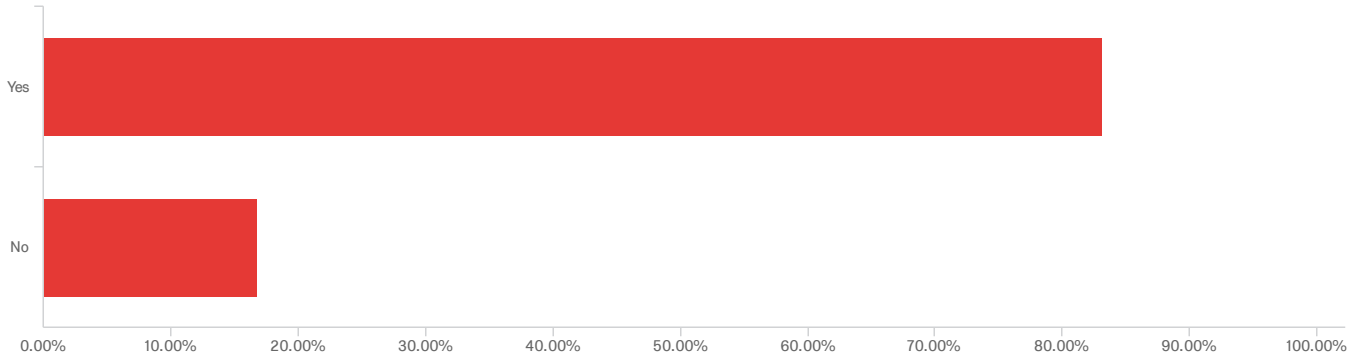
Default Report

Pre-analysis plans survey

January 22, 2019 10:51 AM MST

Q2.1 - Have you ever registered a pre-analysis plan (PAP) for a research project?

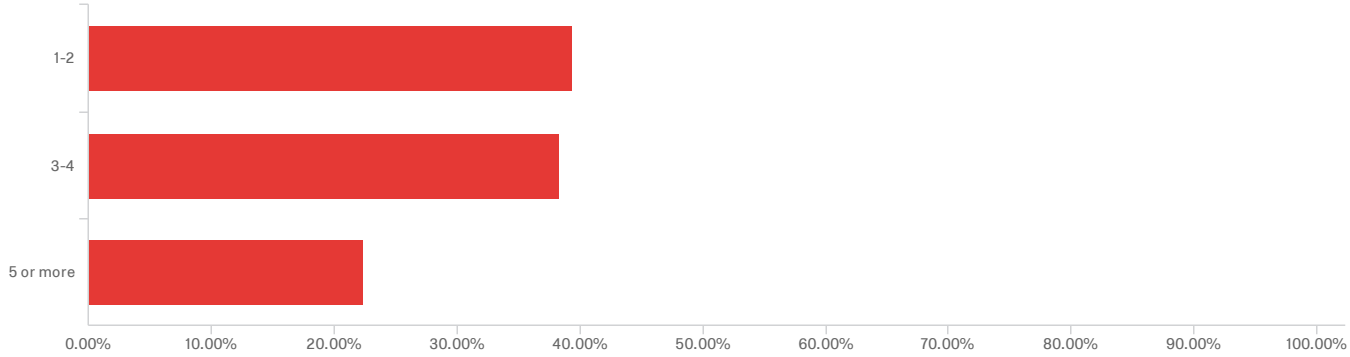


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you ever registered a pre-analysis plan (PAP) for a research project?	1.00	2.00	1.17	0.37	0.14	113

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	83.19%
2	No	16.81%
		113

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q32 - How many PAPs have you registered?

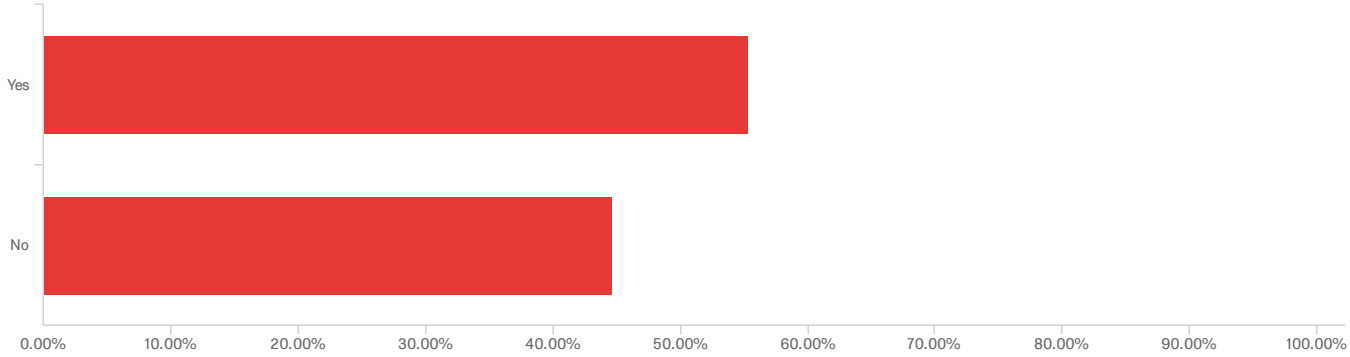


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How many PAPs have you registered?	1.00	3.00	1.83	0.77	0.59	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	1-2	39.36%
2	3-4	38.30%
3	5 or more	22.34%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q2.2 - Have you ever kept one or more of your PAPs gated/private for a period of time?

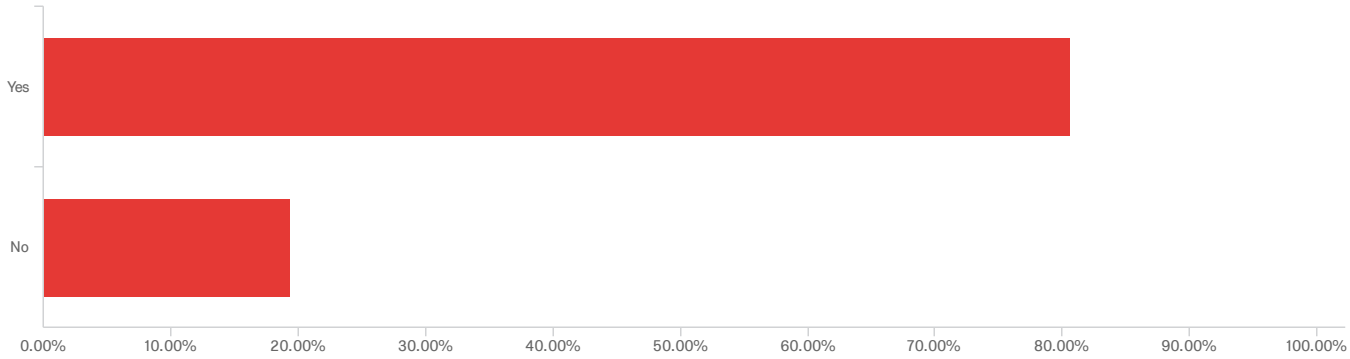


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you ever kept one or more of your PAPs gated/private for a period of time?	1.00	2.00	1.45	0.50	0.25	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	55.32%
2	No	44.68%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q2.3 - Do you have any ongoing research projects for which you did not register a PAP?

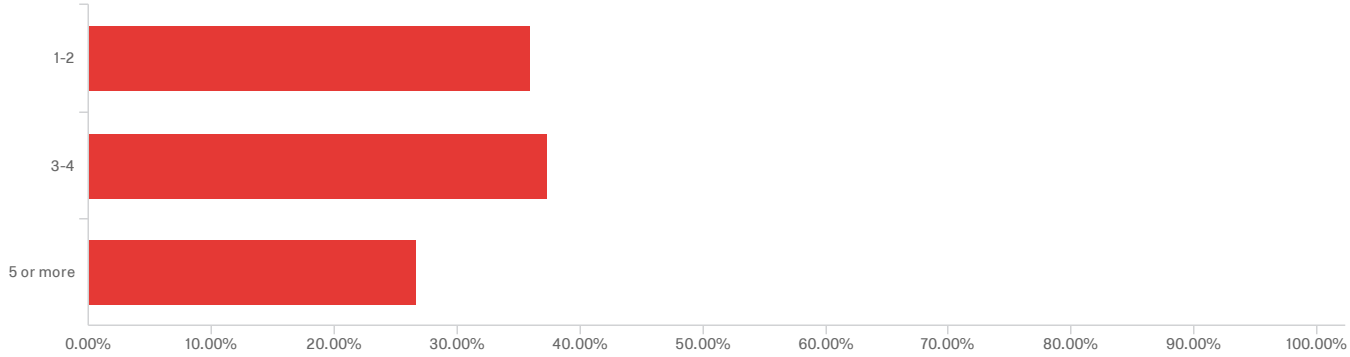


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you have any ongoing research projects for which you did not register a PAP?	1.00	2.00	1.19	0.40	0.16	93

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	80.65%
2	No	19.35%
		93

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q2.4 - How many?

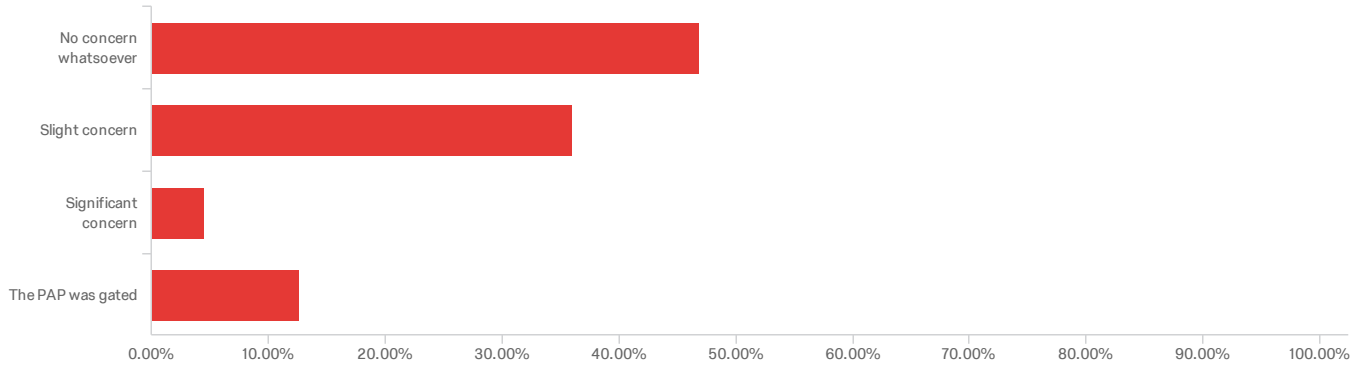


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How many?	1.00	3.00	1.91	0.79	0.62	75

#	Field	Percentage
1	1-2	36.00%
2	3-4	37.33%
3	5 or more	26.67%
		75

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q2.5 - In contemplating registering a PAP, did you have any concern that others might scoop your ideas?

