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Editorial:

Improving Scientific Practices and Increasing Access

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I am honored to be Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy's fifth editor-in-chief. I hope to build on the strengths established by editors Rhoda Unger, Geoffrey Maruyama, Kevin Lanning, and Heather Bullock and enhance ASAP's ability to feature research that influences social action and public policy.

Improving Scientific Practices

Psychology and other fields are in the midst of a reproducibility crisis. Two issues at the core of the crisis are publishing practices that promote novel and positive results (Nosek, Spies, & Motyl, 2012) and questionable (but common) research practices (Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011).

Regarding publishing practices, historically, outlets favored “good stories” where there are no data inconsistent with predictions and everything fits nicely into a theoretical model. Producing such work often involves dropping measures, re-tooling hypotheses after data analysis, and other practices that provide a compelling narrative. These practices should no longer be normative. I want to focus on articles that tell true stories. Given ASAP's goal of serving those involved with making and influence public policy, it is our duty to tell complete stories that reflect the reality of our findings.

As a first step in addressing reproducibility issues, ASAP is now a signatory on the Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP) guidelines (Nosek et al., 2015). The TOP guidelines focus on availability of materials, data, and analysis code, encouragement of preregistration, and support for publication of replication studies. Authors are encouraged but not required to adhere to TOP guidelines. ASAP will soon offer Badges to Acknowledge Open

Practices (see Center for Open Science, 2013 for descriptions of the various badges). Please look for new author instructions regarding specifics.

The Center for Open Science offers this text as part of their standard reviewer statement: ““I request that the authors add a statement to the paper confirming whether, for all experiments, they have reported all measures, conditions, data exclusions, and how they determined their sample sizes. The authors should, of course, add any additional text to ensure the statement is accurate. (Nosek et al., 2017).” This statement provides excellent guidance. I will require all empirical submissions to adhere to this.

Regarding sample size determination, echoing other editorials (e.g., Lindsay, 2015), it is my impression that most reports of statistical power analysis are cursory and fail to demonstrate serious thought about the analysis. If you conducted an a priori power analysis, be sure to include details about how you determined a target effect size. If you did not conduct an a priori power analysis, detail what rules you used for determining sample size (e.g., budget or time constraints) and provide information about the your sample provides to detect various effects (e.g., power of .80 to detect $d = 0.50$, power of .95 to detect $d = 0.20$).

Regarding data exclusions, if you dropped cases, provide a clear rationale for doing so. When I see dropped cases, I often request additional analyses reporting results with and without the dropped cases to make sure results are not the product of data exclusions.

Finally, reporting all manipulations and measures means everything in the original data collection. Justify your exclusions. This helps ensure that results are not simply those significant ones picked from a large number of measures.

Increasing Visibility, Access, and Time to Publication

ASAP began as an outlet that provided timely dissemination of research using an internet-first publication strategy. In 2001, this was innovative. Now, most outlets utilize an online-first structure. To put the “as soon as possible” back in ASAP, I will strongly encourage authors to make preprints available at the time of submission and pursue Open Access (OA) for all accepted manuscripts. To decrease time to publication, I am encouraging authors to utilize our streamlined review process.

Preprints and Accessibility

Preprints are version of the initially submitted manuscript uploaded to a public server. Most ASAP manuscripts are published online a year or more after first submission of the work. ASAP makes your work available after copy editing and formatting. Posting preprints makes your work available and discoverable the second you upload it. I will work with authors to provide resources to make upload of preprints a simple and easy process.

Another advantage of preprints is availability to those without access to academic journals (i.e., those who do not work at a university). ASAP strives to serve an audience that includes policy makers and advocates and the public at large. I expect that many people in these areas do not subscribe to ASAP. If our work is largely unavailable, it restricts our ability to give psychology away. Preprints are an important tool for making ASAP available to as many people as possible.

Preprints offer advantages to authors as well. There is growing evidence showing freely available papers see an increase in both visibility and subsequent citations (e.g., McKiernan et al., 2016). Sources such as Google Scholar index several preprint repositories, greatly enhancing

discoverability. The time and effort required for posting preprints is negligible yet the payoff can be substantial.

A related goal is to make as many articles available via open access (OA) as possible. Increasingly numbers of funders and institutions pay open access fees. I will work with authors of accepted articles to identify opportunities for open access.

Streamlined Review

Streamlined reviews are reviews of work rejected from another outlet. Authors submit reviews along with a revised manuscript. This means you are not starting from square one. Streamlined reviews provide an opportunity to get your work published more quickly.

ASAP began offering streamlined review in 2010, however, there have been few such submissions. I want to encourage use of this submission option. To summarize the procedure, articles submitted for streamlined review should include prior reviews and decision letters along with the submission and clearly state what journal rejected the article. In your cover letter, describe how you addressed the criticisms in the previous review or give reasons for not making specific changes. Authors are not required to address all aspect of the previous reviews, however, reviews generally provide considerable guidance for improving your article. Revising based on reasonable comments from editors and reviewers creates a stronger manuscript. Upload review materials as supplementary files. If you request a streamlined review, I may correspond with the previous editor(s) for verification.

I suspect one reason why ASAP has not received many streamlined review request is that authors prefer not to signal that work was rejected elsewhere. Rejection is part of the scientific process. I do not view prior rejections negatively.

For streamlined reviews, I will either issue an editorial decision based on the revisions to the manuscript or send the work out to additional reviewers. In either case, work that is accepted for publication will reach the finish line more quickly than if submitted as a regular article.

Concluding Remarks

I recognize that some of the approaches discussed in this editorial may represent new ideas to some contributors. My own training included no focus on open science practices. I am sure many contributors have similar backgrounds and experiences. Please do not view a lack of familiarity with these practices be a barrier. I will work to provide as much concrete support as possible for engaging with the approaches outlined in this editorial.

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