Research on Peer Review - in search of a theoretical approach

07.03.2018

Martin Reinhart & Cornelia Schendzielorz
Common denominator

Peer review is a mechanism

• to assess quality based on expert judgement
• to decide on scarce resources
• to self-govern science
Shortcomings

• Unanimity in expert evaluations as dominant criterion for a qualitatively good assessment

• “variations in disciplinary evaluative cultures” (Lamont/Guetzkow 2016: 33) and

• different reading modes of reviewers and editors (Hirschauer 2010. 77-78) are neglected
Approach for a theory of peer review

1. Peer review as a social process
2. Dimensions of legitimation within the process
3. Types of procedural legitimation
1. Peer Review as a social process

- an assessment in which a value is assigned to the assessed object
- carried out by means of various forms of reading by reviewers and editors and the discussion of diverse readings
- a relational assessment of values is consolidated in the decision-making (see Hirschauer 2010: 78-94).
2. Two dimensions of legitimation

1. Internal legitimation
   creation of legitimation through procedures

2. External legitimation
   legitimacy of decision
3.1 Types of procedural legitimation

Minimum procedure
- Postulating activity
- Consultative activity
- Decisive activity
- Administrative activity
## 3.2 Types of procedural legitimation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Additionally up to the Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postulate</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Moderation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Observation</td>
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</tbody>
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Conclusion

• Process-oriented approach

• Legitimation as central theoretical concern

• Applicable across cases
References


