

The Social Science Reproduction Platform

RT2

Fernando Hoces de la Guardia, BITSS

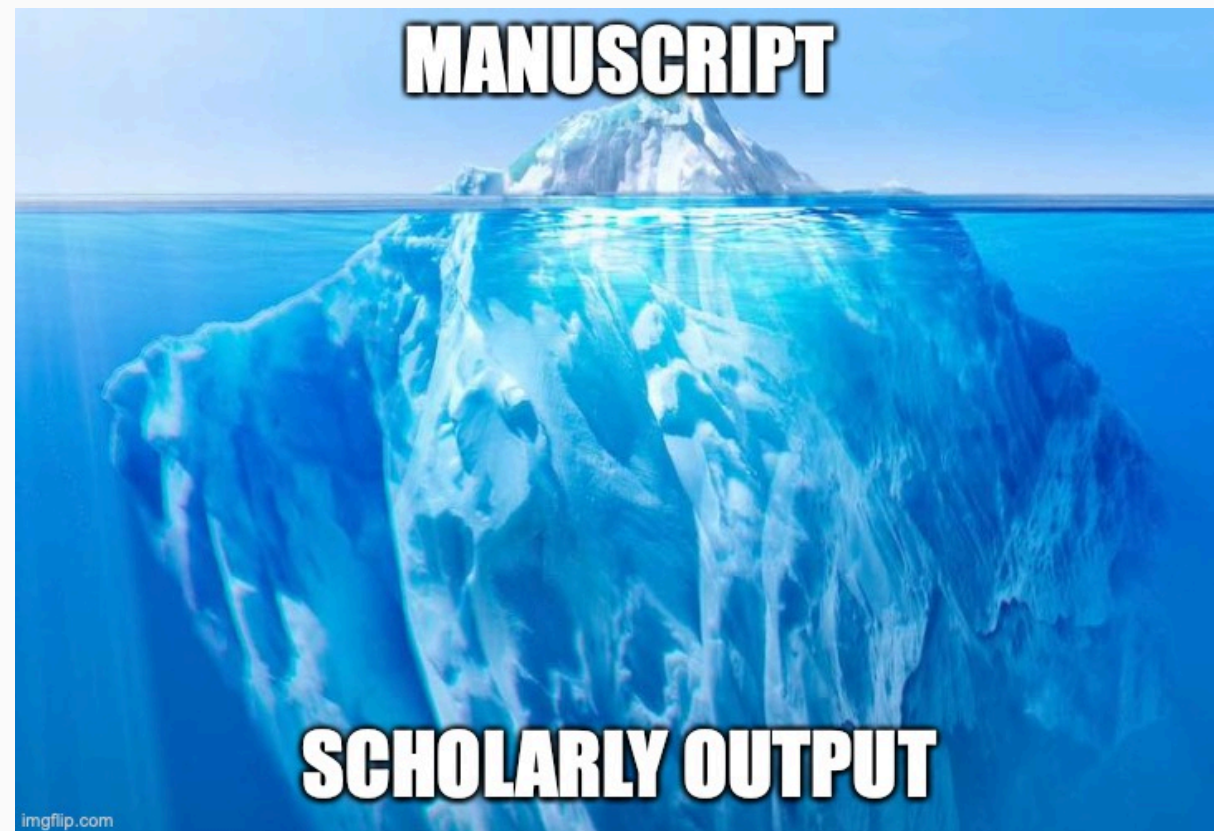
06 June 2024 [Slides](#)

Motivation I: Computational Reproducibility

Clarebout Principle:

“An **article** about computational science in a **scientific publication** is not the scholarship itself, it’s merely scholarship **advertisement**. The **actual scholarship** is the **complete software development environment and the complete set of instructions** which generated the figures.”

Buckheit and D.L. Donoho (1995, 2009)



Motivation II: Prevent Loss of Knowledge

Every semester, graduate students around **the world** take an Empirical/Applied [...] course (e.g., Labor Economics, Social Psychology). A typical assignment consists of reproducing the results of a paper and, possibly, testing the robustness of its results.

Stage	New Knowledge
Scope (select and verify)	Data and code exist?
Assess	Degree of reproducibility for specific part of the paper
Improve	E.g. fixed paths, libraries, added missing files, etc.
Test robustness	Results are robust to additional specifications

