

Sexual Abuse

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Submission guidelines



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Please read the guidelines in full before submitting your manuscript. Manuscripts not conforming to these guidelines may be returned.

Submit Manuscript 

Instructions to Authors

Submission Guidelines

As described in our aims and scope, *Sexual Abuse* is an outlet for research on perpetration of sexual exploitation and abuse, including research on the characteristics, etiology, life course, prevention, assessment, treatment, management, and consequences of individuals who have perpetrated sexual abuse and those who are at risk of doing so. Research focusing on the victims or survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse are more suitable for other journals, unless there is a connection to perpetration of sexual abuse or risk of perpetration.

Sexual Abuse uses an online submission and review platform. Manuscripts should be submitted electronically to <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/sajrt>. Authors will be required to set up an online account on the Sage Track system powered by ScholarOne. From their account, a new submission can be initiated. Authors will be asked to provide the required information (author names and contact information, abstract, keywords, etc.), complete submission checklist, and to upload the "title page" and "main document" separately to ensure that the manuscript is ready for blind review.

[Supplemental materials](#) (e.g., additional tables, figures; open science badging form) can also be uploaded, when applicable, and will need to be prepared for blind review. The site [contains](#) links to an online user's guide (Get Help Now [add web link]) for help navigating the

Manuscripts are subjected to masked peer review and require the author's name(s) and affiliation listed on a separate page. Any other identifiable information, including any references in the manuscript, the notes, the title, supplemental materials, and reference sections, should be removed from the paper and listed separately.

Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines set out in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). This includes stipulations regarding page layout, manuscript sections and headings, and formatting of references, tables, and figures. DOI numbers when available for listed references are to be included. Effect sizes and confidence intervals should be reported, where appropriate.

Each submission should include a short descriptive title and an abstract between 150 and 200 words and 4-5 keywords. There are no page or word limits, but typical empirical manuscripts are 35-40 pages in length, double-spaced, including title page, abstract, references, tables and figures. Some manuscripts are longer because they report on multiple studies, present the results of a systematic review, or can otherwise justify a higher page length.

Authors should also ensure appropriate [statements](#) have been included in the submission and the Submission Checklist completed.

If the manuscript is submitted, the editors assume that any manuscript submitted to *Sexual Abuse* is not currently under consideration by any other journal. Submission of a manuscript implies a commitment by the author to publish in the journal.

If you are interested in open access, click [here](#). The standard article processing charge for Sage Choice is 3,000 USD/1,600 GBP. The fee excludes any other potential author fees levied by some journals (such as color charges) as well as taxes where applicable.

Author Statements

Sexual Abuse strives for objectivity and transparency in research. As such, we request authors to disclose information relevant for the Editors, reviewers, and readers of this journal.

Statement 1: Statistical Significance Statement

Authors should provide information on their study design and analysis that can increase the risk of spurious significant findings (colloquially referred to as *p*-hacking):

1. In the Methods section, empirical manuscripts should include the statement, "*The authors takes responsibility for the integrity of the data, the accuracy of the data analyses, and have made every effort to avoid inflating statistically significant results.*"
- In the Methods section, authors of empirical manuscripts should consider including a statement assuring readers of the methodological and analytic integrity of their work.

One strong example is the following statement, “*We report how we determined our sample size, all data exclusions (if any), all manipulations, and all measures in the study*”, from the 21 Word Solution (Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2012).

3. Authors should include the following elements in the Method section:

1. Report how sample size was determined and what rule was used to stop data collection;
2. Report the total number of any excluded cases or observations, and the reasons for making these exclusions;
3. Report all dependent variables that were analyzed for the research question(s), whether reaching statistically significant thresholds or not;
4. If applicable, report all relevant manipulations or conditions, whether successful or not;
5. Specify whether analyses were *prespecified* prior to data collection- in order to address the specific research question- or *exploratory*- implemented after examination of the data and/or prespecified analyses (see [Head et al. \[2015\]](#), for further information);
6. Cite prior publication of some or all of the data reported in the manuscript, to assist in future meta-analysis.

These guidelines are intended to encourage greater transparency and reproducibility. Submissions that cannot address all these points will still be considered and accepted for publication in *Sexual Abuse*, particularly if the manuscript can explain why points were not addressed.

We recognize these guidelines are more easily implemented for manuscripts reporting experimental designs, but some may not be applicable for other types of studies that are commonly submitted to *Sexual Abuse*. For example, it is common in our field for a study to use data from a large clinical or administrative database that have led to multiple publications using some or all of the data. Citing all prior publications (Element f) would be excessive in length, and might not be possible if the authors are not aware of all the published work that has used this database. In this particular example, we suggest that the authors clearly describe the database and cite prominent studies using the database, so that the readers understand where these data come from. Large databases may also have many measures, not all of which would have been analyzed for the purpose of the submitted study. In such cases, reporting all the measures would again be excessively long. Instead, the authors are asked to report all variables that were examined for the research questions (Element a).

Qualitative study designs are another submission that do not easily fit these elements and where a statement like the 21 Word Solution might not be appropriate. For qualitative studies, Element a (reporting how sample size was determined), Element b (reporting any

included cases), and Element f (citing prior publications that use some or all of the data) are usually applicable.