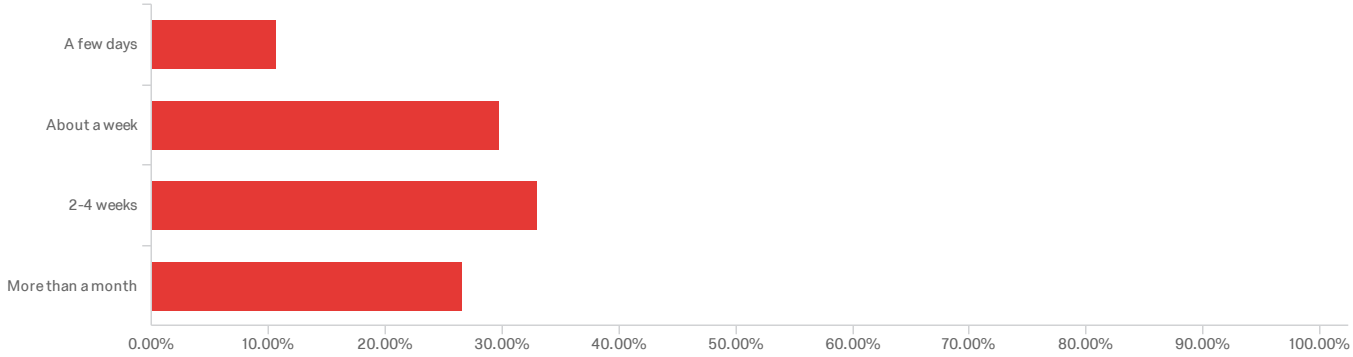


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	In contemplating registering a PAP, did you have any concern that others might scoop your ideas?	1.00	4.00	1.83	0.99	0.99	111

#	Field	Percentage
1	No concern whatsoever	46.85%
2	Slight concern	36.04%
3	Significant concern	4.50%
4	The PAP was gated	12.61%
		111

Showing Rows: 1 - 5 Of 5

Q2.6 - How long does it take you to draft a PAP for a typical project?

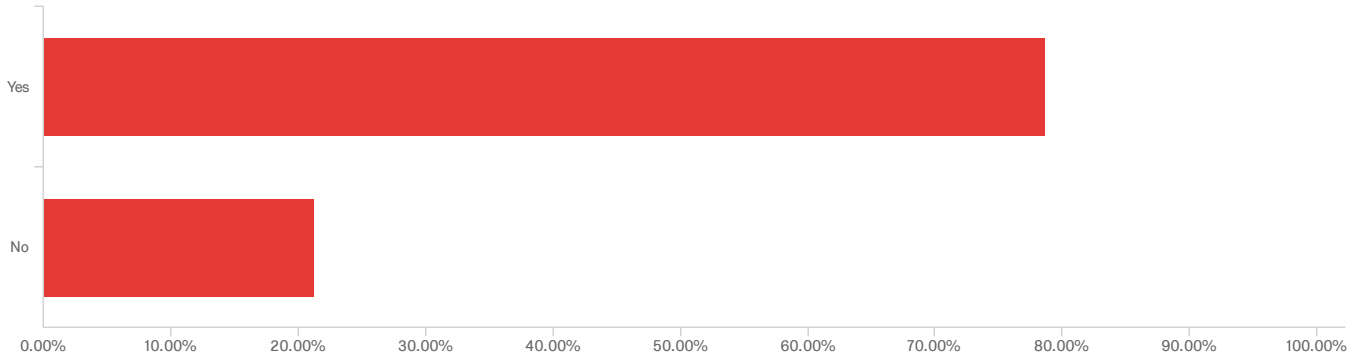


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How long does it take you to draft a PAP for a typical project?	1.00	4.00	2.76	0.96	0.93	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	A few days	10.64%
2	About a week	29.79%
3	2-4 weeks	32.98%
4	More than a month	26.60%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 5 Of 5

Q2.7 - Did writing the PAP cause you to discover anything about your project that led to refinements in your research protocols and/or data analysis plans

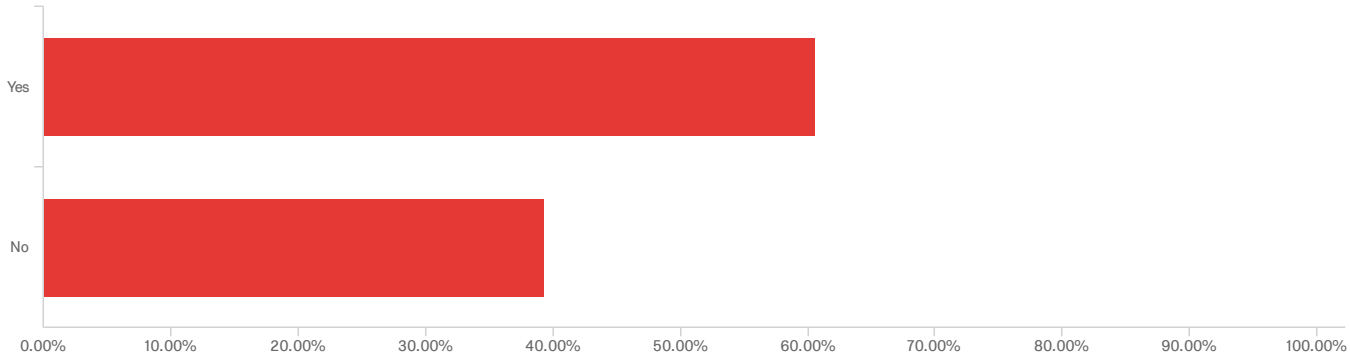


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did writing the PAP cause you to discover anything about your project that led to refinements in your research protocols and/or data analysis plans	1.00	2.00	1.21	0.41	0.17	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	78.72%
2	No	21.28%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q2.8 - Did writing the PAP put you in a position to receive useful feedback on your project design that you might not otherwise have received?

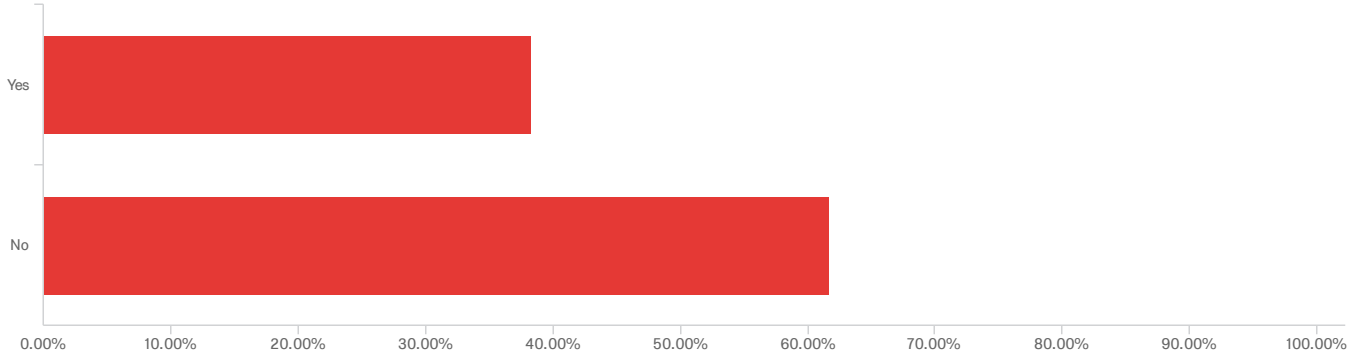


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did writing the PAP put you in a position to receive useful feedback on your project design that you might not otherwise have received?	1.00	2.00	1.39	0.49	0.24	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	60.64%
2	No	39.36%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q2.9 - Did writing the PAP delay the implementation of your project?

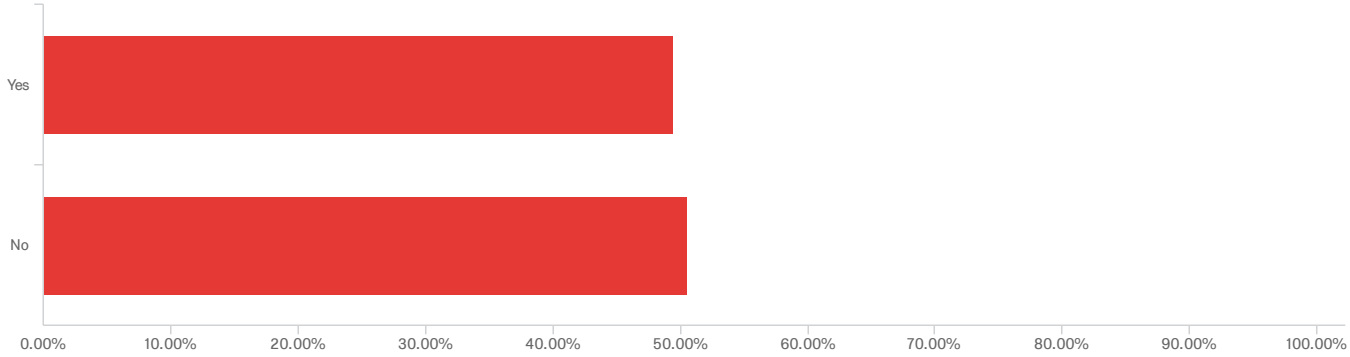


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did writing the PAP delay the implementation of your project?	1.00	2.00	1.62	0.49	0.24	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	38.30%
2	No	61.70%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q2.10 - Did you experience any downstream time savings from having written a PAP?

