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3. References
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5. Author contributions
6. Clearing permissions
7. Competing interests
8. Figure legends
9. Tables
10. Equations
11. General figure guidelines
12. Figures for peer review
13. Figures for publication
14. Supplementary information

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Dr X’s work has been funded by A. He has received compensation as a member of the advisory board of B and owns stock in the company. He also has consulted for C and received compensation. Dr Y and Dr Z declare no potential conflict of interest.

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An inherent principle of publication is that others should be able to replicate and build upon the authors’ published claims. Therefore, a condition of publication in Palgrave Communications is that authors are required to make materials, data and associated protocols promptly available to readers without undue qualifications in material transfer agreements. Any restrictions on the availability of materials or information must be disclosed to the publishing team at the time of submission. Any restrictions must also be disclosed in the submitted manuscript, including details of how readers can obtain materials and information. If materials are to be distributed by a for-profit company, this must be stated in the paper.

Supporting data must be made available to Palgrave Communications and peer-reviewers at the time of submission for the purposes of evaluating the manuscript. Peer-reviewers may be asked to comment on the terms of access to materials, methods and/or data sets: Palgrave Communications reserves the right to refuse publication in cases where authors do not provide adequate assurances that they can comply with the publication’s requirements for sharing materials.

After publication, readers who encounter refusal by the authors to comply with these policies should contact the Palgrave Communications publishing team. In cases where we are unable to resolve a complaint, the matter may be referred to the authors’ institution or funding institution and/or a formal statement of correction may be published, attached online to the publication, stating that readers have been unable to obtain necessary materials to replicate the findings.

All original articles should include a Data Availability statement. This should, wherever possible, include a link to and citation of any datasets analysed or generated in the study, when these are available in an appropriate public repository.

The preferred way to share data sets is via specialised public repositories, if one exists, or through a general data repository that can assure permanence and unique identification of deposited data sets.

Authors who make their datasets publicly available should use the most broadly supported and recognised repository for their research community. Public repositories that can be used by Palgrave Communications authors include:

- Dataverse – authors who do not have a preferred option can use the Palgrave Communications Dataverse. Deposition can be confidential during peer review and datasets released after acceptance of associated manuscripts for publication by the editorial team.
- Figshare
- OpenICPSR
- EASY (part of Data Archiving and Networked Services, DANS)
Repositories for sensitive data that cannot be made public for individual privacy or other legitimate reasons include:

- Dryad
- UK Data Archive
- ICPSR (Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research)

Some of these repositories offer authors the option to host data associated with a manuscript confidentially, and provide anonymous access to peer-reviewers before public release. Some of these repositories coordinate public release of the data with the journal's publication date. This option should be used when possible, but it is the authors' responsibility to communicate with the repository to ensure that public release is made promptly on the publication date. In the unlikely event there is no public repository to accommodate supporting datasets, they must be made available as Supplementary Information files that will be freely accessible on the journal website upon publication. In cases where it is technically impossible for such files to be provided to the journal, the authors must make the data available to Palgrave Communications and peer-reviewers at submission, and directly upon request to any reader on and after the publication date, the authors providing a URL or other unique identifier in the manuscript.

Sharing data sets

A condition of publication in Palgrave Communications is that authors are required to make materials, data and associated protocols promptly available to others without preconditions.

Data sets must be made freely available to readers from the date of publication, and must be provided to Palgrave Communications and peer-reviewers at submission, for the purposes of evaluating the manuscript.

Citing data sets

Citing data sets in an equivalent way to citing journal articles and other types of publication helps enable researchers to earn appropriate credit for the collection and publication of data sets. Data citation also makes reuse and verification of scholarly research more efficient, and can help measure the impact and reuse of data sets. We recommend authors cite, in their reference list, any public data sets that are used or produced in any work described in Palgrave Communications, provided the data sets have been assigned a persistent identifier. When citing data sets the format preferred by DataCite should be used, where persistent identifiers, such as digital object identifier (DOI) names, are displayed as linkable, permanent URLs. See the section of References in our Submission Guidelines for more information.

