

# **Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences**

## **Guide for Contributors**

### **Mission**

The *Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences (JMM)* publishes articles related to methodology and research design, measurement, and data analysis. The journal is published twice yearly, and features theoretical, empirical, and educational articles.

*JMM* is meant to further our understanding of methodology and how to formulate the right questions. It is broadly concerned with improving the methods used to conduct research, the measurement of variables used in the social sciences, and improving the applications of data analysis. In addition to research articles, the journal welcomes instructional articles and brief reports or commentaries. We welcome sound, original contributions. *JMM is supported by the University of Arizona Library and there are no charges for publication or access.*

### **Contributions**

The online *Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences (JMM)* is a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal that considers contributions to research methods, research design, measurement, and data analysis. *JMM* publishes theoretical and empirical articles, how-to articles, and Notes.

- **Full-length theoretical and empirical manuscripts** focus on issues related to research methods, research design, measurement, and data analysis. Full-length articles may be 20 pages, single-spaced. Contributors should check with the Editor before submitting an unusually long manuscript. Because this is an online journal, there is no limit on appendices.
- The purpose of the **Nuggets** section is to explain and demonstrate methodological, statistical and research techniques. Potential topics include cluster randomized designs, propensity scores, software demonstrations, or adaptive sampling designs. Contributions to **Nuggets** may be from 10 to 20 pages, single-spaced.
- **Notes** addresses research, methodological or statistical issues that can be covered in nine pages, single-spaced. There is no minimum length for short research notes as long as these clearly make a significant point.

- ***Cheap Lessons*** includes brief articles that report problems and deficiencies that we encounter in our research. Topics may include the misestimation of the number of cases available for study, data collection approaches that do not work, and other missteps. Snafus, blunders, and hilarious research pratfalls are rarely mentioned in public. As a result, a never-ending series of researchers will repeat the same mistakes, wasting precious time exploring popular blind alleys and way-stations that can consume precious study resources.
- *JMM* also accepts submissions regarding ***Detailed Study Protocols***. Protocols submitted to *JMM* will be sent out for rigorous peer review. These protocols are meant contain sufficient detail to allow complete replication of a study. If accepted for publication, a Study Protocol will be accompanied by signed reviewer comments regarding the study design. Why publish a Detailed Study Protocol? First, to allow other researchers to benefit from the study team's *a priori* decisions regarding the research plan (from the rationale for the hypotheses, sample selection, randomization, choice of measures, a detailed description regarding the study intervention, and precise descriptions of the analyses). Second, the research team may benefit from the recommendations of seasoned peers. Another reason to publish one's study protocol is to avoid potential acrimony after the fact in the face of unexpected results. The Fort Bragg study and its companion evaluation in Stark County, Ohio (Bickman et al., 1993, 1995; Bickman 1996; Bickman, Noser, & Summerfelt, 1999) provide a disturbing example of the animosity engendered by disconfirming results. An issue of the *American Psychologist* was devoted to a heated discussion of the Fort Bragg study's merits and flaws (*American Psychologist* 52(5), May 1997). When evaluating a potentially contentious issue, even if the study team is confident their results will be consistent with the prevailing paradigm, the study team may choose for maximum transparency and peer discussion regarding their research project.

### **Format for Contributions**

*JMM* follows the current *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* with the following exception: Manuscripts should be single-spaced; Manuscripts should include an abstract and three to five key words. All contributions submitted for review must be in English and submitted in MS Word format.

### **Submission Procedure, Publication and Copyright**

Contributions should include a cover letter with the authors' names, telephone numbers, email and mailing addresses, and affiliations. The

cover letter should specify the topics (theoretical/empirical; methodology and research design, measurement and/or data analysis), and the type of contribution (full length manuscript, Nugget, Notes, Research Protocols, Cheap Lessons). In the cover letter, Authors should articulate the relationship of the manuscript to previous work in the area and explain what this contribution adds to the field. Authors should also attest that the manuscript is not under review elsewhere and all authors have approved of the manuscript. The manuscript should be prepared for blind review.

### **Guide for Contributors**

Authors must provide permissions for the reproduction of copyrighted images or material used in their submissions. Images (photographs and line art) to illustrate submissions should be sent in separate, individual digital files. Footnotes on individual pages may not be accommodated.

### **After Submission**

Manuscripts will be scheduled for review by two or more experts in the field. Because JMM is an online journal, submissions will normally appear within a few months of final approval.

### **After Acceptance**

The primary author will be contacted regarding proofs. Corrections to proofs will be limited to factual errors, copyediting errors and figure quality. Please check the accuracy of figures, tables, and references.

For data analysis articles, the journal recommends that authors include an Appendix with the data (either raw data or correlation matrices) and associated syntax or programming files. The data appendix provides authors with a permanent data repository.

### **Copyright Information**

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# **Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences**

## **From the Editors**

The goal of the *Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences* (JMM) is to provide an outlet in which to discuss methodological issues. Existing journals do not exhaust the possibilities of methodology.

Methodology is broadly conceived by *JMM* to include issues related to the philosophical underpinnings of social science, research design, measurement, and data analysis. Purely statistical articles, e.g., derivations of new error terms or fit indices, are probably not appropriate for *JMM*. The content domain of any article is generally not a consideration for publication in the Journal.

*JMM* is intended to be a venue for articles that will advance research practice by describing new procedures and broadening the application of existing research methods. But we also hope to provide a forum for articles that clarify problems, propose new conceptualizations, and point the way toward more rapid and dependable developments in the social sciences. Articles that review the use and usefulness of existing methods will also be welcome if they provide persuasive conclusions that are likely to improve the way that science gets done.

As an online journal, *JMM* can afford a substantial level of flexibility about the structure of articles (although our standards with respect to reasoning and writing will be rigorous). Our intent is not to be bound to the usual expectations of content, structure, and length of typical journal articles. *JMM* does not encourage prolixity for its own sake. However, where more words will foster better understanding,

*JMM* can accommodate articles of greater length than is usual for print journals. As editors, however, we will try always to keep the needs and expectations of our readers at the forefront of our thinking.

*JMM* is peer reviewed with attention paid to accuracy, fairness, and objectivity. Since the aims of the Journal do not encompass the archiving of data, editorial standards for *JMM* place more emphasis than usual on the heuristic value of articles. We are particularly interested in whether a submission will be likely to lead to interesting developments in methodological areas, beyond the immediate contribution itself.