**Letter to the Editors of *Psychological Science*: Determining the Shape of the Attitude-Behavior Relation Requires Clearer Operationalization of the Attitude Valence Continuum: Regarding Bechler et al. (2021)**

Bechler et al. (2021) conclude that difference between attitude valence (positive versus negative) is linked to stronger attitude behavior correspondence than is difference within attitude valence, a finding better explained by a *categorical perspective* on the attitude-behavior relation than the *classic perspective* or *attitude-strength perspective*. Potentially problematic for interpretation of their results are previous research findings regarding the representation of intensity on rating scales of sensory experience and affective experience (Bartoshuk et al., 2005; Bartoshuk & Marks, 1986; Borg, 1982; Green et al., 1993; Lishner et al., 2008; Marks et al., 1992; Marks et al., 1988; Poultan, 1986; Stevens, 1957, 1971). This rating scale work reveals (a) respondents can perceive sensory and valence intensity experiences greater than *extremely*; (b) respondents may perceive intensity descriptors such as *slightly*, *moderately*, and *extremely* as quantitatively non-equidistant; and (c) respondents may perceive moderate intensity as falling lower than the quantitative middle scale point.

Bechler et al. (2021) relied mostly on bipolar attitude measures with unlabeled discrete points between labeled anchor points (*extremely*) and a middle point (*neutral*). The valence intensity of the points closest to *neutral* is unknown (the one exception is Study S1, in which labeled points for *slightly* *negative* and *slightly positive* were included but a labeled value for *neutral* was not). Although Bechler et al. interpreted these critical points as indicating *slightly in favor*, no descriptors for these points were provided to respondents. Absent descriptor labels, it is possible respondents interpreted the critical points as indicating a valence intensity greater than *slightly in favor* (see (b) and (c) above). For instance, the critical points mays indicate “low-to-moderate valence” rather than “low valence,” potentially giving rise to a steeper appearing attitude-behavior slope that appears to favor the categorical perspective over the competing perspectives. The issue becomes exacerbated in their studies with attitude measures having fewer points (e.g. Study 3). In Studies 5a-c it is further unclear whether respondents interpreted the attitude measures (e.g., Best Buy star ratings) as unipolar or bipolar. Bechler et al. also likely under-sampled the full attitude valence continuum by not using descriptors representing maximum valence. Although the diminishing of the attitude-behavior relation with increasing attitude valence found in many of their studies appears consistent with the categorical perspective, this pattern may instead reflect empirical compression of the relation due to respondents’ inability to indicate attitude valence intensity beyond the “extreme” level (see (a) above).

Bechler et al.’s (2021) results are intriguing. However, a call for reorientation to the study of the attitude-behavior relation seems premature. Instead, researchers interested in mapping the relation should ensure their attitude measures possess the following essential descriptor points to more decisively distinguish among attitude-behavior theoretical perspectives: (a) a point indicating neutral/no valence; (b) a point indicating the lowest discernable valence; and (c) a point indicting the greatest possible valence.

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