

Objections to Study Registration

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Establishing a Registration System In Fact is Very Controversial

- Proposing to regulate social scientists' behavior pushes buttons
- To generate buy-in from a cross section we must address objections (Laitin; Morton & Tucker; Wilson)

There Already Exist Other Means to Enhance Transparency

- We could establish
 - Sharing complete (not replication) datasets
 - Lab notebook repositories
 - Outlets for replication studies
- Peer review already places constraints on obvious fishing

Not contentious: Compatible with and reinforced by registration
(zero chili peppers)

There are Questions Regarding How to Design the Registry to Make It Practical

- Will verification and enforcement be too costly?
- What elements of a plan need to be provided for registration?
- Will registration be too time consuming?
- Where will the registry be housed and who governs it?

Moderately contentious: Most of these can be resolved with a pilot study (two chili peppers)

There are Objections Rooted in Various Perspectives Regarding the Philosophy of Science and the Social Construction of Scientific Knowledge

- Will registration curtail exploration that can lead to new theoretical insights?
 - Creates disincentives for engaging in descriptive or inductive research?
 - Incentives to neglect empirical problems in the data and alternatives and extensions that are only known after the data are observed?
- Is registration appropriate for all types of research?
- What are the scientific processes for assessing compliance with registration?*

Very contentious: Regulation of behavior leads to the underproduction of inductive research (five chili peppers)

There are Objections Rooted in Concerns Regarding Status and Hierarchy within the Discipline and Barriers to Entry in Research

- Will registration create a disciplinary bias against:
 - Inductive research or types of research that are not susceptible to registration?
 - Faculty in smaller universities who have less unstructured time or junior scholars who need to publish quickly?
 - Interdisciplinary research from non-registered disciplines?
- Even if the system is designated as voluntary scholars will feel compelled to participate

Extremely contentious: Regulation leads to barriers to entry to the top journals (eleven chili peppers)

The task for today

- Try to forestall “groupthink” among scholars who already agree with each other
- Bear in mind colleagues’ objections as we discuss prospects and designs for registration