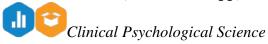# Research Briefs

April 26, 2023

Research Briefs features summaries of selected articles published recently in [APS's six journals](#)*. APS members receive weekly summaries of all new journal articles through the* This Week in Psychological Science *newsletter.*

[The Link Between Low Self-Esteem and Eating Disorders: A Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies](#)

Samantha Krauss, Laura C. Dapp, and Ulrich Orth

Clinical Psychological Science

This research suggests a reciprocal relationship between low self-esteem and eating disorders. Krauss and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis to evaluate the connection between self-esteem and eating pathology (i.e., restrained eating, bulimic behavior, binge eating, eating concern, negative body image, and drive for thinness). They analyzed 48 independent samples with 19,187 participants (mean age of 19.3 years [range = 7–48]). Results suggested that (a) higher self-esteem predicted less total eating

pathology over time, and (b) higher eating pathology predicted lower self-esteem over time. The effects did not differ across eating pathologies, age, gender, sample type (clinical vs. nonclinical), or time lag between assessments.

The Impact of Implicit-Bias-Oriented Diversity Training on Police Officers' Beliefs, Motivations, and Actions
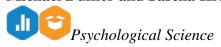
Calvin K. Lai and Jaclyn A. Lisnek

Psychological Science

Diversity trainings that are brief and isolated in time are unlikely to change police behavior, this research suggests. Lai and Lisnek tested the effectiveness of a day-long implicit-bias-oriented diversity training designed to increase U.S. police officers' knowledge of bias, concerns about bias, and use of evidence-based strategies to mitigate bias. Immediately after the training, police officers showed improvements in all three areas, relative to their pre-training assessment. However, after one month, officers' concerns and strategy use regressed to pre-intervention levels, despite maintaining knowledge. Lai and Lisnek suggest that in future training efforts, agencies may consider integrating training with organizational initiatives and extending training over longer periods.

On How to Be Liked in First Encounters: The Effects of Agentic and Communal Behaviors on Popularity and Unique Liking
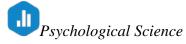
Michael Dufner and Sascha Krause

Psychological Science

When meeting other people for the first time, how should one behave to be liked? Dufner and Krause asked pairs of adults to have one-on-one conversations. After each conversation, both participants rated the other for likeability. Observers viewed recordings of the conversations and rated each interaction partner on four agentic behaviors (leading, dominant, confident, boastful) and four communal behaviors (polite, benevolent, warm, friendly). Participants who generally showed agentic and communal behavior were generally liked (popularity). Participants who showed communal, but not agentic, behavior were particularly well-liked by the respective interaction partner (unique liking). These findings indicate how individuals may become popular and friendships may develop.

Effects of Acute Stress on Rigid Learning, Flexible Learning, and Value-Based Decision-Making in Spatial Navigation

Qiliang He, Elizabeth H. Beveridge, Vanesa Vargas, Ashley Salen, and Thackery I. Brown
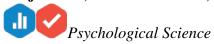
Psychological Science

Stress can impact different memory systems as well as communication between memory and decision-

making, this research suggests. Participants learned to find objects in a virtual environment, starting from locations that were either fixed (rigid learning) or unpredictable (flexible learning). They then decided whether to reach goal objects from the fixed or unpredictable starting location. Results indicated that stress (in this experiment, the threat of shock) impaired rigid learning in female participants but improved their flexible learning. The research team also used computational models to examine how earlier learning influenced subsequent decision-making. They found that stress made participants more likely to focus on recent memory and less likely to integrate information from other sources.

[Food Is All Around: How Contexts Create Misbeliefs About the Health–Taste Relationship](#)

Sonja Kunz, Simona Haasova, Niklas Pivecka, Justus Schmidt, and Arnd Florack

Psychological Science

Many people eat too much unhealthy food because they think it tastes better than healthy food. Kunz and colleagues propose that altering the frequencies of healthy foods and tasty foods in contrasting contexts may change this perception. In three studies, they found that when people saw two contrasting food environments, one featuring much more food that was unhealthy and tasty, they thought unhealthy and tasty go together. This finding suggests that changing perceptions that unhealthy food tastes better will require food environments to bring more healthy food to people's attention (e.g., offering more healthy foods on menus, depicting more healthy foods in media).

[Empathic Accuracy and Shared Depressive Symptoms in Close Relationships](#)

Casey L. Brown, Kevin J. Grimm, Jenna L. Wells, Alice Y. Hua, and Robert W. Levenson
Clinical Psychological Science

Why do close partners often share depressive symptoms? It may be because of empathic accuracy, or the ability of accurately understand other people's emotions, this research suggests. Brown and colleagues used laboratory tasks that capture participants' ability to rate other people's emotional valence accurately over time. They tested married couples and informal caregivers of individuals with dementia. In both samples, greater empathic accuracy was associated with (a) fewer depressive symptoms when a partner lacked depressive symptoms and (b) more depressive symptoms when a partner had high levels of depressive symptoms.

