Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: The Conversation Before and After the Scandal of November 2018: CRISPr-Cas9 Among Experts and Lay People

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Template: LSE Data Management Plan for undergraduate and master's students dissertations

Project abstract:

In the 1960s, gene-editing became a 'lab reality'; in 1990s, gene-edited products entered the public sphere, causing controversy. In 2015 gene-editing took a leap, when CRISPr-Cas9 (CRISPr henceforth) was nominated 'Breakthrough of the Year' by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In November 2018, news broke that Chinese geneticist He Jiankui genome-edited the embryos of two twins, Lulu and Nana, who were born soon after. Adopting a multi-method approach, this study looked at the conversation around CRISPr before and after the November 2018 scandal, across two milieus: experts and lay people. Through media analysis and Focus Groups completion, this study found that lay people and experts' social representations (SR henceforth) of CRISPr differ. Lay people focus on the use of CRISPr on human targets and on risk as core dimensions; experts, on the other hand, understand CRISPr in relation to its use on non-human organisms and scarcely consider misuses with societal consequences. The scandal does not seem to change the two groups' SR: rather, these are reinforced. For lay people, the scandal concretises fears around CRISPr (mis)uses on humans; for experts, it leads to condemning the perpetrator while somewhat forgiving the outcome. Both groups employ anchorings and objectification in order to make sense of CRISPr, both in the media and in intergroup discussion.

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The Conversation Before and After the Scandal of November 2018: CRISPr-Cas9 Among Experts and Lay People

Dissertation title and abstract

Name

The Conversation Before and After the Scandal of November 2018: CRISPr-Cas9 Among Experts and Lay People

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- Social Psychology

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Prof. M. Bauer

Please summarise your research question in no more than three sentences.

Adopting a multi-method approach, this study looked at the conversation around CRISPr before and after the November 2018 scandal, across two milieus: experts and lay people. Specifically, this study aimed to look at what are experts' and lay people's SR of CRISPr, how (if so) they differ, and how (if so) they change after the scandal.

Data collection

Briefly describe the data that will be used, including any secondary sources, noting content, coverage, cost, availability, and terms of use.

The data used will be of two kinds: 1) journal articles; 2) trascripts from Focus Groups. Both data sources are about the biotechnology CRISPr-Cas9. No money was used to buy any of this data. The journal articles were retrieved via NexisLexis, avaiable to me as I am an LSE researcher. I obtained consent from all participants of the Focus Groups to record their conversation and use it as part of my data. All participants were anonimised.

Informed consent and anonymisation of primary research data

If you are collecting primary data, describe your process of obtaining informed consent.

The Focus Groups were conducted by the researcher as an MSc student at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) following the training received in qualitative methods from the Department of Methodology at the LSE.
In order to put the participant at ease, relationships with them were established prior to the Focus Group, via phone or email. All participants were informed beforehand about the research topic, with the possibility of withdrawing if they felt uncomfortable about it. All participants signed an informed consent.

If you are collecting primary data that can identify living individuals, how will you anonymise that data to prevent

identification?

I will anonimise the data by sobstituting the participants' names with a letter ('E' for experts, and 'L' for lay people) followed by a number (E1, E2, ..., E5; L1, L2, ..., L5).

Research ethics

Does your research involve human participants (living or dead), or involve data about directly identifiable human subjects?

- Yes

Storage and back-up

How will data be stored and backed up during the research? How will you manage access and security? Is the size of your data likely to be a problem?

Data was all saved on Google Drive and on hard disk to make sure it wouldn't get lost. Data was saved on MY Google Drive, which is accesible only via my email which requires a password only I know. The size of the data is not a problem.