological processes at stake, and pursuing theoretical innovation. In response to the last decade's replication crisis, expectations continue to grow for high statistical power, often requiring larger samples, as well as open science, frequently including preregistered studies that follow extensive piloting. Furthermore, some editors now require multiple data sources, including in-person studies, based on criticisms of online platforms like Amazon Mechanical Turk and Prolific.

The answers to these competing goals are neither simple nor applicable to every piece of research. However, they can produce the perfect storm for any publication. It may be possible to alleviate the negative effects of these demands if editors and reviewers are more flexible in what we deem worthy of publication. We are promoting this flexibility by introducing modifications to the review format and by actively appealing to reviewers. Additionally, we have introduced policies for authors to communicate limitations of their work in a more open, standardized manner. In combination, these two policies aim to strike a balance between the need to publish articles and the natural caution of reviewers and editors regarding potential limitations or even critical flaws in submitted work. In addition, these goals ensure that authors can communicate research more transparently than ever before without the fear of facing adverse consequences for doing so.

The field of social psychology now operates at a global scale and has significant contributions to offer in advancing our understanding of attitudes, social cognition, and their broader implications for society. The following sections outline the kinds

Dolores Albarracín drafted the editorial and all coauthors provided critical feedback and revisions.

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of submissions we actively seek and detail the editorial policies we have put in place to align with our publication objectives. These policies aim to provide robust support for authors while maintaining a commitment to publishing high quality articles with a strong emphasis on open communication. Our overarching goal is to invigorate the field of attitudes and social cognition by augmenting the number of exceptional articles we publish. In addition, it is imperative that we accurately reflect the perspectives and backgrounds of contemporary attitudes and social cognition scholars.

Types of Submissions

JPSP: ASC will continue its tradition of serving as a platform for multistudy articles that heavily rely on experimental methods to enhance our basic understanding of attitudinal and social-cognitive processes. Pertinent topics include attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and prejudice, culture, cognition, emotion, and motivation. *JPSP: ASC* will publish pieces that either (a) make a theoretical contribution to attitudes and social cognition or (b) report the discovery of new phenomena of high relevance to attitudes and social cognition. Theoretical contribution is defined as:

1. Developing a new theory.
2. Developing a conceptualization of a social-psychological phenomenon not previously studied within the field.
3. Using an existing theory to explain a new phenomenon.
4. Making novel connections between two theories to address new empirical questions.
5. Providing a novel integration of phenomena under an existing theory originally designed to understand a different phenomenon in another area of research.
6. Establishing the operation of psychological processes to explain a phenomenon that is currently understood as implicating different processes.
7. Conceptualizing the conditions that give way to different processes previously studied independently.
8. Conceptualizing moderators that explain conflicting predictions in the literature
9. Introducing a new moderator that aids in understanding the conditions under which a previously established phenomenon occurs.
10. Introducing new elements to a theory that failed to fully explain a phenomenon.
11. Introducing a new theoretical construct and demonstrating its importance.
12. Replicating seminal research that has made any of the contributions above, ideally contributing to explaining variability in past findings.

Even Though *JPSP: ASC* focuses on fundamental questions, its articles inform fields beyond psychology, such as political science,

communication, public health, marketing, and management. Our findings speak to key topics of broad policy relevance, including among many others the effects of public communications regarding health; social policies related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; political dynamics; the law; as well as work and organizational issues. Nonetheless, when research is driven exclusively by questions about a particular context, it is more appropriate for journals dedicated to those specific issues. For example, manuscripts addressing organizational psychology concerns or studying phenomena in a single applied context are outside the scope of *JPSP: ASC*. So is research on health, social media, and political issues, when the work has been carried out to shed light on specific contexts and times rather than with the objective of obtaining general answers to questions about attitudes and social cognition.