Pre-registration of studies

Palgrave Communications encourages pre-registration of studies, where appropriate databases exist, as a means of making research more discoverable. Authors who have pre-registered their study in an independent registry (e.g. http://socialscienceregistry.org/, http://openscienceframework.org/, http://egap.org/design-registration/, http://ridie.3ieimpact.org/) are requested to indicate this clearly in the manuscript, such as in the abstract and an appropriate footnote.

Code sharing

Palgrave Communications requests that authors, where applicable, make available, to editors and reviewers, any previously unreported custom computer code used to generate results that are...
Authors may supply code as Supplementary Information files or submit it to the Palgrave Communications Dataverse when code must be kept private during peer review. Before final publication, however, authors are encouraged to release their code in a public repository that can assign it a DOI, such as the Palgrave Communications Dataverse or Figshare. In addition, for sufficiently complex software, we recommend using an open control version system (CVS), such as GitHub, in combination with a DOI-providing repository to provide permanent access to a usable instance of code (information on how to archive GitHub code at figshare). Code with an assigned DOI may be formally cited and listed in the References section of the manuscript.

Digital image integrity and standards

Image integrity and standards

All digitized images submitted with the final revision of the manuscript should be 300 DPI if possible.

A certain degree of image processing is acceptable for publication (and for some experiments, fields and techniques is unavoidable), but the final image must correctly represent the original data and conform to community standards. The guidelines below will aid in accurate data presentation at the image processing level; authors must also take care to exercise prudence during data acquisition, where misrepresentation must equally be avoided. Manuscripts should include an ‘equipment and settings’ section with their Methods that describes for each figure the pertinent instrument settings, acquisition conditions and processing changes, as described in this guide.

- Authors should list all image acquisition tools and image processing software packages used.
- Authors should document key image-gathering settings and processing manipulations in the Methods.
- Images gathered at different times or from different locations should not be combined into a single image, unless it is stated that the resultant image is a product of time-averaged data or a time-lapse sequence. If juxtaposing images is essential, the borders should be clearly demarcated in the figure and described in the legend.
- The use of touch-up tools, such as cloning and healing tools in Photoshop, or any feature that deliberately obscures manipulations, is to be avoided.
- Processing (such as changing brightness and contrast) is appropriate only when it is applied equally across the entire image and is applied equally to controls. Contrast should not be adjusted so that data disappear. Excessive manipulations, such as processing to emphasize one region in the image at the expense of others (for example, through the use of a biased choice of threshold settings), is inappropriate, as is emphasizing experimental data relative to the control.

When submitting revised final figures upon conditional acceptance, authors may be asked to submit original, unprocessed images.

Refutations, complaints and corrections

Correction and retraction policy

Palgrave Communications operates the following policy for making corrections to their peer-reviewed content.
Publishable amendments must be represented by a formal online notice because they affect the publication record and/or the scientific accuracy of published information. Where these amendments concern peer-reviewed material, they fall into one of three categories: erratum, corrigendum or retraction, described here.

Erratum. Notification of an important error made by the journal that affects the publication record or the integrity of the paper, or the reputation of the authors, or of the journal.

Corrigendum. Notification of an important error made by the author(s) that affects the publication record or the integrity of the paper, or the reputation of the authors or the journal.

Retraction. Notification of invalid results. All coauthors must sign a retraction specifying the error and stating briefly how the conclusions are affected, and submit it for publication. In cases where coauthors disagree, the publishing team will seek advice from independent peer-reviewers and impose the type of amendment that seems most appropriate, noting the dissenting author(s) in the text of the published version.

If ethical misconduct is discovered in content that has already been published, we may publish a statement of concern whilst the work is investigated. If we deem it necessary, the paper may be retracted with a statement of explanation. Other consequences may include a submissions ban for any or all authors, and contacting the relevant institution(s).

