

# Opponent's Report on Dissertation Thesis

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Title of the Thesis:	Essays on Research Reproducibility in Economics
Type of Defense:	<b>DEFENSE</b>
Date of Pre-Defense	April 17, 2024
Opponent:	Abel Brodeur PhD (University of Ottawa)

Address the following questions in your report, please:

- a) Can you recognize an original contribution of the author?
- b) Is the thesis based on relevant references?
- c) Is the thesis defensible at your home institution or another respected institution where you gave lectures?
- d) Do the results of the thesis allow their publication in a respected economic journal?
- e) Are there any additional major comments on what should be improved?
- f) What is your overall assessment of the thesis? (a) I recommend the thesis for defense without substantial changes, (b) the thesis can be defended after revision indicated in my comments, (c) not-defensible in this form.

*(Note: The report should be at least 2 pages long.)*

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a) This thesis makes a significant contribution to the ongoing discussions surrounding the credibility revolution in economics. It addresses critical issues related to meta-research, the replicability of studies, and the widespread occurrence of publication biases and p-hacking across scholarly publications through a set of comprehensive examinations. The initial study reevaluates the influential work of Burgess and Pande on the impact of bank expansion led by the Indian state on poverty reduction. It highlights that the significant effects initially reported become less pronounced when broader policy contexts are taken into account, stressing the importance of considering external policy impacts for the reliability of empirical findings.

The subsequent study scrutinizes the Economic Policy Uncertainty (EPU) indices. It uncovers that the observed trends in these indices are more a reflection of the methodologies employed than of genuine economic uncertainties.

Furthermore, an extensive examination of 20,000 studies investigates the prevalence of publication bias and p-hacking in the field of economics. The analysis indicates that p-hacking is far more widespread than previously believed, contributing substantially to selection bias in the academic literature. The results suggest major selection bias in economic research, potentially compromising the trustworthiness of published results.

b) Yes.

c) Yes, the thesis is well above the bar for a thesis at the University of Ottawa.

d) Yes, particularly the last chapter.

e) No major changes necessary for the defense.

I recommend the thesis for defense without substantial changes.

Date:	May 10, 2024
Opponent's Signature:	

Opponent's Affiliation:

Abel Brodeur PhD (University of Ottawa)