The Benefits of and Need for Increasing Submissions

In the past, the topics that our authors studied were clearly identifiable as “the social psychology of attitudes and social cognition” and *JPSP: ASC* was their go-to journal. However, several new general journals (e.g., *Nature Human Behavior*) are now available as outstanding options to disseminate our studies. In this new context, the ability to highlight our unique focus on the “psychology of attitudes and social cognition” will be critical to maintaining our identity. *JPSP: ASC* has an opportunity to serve as the nexus and connection point for scholars in our field in a way that general scientific outlets like *Nature Human Behavior*, *Scientific Reports*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and *Psychological Science* do not. Thus, even though the research social psychologists conduct belongs in broad categories like “behavioral science” and “psychology,” it is also important that it be recognized as part of the narrower category of “the social psychology of attitudes and social cognition.” In addition, our field is highly diversified, and similar research is conducted in political science, communication, marketing, organizational behavior, and other disciplines. *JPSP: ASC* allows social psychologists and other researchers with homes outside of psychology departments to maintain or establish their identity as contributors to basic questions about attitudes and social cognition, if they so wish.

If we are to ultimately publish a larger number of articles, we need to make submitting to *JPSP: ASC* less costly. Both the articles and the time it takes from submission to publication at *JPSP: ASC* have been historically lengthy. Given the traditionally lengthy articles in *JPSP: ASC*, manuscripts intended for the journal must be crafted differently and require more time compared to those intended for other outlets. To address this concern, we encourage the submission of shorter, yet rigorous multistudy manuscripts. We recommend a combined length of 3,500 words for the introduction and discussion sections. The reduction in length does not limit the number of rigorous studies reported in a manuscript, and supplements and tables may be used creatively to communicate information within these word limits, if necessary. This policy also helps to expedite editorial processing times and to ensure that our work remains accessible to general audiences interested in the topics. As well, with these changes, authors will find it easier to adapt their attitudes and social cognition papers for submissions to journals like *JPSP:*

ASC as well as other outlets like *Psychological Science* or *Nature Human Behavior*.

Another factor that increases the cost of submitting to *JPSP: ASC* is lengthy editorial times. If manuscripts hang in limbo for extended periods, researchers face the risk of significant delays and potential losses when submitting their work. These barriers to entry may have limited the accessibility of *JPSP: ASC*, restricting also the diversity of authors willing and able to submit to the journal. Therefore, we are dedicated to reducing processing times for manuscripts that are sent out for external review. For example, we are limiting the number of times manuscripts go out for external review and requiring reviews within a month. In addition, policies designed to accept more manuscripts, which we discuss below, are likely to also accelerate editorial times.

Policies Designed to Accept More Manuscripts

We have designed specific policies to increase the number of articles we accept. As mentioned, these include encouraging reviewers to be as constructive in their critiques as possible, but we also have new policies that we, editors, are following.

Traditionally, a significant portion of Revise-and-Resubmit decisions at *JPSP: ASC* have asked for new data. However, current submissions to *JPSP: ASC* already include more data than ever before, and asking for even more slows down the rate at which we can publish articles, given the time required for data collection and further rounds of peer review. We have two strategies to address this issue:

1. Our first strategy is to identify manuscripts that can be revised and resubmitted without new data, while maintaining or increasing the number of manuscripts receiving Revise-and-Resubmit decisions, compared to previous terms. Decision letters for these manuscripts will focus on addressing limitations through statistical analysis, elaboration, discussion, or other processes chosen by the editor and the authors. This approach is expected to generate a higher and more predictable number of articles for timely publication.
2. Our second strategy is to identify a larger set of manuscripts that have high potential but nonetheless require new data, for decisions of Reject-and-Resubmit. These are manuscripts that historically would have been rejected, despite receiving reasonably positive evaluations or being identified as promising or excellent by reviewers. This second pool of manuscripts will likely contribute additional articles to fill our pages.

Having implemented these policies for 6 months, we are gratified to see that they are producing the intended effects. We have observed a modest increase in the number of manuscripts receiving Revise-and-Resubmit decisions and a very large increase in the number of Reject-and-Resubmit decisions. We will closely monitor if the policies result in more accepted articles than we can accommodate and make any necessary adjustments.

