Testing Memory

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Testing Memory

An effective way to improve memory is to test it. Repeated testing can strengthen existing memory traces thereby facilitating memory retrieval. In the journal *Memory*, our aim has always been to further improve the journal by evaluating existing practices and testing new ones. In this editorial, we want to briefly reflect on the efficacy of some of our earlier editorial plans thereby providing a pathway for future submissions in the journal. A primary reason for this reflection is to examine whether our editorial plans have shown any merit and to assess where further "testing" is needed.

Of course, before delving into this reflection, the success of this journal would not occur without the help of our Associate Editors, all whom have been very helpful and instrumental in shaping this journal. We also welcome the following new Associate Editors: Ryan Fitzgerald, Mark Huff, John Mace, Filip Raes, Andrew Smith, and Theodore Waters who bring their relevant memory-related expertise to the journal. Finally, we want to thank all reviewers and Guest Editors of Special Issues for their devotion to this journal which has had a significant and positive impact to the journal.

In earlier editorials (Howe & Otgaar, 2019; Howe & Otgaar, 2022; Otgaar & Howe, 2023), we announced that the journal *Memory* would invest more in open science practices. We, for example, announced that the journal would welcome replication studies and Registered Reports. Furthermore, we stated that the journal *Memory* would award Open Science Badges if authors would invest in open science practices such as preregistration, open data, and open materials. Of course these practices are not required to publish in the journal *Memory*, but they come highly recommended.

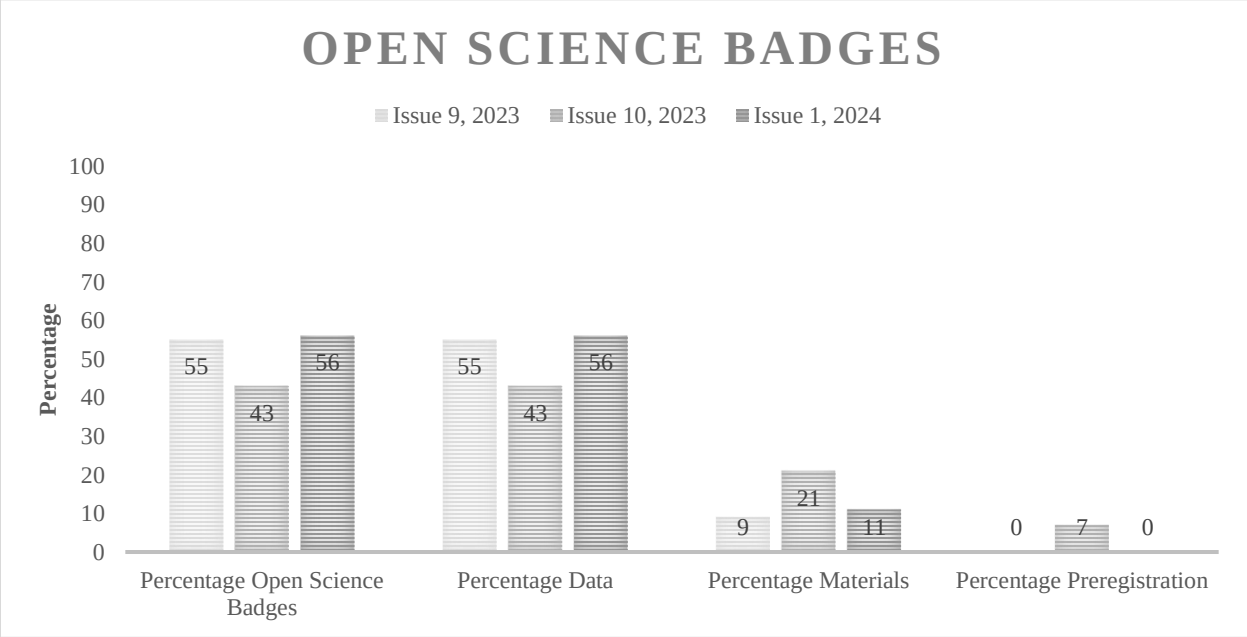
A central question is whether there is evidence that strategies promoting replication, Registered Reports, and open science have made their way into the journal. For replication studies, we searched for articles published since 2019 with the search term "replication" in the title. This search led to the discovery of nine articles (see also: https://osf.io/m9t87/). In these articles, a variety of topics were examined such as replicating the forget-it-all-along effect (Janssen et al., 2022) and replicating decreased emotionality and vividness of autobiographical memories due to eye movements (Meckling et al., 2024). To put these results into perspective, we also used a similar search strategy in the period 2013-2018 and then three articles were detected (https://osf.io/m9t87/). So, although since 2019 there seems to be a notable increase in published replications, time will tell whether researchers will continue to send their replication to our journal.

