

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The influence of journal submission guidelines on authors' reporting of statistics and use of open research practices

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Abstract

From January 2014, *Psychological Science* introduced new submission guidelines that encouraged the use of effect sizes, estimation, and meta-analysis (the "new statistics"), required extra detail of methods, and offered badges for use of open science practices. We investigated the use of these practices in empirical articles published by *Psychological Science* and, for comparison, by the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, during the period of January 2013 to December 2015. The use of null hypothesis significance testing (NHST) was extremely high at all times and in both journals. In *Psychological Science*, the use of confidence intervals increased markedly overall, from 28% of articles in 2013 to 70% in 2015, as did the availability of open data (3 to 39%) and open materials (7 to 31%). The other journal showed smaller or much smaller changes. Our findings suggest that journal-specific submission guidelines may encourage desirable changes in authors' practices.

Introduction

Recent years have seen a *crisis of confidence* in several scientific disciplines including psychological science and psychological research [1]. Data suggest that many, perhaps even most, psychological findings are not fully replicable [2], probably because of the endemic use of questionable research practices.

Questionable research practices can be broadly defined as a set of research practices that are typically employed with the purpose of presenting biased evidence in favor of an assertion [3]. There is extensive direct and indirect evidence that researchers commonly apply these practices in their work, which creates a number of biases [4,5]. These include, for example, the exclusion of data or relevant variables from the analyses, which is used to obtain desirable (typically significant) results [6,7], or the use of summation scores instead of the original measures [8]. Unfortunately, the use of these "malpractices" is very common [9] and different solutions have been proposed in response [9–15]. Namely, among other approaches, the *new statistics* have been adopted by a growing number of journals to deter authors from using questionable research practices.

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