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Standardization in science: effects and issues of guidelines for biomedical reporting

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Propositions

Relating to the subject of the dissertation

1. Reporting guidelines show how practical reform in clinical medicine serves as a model for methodological reform in biomedical research.
2. Research reporting transparency cannot be a value criterion in itself, because prior value judgments define what to be transparent about.
3. Disciplinary contexts and the career status of guideline users shape the patterns in the dissemination and use of reporting guidelines.
4. Methodological standards do not necessarily reduce research complexity, because they can also generate new ones.

Relating to the field of the subject of the dissertation

1. Increasing the informativeness of a practice standard decreases its general applicability.
2. Standardizations of practices transform ex post quality uncertainties into ex ante quality certainties.
3. Conducting a mixed-method study means trading methodological proficiency for the robustness of acquired knowledge.
4. Scholarly communication is more important for scientific progress than the universality of scientific ideas.

Relating to society

1. Individual ignorance and uncertainty are inevitable given the complexity of modern society. The societal stigma around uncertainty is unjustified and hypocritical.
2. The dynamicity and contingency of scientific work can contradict labor laws, such as the German Working Time Act.
3. Against the background of a scientific worldview, belief in the statements of alternative medicine is a serious but relatively small societal problem.