Key challenge: Standardization

Motivation II: Prevent Loss of Knowledge



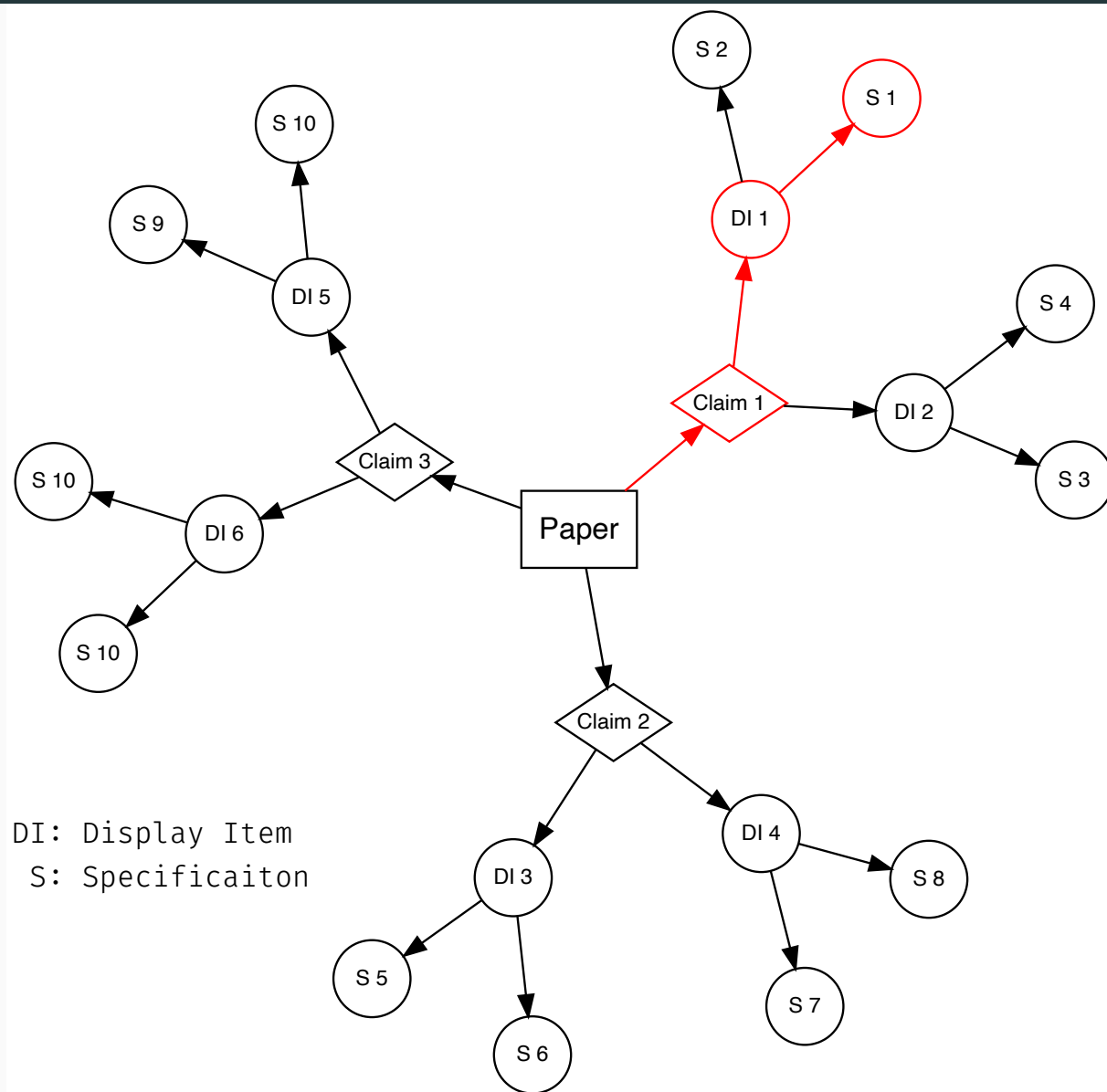
Standardized Scope of a Reproduction

Each **reproduction attempt** is centered around scientific **claims** (following **SCORE**).

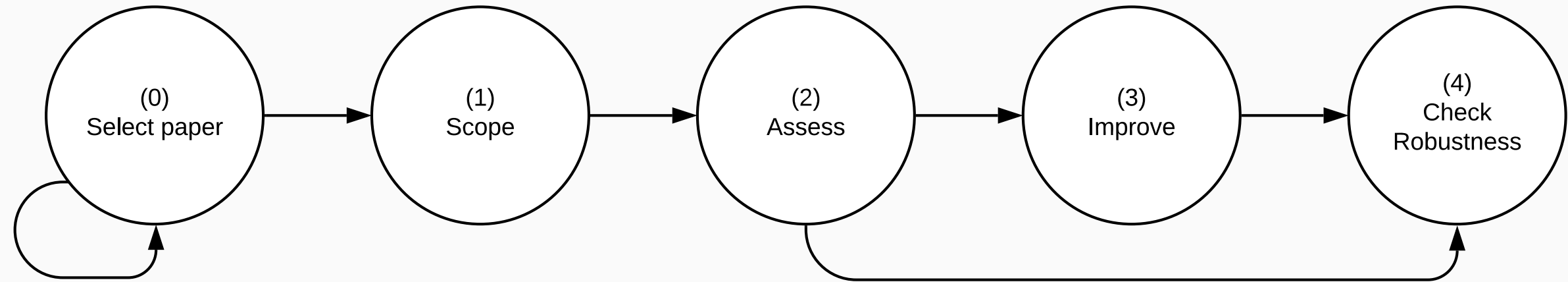
One paper can contain several claims.