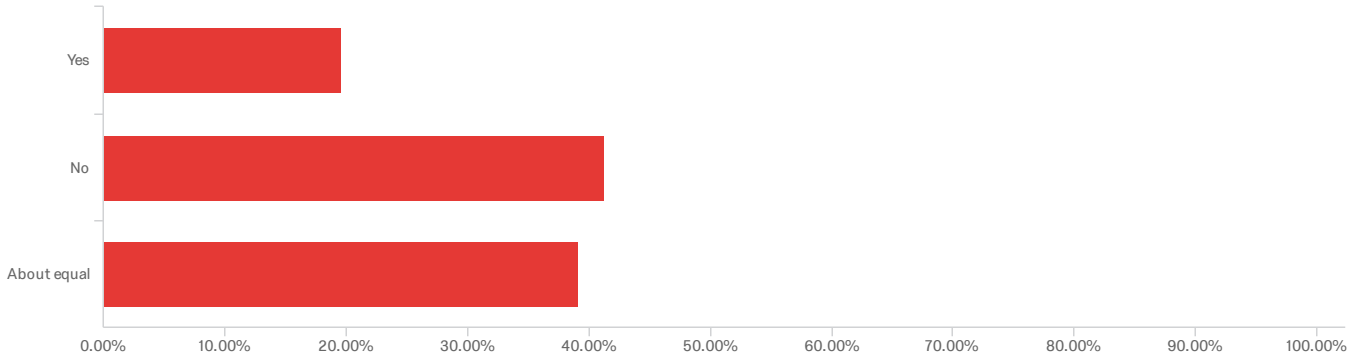


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did you experience any downstream time savings from having written a PAP?	1.00	2.00	1.51	0.50	0.25	93

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	49.46%
2	No	50.54%
		93

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q2.11 - Were these downstream time savings greater than the time spent to draft the PAP in the first place?

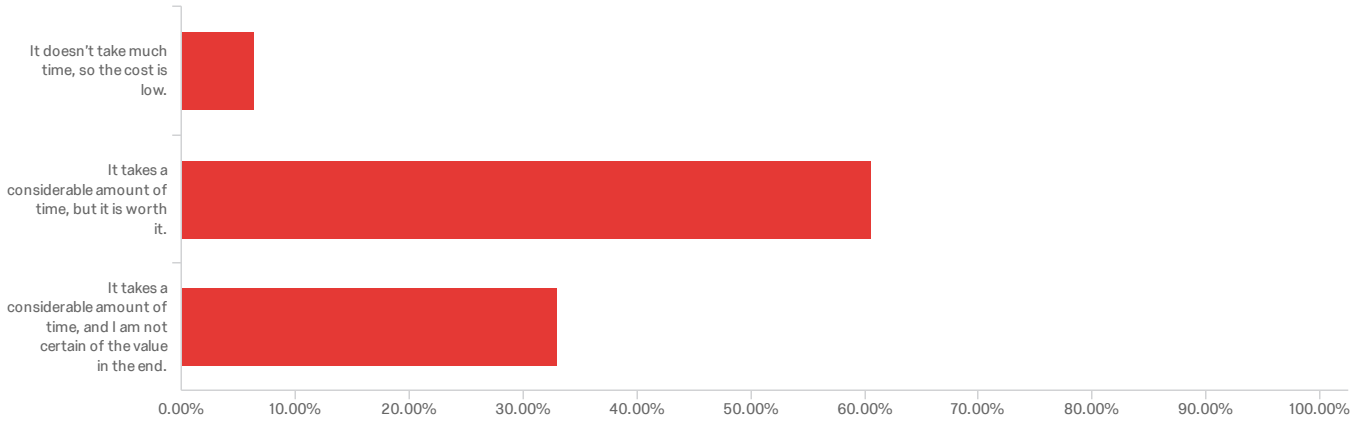


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Were these downstream time savings greater than the time spent to draft the PAP in the first place?	1.00	3.00	2.20	0.74	0.55	46

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	19.57%
2	No	41.30%
3	About equal	39.13%
		46

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q2.12 - Which of the following best characterizes your feelings about the time it takes to write and register a PAP?

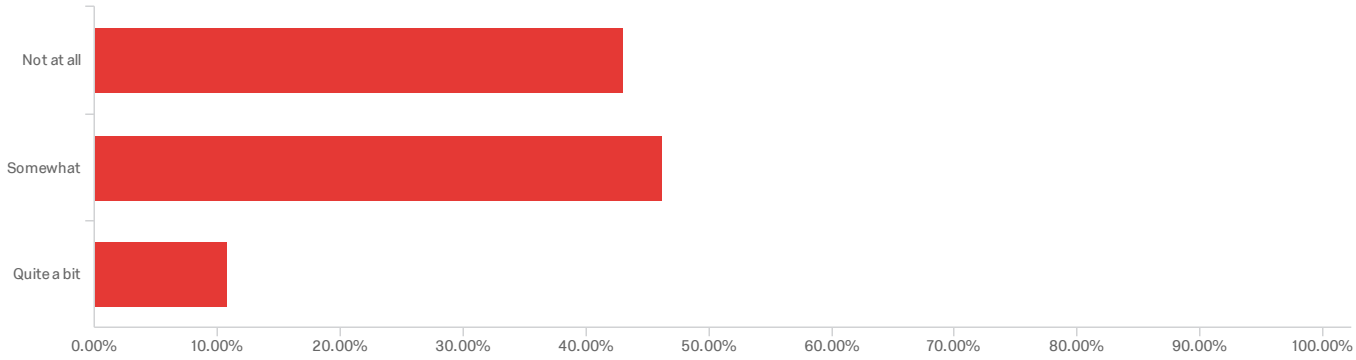


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Which of the following best characterizes your feelings about the time it takes to write and register a PAP?	1.00	3.00	2.27	0.57	0.32	94

#	Field	Percentage
1	It doesn't take much time, so the cost is low.	6.38%
2	It takes a considerable amount of time, but it is worth it.	60.64%
3	It takes a considerable amount of time, and I am not certain of the value in the end.	32.98%
		94

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q3.1 - To what extent do you think the existence of a PAP restricted your ability to fully explore and analyze your data?

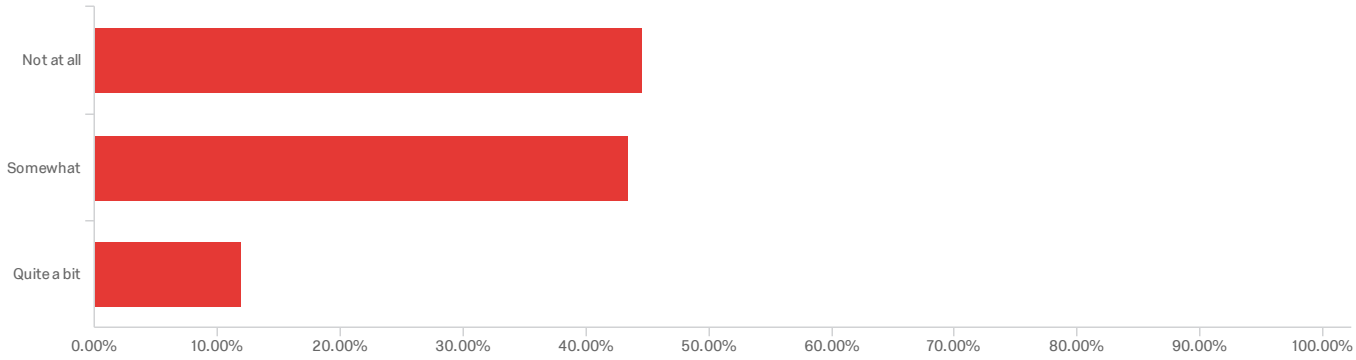


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	To what extent do you think the existence of a PAP restricted your ability to fully explore and analyze your data?	1.00	3.00	1.68	0.66	0.43	93

#	Field	Percentage
1	Not at all	43.01%
2	Somewhat	46.24%
3	Quite a bit	10.75%
		93

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q3.2 - To what extent do you think the existence of a PAP made it more difficult to write a theoretically interesting paper?

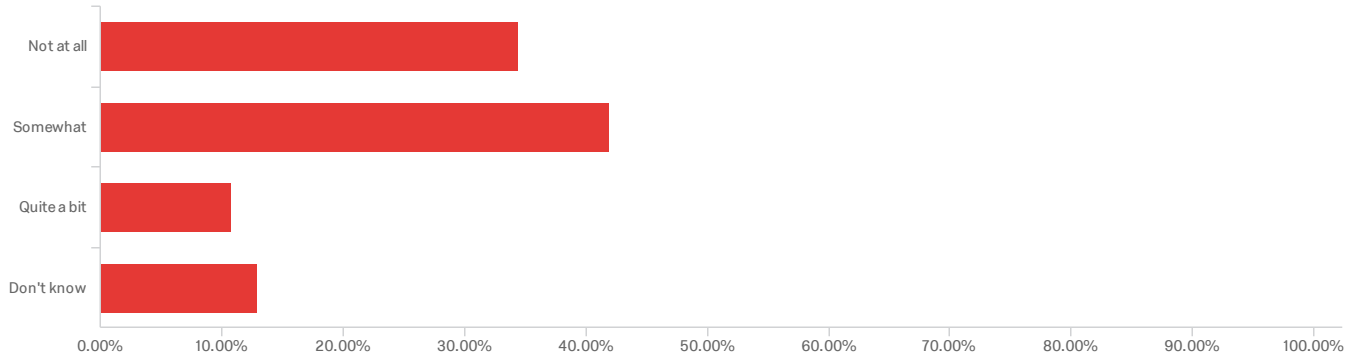


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	To what extent do you think the existence of a PAP made it more difficult to write a theoretically interesting paper?	1.00	3.00	1.67	0.68	0.46	92

#	Field	Percentage
1	Not at all	44.57%
2	Somewhat	43.48%
3	Quite a bit	11.96%
		92

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q3.3 - To what extent do you think the existence of a PAP prevented you from stumbling on unexpected, surprise results?

