

Editorial

A Resurrection and A Beginning: An Introductory Note for *Psychology Research Journal*

When Individual Differences Research Group, predecessor of the current publisher, IDRP, conceptualized and laid the groundwork for *Psychology Research Journal* (PRJ) in 2005, we wanted to create a general forum for researchers, practitioners, and academics to exchange ideas and provide a relatively rapid outlet for publishing psychology-related research. Yet, as life does, several “curveballs” were thrown our way, and *PRJ* was shelved before it could begin. Now, we are excited to resurrect and finally launch *PRJ*, giving it the beginning that fate delayed.

The world of publishing has changed considerably since our conceptualization of *PRJ* over two decades ago. Several journals now provide opportunities similar to what we envisioned. So, the question becomes: Is there a need for another independent general psychology journal? We believe the answer is yes. Despite the proliferation of online journals, there continues to be a need for psychology-specific outlets that are affordable to authors, welcome a broad range of research, and offer fair peer review based primarily on scientific merit rather than editorial preference or rigidity. That is the gap *PRJ* intends to fill.

PRJ welcomes reports of empirical research (quantitative, qualitative, and descriptive) and literature reviews of empirical findings from all areas of psychology. New theory and reasoned speculation with empirical grounding will also be considered. We particularly encourage brief reports, preliminary findings, replications, non-findings, specialized or niche research, and scientifically grounded work examining novel ideas or findings contrary to prevailing psychological thinking. Neither conformity with nor opposition to prevailing thought should itself be a criterion for publication. Likewise, statistical significance or support for the authors’ hypotheses should not be a requirement. Scientific merit and adequate reporting are what matter.

There is a practical reason for this broad approach. Based on informal observation, we have noticed that many potentially valuable findings that do not address trending topics, produce “significant” results, or support the contemporary zeitgeist are stored and forgotten on hard drives rather than published. Many are presented at conferences but never reported to the larger scientific community because of various perceived (and real) publishing hurdles. Others may simply be seen as too modest to justify the lengthy, complex papers increasingly expected in contemporary psychology—papers that sometimes resemble dissertations more than scientific reports. *PRJ* is an attempt to provide a home for some of this work.

Underlying this approach is a simple view of research: scientific contribution should not be confused with novelty, complexity, or magnitude of effect. A project does not need to be large, complex, or definitive to make a contribution. There is nothing inherently more scientific about a complex study than a simple one; the appropriate level of complexity is the level needed to adequately address the research question. A straightforward question addressed with an appropriate straightforward design may be just as scientifically worthwhile as one requiring elaborate methods.

Our primary review criteria therefore emphasize clarity of expression, methodological soundness appropriate to the research question or hypothesis, adequate documentation, and interpretations that fit the data and methodology. Papers should adequately describe their rationale and relevant research or theory, document their methods sufficiently to allow replication, competently interpret the results, and reasonably contextualize the findings. The scope of the conclusions should be commensurate with the strength and scope of the evidence. We do not expect every study to answer a question definitively; we do expect authors to be clear about what their evidence can and cannot support. *PRJ* would rather publish a modest finding described for what it is than a modest finding presented as something it is not.

Regardless of how specialized a project is or whether it reports only a “minor” variation in methodology, work that follows basic scientific principles and is adequately described falls within the intended scope of *PRJ*.

Reviewers are asked to evaluate the study that was conducted and the questions the authors sought to address, rather than the study they might have preferred the authors to conduct. Evaluations should focus on scientific and reporting criteria rather than conformity to theoretical or methodological orthodoxy. Publication priority is likewise not determined by author status or the perceived popularity of a topic. All articles are published open access to make published work widely accessible and allow the broader scientific community, rather than a select few, to ultimately determine its value.

Authors are encouraged to submit their work directly to the editor following the instructions on our website. There is no tedious and confusing account creation and submission form—just provide the requested basic information, make the required attestations, and submit.

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Founder, *Psychology Research Journal*

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