# JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN PERSONALITY

AUTHOR INFORMATION PACK

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**ISSN:** 0092-6566


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## DESCRIPTION

Emphasizing experimental and descriptive research, the *Journal of Research in Personality* presents articles that examine important issues in the field of **personality** and in related fields basic to the understanding of personality. The subject matter includes treatments of genetic, physiological, motivational, learning, perceptual, cognitive, and social processes of both normal and abnormal kinds in human and animal subjects.

Features:
• Papers that present integrated sets of studies that address significant theoretical issues relating to personality.
• Theoretical papers and critical reviews of current experimental and methodological interest.
• Single, well-designed studies of an innovative nature.
• Brief reports, including replication or null result studies of previously reported findings, or a well-designed studies addressing questions of limited scope.

An Official Journal of the Association for Research in Personality.

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## GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

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*Introduction*
The *Journal of Research in Personality* (JRP) publishes both theoretical and empirical work in the traditional areas of personality (including both trait and dynamic process-oriented approaches) and in related areas central to the study of personality. These areas include, but are not limited to, genetic, physiological, motivational, cognitive, cross-cultural, developmental, and social processes relevant to understanding both normal and pathological aspects of personality. JRP publishes integrated sets of studies addressing important theoretical or conceptual issues, as well as theoretical and methodological review articles that have the potential to advance the field. JRP also solicits, in a brief report format, theoretically grounded, well-executed replication and null result studies. Such studies-though often difficult to publish-play a crucial role in building a cumulative knowledge base within any discipline and in fostering valid generalized casual inferences, especially through meta-analysis.

In addition to encouraging substantively and theoretically novel papers, JRP encourages submissions that use strong and innovative methodologies, such as longitudinal studies, diary studies, experiments, or quasi-experiments, as well as those that use non-self-report data (e.g., other reports, implicit methods, narratives). To broaden the base of published research, JRP further encourages studies that include non-college students as participants.

Cross-sectional, self-report studies conducted among college students can make important contributions to the literature. However, such studies are also relatively easy to conduct and have some important limitations. Although single-study papers that use these methods will be considered at JRP, we have somewhat higher expectations regarding the size and the novelty of the contribution that such studies can make. Papers that rely solely on cross-sectional designs and self-report questionnaire methods among convenience samples are often rejected without review.

In short, JRP seeks to continue its tradition of publishing top tier, traditional personality research, while establishing a lively forum in which well-done studies of a slightly riskier nature will find a comfortable home.

*Brief Reports*
The *Journal of Research in Personality* accepts brief reports of empirical studies. This forum is intended primarily for publishing soundly designed studies that address targeted questions can be described without excessive theoretical background, and that have methods that can be described relatively succinctly. The contribution of brief reports is often as large as those from full-length papers; they simply address a more constrained question and can be described in fewer words. An author who submits a Brief Report must agree not to submit a full report based on the same data to another journal.

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*Improving the Replicability of Psychological Research*
The *Journal of Research in Personality* is committed to improving the replicability of psychological research. To that end, the editors have put in place three new policies that all authors should consider when submitting their manuscripts.

First, a major problem in the field has been small sample sizes and a general lack of power. This not only leads to problems detecting effects that actually exist, it also results in lower precision in estimates and systematically inflated effect sizes. Furthermore, some have argued that running large numbers of weakly powered studies increases the chance of obtaining artifactual results. For this

reason, the editors of JRP are committed to increasing the power of studies published in the Journal. All submissions will be evaluated with respect to power before being sent out for review; submissions deemed to be severely underpowered will be rejected without review.

Given the importance of power and precision, authors are strongly encouraged to consider these issues when planning studies. Authors who submit to should ensure that their studies are adequately powered, and they should provide a discussion of power in their papers. Specifically, authors should (a) discuss what size effect they expect to find, (b) defend this expectation by referring to relevant prior empirical work, and (c) estimate the power to detect the expected effect with the sample size that is planned. If no evidence exists to guide judgments about reasonable effect sizes, researchers should err on the side of larger samples and higher power to provide increased precision. For instance, researchers might want to plan studies that are adequately powered to detect effects of the size that meta-analyses have suggested are typical within an area of research or within the field as a whole.