We also examined the number of Registered Reports that have been published in the journal Memory. When we searched for the term "Registered Report" anywhere, four articles were identified. These Registered Reports concerned topics such as suppression-induced forgetting (Wiechert et al., 2023) and the forced confabulation effect (Riesthuis et al., 2023). We will continue to recommend that researchers send Registered Reports to the journal *Memory* as such articles oftentimes have a high-quality methodology and the publication of such Registered Reports could counteract publication bias.

Furthermore, we investigated whether articles would have been awarded with Open Science Badges. Our investigation started from the first issue when these badges were awarded (issue 9, 2023) until the time that we wrote this editorial (issue 1, 2024). As can be seen from Figure 1, about half of the published articles have received at least one Open Science Badge. Specifically, this Open Science Badge was always an Open Data Badge meaning that sharing

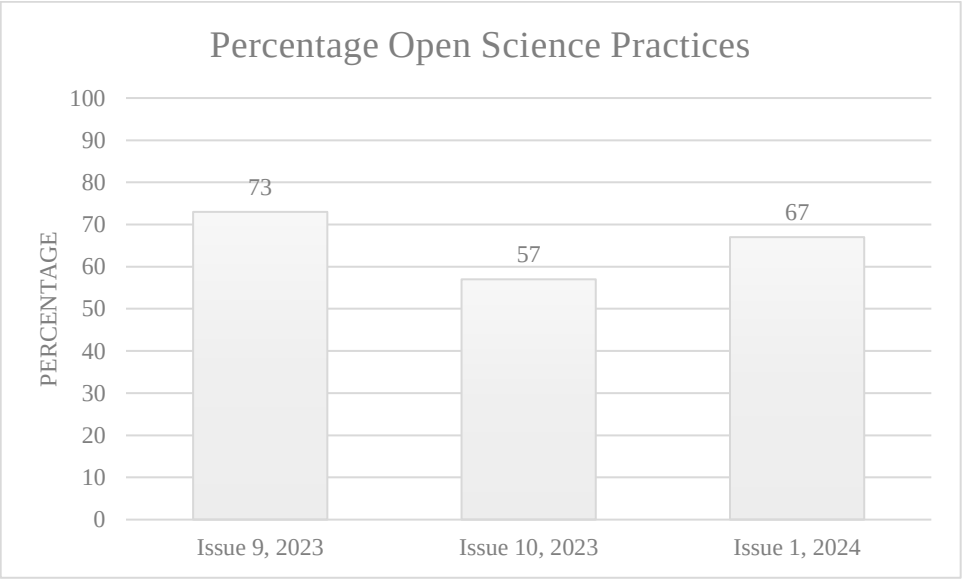
data becomes slowly the norm in this journal. We found substantial lower percentages for sharing materials and preregistering the research.

Figure 1. Open Science Badges in the journal *Memory*



Of importance, these data represent an underestimation of the use of open science practices in the journal *Memory*. That is, some researchers who have published in the journal have not requested to be awarded with a badge but still made their data available. To examine this issue, we looked at the same issues and specifically inspected the presence of data availability statements. When doing so, higher percentages regarding the use of open science practices were found than when we solely focused on Open Science Badges (see Figure 2). Of course, the goal is not to increase Open Science Badges per se but increase the use of open science practices. With this, we agree with Eich (2014) who wrote that Open Science Badges are "at most, steps in the right direction, not an ideal end state."

Figure 2. The use of open science practices in the journal *Memory*



Another new development that we implemented in the journal are Contemporary Insight Discussion Articles. This is a type of article in which memory scholars are invited to engage in an open discussion concerning a particular topic (see Brewin et al., 2023). For example, in a recent paper in the journal, a post publication discussion was initiated on whether memories of sexual trauma are fragmented (McNally et al., 2022). McNally acted as a moderator and Brewin and Berntsen/Rubin elaborated on their scientific views on this matter. According to the authors (p. 658), "[t]he discussion clarified their contrasting viewpoints on memory." We see merit in such discussion articles in which memory scholars who disagree on a certain memory-related topic discuss their positions with a moderator within a single paper. We currently have a group of memory scholars with seemingly different views on an eyewitness memory topic who are preparing a discussion article. We, as editors, ask interested readers to contact us if they are interested in submitting such a discussion piece.

We hope that this editorial has informed interested readers about our plans thereby showing that they seem to have some success. We will continue to evaluate our announced strategies and when necessary, test new ones. With this, our goal is to show readers that the journal *Memory* will continue to be a place for all research related to the functioning of memory.

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