Editorial decision-making

Decisions about types of correction are made by the journal's publishing team, with the advice of the peer-reviewers' and/or Editorial Board Members. This process involves consultation with the authors of the paper, but the publishing team makes the final decision about whether an amendment is required and the category in which the amendment is published.

When an amendment is published, it is linked bi-directionally to and from the article being corrected.

Authors sometimes request a correction to their published contribution that does not affect the contribution in a significant way or impair the reader's understanding of the contribution (a spelling mistake or grammatical error, for example). Palgrave Communications does not publish such corrections. The online article is part of the published record and hence its original published version is preserved. Palgrave Communications does, however, correct the online version of a contribution if the wording in the html version does not make sense when compared with the PDF version ("see left" for a figure that is an appropriate phrase for the PDF but not for the html version, for example). In these cases, the fact that a correction has been made is stated in a footnote so that readers are aware that the originally published text has been amended.

Detailed description of correction types

Errata concern the amendment of mistakes introduced by the journal in production, including errors of omission such as failure to make factual proof corrections requested by authors within the deadline provided by the journal and within journal policy. Errata are generally not published for simple, obvious typographical errors, but are published when an apparently simple error is significant (for example a Greek mu for an ‘m’ in a unit, or a typographical error in the corresponding author’s name).

If there is an error in the lettering on a figure, the usual procedure is to publish a sentence of rectification. A significant error in the figure itself is corrected by publication of a new corrected figure as an erratum. The figure is republished only if we consider it necessary for a reader to understand it.
Corrigenda are judged on their relevance to readers and their importance for the published record. Corrigenda are published after discussion among the team. All coauthors must sign an agreed wording.

Corrigenda submitted by the original authors are published if the scientific accuracy or reproducibility of the original paper is compromised; occasionally, on investigation, these may be published as retractions. In cases where some coauthors decline to sign a corrigendum or retraction, we reserve the right to publish it with the dissenting author(s) identified. Palgrave Communications publish corrigenda if there is an error in the published author list, but not for overlooked acknowledgements.

Readers wishing to draw the journal's attention to a significant published error should contact the publishing team.

Retractions are judged according to whether the main conclusion of the paper no longer holds or is seriously undermined as a result of subsequent information coming to light of which the authors were not aware at the time of publication. In the case of experimental papers, this can include further experiments by the authors or by others that do not confirm the main experimental conclusion of the original publication. Readers wishing to draw our attention to published work requiring retraction should first contact the authors of the original paper and then write to the publishing team, including copies of the correspondence with the authors (whether or not the correspondence has been answered). The publishing team will seek advice from reviewers if they judge that the information is likely to draw into question the main conclusions of the published paper.

Supplementary information

Authors' corrections to supplementary information (SI) are made only in exceptional circumstances (for example major errors that compromise the conclusion of the study). Published corrections to SI are usually linked to the Corrigendum statement. Authors cannot update SI because new data have become available or interpretations have changed, as the SI is a peer-reviewed and integral part of the paper, and hence part of the published record.

SI cannot be amended between acceptance and publication unless a change made for technical reasons by the journal in order to publish the material on the website has introduced a significant error.

Duplicate publication

*Palgrave Communications*’ policy on duplicate publication

Material submitted to *Palgrave Communications* must be original and not published or submitted for publication elsewhere. This rule applies to material submitted elsewhere while the *Palgrave Communications* contribution is under consideration.

Authors submitting a contribution to *Palgrave Communications* who have related material under consideration or in press elsewhere should upload a clearly marked copy at the time of submission, and draw attention to it in their cover letter. Authors must disclose any such information while their contributions are under consideration by *Palgrave Communications* – for example, if they submit a related manuscript elsewhere that was not written at the time of the original *Palgrave Communications* submission.

If part of a contribution that an author wishes to submit to *Palgrave Communications* has appeared or will appear elsewhere, the author must specify the details in the covering letter accompanying the submission. Consideration by *Palgrave Communications* is possible if the main result, conclusion, or
Implications are not apparent from the other work, or if there are other factors, for example if the other work is published in a language other than English.