Each claim may be supported by various **display items**: tables, figures & inline results.

A reproduction attempt is at the claim level, and reproducers must record their **specifications** of interest.



Stages



Standardized Assessment

	Analysis Code		Analysis Data		CRA	Cleaning Code		Raw Data		CRR
	P	C	P	C		P	C	P	C	
L1: No materials	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
L2: Only code	✓	✓	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
L3: Partial analysis data & code	✓	✓	✓	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
L4: All analysis data & code	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	–	–	–	–	–
L5: Reproducible from analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	–	–	–	–
L6: All cleaning code	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	✓	✓	–	–	–
L7: Some raw data	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	✓	✓	✓	–	–
L8: All raw data	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	✓	✓	✓	✓	–
L9: All raw data + CRA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	–
L10: Reproducible from raw data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

^a **Computationally Reproducible from Analytic data (CRA):** The output can be reproduced with

Demo: socialsciencereproduction.org

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Social Science Reproduction Platform

Accelerating computational
reproducibility in the social sciences

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C. Results

Table 2 presents ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates of equation (12). In column 1 I estimate the effect of the lowest-cost route effective distance on trade when the relative costs of each mode (α) are set to observed historical relative freight rate estimates. I use the relative per unit distance freight rates described in Section IB (at their midpoints): $\alpha^{road} = 4.5$, $\alpha^{river} = 3.0$, and $\alpha^{coast} = 2.25$ relative to the freight rate of railroad transport, normalized to 1). Column 1 demonstrates that the elasticity of trade costs with respect to the lowest-cost route effective distance, calculated at observed freight rates, is 0.088, and this is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

However, as argued in Section IB, it is possible that these observed relative freight rates do not capture the full benefits (such as increased certainty or savings) of railroad transport relative to alternative modes of transportation. For this reason the NLS specification in column 2 estimates the relative freight elasticity (i.e., the parameters α) that minimize the sum of squared residuals in equation (12).

Column 2 is my preferred specification. When the mode-wise distance costs (i.e., α) are not restricted to be equal to the observed freight rates, the estimated elasticity of trade costs with respect to effective distance (i.e., δ) rises to 0.169. Even when controlling for all unobserved, time-constant determinants of trade costs between all salt sources and destinations, as well as unrestricted shocks to the source price of each salt type, reductions in trade costs along lowest-cost routes (estimated from railroad-driven time variation in these routes alone) have a large effect on reducing salt price gaps over space.

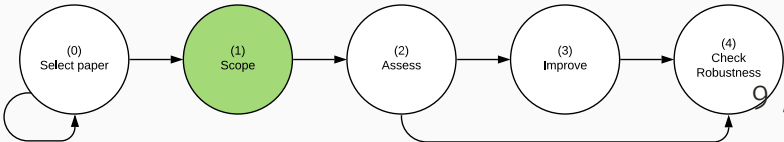
TABLE 2—RAILROADS AND TRADE COSTS: STEP 1

Dependent variable: log salt price at destination	(1)	(2)
log effective distance to source, along lowest-cost route (at historical freight rates)	0.088 (0.028)	
log effective distance to source, along lowest-cost route (at estimated mode costs)		0.169 [0.062, 0.296]
Estimated mode costs per unit distance:		
Railroad (normalized to 1)		1 N/A
Road		2.375 [1.750, 10.000]
River		2.250 [1.500, 6.250]
Coast		6.188 [5.875, 10.000]
Observations	7,345	7,345
R ²	0.946	0.946

Notes: Regressions estimating equation (12) using data on 6 types of salt (listed in online Appendix A), from 133 districts in Northern India, annually from 1861 to 1930. Column 1 and column 2 estimated by OLS and NLS respectively; both include salt type \times year and salt type \times destination fixed effects. “Effective distance to source.”

