Common Qualifier Paper Problems

Ryan T. Moore

2024-01-26

Table of contents I

Content Problems

Design Problems

Style Problems

Resources

Overclaiming

"I prove democracy is not real" \rightsquigarrow

"I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"

- Overclaiming
 - "I prove democracy is not real" \rightsquigarrow
 - "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- Under-contextualizing, conceptually

 Describe one result →

- Overclaiming
 "I prove democracy is not real" →
 "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- Under-contextualizing, conceptually
 Describe one result ⋄

 Your question is a case of a more general political phenomenon. Explain what your answer teaches us about that phenomenon.
- ► Book-reporting

 <u>Literature review</u> ~>

- Overclaiming
 - "I prove democracy is not real" \rightsquigarrow
 - "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- Under-contextualizing, conceptually

 Describe one result ⋄

- ► Book-reporting
 Literature review ~>
 - ▶ Teach us enough to understand the frontier of knowledge

- Overclaiming
 - "I prove democracy is not real" \(\rightarrow \)
 - "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- Under-contextualizing, conceptually

 Describe one result ⋄

- ► Book-reporting
 Literature review ~>
 - ▶ Teach us enough to understand the frontier of knowledge
 - Explain how you move that frontier

- Overclaiming
 - "I prove democracy is not real" \(\rightarrow \)
 - "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- Under-contextualizing, conceptually

 Describe one result →

- ► Book-reporting
 Literature review ~>
 - Teach us enough to understand the frontier of knowledge
 - Explain how you move that frontier
 - Every paper must be related to the paper you are writing

- Overclaiming
 - "I prove democracy is not real" \(\rightarrow \)
 - "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- ▶ Under-contextualizing, conceptually

Describe one result \rightsquigarrow

- ► Book-reporting

 Literature review

 →
 - ▶ Teach us enough to understand the frontier of knowledge
 - Explain how you move that frontier
 - Every paper must be related to the paper you are writing
- Organization

 "(Why is this here?)" "(How related to prior?)"

- Overclaiming
 - "I prove democracy is not real" \rightsquigarrow
 - "I provide evidence consist with failure of representation"
- ▶ Under-contextualizing, conceptually

Describe one result \rightsquigarrow

- ► Book-reporting

 Literature review

 →
 - ▶ Teach us enough to understand the frontier of knowledge
 - Explain how you move that frontier
 - ▶ Every paper must be related to the paper you are writing
- Organization
 - "(Why is this here?)" "(How related to prior?)"
- Abrupt hypotheses

 "And now, after that lit review, here's H1"

Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ⋄ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."

- Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ⋄ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."
- Insufficient statistical interpretation

 "The coef is 0.2" →

- Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ↔ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."
- ► Insufficient statistical interpretation "The coef is 0.2" ~>
 - Pred prob turnout for median is 0.45; for Q3 is 0.53",

- Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ⋄ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."
- Insufficient statistical interpretation

 "The coef is 0.2" →
 - ightharpoonup "Pred prob turnout for median is 0.45; for Q3 is 0.53",
 - Take time to make graphics

- Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ⋄ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."
- Insufficient statistical interpretation

 "The coef is 0.2" →
 - ▶ "Pred prob turnout for median is 0.45; for Q3 is 0.53",
 - Take time to make graphics
 - Uncertainty, inference

- Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ⋄ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."
- Insufficient statistical interpretation

 "The coef is 0.2" →
 - Pred prob turnout for median is 0.45; for Q3 is 0.53",
 - Take time to make graphics
 - Uncertainty, inference
- Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"

- Unclear connection betwn theoretical model, hypotheses Vague description of A, description of B, my Hyp1 ↔ "Under A, we should see X; under B, we should see Y. I argue for model C, which implies that we should see Z."
- Insufficient statistical interpretation

 "The coef is 0.2" →
 - Pred prob turnout for median is 0.45; for Q3 is 0.53",
 - Take time to make graphics
 - Uncertainty, inference
- Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"
- Insufficient detail about the case, data, methods,

► Failing to recognize design's weaknesses

"Because coefficient is positive, X causes Y"
design that enables answering Q you propose