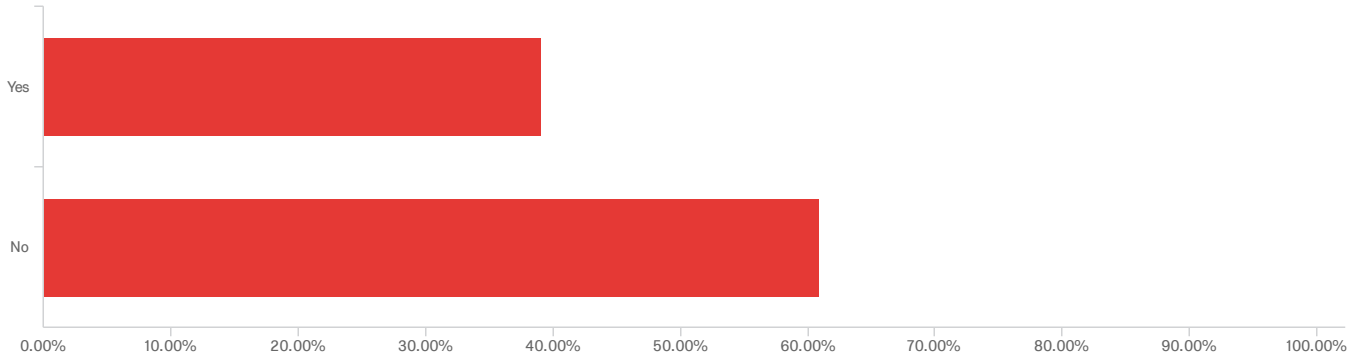


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	To what extent do you think the existence of a PAP prevented you from stumbling on unexpected, surprise results?	1.00	4.00	2.02	0.98	0.97	93

#	Field	Percentage
1	Not at all	34.41%
2	Somewhat	41.94%
3	Quite a bit	10.75%
4	Don't know	12.90%
		93

Showing Rows: 1 - 5 Of 5

Q3.4 - Have you ever consulted a registry (EGAP, AEA) to learn whether studies on a particular research topic have ever been initiated?

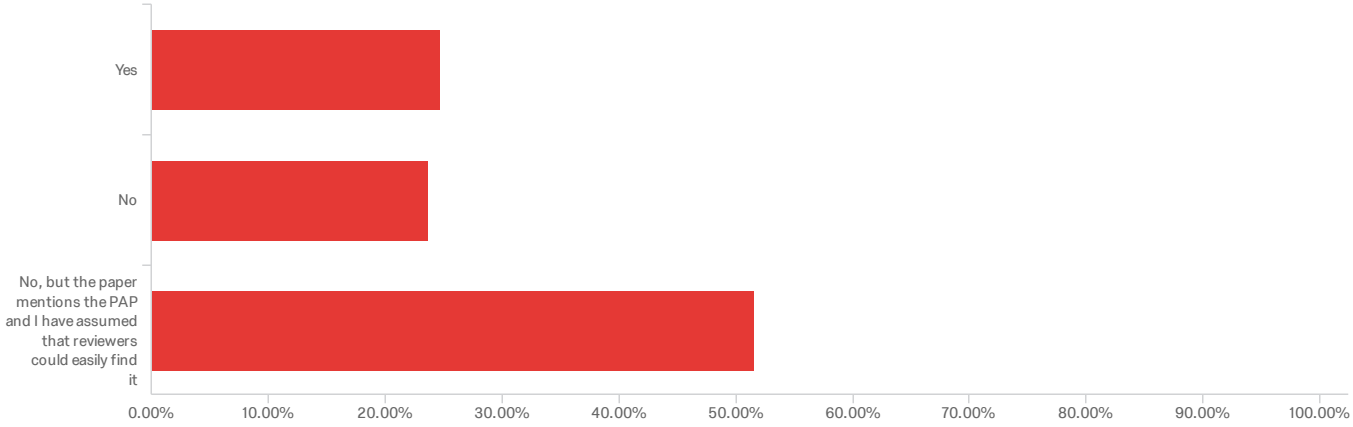


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you ever consulted a registry (EGAP, AEA) to learn whether studies on a particular research topic have ever been initiated?	1.00	2.00	1.61	0.49	0.24	110

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	39.09%
2	No	60.91%
		110

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q4.1 - Have you ever included a PAP with a paper you have submitted to a journal?

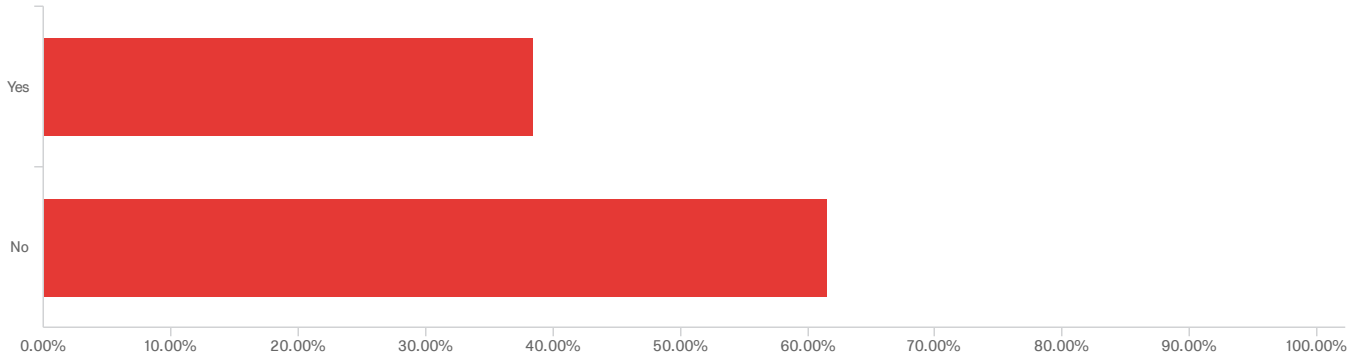


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you ever included a PAP with a paper you have submitted to a journal?	1.00	3.00	2.27	0.83	0.69	93

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	24.73%
2	No	23.66%
3	No, but the paper mentions the PAP and I have assumed that reviewers could easily find it	51.61%
		93

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q4.2 - When you have submitted a pre-registered paper for publication, have reviewers ever mentioned your PAP?

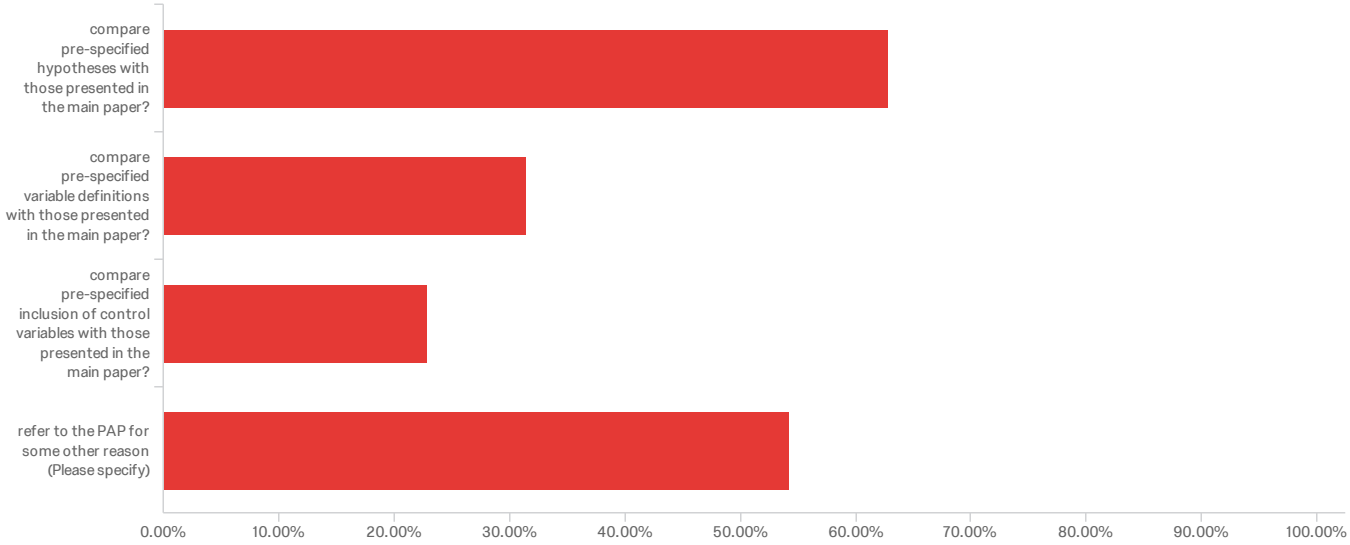


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	When you have submitted a pre-registered paper for publication, have reviewers ever mentioned your PAP?	1.00	2.00	1.62	0.49	0.24	91

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	38.46%
2	No	61.54%
		91

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q4.3 - Did they (please choose all that apply):



#	Field	Percentage
1	compare pre-specified hypotheses with those presented in the main paper?	36.67%
2	compare pre-specified variable definitions with those presented in the main paper?	18.33%
3	compare pre-specified inclusion of control variables with those presented in the main paper?	13.33%
4	refer to the PAP for some other reason (Please specify)	31.67%
		60

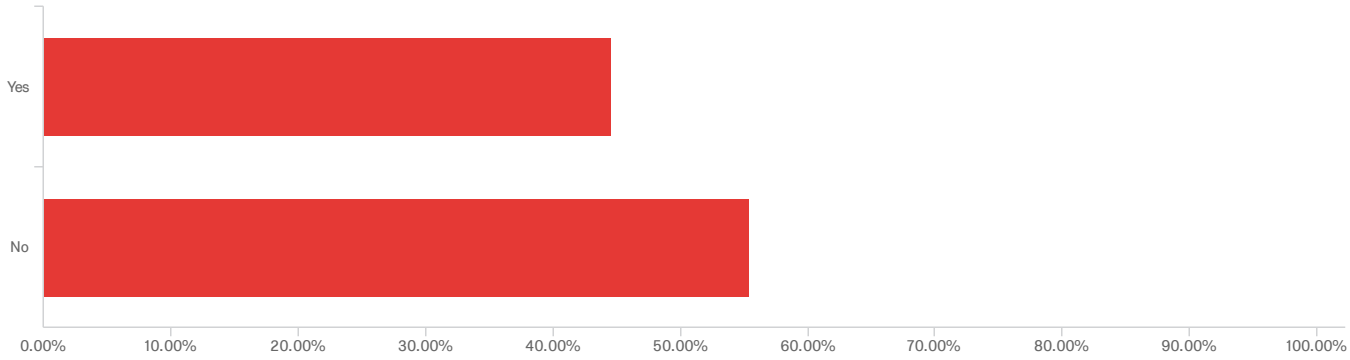
Showing Rows: 1 - 5 Of 5

refer to the PAP for some other reason (Please specify)

refer to the PAP for some other reason (Please specify)
compare pre-specified models / empirical strategy with those presented in the main paper
compare pre-specified empirical setup (model choice, clustered errors, subsetting data)
To suggest an analysis that wasn't in the pap
critiqued revisions to the PAP
Some reviewers are skeptical of PAPs and say so in their reviews.
They discussed whether they felt the emphasis on specific outcomes in the paper matched the PAP
were appreciative that there was a PAP

refer to the PAP for some other reason (Please specify)
said they appreciate it, with no consequences
They praised the existence of the PAP
Mention the use of a PAP.
Just mentioned that it was pre-registered.
complimented having a pap
Heterogeneous effects analysis, choice of outcomes

Q4.4 - Have you ever invoked your PAP to respond to the suggestions of reviewers or workshop participants regarding additional analyses to run?