Second, the editors of JRP believe that transparency in the scientific process is of utmost importance. All authors who submit to the journal must abide by principles for research conduct, including making data available to other researchers who wish to verify the findings reported in the published paper. To facilitate greater transparency, all authors who submit to JRP will be asked to certify that they will share their data with researchers who make such a request (authors can stipulate that data will be used for verification purposes only). Note that data sharing refers to data/parameters described in the submitted manuscript; additional data/parameters collected can be listed without sharing actual data. If such a data sharing arrangement is not possible, authors must disclose the reasons why data cannot be shared at the submission process. The editors will consider these reasons when evaluating the paper. Authors should remember that according to most ethical guidelines, deidentified data is not human subjects research, and thus, institutional review boards should generally allow for this type of data sharing arrangement. JRP also has resources to link the underlying data to the article itself, and authors are encouraged to post their raw data with their articles upon publication. In addition, authors are encouraged to use on-line supplemental material to report additional information that cannot be included in the main text but that help improve the transparency of their investigation (e.g., large correlation matrices that allow other to replicate structural equation modeling results, alternative analyses that investigate the robustness of effects, scatterplots that illustrate the nature of the association between two variables).

Finally, the editors of JRP strongly believe that highly powered replication studies are essential to good science. Although JRP has for many years considered and published replication studies (including failures to replicate), we are now, on a trial basis, expanding this policy to encourage even more replication. Specifically, we invite authors to submit especially strong replication attempts of studies that were published in JRP in the past five years (or older studies that are frequently cited). Authors should assume that effect sizes will likely not be as large as those published in the original paper, and they should choose sample sizes that have more than adequate power to detect this expected effect. Furthermore, authors should calculate confidence intervals around their estimated effects and compare them to the original effect size and to the null hypothesis when reporting their results.

During the trial period, replication reports will be considered in the Brief Report format. Replication reports should include brief introduction and discussion sections that succinctly report the goal of the initial paper. Manuscripts submitted through this new policy will be subjected to an abbreviated review process that simply evaluates whether the research was conducted competently. Replication attempts that follow these guidelines and are judged to have adequate methods will typically be accepted at JRP regardless of the results that are obtained. Although pre-registration is not required, authors who have questions about whether their planned study is likely to be accepted can contact the editor-in-chief before conducting the study to get feedback on these issues.

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Peer review is widely accepted as an essential if not the essential component in the scientific publication process. Nevertheless, the peer review process can be costly for both authors and reviewers. For authors, obtaining written reviews from qualified reviewers accounts for much of the total lag in the review process (which, as we all know, can sometimes be excruciatingly long).For reviewers, preparing thoughtful and detailed reviews is enormously time-consuming and can eat into time for one's own research. To make matters worse, with the high rejection rates common among top journals, authors may have to go through multiple review processes before finding an appropriate home for their work. And as anyone who has ever gone down this road knows, resubmitting a paper to a new journal creates its own set of dilemmas. For example, to what extent should the paper be revised to address issues raised in a set of reviews with which one may not completely agree? On the other hand, failing to address issues raised int he initial set of reviews risks a negative outcome in the new review cycle, particularly when advice is sought from the same reviewer! Thus, the resubmission cycle appears to compound many of the problems associated with the peer review process.
To help address this issue, *JRP* has instituted on a trial basis a streamlined review process in which authors may submit a peer-reviewed article that was rejected by any journal published by either The **Association for Psychological Science (APS - formerly American Psychological Society)** or the **American Psychological Association (APA)**, and request an editorial decision on the basis of the prior reviews. These journals often reject papers for reasons that have little to do with quality per se - for example, they include only a single study, use unconventional methods, or are on the periphery of traditional areas of inquiry. *JRP* seeks to publish innovative, high quality research and may not be limited by these same restrictions.

*Instructions for requesting a streamlined review* 1. Submit the manuscript along with a cover letter. In the cover letter, the author must request a streamlined review and indicate when and where the paper was previously submitted. In addition, the author should specifically describe the nature of any changes that were made to the manuscript in response to the prior set of reviews, just as he/she would normally do when submitting a revised manuscript. Although the author is not obligated to revise the manuscript in response to the prior set of reviews, it is the rare manuscript that would not

benefit from at least some revision. Thus, in most cases, it would behoove the author to carefully consider the content of the reviews and to make those changes with which the author agrees prior to requesting streamlined review.

2. Include a copy of the editor's action letter along with copies of all of the written reviews from the prior submission. These materials must be submitted in their original form; any alteration of these materials will cause the manuscript to be returned without review.

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2. If the materials are deemed adequate (which is the typical outcome), an editorial decision will be rendered within 45 days, or sooner when possible.

3. The range of decisions in either case is the same as manuscripts going through the normal review process - that is, Accept (with or without minor revisions), Revise and resubmit, or Reject.

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