



CJSP: On Reaffirming a Canadian School Psychology

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I am excited and honoured to begin my tenure as editor of the *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* (CJSP). Following the professionalism, skill, and expertise of Donald Saklofske and Joseph Snyder in this role is a daunting task. Continuing and expanding on their leadership will prove to be a challenge. However, journal editors do not work alone. Don and Joe have agreed to make themselves available for frequent consultation and support. Don will continue in a formal role as Consulting Editor. There is also an excellent team of associate editors who have proved indispensable to developing a framework and vision for CJSP—Adam McCrimmon, Janine Montgomery, and Shannon Stewart. The editorial board reflects a range of expertise and experiences within the professional school psychology.

CJSP will continue to publish contributions to research and clinical practice that are diverse in content and methodology. CJSP will continue to have high standards for research methodology, clarity, scholarship, credibility, and relevance to school psychology. The primary criterion for selecting articles among those submitted is whether the article makes a substantial contribution to knowledge or clinical practice. CJSP is entirely focused on moving the profession of school psychology in a positive direction for the benefit of the children and families of Canada and around the world.

Sections

CJSP is intended to be a valuable source of innovation for practicing school psychologists and for researchers in the field. We also wish to encourage new voices and new ideas into the conversation about the future direction of school psychology. Many of the most innovative practices that could be major contributions to our profession are developed and tested by practicing school psychologists. CJSP wishes to be an outlet for sharing this information with the entire profession. We are committed to helping new and diverse authors effectively communicate their original ideas so that they can be shared and influence the entire profession. Academic journals are often thought of as the purview of university-based academics, but CJSP is designed to encourage multiple contributions from all professionals in the field of school psychology. I would like all readers to feel comfortable contacting the editor to discuss ideas and potential contributions to CJSP. Our field has an incredible amount of talent and diverse voices, CJSP would like to harness and share these ideas with the profession. Authors considering contribution of their work and ideas have five major sections from which to choose.

Brief Reports

This section is dedicated to action research, case studies, single-case designs, pilot studies, and innovative practices. Quite often, brief reports will include classroom-wide interventions, unique methods of addressing a case, or small-scale advances in treatment techniques, consultation, assessment, and systemic interventions. Brief reports are limited to 2,500 words with no more than three tables or figures, 15 references or less, and an abstract of 100 words. The brief report section is specifically designed for students, practitioners, policymakers, and other professionals who would like to share their practices with the entire profession.

Original Articles

Original articles represent the core of most scholarly journals. These articles involve original studies that may be experimental, quasi-experimental, or qualitative in nature. Original articles are less than 5,000 words, may include multiple tables or figures to describe the results of the study, and should have less than 60 references. The primary difference between a scholarly article in *CJSP* and other journals is that the conclusion section must have an explicitly labelled subsection titled, "Relevance to the Practice of School Psychology." Although all papers for all journals are expected to make scholarly contributions to the field, all articles in *CJSP* are designed to advance the knowledge base or clinical skills of the profession.

Literature Reviews and Meta-Analyses

Evidence-based practices are the cornerstone of the practice of school psychology. The highest level of evidence is the preponderance of information from multiple studies supporting a practice. Comprehensive systematic literature reviews, meta-analyses, and other forms of literature reviews serve the purpose of evaluating practices that provide the foundation for the label of evidence-based practice. *CJSP* strongly encourages literature review papers that are directly related to evaluating practice and policy, resolving important professional debates, and identifying major needs within a specific topic area. Literature reviews and meta-analyses are less than 8,000 words, may include multiple tables or figures to describe the literature, and should have less than 100 references. Much like original articles, literatures and meta-analyses also require an explicitly labelled subsection of the conclusions titled, "Relevance to the Practice of School Psychology." Literature reviews and meta-analyses serve as the foundation for evidence-based practices.

Book and Test Reviews

Mental health service providers are inundated with advertisements for new books, therapeutic interventions, tests, workshops, and other products. Most clinicians do not have the time and energy to evaluate the effectiveness, robustness, or credibility of

these products. *CJSP* will evaluate the quality and utility of products and publish the results. Every effort will be made to provide the highest levels of reviews to assist clinicians in their decisions to purchase new products. Given the costs, training, and implementation of new products, an impartial review is intended to be a useful tool to support school psychologists in their purchase of new products.