Col 1: OLS with alpha at historical rates. 1% inc in effc dist (in km) -> 0.088% inc in trade costs

Col 2: NLS with alpha chosen to minimize SSR of col1. effc dist (in km) -> 0.169% inc in trade costs



Standzarized Assessment

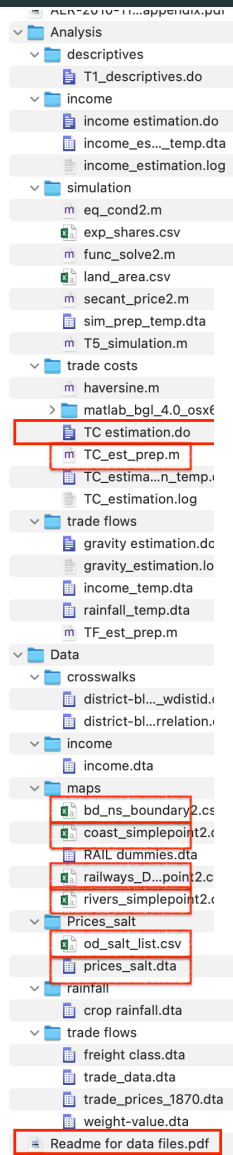
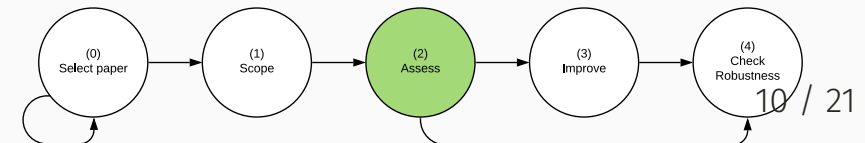


Table 2

TC estimation.do	
LCRED_RoX_CoY_RiZ.csv	
TC_est_prep.m	
railways_Dissolve_Simplify2_point2.csv	
bd_ns_boundary2.csv	
rivers_simplepoint2.csv	
rivers_simplepoint2.csv	
coast_simplepoint2.csv	
od_salt_list.csv	
prices_salt.dta	
railways_Dissolve_Simplify2_point2.csv	
bd_ns_boundary2.csv	
rivers_simplepoint2.csv	
coast_simplepoint2.csv	
od_salt_list.csv	



Standzarized Assessment

Analysis

descriptives

T1_descriptives.do

income

income estimation.do

income_es..._temp.dta

income_estimation.log

simulation

eq_cond2.m

exp_shares.csv

func_solve2.m

land_area.csv

secant_price2.m

sim_prep_temp.dta

T5_simulation.m

trade costs

haversine.m

matlab_bg1_4.0_osx64

TC estimation.do

TC_est_prep.m

TC_estima...n_temp.dta

TC_estimation.log

trade flows

gravity estimation.do

gravity_estimation.log

income_temp.dta

rainfall_temp.dta

TF_est_prep.m

Data

crosswalks

district-bl..._wdistid.dta

district-bl..._relation.dta

income

income.dta

maps

bd_ns_boundary2.csv

coast_simplepoint2.csv

RAIL_dummies.dta

railways_D...point2.csv

rivers_simplepoint2.csv

Prices_salt

od_salt_list.csv

prices_salt.dta

rainfall

crop rainfall.dta

trade flows

freight class.dta

trade_data.dta

trade_prices_1870.dta

weight-value.dta

Readme for data files.pdf

Table 2

TC estimation.do

LCRED_RoX_CoY_RiZ.csv

TC_est_prep.m

railways_Dissolve_Simplify2_point2.csv

bd_ns_boundary2.csv

rivers_simplepoint2.csv

rivers_simplepoint2.csv

coast_simplepoint2.csv

od_salt_list.csv

prices_salt.dta

railways_Dissolve_Simplify2_point2.csv

bd_ns_boundary2.csv

rivers_simplepoint2.csv

coast_simplepoint2.csv

od_salt_list.csv

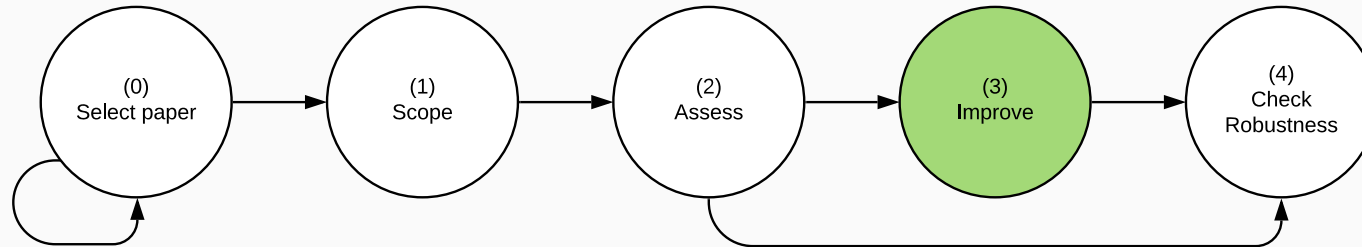
Table 3.5: Levels of Computational Reproducibility
(P denotes “partial,” C denotes “complete”)

	Availability of materials, and reproducibility									
	Analysis Code		Analysis Data		CRA	Cleaning Code		Raw Data		CRR
	P	C	P	C		P	C	P	C	
L1: No materials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L2: Only code	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L3: Partial analysis data & code	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L4: All analysis data & code	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-
L5: Reproducible from analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
L6: All cleaning code	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-
L7: Some raw data	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
L8: All raw data	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
L9: All raw data + CRA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
L10: Reproducible from raw data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

^a **Computationally Reproducible from Analytic data (CRA):** The output can be reproduced with minimal effort starting from the *analytic* datasets.