Palgrave Communications is happy to consider submissions containing material that has previously formed part of a PhD or other academic thesis which has been published according to the requirements of the institution awarding the qualification.

Palgrave Communications allows and encourages prior publication on recognized community preprint servers for review by other academics in the field before formal submission to a journal. The details of the preprint server concerned and any accession numbers should be included in the cover letter accompanying submission of the manuscript to Palgrave Communications.

Palgrave Communications is happy to consider submissions containing material that has previously formed, and continues to form, part of an online academic collaboration such as a wiki or blog.

If an author of a submission is re-using a figure or figures published elsewhere, or that is copyrighted, the author must provide documentation that the previous publisher or copyright holder has given permission for the figure to be re-published. We consider all material in good faith and that the publication has full permission to publish every part of the submitted material, including any illustrations.

Confidentiality and pre-publicity

Confidentiality

Palgrave Communications keeps all details about a submitted manuscript confidential and does not comment to any outside organization about manuscripts that are either under consideration or that have been rejected.

After a manuscript is submitted, correspondence with Palgrave Communications, referees’ reports and other confidential material, regardless of whether or not the submission is eventually published, must not be posted on any website or otherwise publicised without prior permission. Referees of manuscripts submitted to Palgrave Communications undertake in advance to maintain confidentiality of manuscripts and any associated supplementary data.

Pre-publicity

Our policy on the posting of particular versions of the manuscript is as follows:

1. You are welcome to post pre-submission versions or the original submitted version of the manuscript on a personal blog, a collaborative wiki or a preprint server at any time.

2. Palgrave Communications articles are open access and can replace the original submitted version immediately, on publication, as long as a publication reference and URL to the published version on the Palgrave Communications website are provided.

Presentation and discussion of material submitted to Palgrave Communications at academic and scientific meetings is encouraged.

Contributions being prepared for or submitted to Palgrave Communications can be posted on recognized preprint servers and on collaborative websites such as wikis or the author’s blog. The website and URL must be identified in the cover letter accompanying submission of the paper.
Material in a contribution submitted to Palgrave Communications may also have been published as part of a PhD or other academic thesis.

Plagiarism and fabrication

Plagiarism can be said to have clearly occurred when large chunks of text have been cut-and-pasted. Such manuscripts would not be considered for publication in Palgrave Communications. But minor plagiarism without dishonest intent is relatively frequent, for example, when an author reuses parts of an introduction from an earlier paper. We judge any case of which we become aware on its own merits.

We are part of CrossCheck, an initiative to help editors verify the originality of submitted manuscripts. As part of this process, Palgrave Communications spot checks submitted manuscripts to be scanned and compared with the CrossCheck database.

If a case of plagiarism comes to light after a paper is published in Palgrave Communications, the publication will conduct a preliminary investigation. If plagiarism is found, the publication will contact the author's institute and any funding agencies. A determination of misconduct will lead Palgrave Communications to run a statement, bidirectionally linked online to and from the original paper, to note the plagiarism and to provide a reference to the plagiarised material. The paper containing the plagiarism will also be obviously marked on each page of the PDF. Depending on the extent of the plagiarism, the paper may also be formally retracted.

Due credit for others' work

Discussion of unpublished work: Manuscripts are sent out for review on the condition that any unpublished data cited within are properly credited and the appropriate permission has been sought. Where licensed data are cited, authors must include at submission a written assurance that they are complying with originators' data-licensing agreements.

Referees are encouraged to be alert to the use of appropriated unpublished data from databases or from any other source, and to inform Palgrave Communications of any concern they may have.

Discussion of published work: When discussing the published work of others, authors must properly describe the contribution of the earlier work. Both intellectual contributions and technical developments must be acknowledged as such and appropriately cited.
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Aims and scope

*Palgrave Communications* is an open access online-only journal dedicated to publishing high quality original research. The scope of the journal reflects Palgrave Macmillan’s strengths in the humanities, the social sciences and business. In addition to our multidisciplinary position, we particularly welcome interdisciplinary research, which fosters interaction, creativity and reflection between the rich disciplines that our project encompasses.