Registered Reports

For a scholarly journal to have any influence on clinical practice, research must be held to high scientific standards. There are serious problems with published research in psychology that have been well documented. Some of those issues are known as p-hacking (i.e., collecting data on many variables, conducting statistical analyses, and selecting variables that reach statistical significance), harking (i.e., hypothesis after results are known), and publication bias (i.e., journals only publishing significant results and systematically not publishing results that do not reach statistical significance; Ioannidis, 2012). The Registered Report section allows scholars to submit the introduction, methods, and data analysis plan for peer review. The cornerstone of the Registered Reports format is that a significant part of the manuscript will be assessed prior to data collection, with the highest quality submissions accepted in advance (Mellor, 2017). Initial submissions will include a description of the key research question and background literature, hypotheses, experimental procedures, analysis pipeline, a statistical power analysis (or Bayesian equivalent), and pilot data (where applicable). Following review, the article will then be either rejected or accepted in principle for publication. Following in principle acceptance, the authors will then proceed to conduct the study, adhering exactly to the procedures that were reviewed and accepted. When the study is complete, the authors will submit their finalised manuscript for re-review (Chambers, 2013). Pending quality checks and sensible interpretation of the findings, the manuscript will be published regardless of the results. In this fashion, papers in the Register Report section focus entirely on the importance of the study and the quality of the research methodology. Registered reports have been widely adopted in basic research journals. However, if evidence-based practices are to be the foundation of professional school psychology, then research must meet basic scientific standards before results are implemented to promote the educational achievement and mental health of children.

Special Issues

A special issue consists of six to eight articles that focus on a specific topic. The purpose of a special issue is to address a broad theme in detail and from multiple perspectives. A common approach is for a guest editor of the special issue to provide an abstract of the issue to be covered, titles and authors of all contributing papers, and a brief paragraph describing how the special issue will address a need in the professional school psychology. Special issues are evaluated and approved by a consensus of the editor and associate editors. See the website instructions for authors for details on how

to develop a special issue proposal. However, readers and professional school psychologists may have an idea for special issue, but do not have a fully developed proposal. Please contact the editor with ideas for special issues, and we will strongly consider developing the issue around this given idea.

Priorities

An important role of a journal editor is to provide an editorial direction and develop a niche for the publication. There are many outstanding journals directly and indirectly related to the research and practice of school psychology. When scholars search for a publication in which to disseminate their research and school psychologists wish to find a specific type of information, they need to know exactly what types of papers are prioritized in *CJSP*. During this editorial cycle, *CJSP* will have three primary priorities.

Canadian Content

CJSP will be the premier journal for Canadian content. Studies conducted by researchers and clinicians in Canada will be a top priority in this journal. Canada is home to excellent and well-known scholars in school psychology and related fields. The goal of *CJSP* is to become the target journal for the outstanding research that arises from school boards, mental health service units, ministries of education, and university research laboratories. International scholars are welcomed to contribute their work to *CJSP*, yet part of the evaluation criteria includes the relevance and potential application of this information to Canadian school psychology. As a journal serving Canada, *CJSP* will review, accept, and publish articles in either official language, French or English.

Diversity and Indigenous Populations

Canada is a nation that consists of an increasingly diverse population. This is a nation that has welcomed immigrants looking for an improved quality of life for families and children. Many of these immigrants are refugees who have experienced trauma and are otherwise at risk for mental health and academic problems. Moreover, the long-ignored indigenous populations of Canada have unique needs in education and mental health that require far more attention through evidence-based practices. Also, the creativity and skills shown by indigenous educational and psychological professionals may provide valuable insight that can be generalized and applied to other populations as well. *CJSP* will prioritize methods to address the needs of Canada's dynamic and diverse population.

Implementation

The practice of school psychology is more than knowledge. There is a professional emphasis on what works or what practices are most effective as determined by

evaluative research studies. Although this form of research is a foundation of school psychology, equally as important is how do we bring interventions that work and are effective to practicing school psychologists so that they can directly affect outcomes for children and their families. The field of implementation science is the study of methods and strategies to promote the uptake of interventions that have proven effective into routine practice with the aim of improving population education, health, and mental health. The process of applying innovation to practice is a growing area of systematic research. Moreover, the practice of school psychology in Canada is affected by low school psychology to student ratios, rural areas in which services must be provided across vast distances, issues in the practice of urban school psychology, diversity, and multilingual environments. Emphasizing how we translate knowledge and research into practice is a field worthy of study and is a priority for *CJSP*. Systematic methods of studying implementation are strongly encouraged at the microlevel (e.g., therapy with individual students) and macrolevel (e.g., provincewide educational policies for persons with fetal alcohol effects). The implementation of evidence-based practices requires not only knowledge of what works and what is effective, but exactly how a new idea is applied to diverse situations, populations, and service delivery needs.

Conclusion

Having an outstanding team of associate editors is a privilege. Janine Montgomery, Adam McCrimmon, and Shannon Stewart were chosen for their unique expertise, scholarly abilities, reputation in the field of school psychology, and ability to provide guidance to authors. Don Saklofske will continue to be associated with *CJSP* as a consulting editor. There is also a diverse, talented, expert, and international editorial board that have volunteered their time and expertise to ensure that all articles published in *CJSP* are addressed in a timely fashion and are of the highest quality.

The strength of *CJSP* is based on the quality of manuscript submitted and the ability of authors to communicate effectively to school psychologists. The editorial board welcomes ideas for papers and special topics, suggestions for improving the journal, and even criticism. I invite you to communicate with me in person at steven.shaw@mcgill.ca

Steven R. Shaw
McGill University, Montreal, Québec, Canada

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