

## Evaluation criteria

Although there is no single recipe for an excellent paper, EJP editors and reviewers evaluate submissions using the following criteria.

### Overall Contribution

- **Importance:** Does the paper address a key question for personality psychology or its applications?
- **Contribution:** A paper can contribute by **either** substantially changing our confidence in existing knowledge or offering new knowledge, or both:
  - *Does it provide strong additional evidence for / against an established finding in a manner that increases / decreases confidence in it (e.g., with larger sample sizes, replication samples, or registered hypotheses)?*
  - *Does it address novel questions and / or provide novel insights? It may explore an important but overlooked phenomenon, take a creative approach to a topic, use a novel / rare method / sample, or describe a novel (practical) application of existing knowledge.*

### Theoretical background

- **Conceptual reasoning:** Is there a coherent theoretical rationale for the hypotheses and / or research questions? Are constructs and research problems clearly defined and distinct from each other?
- **Literature review:** Is there a thorough overview of relevant existing work?
- **Construct proliferation:** Does the paper avoid introducing new concepts and / or constructs without clearly explaining the need for them and linking them with existing ones?
- **Formulation of research questions:** Are research questions and / or hypotheses formulated clearly, saying both what is and also what is *not* expected? Do they logically follow from the text thus far?
  - *Where possible, numerically expressed predictions (expected effect sizes) are encouraged.*

### Methodology

- **Transparency:** Does the paper include necessary information about participant sampling, measures and testing / experimental procedures (if necessary, in Supplemental Material)?
  - *For empirical papers, we expect **full compliance with our Open Science Policy**.*
  - *If human subjects are tested, include an ethics statement in the Participants section, referring to necessary approvals*
- **Robustness:** Are the results based on sufficient statistical power? Where possible, report statistical power (e.g., based on simulations or other procedures).
  - *EJP encourages that main findings are cross-validated across samples, research teams and / or cultures.*
- **Reliability and validity:** Is there evidence for the reliability and validity of the measures?
  - *Prefer retest reliability to internal consistency.*
  - *For validity, provide concrete and relevant evidence and / or reasoning.*
  - *Previous use of a measure, however wide, is not proof of its reliability and validity.*
- **Representativeness:** Do the participants, research design and measures represent the phenomena of interest as broadly as claimed by authors?
  - *Besides appropriate participant sampling, we expect that measures or stimuli represent their constructs broadly (e.g., test items broadly sample the universe of possible items for their construct).*
  - *Where reasonable, avoid brief measures for broad constructs such as the Big Five or intelligence.*
  - *Specify when data collection took place.*
- **Transparency about assumptions:** Many models have (simplifying) assumptions (e.g., distributions, parameter constraints). Are authors transparent about these?

## Analyses and results

- **Reporting standards:** Is necessary descriptive information reported, including means and standard deviations of variables as well as zero-order correlations between them? Do authors report (standardized) effect sizes, confidence (or credible) intervals, and exact p-values (where appropriate)?
- **Statistical analyses:** Are statistical analyses appropriate and use up-to-date methodology? Are alternative / supplemental analyses included to back-up the robustness of the findings (e.g., across models with different assumptions)?
  - *Using complex models where simpler ones are equally good is discouraged.*
- **Multiple testing:** Do authors explicitly address (e.g., adjust statistics for) multiple testing, where applicable?
- **Careful language:** Are results described as one contribution to empirical literature rather than the absolute truth (e.g., use of past tense, avoidance of unwarranted causal interpretations)?
  - *Longitudinal data in itself does not make observed associations causal*

## Discussion

- **Careful inferences:** Do the inferences / interpretations correspond to available data and the strength of results, including effect sizes and generalizability across measures and samples? Are results and effect sizes discussed in an appropriate and context-sensitive way, avoiding over-claiming? Is the writing appropriately cautious regarding causality?
  - *EJP encourages well-reasoned causal interpretations, but expect authors to be explicit about and justify their assumptions (e.g., differences between the conceptual and statistical models), and to avoid implicit inferences and unwarranted generalizations, including from small population-level associations to particular individuals.*
  - *Clearly differentiate between primary research questions / hypotheses and additional analyses*
- **Theoretical discussion:** Do authors thoughtfully discuss the broader implications of their work? Is there a meaningful integration with previous work and an honest consideration of competing theories?
- **Limitations section:** Are the limitations thoroughly and openly discussed?
  - *Do authors show awareness of restricted statistical power, limited generalizability, potential alternative interpretations, or potential methodological confounds?*
  - *Do authors provide useful guidance for potential solutions to these limitations in future research?*

## Quality of writing / presentation

- **Clarity and coherence:** Is the manuscript no longer than needed and well structured? Is any non-essential material in Supplemental Material rather than in the main text? Does it have clear and meaningful subsections and -headings? Is the use of terms and labeling consistent?
- **Formal standards:** Is the writing appropriate (spelling, grammar, and style)? Does the manuscript follow APA standards (including references, tables, figures, and notes)?

In most cases, EJP **does not publish articles about the development and validation of assessment tools or associations between psychological constructs observed in cross-sectional self-report data**, including factor analysis of such data. Submissions about specific clinical phenomena without broader relevance to personality are also not accepted.