Improving Disclosure of Uncertainty and Other Open Science Practices

Uncertainty is inherent in scientific research, and, while we strive to minimize error, we cannot eliminate it entirely. *JPSP: ASC* supports open science and adheres to best practices to enhance the validity of our work. We have introduced two instruments to communicate uncertainty: (a) a statement of limitations and (b) a table of limitations. These tools reassure reviewers, editors, and readers that any imperfections in published work will be openly communicated. In addition, they enable science journalists to access the limitations of our research, so they can convey them to their readers. Perhaps most importantly, these tools may also support authors in offering appropriately moderate, and indeed more accurate, representations of the conclusions of their work, its generalizability, and directions for future investigations. Requests for corrections and retractions will be processed as promptly as possible, and such decisions will be made by multiple editors with the goal of sustaining the credibility of our science and safeguarding our role in society.

Preregistered research is expected and registered reports, including adversarial replications, may be submitted to *JPSP: ASC*. We particularly welcome work establishing the boundary conditions of attitudinal and social-cognitive phenomena. For example, authors who encounter challenges in replicating a phenomenon may conduct further research to explicate the role of moderators such as population, social, or historical context. Authors who investigate variability via meta-analysis may proceed in the same manner, preregistering their procedures and analyses. Given that APA endorses Transparency Openness Promotion guidelines, a strong structure is in place to support best practices.

All open science practices implemented during the prior editorial period will continue to be enforced (<https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/psp>). This includes the expectation that data, materials, and code are shared in a permanent repository. We also expect that most manuscripts submitted will include at least some preregistered studies, and the absence of this may factor into the decision to Reject or Desk Reject.

Diversifying Editors, Reviewers, and Authors

Our editorial team is diverse in theoretical orientation, gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, country of residence, parental educational level, immigration status, and sexual orientation. So is our editorial board, which now includes a group of reviewers who we hope reflects the composition of all possible *JPSP: ASC* authors. We encourage editors, reviewers, and authors to report their demographic information so that APA can monitor progress toward an inclusive and equitable science. We also encourage scholars from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in the publication process to apply to be editorial fellows in the years to come. By allowing early career researchers to play an editorial role, with some support from other editors and a lower volume of assignments, the editorial fellowships support the journal, the individuals, and the field as a whole.

Closing Note

Traditionally *JPSP: ASC* did not fill its allotted pages because not enough manuscripts were deemed worthy of publication. Today, it is

necessary to open the door to more scientific discoveries that contribute to answering fundamental questions about attitudes and social cognition. The research is expected to be communicated concisely and to address limitations openly, with adherence to open practices and preregistration unless there are strong reasons for not doing so. We will process these manuscripts as efficiently as we can, keeping an eye on the needs of the field and our authors, and with the overarching goal of increasing the reach of our vibrant discipline.

Dolores Albarracin On behalf of Paul Conway, Sean Laurent, Kristin Laurin, Francesca Manzi, John V. Petrocelli, Aneeta Rattan, Cristina E. Salvador, Chadly Stern, Andrew Todd, Maferima Touré-Tillery, Cheryl Wakslak, and Xi Zou.

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New Policy for the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*

The *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* is inviting replication studies submissions. Although not a central part of its mission, the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* values replications and encourages submissions that attempt to replicate important findings previously published in social and personality psychology. Major criteria for publication of replication papers include the theoretical importance of the finding being replicated, the statistical power of the replication study or studies, the extent to which the methodology, procedure, and materials match those of the original study, and the number and power of previous replications of the same finding. Novelty of theoretical or empirical contribution is not a major criterion, although evidence of moderators of a finding would be a positive factor.

Preference will be given to submissions by researchers other than the authors of the original finding, that present direct rather than conceptual replications, and that include attempts to replicate more than one study of a multi-study original publication. However, papers that do not meet these criteria will be considered as well.

Submit through the Manuscript Submission Portal at (<http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/psp/>) and please note that the submission is a replication article. Replication manuscripts will be peer-reviewed and if accepted will be published online only and will be listed in the Table of Contents in the print journal. As in the past, papers that make a substantial novel conceptual contribution and also incorporate replications of previous findings continue to be welcome as regular submissions.