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AMPPS - Decision on Manuscript ID AMPPS-20-0033

Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science

<onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ampps.editor@gmail.com

To: akmontoya@ucla.edu

Thu, Apr 16, 2020 at 7:09

AM

16-Apr-2020

Dear Dr. Montoya:

Thank you for submitting your Empirical Article (AMPPS-20-0033) entitled "Opening the Door to Registered Reports: Census of Journal Policies and Open Science Practices" to Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science (AMPPS). One of the Associate Editors and I have read the manuscript. We agreed that the topic of the paper has promise, but we felt that it would need some substantial changes before we could send it for review. When we think a paper potentially could be an important contribution to AMPPS but would not fare well in its current form, I use an "immediate revise and resubmit mechanism" in place of a desk rejection. Our hope is that you will be interested in and willing to undertake these preliminary revisions, and we believe that a manuscript revised along these lines will be sent out for peer review. Of course, I would understand if you do not want to undertake this sort of revision at this stage and would prefer to withdraw the manuscript. Please let me know your plans either way.

Here are the changes that we think are needed before we could send the paper for review:

- The biggest issue is that the sample of journals is already outdated. As you note, more than 100 additional journals have added RRs, so field has changed dramatically since your October 2018 inclusion date. The survey would need to be updated to at least go through 2019 and preferably up to the present. Otherwise, by the time it reached print, it could be 2 years out of date and would no longer be an accurate characterization of the state of the field (the main contribution of the paper). Without that update, it wasn't clear to us that the paper would make a contribution to current knowledge.
- Another concern is about the control/baseline comparisons. One of the main assumptions is about the comparable impact/quality of journals that do and do not offer RRs, but the paper provides little detail on the journals used for that comparison group and does not fully justify how they are comparable. Why 59 APA journals?
- The paper also concludes that open practices often are paired with RRs, but there is no comparison group to back this claim. It would be nice to know whether open practices are more commonly encouraged among journals that do (vs. don't) accept RR. It might also help to know whether the open practices you're documenting are only for the RRs or for the journal more broadly. It was hard to tell from the write-up.
- The publication ratio of journals to reports needs to take lag into account. It might be better to plot articles relative to the date when journals adopted RRs. If a journal started accepting RRs in 2018, they likely wouldn't have any published papers until at least 2019 and likely not until 2020 or later (given publication lags, data collection times, etc.). Figure 1 and the interpretation doesn't take that lag into account, and it could be misleading. If publications lag adoption of RRs (which they must), then the increasing publication rate over time could look quite a bit better given that publication numbers are a lagging indicator. Perhaps they are also increasing exponentially, but lagging.
- A lot of a lot of the introductory material (e.g., "Discouraging Questionable Research Practices..." and "Benefits and Barriers") has been covered extensively in the literature and also by the Chambers' RR FAQ at osf.io/rr. It could be pared back and cited.

More minor stuff:

- The topic of author blinding seems tangential to the focus on registered reports, and I don't think it belongs in the paper. I'd suggest moving it to a supplement. (there also is debate about whether blinding or open reviews are best practice for open science, even if they do reduce bias). ["Previous research suggests that in traditional peer review formats, author blind review can disadvantage women, minorities, and individuals from less prestigious universities (Knobloch-Westerwick, Glynn, & Huges, 2013; & Heavlin, 2017)."] - this is backwards, right? Blinding doesn't disadvantage those folks]

- "The purpose of registered reports is to reduce the issue of publication bias, file-drawer issues, p-hacking, and HARKing" -- "a purpose" or "among the purposes of..." - there are others.
- The claim that "79% of journals" are missing information seems a bit arbitrary given that you determined which information was required information.

If you decide to pursue this course--and I hope that you will--when you've completed the revision, please log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ampps> and enter your Author Center, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number will be changed to denote a revision.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to AMPPS and I look forward to receiving your revision. I fully anticipate that a manuscript revised along these lines will be sent out for peer review, but again, I'd understand if you don't want to undertake it given that it would require substantial new coding and analysis. Please let me know either way.

Sincerely,
Dan

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