Literary fiction & social cognition p-curve (#42017)

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1) Have any data been collected for this study already?
No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?
Does the experimental research into the effects of reading narrative fiction on social cognition contain evidential value?

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
This study will use the p-curve method to assess the hypothesis. The DVs used in this technique are the p-values associated with the main hypotheses of the studies under consideration.

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
Not applicable

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
The p-curve analysis requires several steps: (1) Conduct a systematic search for the literature to be analyzed; (2) Select the articles to be included in the p-curve; (3) Collect the relevant statistical results from each paper; (4) Input the results into the online calculator and run the p-curve.

Step 1: The search terms and databases used for this process will be based on those used in the Dodell-Feder and Tamir (2018) meta-analysis. Specifically, we will search the databases PubMed, PsychInfo, and Web of Science, using the word “fiction” paired with 10 different search terms related to social cognition: fiction AND (social cognition OR social ability OR social skill OR social perception OR theory of mind/theory-of-mind OR mentalizing OR mind reading OR perspective taking OR empath* OR emotion).

Step 2: Coders will use the following inclusion/exclusion criteria to determine whether the articles gathered in Step 1 will be included in the analysis: (1) published in a peer-reviewed journal, (2) written in English, (3) a true experimental design (between-subjects or within-subjects) with random assignment to condition, (4) a comparison between exposure to narrative fiction versus a control (e.g., popular fiction, non-fiction, no reading at all), and (5) include an outcome variable that is a form of social cognition as defined by Dodell-Feder & Tamir (2018) (i.e., theory-of-mind/mentalizing, empathy, and/or prosocial behaviour).

Step 3: Following the guidelines set out by Simonsohn and colleagues (2014), we will review the final set of articles and select the statistical analyses associated with the primary research question of interest (i.e., the effect of reading narrative fiction on social cognition). All articles will be examined independently by two authors, each of whom will create a disclosure table that documents their selection process.

Step 4: After comparing disclosure tables and resolving any discrepancies through discussion, the relevant statistical results will be submitted to the online p-curve calculator which will automatically calculate the results (p-curve.com).

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
Not applicable

7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.
The amount of articles included will be based on the results of the systematic review described above. Based on the results of the Dodell-Feder & Tamir (2018) meta-analysis, we expect there will be approximately 15 – 20 articles included.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
After the initial analysis has been conducted, we will also conduct robustness analyses. The first set of robustness analyses will include cases when the appropriate statistical result to choose for the p-curve is ambiguous or there are multiple relevant results based on the given study design. The second set will consider alternative but related comparison groups, such as reading narrative fiction versus expository non-fiction and narrative fiction versus popular fiction. Additional robustness analyses may be applied if deemed appropriate.