We aspire to be the definitive peer-reviewed outlet for open access academic research in and between our subjects. *Palgrave Communications* is open to all theoretical and methodological perspectives.

We are committed to providing an efficient service for both authors and readers. A streamlined peer-review system, together with the support of an eminent Editorial Board, allows us to make rapid and fair publication decisions. Prompt dissemination of accepted papers to Palgrave Macmillan’s wide readership and beyond is achieved through a program of continuous online publication. Published manuscripts are enhanced by innovative web technologies, including interactive browsing and article level metrics.

Criteria for publication

To be published in *Palgrave Communications* a paper should meet several general criteria:

- the methodology and any data utilised are technically sound;
- the paper provides strong evidence for its conclusions;
- the results are novel (we do not consider abstracts and internet preprints to compromise novelty); and
- the manuscript is important to the specific field(s) and/or is important in interdisciplinary terms.

In general, to be acceptable, a paper should represent an advance in understanding likely to influence thinking in the field.

The review process

To save authors and referees time, only those papers that seem most likely to meet our editorial criteria are sent for formal review. Those papers judged to be of insufficient interest to the field, or otherwise inappropriate, are rejected promptly without external formal review (although these decisions may be based on informal advice from the Editorial Board).
Manuscripts judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review, typically to two reviewers. A decision is then made, based on the reviewers’ advice, from among several possibilities:

- Accept
- Accept after minor revision
- Probably acceptable after major revision with re-review
- Unacceptable as is, but worth reconsideration if extensively revised
- Reject

Referees are asked to recommend a particular course of action. The most useful reports, therefore, provide us with the information on which a decision should be based. Setting out the arguments for and against publication is often also helpful.

We may go back to referees for further advice, particularly in cases where referees disagree with each other, or where the authors believe they have been misunderstood on points of fact. We therefore ask that referees should be willing to provide follow-up advice as requested. We are very aware, however, that referees are normally reluctant to be drawn into prolonged disputes, so we try to keep consultation to the minimum we judge necessary to provide a fair hearing for the authors.

When referees agree to review a paper, we consider this a commitment to review subsequent revisions as well. However, editors will not send resubmitted papers to the referees if it seems that the authors have not made a serious attempt to address the referees’ criticisms.

We take referees’ criticisms very seriously, and in particular, we are very reluctant to disregard technical criticisms. In cases where one referee opposes publication, we may consult with the other referee(s) as to whether s/he is applying an unduly critical standard. We occasionally bring in additional referees to resolve disputes, but we prefer to avoid doing so unless there is a specific issue on which we feel a need for further advice.

Selecting referees

Referee selection is critical to the review process, and our publishing team, in conjunction with the editorial board will base their choice on many factors, including expertise, specific recommendations, and previous experience. When inviting referees to review manuscripts we may send confidential information with the invitation letter, which should be treated as such. Authors can suggest reviewers during the submission process, but we are not bound to accept such suggestions.

We normally check with potential referees before sending them manuscripts to review. Referees should bear in mind that these messages contain confidential information, which should be treated as such.

Writing the review

The primary purpose of the review is to provide us with the information needed to reach a decision. It could also instruct the authors on how they can strengthen their paper to the point where it may be acceptable.