- ► Failing to recognize design's weaknesses

 "Because coefficient is positive, X causes Y"
 design that enables answering Q you propose
- ► Failing to recognize data's limits

 Cool data that can't answer question
 →

 Data + Method that address exactly what you propose

- ► Failing to recognize design's weaknesses

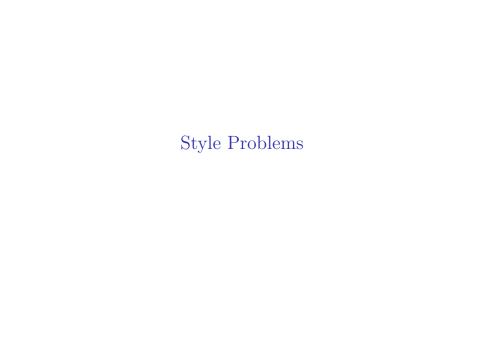
 "Because coefficient is positive, X causes Y"
 design that enables answering Q you propose
- ► Failing to recognize data's limits

 Cool data that can't answer question
 →

 Data + Method that address exactly what you propose
- ► Accepting unacceptable limits

 "X is too hard", "Y not computationally feasible for me",

 "Z takes hours", "To know W, must visit archive"
 Get as close to bleeding edge as you can.



Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"

- Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"
- ▶ Writing a mystery novel Holding out until page $4 \rightsquigarrow \text{Reader } always \text{ knows result}$

- Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"
- ▶ Writing a mystery novel Holding out until page $4 \rightsquigarrow$ Reader always knows result
- Using the passive voice

 "an analysis was conducted" → "we analyze"

- Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"
- ▶ Writing a mystery novel Holding out until page $4 \rightsquigarrow$ Reader always knows result
- Using the passive voice

 "an analysis was conducted" → "we analyze"
- Getting the details wrong
 "logistical regression", "the OLS model"
 "the democrats and republicans"

- Claiming causality without causal identification "The effect of X", "X increases Y"
- ▶ Writing a mystery novel Holding out until page $4 \rightsquigarrow$ Reader always knows result
- Using the passive voice

 "an analysis was conducted" → "we analyze"
- Getting the details wrong "logistical regression", "the OLS model" "the democrats and republicans"
- ► Referring to the person rather than paper "He argues" \rightsquigarrow "Barker (2002) argues"



There's a lot of good advice about writing academic papers. Heed it.

A template for writing a paper:

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv
 - ▶ Quarto file: http://tinyurl.com/yeysumx4

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv
 - ▶ Quarto file: http://tinyurl.com/yeysumx4
 - (Bib file:) http://tinyurl.com/yucp32h4

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv
 - Quarto file: http://tinyurl.com/yeysumx4
 - ▶ (Bib file:) http://tinyurl.com/yucp32h4
- ➤ Some advice: https://www.ryantmoore.org/papers.html

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv
 - Quarto file: http://tinyurl.com/yeysumx4
 - ▶ (Bib file:) http://tinyurl.com/yucp32h4
- ➤ Some advice: https://www.ryantmoore.org/papers.html
- These notes

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv
 - Quarto file: http://tinyurl.com/yeysumx4
 - ▶ (Bib file:) http://tinyurl.com/yucp32h4
- ➤ Some advice: https://www.ryantmoore.org/papers.html
- ► These notes
 - http://tinyurl.com/bddxyxjw

- ▶ A template for writing a paper:
 - Compiled PDF: http://tinyurl.com/3sk8djrv
 - ▶ Quarto file: http://tinyurl.com/yeysumx4
 - (Bib file:) http://tinyurl.com/yucp32h4
- ▶ Some advice: https://www.ryantmoore.org/papers.html
- ► These notes
 - http://tinyurl.com/bddxyxjw
 - $https://github.com/ryantmoore/discussions/blob/main/998-2024-01-26_qualifier_probs.pdf$

References I

Barker, David. 2002. Rushed to Judgment: Talk Radio, Persuasion, and American Political Behavior. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.