[The Insidious Influence of Stress: An Integrated Model of Stress, Executive Control, and Psychopathology](#)

Meghan E. Quinn and Grant S. Shields
Clinical Psychological Science

Quinn and Shields's integrated model of stress, executive control, and psychopathology posits that the

impairing effects of acute stress on executive control (the control of cognition and behavior) can contribute to psychopathology. The authors review research on biological, emotional, and cognitive processes that can be impacted by executive control. They thus propose a framework for how poorer executive control under conditions of acute stress can contribute to psychopathology. This integrated model is intended to further researchers' and practitioners' understanding of who is more susceptible to the negative consequences of stress.

Hypervigilance: An Understudied Mediator of the Longitudinal Relationship Between Stigma and Internalizing Psychopathology Among Sexual-Minority Young Adults

Nathan L. Hollinsaid et al.
Clinical Psychological Science

Psychological interventions to improve sexual minorities' mental health might benefit from addressing hypervigilance (heightened attention and alerting to socially threatening and ambiguous stimuli and broader efforts to detect and/or minimize threat), this research suggests. Hollinsaid and colleagues embedded a hypervigilance measure in a longitudinal study of Swedish LGBTQ+ young adults. Hypervigilance predicted associations between perceived discrimination and internalizing symptoms 2 years later. Moreover, rumination and sensitivity to sexual-orientation-related rejection (which are often confounded with hypervigilance) predicted future hypervigilance. These findings suggest that hypervigilance represents a distinct construct and transdiagnostic mechanism through which stigma-related experiences and processes undermine the mental health of sexual minorities.

How Children Develop Healthy Behavioral Choices to Promote Illness Prevention

Vanessa LoBue, Elizabeth Bonawitz, Lauren Leotti, and Nina Fefferman
Current Directions in Psychological Science

When faced with the possibility of getting sick, children might learn adaptive behaviors and make healthy behavioral choices. LoBue and colleagues examine various theories regarding the pathways for acquisition of healthy behaviors by children, including rule-based learning, disgust, and causal knowledge. By examining these pathways' strengths and weaknesses, the researchers develop recommendations for designing interventions aimed at teaching children about contagion and illness. They highlight the importance of understanding how children learn to use adaptive health behaviors in real-world situations for public health, potentially limiting disease spread in schools.

Disadvantaged-Group Members' Experiences of Life Transitions: The Positive Impact of Social Connectedness and Group Memberships

Aarti Iyer and Jolanda Jetten
Current Directions in Psychological Science

Iyer and Jetten review their research with immigrants and university students to show how individuals' social connectedness with groups can facilitate positive outcomes during life transitions. These outcomes include social integration, psychological well-being, positive beliefs about the self, and successful academic performance. The authors consider, specifically, individuals' group memberships prior to transitions and the new identities they adopt in the new context as key determinants of successful identity change. The findings reviewed suggest the need for facilitating disadvantaged-group members' positive experiences of life transitions after they have arrived in the new context, Iyer and Jetten write.

Ancestral Diversity: A Socioecological Account of Emotion Culture

Paula M. Niedenthal, Ryan S. Hampton, and Michelle Marji
Current Directions in Psychological Science

Conditions created by the long-term commingling of the world's people have predictable effects on the evolution of emotion cultures, Niedenthal and colleagues suggest. They propose that the ancestral diversity of world regions accounts for significant variation in how cultures express, experience, and regulate emotion. The researchers review findings that relate countries' ancestral diversity to present-day differences in how they display emotion, clarify expressions, and use specific facial expressions, such as smiles. They also suggest that historically diverse contexts (i.e., with more heterogenous people, from different backgrounds) provide more opportunities for emotion regulation than less diverse contexts.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: The Underlying Role of Diminished Access to Internal States

Nira Liberman, Amit Lazarov, and Reuven Dar
Current Directions in Psychological Science

Liberman and colleagues suggest that individuals with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) experience difficulty accessing their internal states, including their feelings, emotions, preferences, and motivations. Instead, they rely on proxies to inform them of these states—that is, discernible substitutes in the form of fixed rules and rituals, observable behavior, and indexes. The Seeking Proxies for Internal States (SPIS) model of OCD proposes that compulsions, obsessions, indecision, and doubt result from seeking and using such proxies. The SPIS model accounts for these OCD symptoms and sheds new light on normal processes of action control, metacognition, decision-making, and introspection.