As far as possible, a negative review should explain to the authors the weaknesses of their manuscript, so that rejected authors can understand the basis for the decision. This is secondary to the other functions, however, and referees should not feel obliged to provide detailed advice to authors of papers that do not meet the criteria for Palgrave Communications.
Confidential comments are welcome, but it is helpful if the main points are stated in the comments for transmission to the authors. To enable rapid and easy decisions we have developed a template approach. The review process will answer the following questions:

- Is the paper methodologically and technically sound?
- What are the major claims of the paper?
- Are the claims novel? If not, please identify the major papers that compromise novelty
- Are the claims convincing? If not, what further evidence is needed?
- Will the paper be of interest to others in the field?
- Will the paper influence thinking in the field?
- Are the claims fully supported by the argument(s) and/or any associated data?
- Are the claims appropriately discussed in the context of previous literature?
- Have the authors complied with the journal’s policy and the research community’s expectations on the availability of research data, and documented this in their Data availability statement?
- If the manuscript is unacceptable in its present form, does the study seem sufficiently promising that the authors should be encouraged to consider a resubmission in the future?

In addition to answering the previous questions, referees can provide further information, including comments that may answer the following:

- Is the manuscript clearly written? If not, how could it be made more accessible?
- Have the authors done themselves justice without overselling their arguments/claims?
- Have they been fair in their treatment of previous literature?
- Have they provided sufficient methodological detail?
- Is any statistical analysis of any data sound?

Referees are given the opportunity to provide comments that will be transmitted to authors and to provide comments that are solely for us.

Finally referees are asked for their overall recommendation:

- Accept
- Accept after minor revision
- Probably acceptable after major revision with re-review
- Unacceptable as is, but worth reconsideration if extensively revised
- Reject

Confidentiality

We ask all referees to treat the review process as strictly confidential, and not to discuss the manuscript with anyone not directly involved in the review. If it is deemed necessary to consult with colleagues, please identify them to us. Consulting with experts from outside the referee’s own institution may also be acceptable, but please check with us before doing so, to avoid involving anyone who may have been excluded by the authors.

Timing

*Palgrave Communications* is committed to rapid editorial decisions and publication, and we believe that an efficient editorial process is a valuable service both to our authors and to the scholarly community as a whole. We therefore ask referees to respond promptly (within four weeks of receiving a manuscript, although this may be either longer or shorter by prior arrangement). If referees
anticipate a longer delay, we ask them to let us know so that we can keep the authors informed and, where necessary, find alternative referees.

Anonymity

We do not release referees' identities to authors or to other referees, except when referees specifically ask to be identified. Unless they feel strongly, however, we prefer that referees should remain anonymous throughout the review process and beyond. We ask referees not to identify themselves to authors without our knowledge.

We deplore any attempt by authors to confront referees or determine their identities. Our own policy is to neither confirm nor deny any speculation about referees' identities, and we encourage referees to consider adopting a similar policy.

Editing referees' reports

As a matter of policy, we do not suppress referees' reports; any comments that were intended for the authors are transmitted, regardless of what we may think of the content. On rare occasions, we may edit a report to remove offensive language or comments that reveal confidential information about other matters. We ask referees to avoid saying anything that may cause needless offence; conversely, authors should recognize that criticisms are not necessarily unfair simply because they are expressed in robust language.

Competing interests

Our normal policy is to avoid referees whom the authors have excluded, for whatever reason. We also usually try to avoid referees who have recent or ongoing collaborations with the authors, who have commented on drafts of the manuscript, who are in direct competition to publish similar research, who we know to have a history of dispute with the authors, or who have a financial interest in the outcome. It is not possible for the publishing team or our editorial board to know of all possible biases, however, so we ask referees to draw our attention to anything that might affect their review, and to decline to review in cases where they feel unable to be objective.

We recognize, however, that competing interests are not always clear-cut, and the above circumstances need not automatically undermine the validity of a report. Indeed, the people best-qualified to evaluate a paper are often those closest to the field, and a skeptical attitude towards a particular claim does not mean that a referee cannot be persuaded by new evidence.

Referees who have reviewed a paper for another journal might feel that it is unfair to the authors for them to re-review it for Palgrave Communications. We disagree; the fact that two journals have independently identified a particular person as well-qualified to review a paper does not, in our view, decrease the validity of his or her opinion.

Online manuscript review

Referees must submit their comments via our online submission system by following the link provided in our email. For help with the system please contact palcomms@palgrave.com.