

Journal of Social Issues

Open Call for Proposals:

How Can Psychologists Walk the Walk to Promote Racial Justice? Situating racial justice intervention research within the translational research framework

Special Issue Editors:
Nao Hagiwara & Peter Mende-Siedlecki

Submission Deadline:
October 31st, 2023

For decades, psychologists across sub-disciplines (e.g., social, developmental, clinical, counseling) have been invested in understanding the processes underlying stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination, as well as the antecedents and consequences of these processes. Yet, racism and racial injustice persist in every social domain globally, including healthcare (Fiscella & Sanders, 2016), education (Bertocchi & Dimico, 2014), employment (Pager & Shepherd, 2008), criminal justice (Koyera, 2019), and community safety and autonomy (Joseph, 2021). Moreover, the world has witnessed a recent resurgence of open expressions of White supremacy in many countries. In response, we often hear that “what is happening is heartbreaking, but not surprising,” which could be interpreted that as a field, psychology can provide adequate scientific knowledge of racism, but that this knowledge has not been translated into real changes in the lives of BIPOC individuals. Indeed, racial justice is achieved by developing and reinforcing not only individuals’ attitudes and actions but also policies and practices that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, and outcomes for people of all races (Proctor, 2016). Yet, one common critique of psychological research that attempts to promote racial justice is that this work focuses on the level of individuals and fails to reckon with the systems these individuals operate within. This proposed special issue will illustrate how psychologists can contribute to the *actual* promotion of racial justice globally (we refer to research studying interventions promoting racial justice in real-world settings as “racial justice intervention research” hereafter) across social domains by grounding their work in the Clinical and Translational Science (CTS) framework (Khoury et al., 2007).

The CTS framework was initially proposed as a means of developing and implementing interventions within the biomedical sciences, and consists of five stages: from T0 (*basic research*) to T4 (*translation to communities*), Woolf, 2008). However, this framework can be effectively leveraged across the psychological research domains we highlight in this proposal (Hagiwara, Kron, Scerbo, & Watson, 2020). Indeed, doing so will be key to translating acquired psychological knowledge into social justice. Of the five stages within the CTS framework, T1 through T3 are particularly relevant to racial justice intervention research. In the context of this work, T1 (*translation to humans*) is often conducted in the field of basic experimental psychology. The goal of this stage is to identify theory-driven strategies that reduce stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. The goal of T2 (*translation to stakeholders*) is to develop and refine interventions based on findings from T1 and test their effectiveness with key stakeholders in a domain (e.g., healthcare providers, teachers, police officers, etc.). Finally, the goal of T3 (*translation to practice*) is to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions after they are adapted into actual practice (given the broader applicability of this framework, we refer to its application from here on as the Translational Research Framework [TRF]).

Notably, grounding racial justice intervention research in the TRF forces psychologists to consider the influence of systemic racism. This is because the intervention validation in the later stages of TRF must be done in natural settings, which inherently reflect systemic racism. It also highlights the fact that psychologists alone will not be successful with developing effective interventions because each stage within the TRF requires different skill sets (e.g., later stages requiring adjusting the nature of interventions within the context of systemic racism). Psychologists conducting this work cannot stop at the proof of concept and should be working as part of an interdisciplinary team throughout *all* stages in order to ensure that interventions maintain their fidelity while they are modified and adapted to the natural setting.

We welcome scholarly submissions from around the world representing psychological research from TRF stages T1 through T3 that addresses a variety of social domains (e.g., healthcare, education, criminal justice, labor). We also welcome papers based on a range of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies, as well as conceptual or theoretical pieces. Example topics include, but are not limited to, racial health disparities, racial education gaps, employment discrimination, police brutality against racially minoritized people, and threats to the safety and autonomy of Indigenous and tribal communities. Collectively, this special issue will provide both theoretical guidance and methodological examples needed to stimulate further theorizing, research, interventions, and policy reform toward racial justice.

Interested contributors should submit a proposal that contains the following:

- Title
- Estimated length or word count of proposed final manuscript
- Current status of the work and estimated timeline for completion of manuscript
- Detailed abstract (3-6 double-spaced pages, in APA Style [7th edition])
 - For empirical reports, the abstract should include descriptions of the sample, methodology, primary results, and which TRF stage the study addresses.

- Authors reporting qualitative research should consider COREQ or SRQR guidelines.
- For review articles, the abstract should include a discussion of criteria for inclusion and primary conclusions.
- All abstracts should describe the theoretical underpinnings of the work and implications for institutional policy or action.
- Acknowledgment of the broader structural and historical contexts in which the problems they study are embedded
- Clear descriptions of how an intervention could be informed by their work (for studies representing T1) or the nature of the intervention and its goal (for studies representing T2 or T3)
- Brief discussion of the authors' personal experiences with conducting racial justice intervention research (in particular, reflection on the necessity of interdisciplinary collaboration when conducting their work, the challenges faced, and the solutions found)
- Short biographies of the authors (limited to half a page per author).

Additionally, authors are encouraged to include brief positionality statements or information with their submissions.

Proposals should be sent via email to Nao Hagiwara (nhagiwara@vcu.edu) or Peter Mende-Siedlecki (pmende@udel.edu) and **must be received no later than October 31st, 2023**. The special issue editors will select a subset of detailed abstracts and submit these in a formal proposal to the JSI Editor. If approval of the special issue is granted by JSI, we will direct invitees to submit manuscripts within three months of the invitation date.

References

- Bertocchi, G., & Dimico, A. (2014). Slavery, education, and inequality. *European Economic Review*, 70, 197-209.
- Fiscella, K., & Sanders, M. R. (2016). Racial and ethnic disparities in the quality of health care. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 37, 375-394.
- Hagiwara, N., Kron, F. W., Scerbo, M. W., & Watson, G. S. (2020). A call for grounding implicit bias training in clinical and translational frameworks. *The Lancet*, 395(10234), 1457-1460.
- Kovera, M. B. (2019). Racial disparities in the criminal justice system: Prevalence, causes, and a search for solutions. *Journal of Social Issues*, 75(4), 1139-1164.
- Khoury, M. J., Gwinn, M., Yoon, P. W., Dowling, N., Moore, C. A., & Bradley, L. (2007). The continuum of translation research in genomic medicine: how can we accelerate the appropriate integration of human genome discoveries into health care and disease prevention? *Genetics in Medicine*, 9(10), 665-674.

Joseph, A. S. (2021). A modern trail of tears: the missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) crisis in the US. *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine*, 79, 102136.

Pager, D., & Shepherd, H. (2008). The sociology of discrimination: Racial discrimination in employment, housing, credit, and consumer markets. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 181-209.

Proctor, S. L. (2016). Introduction to the special issue: Encouraging racial and social justice throughout the pre-k to graduate school pipeline. *School Psychology Forum*, 10(3), 233-236.

Woolf, S. H. (2008). The meaning of translational research and why it matters. *JAMA*, 299, 211-13.