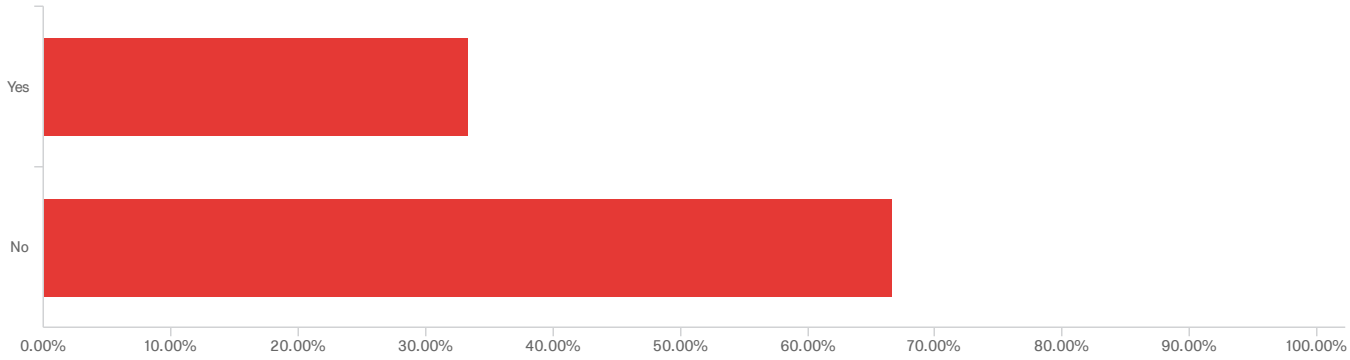


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you ever invoked your PAP to respond to the suggestions of reviewers or workshop participants regarding additional analyses to run?	1.00	2.00	1.55	0.50	0.25	92

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	44.57%
2	No	55.43%
		92

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q4.5 - As a reviewer, have you ever consulted the PAP of a paper you are reviewing for a journal?

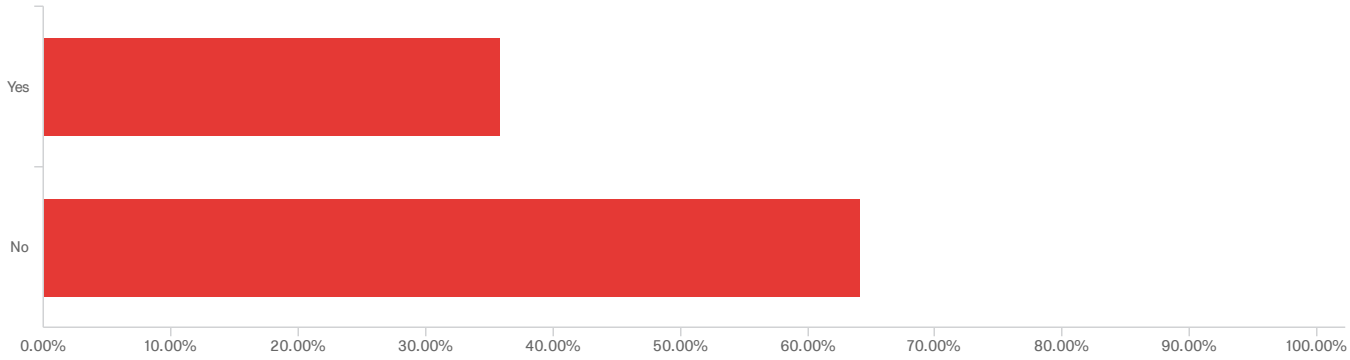


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	As a reviewer, have you ever consulted the PAP of a paper you are reviewing for a journal?	1.00	2.00	1.67	0.47	0.22	105

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	33.33%
2	No	66.67%
		105

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q4.6 - Outside of the formal review process at a journal, has another researcher ever invoked your PAP when discussing your paper?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Outside of the formal review process at a journal, has another researcher ever invoked your PAP when discussing your paper?	1.00	2.00	1.64	0.48	0.23	92

#	Field	Percentage
1	Yes	35.87%
2	No	64.13%
		92

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q5.1 - Thinking back to the part of your scholarly career before you began regularly pre-registering your studies, how, if at all, has preregistration changed the way you conduct research? (Please write your response in the box below. You can write as much or as little as you want).

Thinking back to the part of your scholarly career before you began regular...
it is a constraint and limits the ability to explore the data. the PAP craze is misguided.
It does change the pace of research, with lots more discussion about specification, hypothesis testing coming earlier in the process. While this is highly useful, there have been a number of cases where marginal costs of additional time on PAP may have outweighed the benefits, especially in hindsight (eg long discussions about scenarios that could have occurred but didn't, that a quick check at the data could have ruled out). Using pre-analysis plans makes working with RAs substantially easier once the PAP is filed- can hand an RA the PAP and dataset and let them get to work.
forces me to think through my procedures ahead of time (a good thing!)
It's made me more worried about the discounting of good evidence if it doesn't come along with a PAP
I have only pre-registered an analysis once, at the request of a co-author who does it more regularly. The analysis for this PAP has not started yet, so I don't know how it will affect the research.
Think much more about design ahead of time. Greater recognition of fuzziness of theory.
Forces you to write down actual estimations you will run, which directly affects endline data you will collect
They have forced me to have deeper conversations with my co-PIs during the fieldwork stage. They also have introduced significant delays (sometimes of months) because of a need to file them before we look at follow up data and a need to get sign offs from multiple busy PIs. In projects with a high frequency panel, this limits opportunities to learn and to adjust the project.
It improves the quality of my data analysis, it makes it more thoughtful and deliberate. It also makes it easier to be persuasive about my results.
I like PAPs--they are the open, honest way to conduct impact research, and they actually make life easier after you have written and filed them.
It has not changed things much in how I conduct research. That's in part because I do not see PAPs in quite the rigid way that some do. I know that's heresy. In my view, they exist as a record of initial hypotheses and plans. I do not see them as anything more than that. With field experiments, so much crap happens between theory and the reality of implementation. So I see them as a way to keep me honest, but I am not so committed to the concept that I am going to throw out a project if it becomes impossible to follow the PAP precisely (though I'm willing to flag what is and is not preregistered). It's easier with survey and lab experiments.
Helped to define our primary and secondary outcomes. Though we rarely came back to it when analyzing the data.
Substantially, in that it adds a significant and time consuming step in the research process.
I feel like when I was a grad student, we were taught that a way to get a good paper was do do some cool experiment, and then once the data came in you figured out a cool story and wrote a model to defend it. I do think that PAP registration has cut down on that approach, but I think that is a good thing. I was never a fan and am happy that now others are likely constrained.

Thinking back to the part of your scholarly career before you began regular...
It makes me think more about what I might get out of conducting an experiment before I go ahead with it
It hasn't, but I worry that it might as PAPs are more expected. I'd hate for them to constrain our ability to learn unexpected things, or to raise the bar for publication of experiments even higher relative to non-experimental empirical work. No one expects a PAP for work with the NLSY...
At first, preregistration was encouraging me to think through design and analysis in advance of conducting research. However, given a few experiences I and co-authors have had in the review and publication process, recently preregistration makes me think about the lowest risk research I can run with the least potential for surprising findings. In other words, preregistration ties my hands and makes me risk averse more than it used to.
I don't know.
A PAP is just a research design and proposed analysis: I'm not really sure who goes about starting a project without writing that up. Calling the research design a PAP and registering changes the way I write up findings (these analyses or protocols were pre-registered, these weren't), but it doesn't actually change anything that I do.
It has forced me to more clearly formulate my theory and study design at the start of a study.
The first PAP I registered was my dissertation project!
Think through more of the planned empirical analysis ahead of time, which is a good thing.
It's an additional hassle. A PAP can be useful for junior researchers as it forces them to clarify their hypotheses and priors. But referees and editors ignore them/refuse to be bound by them. And papers without a strong coherent narrative are customarily rejected by journals, and a PAP nearly never produces a strong narrative. You have to reshuffle the results, push many PAP results to an appendix and introduce new analysis (often requested by referees) in order to get accepted. In the end the PAP does not serve its purpose. We'll see whether the new Journal of Development Economics initiative will change that -- but even they have reneged on the idea that they would pre-commit to publish based on a PAP/good research design.
So far, PAP has not changed my research.
I am in the field of epidemiology, where it is very common to pre-specify outcomes and analyses for trials. It is in this context that I have done this most, though we increasingly use it for non-randomized (observational) studies. Pre-registration hasn't changed in a big way the way we conduct research, but I believe that it provides an additional layer of transparency and rigor that outside readers can use to evaluate the studies.
Forces me to think carefully about outcome measurement beforehand so have a shorter survey. I think some of this is good, but then also you might miss out on some unexpected findings because you don't want to have to use them in multiple-hypothesis testing.
Along with changes in the style of research (e.g. more experimental), PAP registration has led to more work going in at the front end of a project
I have tried to move more toward using PAPs - in experimental work, I find that they help ensure I'm thinking clearly about my research questions and planned tests, plus they help direct the analysis and avoid the temptation to go down channels that are unlikely to be fruitful. That said, I've had several papers where the results have been so far from any PAP I would have registered (I did not register one for those), and being constrained by a PAP would have prevented those papers from being written/published. That said, if there had been a PAP, I don't know if it would have been a problem to simply say - here we are deviating from our PAP for these reasons.
Writing PAP's has made me more deliberate and thoughtful about the design of my research projects.
Especially for field projects, where practical considerations for getting an intervention off the ground can come to dominate one's thinking, the PAP process has been valuable for recentering and insuring the project actually answers what it is meant to. It's important also to register your priors even if other aspects of a PAP end up not being that useful.
Generally this has been a good disciplining device, but the problem with it is that too many people overemphaize extreme levels of hand tying, which is counterproductive and unreasonable. Also, my feeling is the absence of PAPs in non-experimental research gives experimental research a real handicap.

Thinking back to the part of your scholarly career before you began regular...

Makes me more careful in everything that comes after initial data preparation for observational studies.