A statement like the 21 Word Solution would also not be applicable to meta-analyses, but much of the elements (i.e., Element B, C, E, and F) are pertinent. Finally, narrative review or theoretical submissions that do not present any statistical analyses would not require these statements.

Statement 2: Role of Funding Sources

Authors must identify any financial support received to conduct the research and/or preparation of the manuscript. Authors should specify if the funding source had any involvement in the research and/or preparation of the manuscript. The absence or presence of funding does not preclude eligibility for publication in the journal.

Statement 3: Disclosure of Financial Interests

All authors must disclose any financial interests, such as a financial stake in a measure or service described in the manuscript, or a close, current personal relationship with someone (e.g., partner/spouse, family member) who has a financial stake in a measure or service that is described. A financial interest does not preclude eligibility for publication in the journal if it is declared.

Statement 4: Research ethics approval

Authors must include a statement in the Methods section regarding institutional research ethics review and approval, if applicable. If not applicable, a short rationale should be provided (e.g., not applicable or not required).

Person-First Language

Authors are encouraged to be thoughtful about the language used in their manuscripts to describe persons or groups. Person-first language (e.g., “persons with sexual offense histories”, “individual who has been adjudicated for...”, “child/adolescent with sexual behavior problems”) is generally preferred because it is often more accurate and less pejorative than terms like “sex offender”. Terms like “sex offender” imply an ongoing tendency to commit sex offenses, which is inaccurate for many persons who have been convicted for sex offenses given current sexual recidivism base rates. Similarly, the term suggests a homogeneous group defined and stigmatized on the basis of criminal behaviors that may have taken place infrequently or many years in the past. Person-first language is also consistent with [American Psychological Association](#) style guidelines for reducing bias in written language and for [more inclusive language](#). Authors will sometimes need to refer to current legal terms such as “Sexually Violent Predator” laws in the US; in such cases the legal term can be placed in italics or in quotation marks. Additional guidance on this

recommendation can be found in the 7th edition of the APA Publication Manual, Willis (2018), and Willis and Letourneau (2018).

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Fanniff and Alexander (2022) provide the rationale for a series of initiatives described by Seto (2022) to address justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion considerations in the scholarship published in this journal. Fanniff and Alexander (2022) focused on race and ethnicity in particular, given ample evidence of how racial bias can influence the design, handling, interpretation, and dissemination of research, including the journal review process. As part of these initiatives, authors are asked to include the following:

1. Consider including sample descriptors in terms of gender, race, national origin and any demographic characteristics that are *directly relevant* to the research questions in the title or abstract.
2. Describe the demographics of the sample in more detail in the Participants section, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, primary language, and any other participant characteristics that are particularly relevant to the research questions. Authors are therefore encouraged to collect these data in their empirical research. Authors should provide an explanation if these details are not available, for example, because the data were not available in administrative or clinical data.
3. Authors, especially those submitting qualitative studies or narrative reviews or theoretical manuscripts are encouraged to provide positionality statements. Examples of these statements are included in Fanniff and Alexander (2022) and Seto (2022).
4. Authors should consider how the social history and cultural characteristics of their sample influence their findings. Researchers should not assume that the factors associated with sexual abuse in Western, industrialized, affluent countries are the same as in countries with substantially different cultural and social histories. Researchers should address the extent to which their theories and findings are expected to generalize to people with other sociocultural identities as well as to other localities and cultural contexts, and consider the conditions that increase the likelihood of cross-cultural generalizations (e.g., similar definitions of sexual crime)
5. We encourage authors to use systems-centered language when appropriate. Describing an effect as being due to race or gender, for example, ignores the systems-level factors impacting the experiences and opportunities that individuals face; describing an effect as related to racism or sexism, in contrast, recognizes the impact of systemic forces. Additionally, low socioeconomic status is often described as a demographic characteristic, but this framing ignores historical and contemporary systemic forces that cause some people to have lower incomes and earning potential



than others (see American Psychological Association, 2019, for an [open access document suggesting alternative framing](#)).

In order to increase the visibility of historically under-represented authors in this journal, particularly BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color) authors and authors outside Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand, manuscripts that are accepted for publication in *Sexual Abuse* can be made temporarily open access without any article processing charge. Authors interested in this option should notify the Editor-in-Chief in their submission cover letter, or following the final decision on their manuscript.

Open Science Badging

Sexual Abuse encourages open science practices, which includes preregistration of studies, providing open study materials, or providing study data in a public repository. To qualify, preregistration, open materials, and open data should be on a publicly accessible website in a format that is time-stamped, immutable, and permanent.

To recognize these practices, we are introducing Open Science Framework (OSF) badging to articles published in this journal. For more information about these badges, see the OSF [Wiki](#). Badging is not required for submission, peer review, or publication.

Preregistration badges are currently for Registered Reports only. Authors are asked to be mindful of ethical issues, copyright, and feasibility when considering the sharing of materials or data.

If you wish to apply for OSF badging, please ensure you mention this in your cover letter, complete our [disclosure form](#) and include it with your submission.

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