^b **Computationally Reproducible from Raw data (CRR):** The output can be reproduced with minimal effort from the *raw* datasets.

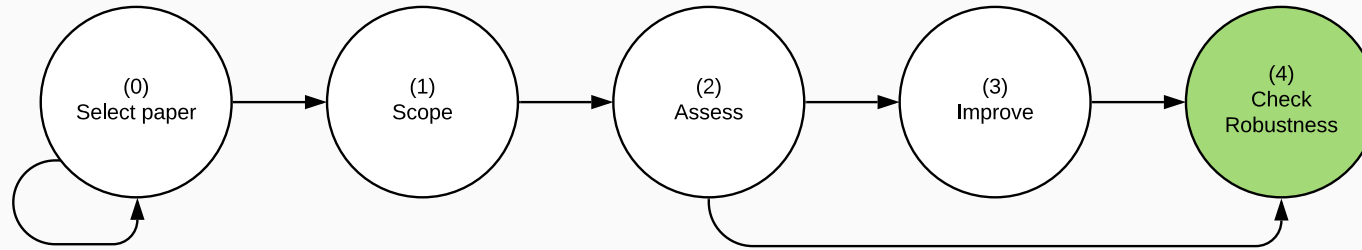
Standardized Improvements



Three types of improvements:

1. Improvements at the paper level (e.g., improve documentation following **TIER's protocols**)
2. Improvements at the display-item level
3. Specific future improvements

Robustness Checks



Two main parts for robustness:

1. Increase the number of robustness checks
2. Justify the appropriateness of a specific test

Completed Reproduction: Generate Knowledge and Get Credit

Reproduction of: Railroads of the Raj: Estimating the Value of Transportation Infrastructure in American Colonial India
<https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20101199>

Reproducer: Emma Ng

Date created: November 19 2020

Date submitted: August 03 2021

Claims assessed: 1

Display Items (DI) assessed: 1

Improvements: 3

Robustness tests:

- Feasible choices added: 0
- Specifications justified: 0

Claims identified by reproducer:

1. "The paper estimated the value of the extent to which the costs of different modes of transportation are estimated by the reduction of LCRED (lowest-cost route effective distance trading cost. This estimate has a 95% confidence interval."

Reproducibility of Display Items:

1. Table 2 - Table 2 -- Railroads and Trade Costs: Step 1. ...

Original reproduction package: <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.20101199>

Revised reproduction package: <https://github.com/em-ng21/railroads-of-the-raj>

Original authors' availability for further inquiries: Not sure

0 Select a paper

Declare the paper that you will analyze in the remainder of the exercise and any other "candidate" papers for which you were unable to obtain access to the full text.

[VIEW THIS SECTION](#)

