

**From:** Political Science Research and Methods <onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 1:16 PM  
**To:** Tai, Yuehong Cassandra <yhcasstai@psu.edu>  
**Subject:** Political Science Research and Methods - Decision on Manuscript ID PSRM-RE-2022-0155.R1

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11-Oct-2023

Dear Dr. Tai:

Manuscript ID PSRM-RE-2022-0155.R1 entitled "On Data 'Janitor Work' in Political Science: The Case of Thermostatic Support for Democracy" which you submitted to Political Science Research and Methods, has been reviewed and I have read it carefully as well. The comments of the reviewers are included at the bottom of this letter.

As you can see, the reviews (continue to) point into opposite directions. It is my reading that the critical review is predominantly skeptical about the manuscript's contribution to the larger topic of data entry errors.

I have discussed this issue with the (new) lead editor. We both agree that the manuscript does not make a clear contribution here. To make a real contribution more studies would need to be reanalyzed and examples would have to be found where data entry errors are the clear culprit (as opposed to cases where "researcher degrees of freedom" etc. were exercised).

In our judgement, the manuscript is better presented as what we think it really is: a reanalysis of a prominent paper with an eye on data entry errors. As such, we invite you to resubmit the manuscript and cut away much of the data entry discussion. To be clear, you are of course free to refer to data entry errors (and the literature) whenever you think such an error is discovered in your reanalysis. But it should not be the framing of the paper.

When revising the paper, I would also ask that you cut its length from 14 pages to about 11 (I know everyone, including me as an author, hates these cuts; but I think the essence of the paper can be communicated in a "compact" fashion).

Finally, to be transparent: because we see this research note as a critique of an existing paper, we will invite the author to comment on the final version of your note.

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When submitting your revised manuscript, you will be able to respond to the comments made by the reviewer(s) in the space provided. Please use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript. In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as

possible in your response to the reviewer(s).

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to the Political Science Research and Methods, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. We expect to receive your revision by 10-Dec-2023. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision by this date, please contact the Editorial Office to rearrange the due date. Otherwise we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Political Science Research and Methods and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,  
Daniel Stegmueller  
Political Science Research and Methods  
ds381@duke.edu

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 2

The authors addressed the issues I raised. I was already positive about publishing the manuscript in my initial review and am happy to recommend publishing it in PSRM.

Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Author

The authors have submitted a revised manuscript that considers the comments they have received on the original manuscript.

Unfortunately, the original author does not seem to be among the reviewers. This is particularly problematic in this case which requires close scrutiny of minute decisions of data entry which, in turn, requires close knowledge of the object under investigation. However, it seems that errors not only occurred in the original study but also in the replicating study (see Footnote 6 in [http://chrisclaassen.com/docs/Claassen\\_dynamic\\_measurement\\_error.pdf](http://chrisclaassen.com/docs/Claassen_dynamic_measurement_error.pdf) and section 3.2 in [http://chrisclaassen.com/docs/Claassen\\_dynamic\\_measurement\\_error%20SM.pdf](http://chrisclaassen.com/docs/Claassen_dynamic_measurement_error%20SM.pdf)). Some of the errors in the authors-collected dataset seem grave although I personally am not capable of judging these detailed questions.

In any case, these issues emphasize the concern I have previously expressed that it is not clear that automated data entry is necessarily superior to manual data entry. Yet, this argument on automated data entry seems to be the main point that distinguishes this manuscript of the author's replication of Claassen (2020) from the manuscript of their replication study that is already published in the APSR. I noticed that the authors decided against the suggestion to clarify this manuscript's distinct contribution by systematically discussing the advantages and disadvantages of automated vs manual approaches. As a result, the entire weight rests on how the automated approach works in the applied example case. Yet, given the potential errors discussed in the references above, it seems that both automated and manual approaches are error-prone.