Too early to tell.

I can see why we do it. I can see why it was introduced. But it is already being used as ammunition against careful researchers with integrity who genuinely want to learn from data, or whose best theoretical ideas evolve from confrontation with data. This emerging practice is stifling creativity and in the end, the pursuit of knowledge and insight for change. In the way practice around PAP is evolving, it is only consistent with a very naive and immature theory of knowledge generation, and no doubt this will and should backfire. Time to push back?

I am a junior faculty member and have always used PAPs

It has forced me to think through analysis more thoroughly, especially heterogeneity analysis. I have also started presenting PAPs at conferences as ways to refine research design, and believe my projects are much stronger as a result. I now write PAPs for all experimental projects; I have not yet used them for observational research.

More careful matching of survey questions I am designing to how I will ultimately use these variables.

It makes me think more clearly early on about exactly how I planned to do the analysis. But on the whole it hasn't really changed that much how I go about understanding my data. I almost always deviate from the pre-analysis plan in order to make a paper that makes sense. I still think it's useful to have the pre-analysis plan so that the reader can compare what we anticipated before hand and what we ultimately did and our justification for any changes

Much more thought has gone into the design. For all prospective studies, I preregister and the design gets much better. Would like to start doing for retrospective studies, but model is less clear.

Pre-registering my studies has forced me to think more clearly about all the possible outcomes I could get from my studies, as well as possible problems that I could run into while implementing them. I have to say that I am still finding out that I do not predict successfully all the problems I can run, and would need to adjust for, while running a study but I am getting better at it.

Takes more time. Harder as a novice to get it right.

registered reports!

It has caused me to really think through design and analysis decisions that, honestly, were often done on the backend. It's caused me to realize how easy it is to think you have all the bases covered when you don't.

Yes. It has also made the publication process a bit harder, especially when results weren't as expected. Some reviewers didn't like when we distinguish between hypotheses that were included in the PAP and those that were not. But other reviewers thought we were trying to hide something when we presented all the results (PAP and non-PAP) together

I am a young researcher... always registered a study.

I think the motivation is valid, but the implantation has become extreme.

Much more efficient in collecting data, more thinking up front what the paper will look like, much earlier ready with draft of paper, more feedback on design

It hasn't changed the way I do research significantly. However, it is coming up more often and probably we will have be more careful. I think it is good to support PAP as much we can. Also, I think replicability is a bigger issue. Data, codes and analyses should be accessible so that people understand what's going on.

I do more work upfront now.

Thinking back to the part of your scholarly career before you began regular...

I think it helps to ensure one has the appropriate measures included in survey instruments, and makes it much easier to get feedback. Preregistration has led to more upfront work in the research process. I think this about washes out in the end, as I've indicated already.

Has forced much more up-front theorizing and thought about research plans.

I am a grad student now, so PAPs had been introduced by the time I started doing research.

It has made life difficult for projects that are complex, where a single project is designed to yield multiple papers. For simple projects where the treatment and outcomes are clear, it has made life easier.

I think I spend more time making theory explicit and precise before embarking on field research. I am also more cognizant of analyses where I might be accused of "fishing" and try to pre-specify in those cases.

I strongly disagree with pre-registration.

Writing the PAP frontloads the research process, so it shifts the timing of my focus on the project.

I think more about the types of analyses I will run before I do them.

I put more effort into the front end design as expected but I also spend a lot more time worrying about how to address/present interesting additional analysis that was not pre-registered. While I think Paps should be about transparency rather than be handcuffs, not all reviewers see it that way and this variation in how they are approached by reviewers is a great source of stress.

1) made me think more clearly about which hypotheses I want to focus on, 2) made me ask authors when reviewing papers which parts, if any, of their work were prespecified.

Using PAPs is an emerging norm for field experiments. However, they are totally infeasible and/or non-credible for any analyses of secondary data. The net effect of the emergence of this norm has been to promote lower-quality/more-spurious results from the vast amount of observational/secondary data analysis that is done in social science. It's also toxic to the process of doing research: virtually none of what we have learned from the famous PROGRESA experiment could have been pre-registered. I understand the desire to have our p-values really mean what they claim to mean, but that's a quixotic quest. We are never going to get there. If PAPs are required for experimental studies, then secondary data analysis needs to be banned. But can we do social science in a strictly primary data/field experiment paradigm? I am of the opinion that historical data provides vital insights into human behavior - and that it should be published on a level playing field with field experiments. Both researchers who actually create exogenous variation in a variable of interest, and those who stumble upon possibly-exogenous changes, should be able to explore and analyze their data with the same degree of freedom. Finally, I've gotten an absurd number of requests for sensitivity analyses for strictly pre-specified empirical work. The existing norm appears to keep me from looking for unexpected results while providing no protection from readers or reviewers who want to dig through the data trying to kill off empirical results they don't agree with. If the norm of PAP use is to survive, those kinds of reverse fishing expeditions need to be banned.

It's introduced a nonsensical element to my research where I sort of have to pretend to know what's going to happen even though the kind of work I do is highly exploratory.

no difference

Q5.2 - If you answered earlier that you have ongoing research studies for which you have not registered a PAP, what was it about those studies that made you decide that pre-registration was not necessary? (Please write your response in the box below. You can write as much or as little as you want).

If you answered earlier that you have ongoing research studies for which yo...
studies started a while ago, this PAP movement had not gotten underway
Using previously-collected data in a new way, making it hard to credibly signal validity of a PAP.
I register the study with the AEA but I do not need to write a PAP. The key hypotheses and outcomes are already mentioned in the registry entry. Specifying which controls will be used etc. in advance does not make sense to me since typically i show results both with and without controls anway.
observational studies that are mostly exploratory
The cost of the PAP is high in terms of time, and that often times I'm just checking basic things (did this employment program help improve employment)
I didn't realize that pre-registration was possible. I often have an informal analytic plan, but no one had ever asked for one, so why bother with the extra effort? Plus reviewers inevitably end up asking you to do different analyses anyway. If it was more standard in my field (epidemiology), I'd consider it.
Simulation-based methodological work
Observational studies
exploratory, descriptive study
n/a
They are not yet formally registered --- PAPs are in the process of being written. OR, they are for observational studies using secondary data with collaborators who are not interested in pre-registering the analyses.
Didn't lend themselves to a PAP for one reason or another.
They are field experiments that we had to design and implement in an urgent and time-sensitive fashion. I just didn't have the hours/manpower to devote to them when the timeline for launch was so short and the logistics themselves were overwhelming. And while I am deeply sympathetic to the PAP approach, I also wonder some about whether RCTs are the worst offenders. I have randomized treatments; I run difference of means or proportions on the results. That seems less problematic to not do a PAP than basically every other type of research design. In the cases where I'm pressed for time, I guess I'm okay having there be a shadow around other analyses I do in the paper (subgroups, etc) because I can always point the skeptics to the intervention and t-tests. Basically, I know it's not ideal, but when I'm drowning with field experiment deadlines and logistics and partner's schedules, PAPs do not make it to the top of my priority list.
I have only registered randomized control trials.

If you answered earlier that you have ongoing research studies for which yo...

I can't credibly demonstrate that I wrote the PAP prior to access to the data.

The projects use pre-existing publicly available data.

Most were just before registering became a norm. Some are studies with more targeted audiences (as in journal publication is not the main goal), for which it seemed less necessary. For others it was just time/budget constraints that led PAP writing to fall by the wayside.

I have not typically preregistered studies that did not involve field research (and instead relied on pre-existing data).

Not experiments, no funding, nobody required it. It still might have been good to do, but time is very limited.

Since PAPs don't change the substance of my research or analysis, they seem largely to function as a signaling device. Where I don't need the signal (or a PAP would be taken as a negative signal) I don't pre-register.

Ongoing studies without a PAP are not experimental.

N/A

I wasn't thinking about this as an ongoing project, but I do have research on pre-existing data that I have not registered. I tend to only register PAPs that involve the collection of new data, although I think this is misguided!

They either use observational data, which are exploratory in nature, or involve lab experiments, for which PAP are not part of the practice of the field. Besides, lab experiment by design suggest what tables/regression should be shown so a PAP is not necessary.

I initiated the project before PAP was common/expected.

We do not use PAPs when we are developing new methodology or conducting exploratory / descriptive studies. We use PAPs for studies designed to test specific hypotheses.

They are studies without a comparison group, ie not rigorous

Well, most of them are either (a) descriptive in nature so is more about exploring the data or (b) started before PAP became common.

Too much uncertainty and time pressure surrounding intervention implementation

Exploratory analyses, descriptive goals, historical data...

In some cases, it was a lack of awareness of how useful they could be. In others, it was that the work was really more of a preliminary experiment in which we were planning to conduct exploratory work as part of the analysis. But to be honest, a lot of the time it's just timing issues - we get so rushed to push out endlines that we often don't have time.

Legacy observational work that if I were starting today I'd pre-register at least something.

They were non experimental or early pilots

Already written a large amount on a topic and paper anticipated was observational and/or a marginal contribution on already analyzed data with little potential for fishing.

10+ years ago.

If you answered earlier that you have ongoing research studies for which yo...

Projects started much longer ago, or research projects unsuitable for the premise (e.g. whether data collection was meant to serve theoretical development, or where insights could only come from confrontation with the data, or where there is no obvious, simple linear theory of change).

N/A

These were observational studies, or observational components of experimental papers. In many cases I have found it hard to pre-specify analysis without at least accessing the data to get a better sense for what variation exists in out come measures, etc., which makes the existence of a PAP less compelling.

Lots of uncertainty in terms of what the intervention will end up being, what we will be able to measure, and whether the intervention will even take place at all (messy government projects); for others, studies have been underway for long enough and early rounds of data available, making PAP less pre-

They were started before pre-registration became part of the process, or they were too small (a pilot) that ended up having significant results.

based on ongoing survey projects where the questions are asked are exactly the same every year.

The studies are retrospective. Could still preregister, I suppose, but seems much less credible and the discipline still seems to be deciding whether to go down that road. Even in these cases, though, I'm meticulously documenting all analyses investigated/performed and reporting all variations at very least in footnotes or an appendix.

NA

Not RCTs or RCTs still in preliminary phases.

observational studies; I only have PAPs for my experimental studies

These are studies that I began before I began to pre-registered in a systematic way. I went through a transition period when I was figuring out how best to pre-register where some studies just feel through the cracks.

Using observational data.