(Why) Is Misinformation a Problem?

Zoë Adams, Magda Osman, Christos Bechlivanidis, and Björn Meder
Perspectives on Psychological Science

Advancements in information technology (e.g., the Internet, social media) are viewed as a main cause of misinformation's proliferation, according to the authors' examination of different disciplines that

investigate misinformation. However, they argue that this relationship is unclear, and a causal relationship between misinformation and misbehavior has not been empirically demonstrated. Given these two doubts, Adams and colleagues suggest that any regulatory interventions should aim to empower people to navigate both traditional and online information landscapes without posing the risk of eroding the foundations of an open and democratic society.

Why We Gather: A New Look, Empirically Documented, at Émile Durkheim's Theory of Collective Assemblies and Collective Effervescence

Bernard Rimé and Dario Páez
Perspectives on Psychological Science

Rimé and Páez take a new look at Durkheim's theory of collective assemblies and collective effervescence, according to which individuals' survival and well-being rest on cultural resources and social belonging that require periodic reviving in collective assemblies. Rimé and Páez examined research questions (translated from Durheim's main statements) in relation to current theories and findings. They found data supporting collective assemblies' contribution to reducing self-other differentiation and shared emotions' fueling of high-intensity experiences. Moreover, recent studies of self-transcendent emotions can account for the self-transformative effects Durkheim described as occurring at the climax of collective assemblies. In conclusion, Durkheim's century-old model appears to be supported by recent experimental results.

Neurocognitive Model of Schema-Congruent and -Incongruent Learning in Clinical Disorders: Application to Social Anxiety and Beyond

David A. Moscovitch, Morris Moscovitch, and Signy Sheldon
Perspectives on Psychological Science

Schemas such as negative mental representations of the self (e.g., "I am unlovable") guide people's thoughts and behaviors and lie at the core of many mental disorders. Moscovitch and colleagues suggest that the optimal development of interventions aimed at changing negative schemas can benefit from a framework outlining how schema change occurs in the brain. Their memory-based neurocognitive framework for schema emergence and change, the SCIL model, highlights the critical roles of the hippocampus, ventromedial prefrontal cortex, amygdala, and posterior neocortex in directing schema-congruent and -incongruent learning (SCIL). The authors use this model to recommend optimal interventions to change schemas and provide cognitive-behavior therapy for social anxiety disorder as an illustrative example.

These Are Not the Effects You Are Looking for: Causality and the Within-/Between-Persons Distinction in Longitudinal Data Analysis

Julia M. Rohrer and Kou Murayama

Rohrer and Murayama aim to show that the relationship between the within- and between-persons distinction and causal inference in longitudinal data analysis is informative but not decisive. They argue that within-persons data are not necessary for causal inference (e.g., between-persons experiments can inform about average causal effects). They also propose that within-persons data are not sufficient for causal inference (e.g., spurious within-persons associations may occur) but can be helpful. Rohrer and Murayama suggest that instead of letting statistical models dictate which questions to ask, researchers should start with well-defined theoretical descriptions of effects to determine study design and data analysis.

[Information Provision for Informed Consent Procedures in Psychological Research Under the General Data Protection Regulation: A Practical Guide](#)

Dara Hallinan, Franziska Boehm, Annika Külpmann, and Malte Elson
Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science

Informed consent procedures under the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) require providing research participants with specific forms of information. In this tutorial, Hallinan and colleagues offer psychological researchers general guidance about informed consent under the GDPR. The GDPR applies, as a rule, to psychological research conducted on personal data in the European Economic Area—and even, in certain cases, to psychological research conducted on personal data outside this area. Specifically, Hallinan and colleagues suggest that researchers provide information about: types of personal data collected, the controller(s) and recipients of data, the purposes of processing, risks and safeguards, international transfers of data, storage periods, participants' rights, contractual or statutory requirements, and automated decision-making.

[Low Research-Data Availability in Educational-Psychology Journals: No Indication of Effective Research-Data Policies](#)

Markus Huff and Elke C. Bongartz

Huff and Bongartz examined whether educational psychology articles are sharing more data than previously. They coded the availability of research data for 1,242 publications from six educational-psychology journals published in 2018 and 2020 and compared it with data availability in the psychological journal *Cognition* in the same years. Data availability in educational-psychology journals was overall low both years (3.85% on average compared with 62.74% in *Cognition*) but increased from 0.32% (2018) to 7.16% (2020). However, there was no relationship between research-data availability and either the journal's data-transparency level or the existence of an official research-data policy at the corresponding author's institution.

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