Review

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“Data Feminism as a guide for agricultural research”

The paper entitled “Data Feminism as a Guide for Agricultural Research” by Virginia Nichols, Angie Carter, Stefan Gailans, Andrea Basche and David Weisberger proposes to demonstrate the utility of D’Ignarzio and Klein’s Data Feminism framework in agricultural research and to present evidence that explicit attention to power and values fosters creativity and positive societal outcomes. The paper provides a useful, timely, and important extension of the framework to agricultural research. The paper also provides a good overview of the imbalance of power in agricultural science . It makes a solid effort of describing the power disparities in agricultural science utilizing the four domains of power: structural; hegemonic or cultural; disciplinary; and interpersonal and discussing its application within three of the framework’s themes: power awareness , reciprocity, and framing. The authors have cited much of the relevant literature. although I would consider adding more current references to citizen science and Sach’s work (e.g. The Rise of Women Farmers and Sustainable Agriculture, 2016). The authors use three research activities to demonstrate the value of the framework: serving the margin; leveraging science; and expanding the concept of scientific measurements. While these are useful examples, the contributions of direct and explicit attention to power and values for increased creativity and positive societal outcomes remains less obvious and falls short of providing compelling evidence. Since this is one of the main purposes of the paper, this hypothesized relationship needs some refinement. The paper includes an important focus on the way research is conducted stressing reciprocity, multi-dimensional compensation, metrics of success, diverse framings. The authors conclude with a key brief discussion of the importance of diverse frameworks.

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