1 Scoping

2 Assessment

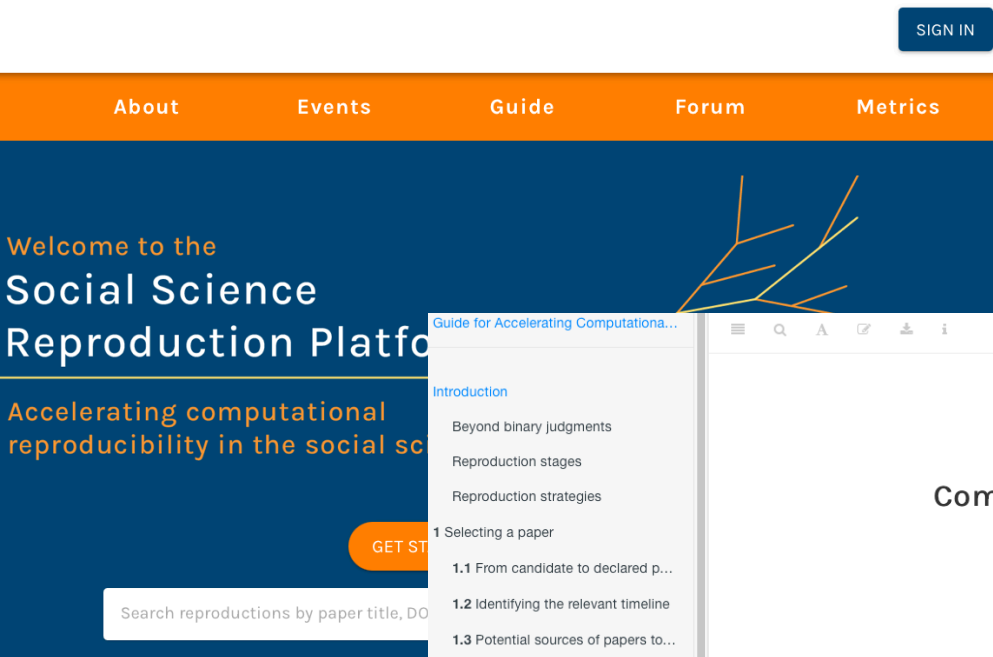
3 Improvement

4 Robustness

0 Select a paper

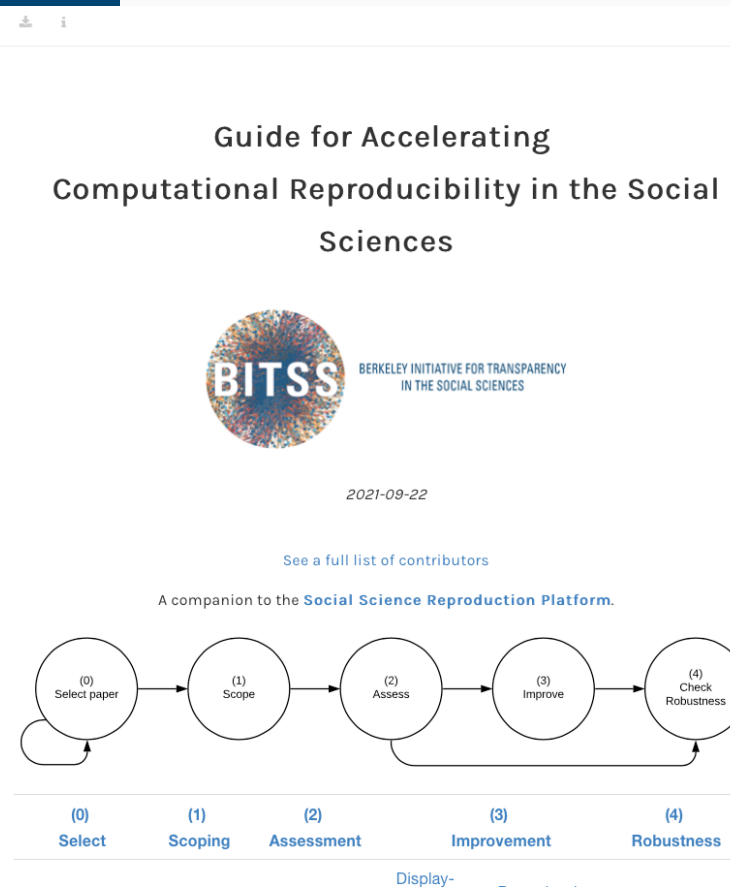
Declare the paper that you will analyze in the remainder of the exercise and any other "candidate" papers for which you were unable to obtain access to the full text.

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Consult the
supporting
guide

Use it for your class
or independent project



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Guide for Accelerating Computational Reproducibility in the Social Sciences

Introduction

Beyond binary judgments

Reproduction stages

Reproduction strategies

1 Selecting a paper

1.1 From candidate to declared paper

1.2 Identifying the relevant timeline

1.3 Potential sources of papers to consider

2 Scoping

2.1 Read and summarize the paper

2.2 Record a revised reproduction

2.3 Record scope of the exercise

3 Assessment

3.1 Describe the inputs

3.2 Connect display items to all items

3.3 Assign a reproducibility score

4 Improvements

4.1 Display item improvements

4.2 Paper-level improvements

4.3 Documenting the improvements

5 Checking for Robustness

5.1 Feasible robustness checks: I...

5.2 Justifying and testing reasona...

Use it for your class or independent project

Consult the supporting guide

SIGN IN

Guide for Accelerating Computational Reproducibility in the Social Sciences

BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

2021-09-22

See a full list of contributors

A companion to the [Social Science Reproduction Platform](#).

```
graph LR; 0((0) Select paper) --> 1((1) Scope); 1 --> 2((2) Assess); 2 --> 3((3) Improve); 3 --> 4((4) Check Robustness); 4 --> 0;
```

(0) Select (1) Scoping (2) Assessment (3) Improvement (4) Robustness

Social Science Reproduction Platform

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Categories

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New (3)

Unread (1)

Top

+ New Topic

Category

Topics

Latest

Getting Started

0

Version 1.0, developed in April 2021

Reproductions

5

1 unread

Discuss and share resources about ongoing or completed reproductions sorted by papers reproduced. To join the discussion about a particular paper, look up the paper's DOI, replacing "." with "-".

Tips for Reproducibility

1

Find and share tips and resources for reproducible workflows that aren't linked to a particular reproduction.

Help

3

3 new

Ask questions on how to use the SSRP.