Not the case.

Pilot

They are based on secondary data.

I didn't know about the pre-registration process. In certain types of research PAP is difficult for time constraints.

They are descriptive or exploratory

Non experimental studies using survey data where substantial iterative exploratory analysis was necessary

They started before I became aware of pre-registration, and I am still trying to get them published

One such study is a descriptive survey with traditional leaders, which is a follow up to other parts of the project that are preregistered. I am not using this data for hypothesis testing per se, but rather to collect descriptive data on the knowledge, beliefs, and preference of traditional leaders over public goods.

If you answered earlier that you have ongoing research studies for which yo...

Exploratory study using observational data.

There is no reason to preregister a formal theory paper. (Torturing a model to get a result typically leaves a more obvious trace than "fishing" in empirical analysis.) I do wish there were more incentives for pre-registration in non-experimental empirical work. Here, there seems to be a belief that one could never know if a PAP was written before the data was analyzed, so don't bother with the PAP. I'm not sure how to get around this, but I see more room for growth here.

The project was complex where the design was changing as we learned more stuff from the field. Spending time updating a PAP constantly was not worth it.

They are either: (a) not experimental studies; or (b) survey experiments in which I planned (and did) analyze the average treatment effect in a fairly obvious way and so pre-registering did not seem necessary.

I did not want to tie the analysis of data

The research was exploratory and/or descriptive and I was not planning on making any causal claims in the resulting papers.

I usually register the study, but don't think a PAP is necessary beyond that.

Large and numerous observational datasets that I don't know really know the contents of before getting access to the data.

1. Started before norm emergence. 2. Secondary analysis of data that was not expected when study was designed. 3. Coauthors who are deeply hostile to PAPs, to the point of refusing to file them - which I understand, but which makes my life hard.

Either because they were super obvious experiments with clearly just one outcome measure and few degrees of freedom. Or because they were inherently chaotic and opportunistic field experiments where there was no time to register.

observational

Q5.3 - How have you dealt in your research papers with deviations from what you pre-registered in your PAP? (Please write your response in the box below. You can write as much or as little as you want).

How have you dealt in your research papers with deviations from what you pr...
Have made a good-faith effort to explain deviations and the scientific justification for doing so. Show original results in an appendix (sometimes online). Still going through referee process though, so unclear how successful this approach will be.
NA, no deviations
Explained in the text. Can be a problem when strict word limits.
N/A, we haven't yet begun analysis on the single study for which we did a PAP.
By noting that the described analysis was not preregistered, then presenting it.
Making it explicit in the paper the part of the analysis that is not pre-registered.
describe the deviation and why
Explained why it was necessary, mainly because of issues related to data collection
I flag analyses that are not pre-registered.
I record the deviations on the PAP via updates.
You have 1 section for PAP results and another for interesting things you discover in your data for you or others to test later.
I have not yet published anything PAPed, but the manuscripts just have footnotes. But also, two of my PAPed projects blew up in the field, so they are in limbo and may end up file drawered. (I know I know, but I'm not sure the data is even worth anything. And the opportunity costs of investing more in them are very high.)
Included the pre-registered spec and the deviation with an explanation of why it was being added.
Have not revisited the PAP, so we have deviated from the original plan at times.
Discussed the deviation in the manuscript.
I have just been explicit about how and why deviations happened.
Mostly, I've ignored them.
Noted deviations clearly in an appendix table and explained rationale; also provided the pre-registered analyses as a supplement.

How have you dealt in your research papers with deviations from what you pr...

Acknowledge and discuss reasons for deviations in a footnote in the paper.

I have not explicitly, yet. Although, I probably should.

Of course.

Noted in text, footnotes, and in appendices

All deviations are identified and explained in the body of the eventual manuscript.

I specify those deviations clearly in the paper to leave it up to the reader to decide how to weight that evidence. I also document deviations from the PAP clearly in the appendix, along with documenting analyses exactly as they were pre-specified if these were not included in the paper.

Every single time. I have never manage to publish a paper that followed my PAP.

I explain in the paper that the analysis/finding is outside of the original research plan.

We make the change, and then amend the PAP with an itemized list of changes and a rationale for each change. We provide a date stamp for each change, and typically use the open science framework registration option to provide an official date stamp. By providing a rationale for each change, it ensures we only make well-reasoned changes, and we have never run into any issues with reviewers of the work using this approach.

Explained in the paper why it deviated.

noted deviations in main text, footnotes and/or table notes

Yes

Not yet, but I will soon.

We note the deviation, and attempt to justify it. There are often good reasons to do so (e.g., errors or omissions). We are all human!

Usually in an appendix. Reviewers this far have not been particularly interested.

Yes, being explicit in the paper about what were the deviations

YEs I explain clearly ex post changes

Yes. We filed an amendment explaining why we looked at additional heterogeneity before we crunched the data.

We mention in the paper that this regression was not covered by the PAP.

I have documented them in footnotes in the body of the paper and a table in the appendix.

Yes. Was just transparent about it not being in the PAP and why we deemed it worthy of inclusion.

I still report all pre-specified analysis, although sometimes parts of this go in the appendix. I clearly state in the paper which parts of the analysis were pre-specified, and explain any deviations.

How have you dealt in your research papers with deviations from what you pr...

Typically indicate which outcomes/tests were not pre-specified. This becomes harder as the paper goes through revisions and moves further away from what is pre-specified in response to editor and referee demands.

I typically report any deviations between the pre-analysis plan and the main paper. I didn't report all results of analyses if we had followed the pre-analysis plan exactly in the appendix

Yes. I try to put them in footnotes, so the overall flow of the paper is not interrupted.

Yes, I have deviated from the pre-registration, but open acknowledge and discuss the deviations in the manuscript.

include descriptions of deviations in appendix

I am in the process of doing that as I had problems in the implementation of a study.

just describe as outside of the PAP and let readers decide whether how to interpret

yes, I always have a deviations section in the appendix

I simply note them and explain the deviation. For instance, I discovered a better way to operationalize a variable after we had the data. So, I report the pre-registered results, explain why the operationalization is suboptimal, and then report the new operationalization.

At first we tried to be as transparent as possible: having a section with pre-registered analysis and another section with further tests. A number of referees really didn't like that. So we rewrote the paper with all the results together. but referees didn't like that either. Still unclear what we can do.

I have not. I just don't mention that it's not in the PAP, and no one really cares.

I have had research tha5 started before PAPs were widely used and mentioned that the analyses were pretty directly linked to the intervention.

Noted in footnote and provided an annex that maps PAP to paper.

So far we haven't reached that stage. I'll be explicit with the reasons and highlight when I am deviating from the PAP.

Make a note of the deviation

Yes, explorations of unanticipated HTE

I reference that there is a deviation, either in the main text or a footnote, and I explain why

Reported PAP results but wrote theoretically interesting paper.

Stated these deviations explicitly in the paper.

I have stated that specific parts of the analysis were deviations or not foreseen.

I note what is preregistered and what is not.

I write an appendix section that discuses deviations from the PAP and provides reasons for them. Again, this is harder for more complex projects.

By acknowledging and justifying/explaining them.

How have you dealt in your research papers with deviations from what you pr...

I trust my training; I trust good/honest researchers...

Deviations are clearly identified as such, either in the text or in a footnote. Readers can then decide how much stock to put in the results generated by the deviated analysis.

Note in the paper.

Included a discussion in the appendix explaining the deviations and providing corrections (eg for alternate codings or for additional analysis not included in the main text) in the appendix.

Just explain it. "Use your words."

Just noting the deviation in a footnote. Honestly none of these p-hacking type concerns has ever been important. There's a wealth of evidence that N=17 experiments on college students with treatments that do nothing are p-hacked to death. The literature on field experiments suggests that we're probably staving off a fake problem here - although ironically people keep attempting and publishing meta-analyses about this question, and the one paper that find p-hacking problems got far more attention. Meta-p-hacking, if you will.

argue why deviation makes sense

Q5.4 - Has pre-registration ever been helpful for dealing with implementing partners or funders? If so, how? (Please write your response in the box below. You can write as much or as little as you want).

Has pre-registration ever been helpful for dealing with implementing partne...
no
It has helped reduce surprises from implementing partners: they are able to see set of outcomes of interest in advance, rather than in final paper.
N/A
no
No
They are useful for communicating the research objectives for projects.
A little, makes it more straightforward for the implementing partners.
No, it's never come up. They want IRB approval, and that's it.
Yes, because it is transparent.
No
No
No
I think it is definitely helpful for fending off requests from funders/implementers for bad spec searching to get hte results they want.
Unfortunately, JPAL and IPA now require pre-registration. I do not like the trend of implementers or funders directing aspects of the research design.
No.
Sometimes it's required, but that's it.
Nope.
Yes, the commitment to transparency builds trust with partners and funders.
Only to the extent that a written PAP can be useful for sharing research plans with field partners.

Has pre-registration ever been helpful for dealing with implementing partne...
No. I have seen no difference.
Yes, managing expectations for analysis
Serves as a research protocol which some implementers/funders want.
yes - protection against vested funders undermining null results
Not in my own experience
Not yet.
Yes, many funders nowadays prefer to fund studies with PAPs, in order to increase the credibility of the resulting findings.
I could imagine it being helpful, but hasn't been particularly important in practice so far.
No
The Arnold Foundation has taken PAPs to their logical and insane extreme and they are a great example of a major problem that may only grow.
No.
No.
No.
no
No
Yes, both for sending to implementing partners to coordinate project planning, and for IPA to get approval for the study.
Only in that some have required it
NA
Yes. Some now require it.
Not yet, but it has with reviewers in some cases.
Not yet.
Nope.
nay; but it helps with coauthors.
Not yet, but I suspect it will be.

Has pre-registration ever been helpful for dealing with implementing partne...
Mo
Yes, PAPs serve well as a research proposal, so a great communication divise
Not so much. I think they are slowly warming up to the idea.
Yes. It keeps everyone honest.
No
No.
Not really, except some text from the PAP can be lifted to include in briefs for other audiences. Often there are parts of the PAP we don't want even implementing partners to know, as it might affect the way they implement a project.
Yes. Donors typically require PAPs.
Only for the purposes of satisfying funding requirements.
Not in my experience so far. But I can see how it would be useful.
not really
Not yet
It's a contract. Also, we got it published.
No but I could imagine it helping forestall certain kinds of pressure. That said, funders and implementers can always go find a "researcher" to tell them what they want to hear - and many of them do.
No
no. in my experience, governments do not care about PAPs

Q5.5 - Have your views on pre-registration changed over time? If so, how? (Please write your response in the box below. You can write as much or as little as you want).

