

Announcement Regarding the New Submission Guidelines at the Journal of Consumer Psychology

Cornelia (Connie) Pechmann

In an effort to promote the quality, transparency, and reproducibility of the research conducted in the field of consumer psychology, the *Journal of Consumer Psychology* (JCP) will change its submission guidelines as of January 1, 2014. JCP will now expressly require three types of materials upon manuscript submission:

- (1) A detailed description of the study methods, analyses and results in the text or in a methodological appendix that is sufficient to allow for precise replication.
- (2) A methodological appendix that contains the key stimuli and measures that were used in the research.
- (3) Statements about the authors' roles in data collection and analysis and affirmation of compliance with IRB and APA mandates regarding human subject protection and data sharing.

Requirements 1 and 2 are similar to the Journal of Marketing Research's new submission requirements with JCP being more explicit about what requirement 1 entails. Requirement 3 on disclosing the authors' roles in the research is similar to a requirement recently instituted by the Journal of Consumer Research. JCP does not currently require that datasets be posted, as Marketing Science does, but offers this as an option to authors.

We have three primary motivations for making these changes in JCP's submission requirements. Our first motivation is to help authors, especially those who are more junior or less experienced, to submit manuscripts to JCP that reviewers will find sufficiently detailed in terms of the methods, analyses and results. We have always wanted JCP submissions to include these details but previously were not very explicit about this in our submission requirements; now we are.

Our second motivation is to help ensure that researchers and readers find the information they need in JCP papers to understand the research fully and replicate it if they desire without having to contact the authors for additional information. Our third motivation is to help ensure that authors describe their responsibilities with respect to the research and assume key responsibilities rather than delegating these responsibilities to others.

At JCP and other consumer and marketing journals, details on methods, analyses and results have become sparser over the years. This has occurred in part because over the years reviewers, AEs and editors have asked for more and more studies without increasing the page length. Moreover, JCP accepts shorter research reports. With the current initiative, we are trying to reverse the recent trend toward less complete reporting and encourage more transparent reporting either in the text or in a methodological appendix.

The new JCP submission guidelines are consistent with the reporting guidelines specified in the APA Publication Manual (2010) and with recent recommendations offered by Kashy and colleagues (2009). We expect that these guidelines will not substantially affect the large number of authors who, as

doctoral students or young scholars, were fortunate enough to learn about what to report in their journal submissions. Unfortunately, though, not everyone knows this information because training in such matters varies widely. We hope that the new JCP submission guidelines will help level the playing field by making every submission equally transparent and easy to evaluate. When a submission has poor reporting, often reviewers become frustrated and this affects their judgments and recommendations about a paper. The paper could have important insights but if reviewers must struggle to understand what the studies did the paper could be rejected. We hope that the new JCP submission requirements will guide authors in transparent reporting so that important research insights are published in JCP and can be replicated.

As part of this initiative, we also offer new guidelines to reviewers and AEs regarding how to evaluate research manuscript in light of more transparent descriptions of methods, analyses and results. These guidelines suggest the following.

1. Reviewers should consider the common standard for statistical significance of $p < .05$ but also the pattern of data across studies and the centrality of the relationships.
2. Reviewers should consider being more tolerant of imperfections in the data that may become evident due to more detailed reporting.
3. Reviewers should consider being more tolerant of various methods used to screen or remove participants, such as attention checks or outlier analyses, provided that the methods are clearly explained, appropriately justified, and generally reasonable.
4. Reviewers should encourage rather than discourage direct and conceptual replications.
5. Reviewers should refrain from reflexively dismissing results that challenge or do not support current theory or are inconsistent with previous research findings.
6. When raising the possibility of alternative explanations for findings, reviewers should specify those alternatives and avoid requesting that authors rule out non-parsimonious alternative explanations, i.e., ones that may reasonably account for findings in one study but not all studies in the submission.
7. Reviewers should avoid a reflexive dismissal of correlational data.
8. Reviewers should avoid a reflexive dismissal of small effect sizes. Instead, they should evaluate observed effect sizes in light of substantive and/or theoretical significance, manipulation strength, and dependent measure malleability.

Full details about JCP's new submission requirements are in the "guide for authors" and similarly in the "author information pack" on the JCP website. In particular, review the appendix. The website link is: <http://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-consumer-psychology/1057-7408/guide-for-authors>.

In closing, I want to sincerely thank the Society for Consumer Psychology's (SCP) Super-Committee on Scientific Practices set up by Michel Pham as 2012 SCP President to initiate this important work. The committee chair was L.J. Shrum and the members were Daniel Bartels, Katherine Burson, Amitava Chattopadhyay, Carolyn Costley, Gerald Gorn, Wesley Hutchinson, Chris Janiszewski, and Ashesh Mukherjee. I also want to thank the SCP Publications Committee that finalized the relevant documents and included Michel Pham (chair), Darren Dahl, Susan Broniarczyk, Tina Lowrey, CW Park and Larry Compeau.

References

American Psychological Association (2010). *The Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. Sixth Edition. Washington, D.C., American Psychological Association.

Kashy, D. A., Donnellan, M. B., Ackerman, R. A., & Russell, D. W. (2009). Reporting and interpreting research in PSPB: Practices, principles, and pragmatics. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35(9), 1131-1142.