For instructors

0

Connect with a community of

Welcome to Discourse

0

Nov '20

Restricted-use data

0

23h

Catalog of reproductions

0

23h

No replication package

1

23h

Feedback for my reproduction of Twenty-year economic impacts of deworming

1

Aug 11

How to use the SSRP

2

Jul 22

Ask questions

16 / 21

First Insights Comming Out of the SSRP

Standardizing and Crowdsourcing Analysis to Assess Reproducibility in Economics

Abel Brodeur, University of Ottawa

Fernando Hoces de la Guardia, University of California, Berkeley

Edward Miguel, University of California, Berkeley and NBER

Seung Yong Sung, University of California, Berkeley

Lars Vilhuber, Cornell University

April 2024

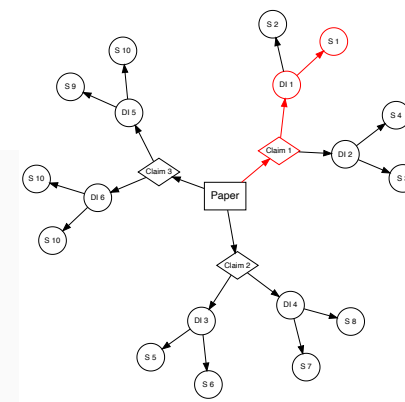
Abstract

This paper presents a framework to standardize computational reproductions in economics, and discusses a platform that implements this framework to crowdsource reproductions from around the world, the Social Science Reproduction Platform (SSRP). The framework and platform address

First Insights: Some Utilization

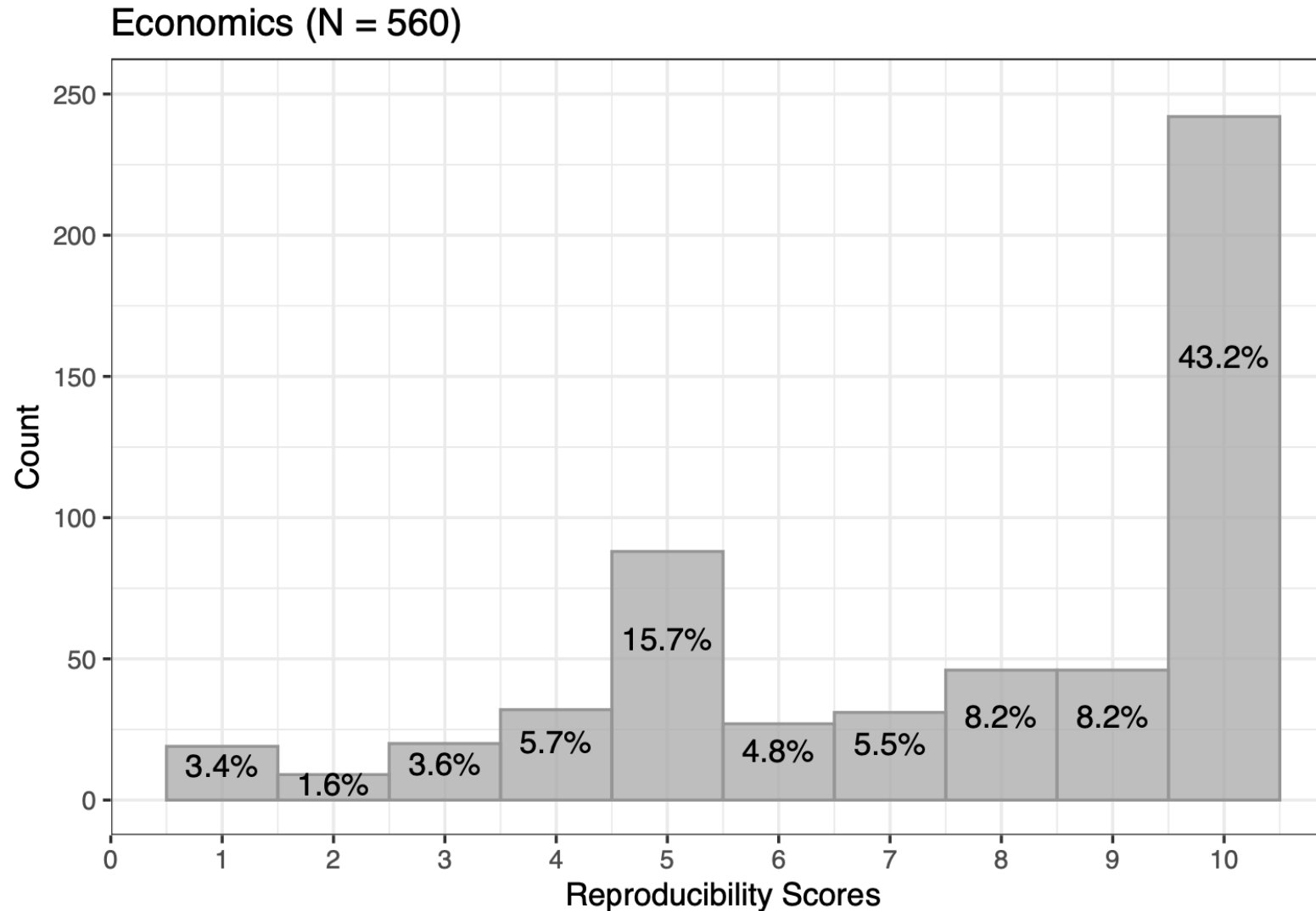
Table 2: Number of Items Evaluated on the Social Science Reproduction Platform (SSRP)