Have your views on pre-registration changed over time? If so, how? (Please...
not really. they tie your hands, perhaps not in a good way since it may limit exploration. it does focus analysis.
After going through several PAPs, definitely feels costlier in terms of the amount of time it takes to write them and to get everyone on board. Pre-specifying regression equations with treatment effect indicators relatively straightfoward, but much harder when trying to use experimental variation in other ways (such as looking at spatial spillovers)
Yes, I was more excited about them in the past, now I think they are a bit too restrictive
More open to the idea, but it is not yet a standard part of my research.
Very enthusiastic initially. Now a more nuanced view.
I see there main value as providing a comprehensive record of what studies are being conducted. Hopefully, this eliminates a file drawer problem. They are particularly costly, however, when working on projects where conditions in the field change frequently because of a need to readjust and update them.
Not too much.
Yes. I was a strong believer, and am still very sympathetic. But wow the complexities of field implementation and the compromises you have to make with partners and such...I am more sympathetic to "just do your best" research approaches. My answers earlier about PAPs not getting in the way are not because PAPs don't have the ability to get in the way; they're because I haven't made them sacred enough to get in the way. I was talking with a PAP-enamored grad student about a lab experiment she had run. I asked if she had looked at task completion times by experimental condition. The software had collected the data, but she was horrified and didn't want to look at it because she hadn't preregistered and said her advisor would be upset. Seriously? I suggested a DV that was theoretically interesting and that you inadvertently collected, and you aren't willing to look? The treatment was randomized! You can flag the result as not PAPed. Sheesh. Now, I get that this was a grad student who was maybe not very mature. But that naive PAP worship worries me. Anyway, the on-the-ground time and resource pressures are real, especially with field experiments. I understand the way that my attitude can undermine the purity of science PAP goals, but I don't have an army of RAs to take care of things for me and if I can collect data, I will do that with or without a PAP. I guess I'm willing to have my un-PAPed work be seen by some as exploratory work. I think exploratory work is valuable and I'd rather do it than not.
A better follow-through is needed. While pre-registration is an important advancement, these should be included with the submitted and published with the manuscripts.
Yes, in that I believe they are applicable to a relatively narrow type of research, but that they are valuable.
I am still positive to pre-registration for projects doing original data collection. However, I think it is important that even results that were not pre-registered should be published / made available to the research community.
I've become a bigger fan over time, as I've learned more about the sausage factory that composes many econ papers.
Marginally more negative. PAPs sometimes just incentivize writing down in advance that you are going to specification search. Think about the Haushofer et al QJE paper.
More and more convinced that they are essential for the credibility of empirical research.
See previous answer.

Have your views on pre-registration changed over time? If so, how? (Please...

My sense is that the norm has become that researchers absolutely include analysis that wasn't in the pre-analysis plan, which I wasn't expecting. I think this is probably good. I think they are both a little less constraining and maybe a little less valuable than I expected. I am pleasantly surprised to see that less detailed PAPs are accepted, which means the costs are not as high (particularly important for folks with limited RA/money/time resources).

I thought they were a really good idea. Now I am indifferent. They're too easy to game and no one outside of EGAP seems to care at all.

Yes, my appreciation has grown and I now distrust to some extent results from studies that were not pre-registered.

By doing more of them, I have experienced the variance in how a PAP can look and the range of micro-decisions that have to be made about how to write a PAP that can vary. So I guess I have learned that when we talk about PAPs, we are not necessarily referring to one thing.

I was initially skeptical but hopeful. Now I think the problem is much more ingrained in the way we publish our work. Referees love power and control, and they refuse to be bound by PAPs. Editors want a good story, and the PAP nearly never delivers a good read -- it only delivers a boring, mechanical read with no surprises or new insights.

When I first heard of PAP I was skeptical. I now believe it's good practice.

My view continues to grow stronger that it is a valuable and near-essential step in hypothesis-driven research.

They are totally trendy now

Initially was 100% positive, but now I think they have a downside in making us lose our advantage as economists, and put us more in the realm of public health. Not sure if this is ultimately a good thing.

no

I view it as even more necessary for research aimed at testing causal hypotheses than I used to

When I first heard about PAPs, I thought they were a great solution and should be mandatory. Now I'm a little more skeptical because I've seen how much /stuff/ people put into them. I'm not so concerned about them preventing exploratory analysis - people can still conduct it, but readers will know what was and was not planned ahead. Where I do worry is that I've seen some PAPs that are massive - with enough tests that executing all of them would surely lead to spurious null rejections, and I would also want to make sure people consider what is in those PAPs before blindly saying - oh, it was pre-registered, that is fine.

Yes, I am increasingly positive about their use in a wider range of projects than I had previously supported.

My views have softened somewhat in that I now think it's good for every study to pre register something (priors, hypotheses, outcomes, motivation), but I am less supportove than I once was of a prescriptive approach that ties hands too tightly.

I think there is a value to pre-registration, that is different from sticking to a specific pre-analysis plan

I increasingly think we should have norms of very broad PAPs and still leave some room for researchers to make ex post decisions about best measures and estimation methods.

More inclined to describe to others as a useful tool.

No.

I am increasingly skeptical of pre-registration. For an exercise that is ostensibly designed to improve the quality of empirical evidence, our belief in the utility of PAPs is remarkably faith-based. I'd like to see some evidence that PAPs are actually improving our ability to learn something meaningful about the world.

Have your views on pre-registration changed over time? If so, how? (Please...

Yes. I see them less as a formal contract (not to be deviated from), and rather a public declaration of the road map you plan to follow and the main hypotheses you have.

I still see pre-registration as very valuable, but also understand the extent to which we learn from the data collection process itself. I don't think this is an argument for not using PAPs, more that it may be helpful to file amendments to document this process more fully.

1. My plans have become less comprehensive over time, convinced in part by Ben Olken's JEP.

I was worried initially that they would be to binding. But it seems that others use them in the same way that I do: just as a signal about the congruence of expectations overtime

No.

Yes. I'm still a fan and will keep doing it. But I think that even the most meticulously specified pre-registration could be gamed or weaponized by reviewers in all the wrong ways. To my mind, preregistration is a key step towards a larger goal of just striving for 100% transparency of the research process. No doubt this comes from the comfortable armchair of someone fully promoted, and I would probably be more concerned if a newly minted assistant, but I've just reached the point where I'm genuinely trying to be candid about what I'm doing, even if it doesn't reflect well in some way. I'd really love it if we could get rid of the "gotcha" mentality in preregistration, replication, etc, etc, and just move towards an open, engaging, and continuously updating scientific process.

I think everyone should pre-register their studies, but I also think that there should be a bit of flexibility in terms of allowing to amend the registered design in terms of issues that have to deal with implementation or unforeseen incidents that might be out of the control of the researcher that could affect the analysis of the data.

No. Always thought they were a pain, still do.

yes; that we need a method to compare between published work and PAPs. The gap between them in many studies is glaring

Yes. In the beginning, I thought it was a) a good idea, but too much effort and b) given the current practices, a potential obstacle to publication. As I've come to appreciate the real problems with HARKing and Phacking in our discipline, it has convinced me that this is something we should all be doing. It just makes our work more transparent and, therefore, more credible.

I didn't think the editorial process would be so slow to change and adjust to this "new" technology. This might be more of a concern in econ than in polisci

Same...ambivalent, and has the potential to stifle interesting research.

Not really.

Not a lot as I am still at the learning phase. It is possible it will impose some constraints. Many interesting analyses develop during the writing phase. So some leeway should be allowed as long as researchers are transparent.

I liked it when I first learned about it. And that hasn't changed

No.

Yes, is as much as it has become a norm, and I am worried about being able to publish anything experimental in the absence of one. I think they are generally quite useful, but there remains a lot of uncertainty about how they will be used in the review process, what level of detail is expected, etc. Also, I think there is a lot of confusion regarding how to do multiple hypothesis correction, this may be leading some people not to register hypotheses they have for fear of how it will affect multiple hypothesis correction. I'm not sure how to solve this, but I think it's a issue that should be addressed.

Have your views on pre-registration changed over time? If so, how? (Please...

Empirically, I am completely in favor of having a record of at least the planned analyses. Aside from the obvious and correct arguments in this regard, I hate PAPs. The incentive to not run tests outside the PAP gives researchers an incentive to dump a kitchen sink worth of specifications into a PAP, often without any theoretical intuition. While we have taken a step back from kitchen sink regressions that test, i.e., H1-H7 by throwing seven independent variables into a single multivariate regression and looking “for stars,” I find that most PAPs have that flavor, except with (generally) more principled analysis. For example, here are vaguely related hypotheses H1-H10 and the estimators I will use to test them. However, H1-H10 do not flow from any argument or theory. I do think this mode of research makes theory (or even just argumentation) suffer. Second, as I received more training in statistical methods as a grad student, I became increasingly scared to write and post a PAP. The more you know, the more problems you can anticipate. However, you also realize that there are many more problems that you are not anticipating. To the extent that this dynamic is common to others, I think that lack of training in research design and methods inhibits PAPs to constrain a researcher. If I don’t foresee problem X when writing a PAP, should I be constrained not to address it in analysis? Presumably no. So if some researchers are missing literally every problem, to what extent are PAPs actually constraining researchers?

I was fully on board until I implemented a PAP for a fairly complex project that will likely yield 3-4 papers. Writing an appendix for each of those papers where i clarify to the reviewers that the PAP provides omnibus pre-registration for all projects is not straightforward. We also have not had discussion on how to think of PAPs for projects that yield multiple papers in the discipline yet.

I have witnessed some disagreements between other scholars about whether studies have sufficiently followed their pre-analysis plans. This was probably inevitable but I didn't anticipate it. It can be difficult to fully specify a pre-analysis plan under time pressure.

I now think that pre-registration is better than PAP

I recognize the value but increasingly find them very hard to do well. I often end up with significant deviations that I think are well-justified but I have gotten penalized for, one way or another

ML techniques seem to obviate the need for most of this. You could still pick and choose outcomes, but even if we ban that the biggest researchers will run dozens of trials and publish the "best" ones in more-prominent outlets.

Much less positive than I used to be. Major fear now about being chained to a stupid / wrong thing I thought 3 years ago.

no

End of Report