Reproduced Item	Count	Econ Only
Paper	186	145
Reproductions	260	206
Claims	510	384
Display Item	724	560
Claim+Display Item	840	587
Abandoned	10	10



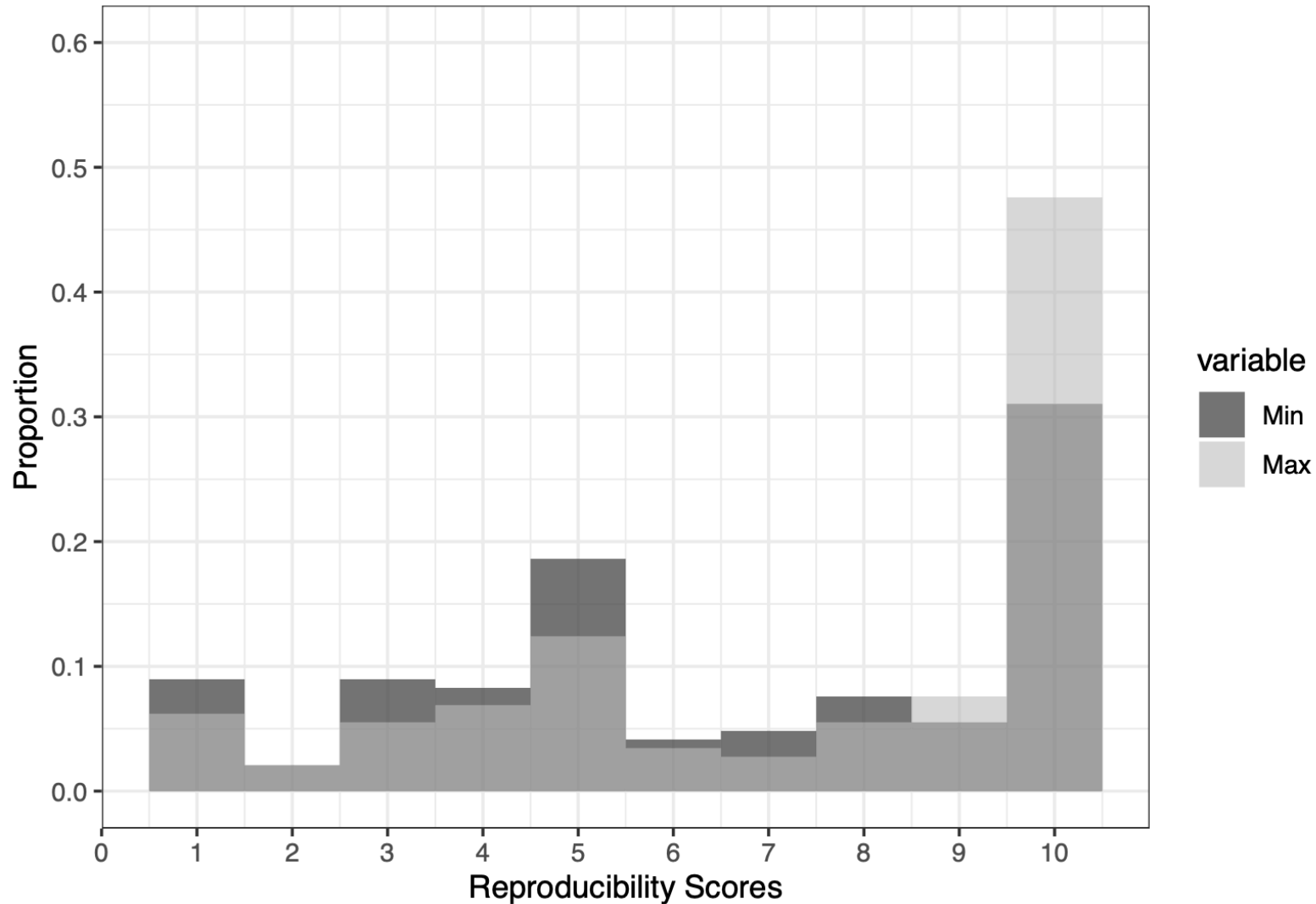
First Insights: Distribution of Scores for Display Items

Figure 2: Dist. of Display Item Reproducibility Scores in Economics (N = 560)



Can Aggregate at Paper Level In Different Ways

Figure 5: Dist. of Paper Level Reproducibility Scores in Economics (N = 145)



Thank You

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