

Research data and the academic reward system

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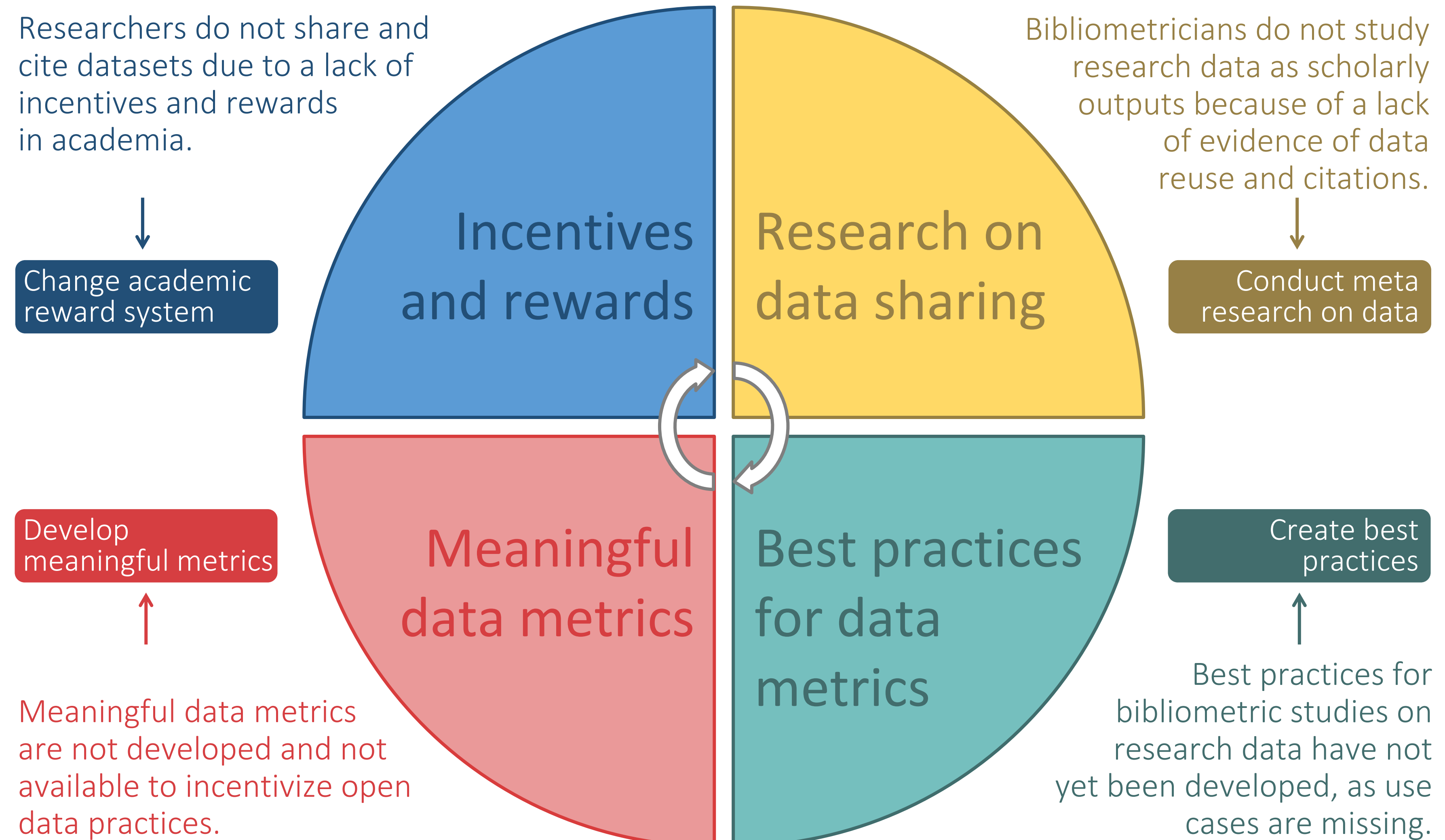
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As more funders and publishers ask for underlying data to be published, research data is gaining importance in the scholarly communication process. However, the scientific reward system has not yet caught up by valuing data as research output on the same or similar level as publications. Even if data sharing and research data management plans are increasingly required, data collection, cleaning and curation are not yet considered valuable contributions to scientific advancement.

Data sharing and reuse are undervalued and not rewarded

The lack of incentives and rewards creates a vicious circle where the absence of evidence of data sharing and citing leads to a lack of bibliometric research on data, which in turn leads to a lack of data metrics. As part of the Make Data Count initiative, our research project seeks to conduct basic research on data reuse and citations to develop best practices and meaningful data metrics, which help to demonstrate the value of research datasets and raise their status to first-class scholarly outputs.



Improving the understanding of data sharing and citations

The Meaningful Data Counts research project will apply a mixed-methods approach to improve the understanding of data sharing, reuse and citation patterns across academic disciplines and career stages. We expect our research to improve incentive structures to elevate the status of datasets to first-class scholarly outputs and influence data sharing policies.

Data citation patterns

We will conduct bibliometric analyses of research datasets to explore data sharing, reuse and citation patterns with a particular emphasis on disciplinary differences. The quantitative analysis will provide benchmarks for field-normalized indicators.

Motivations to (not) cite

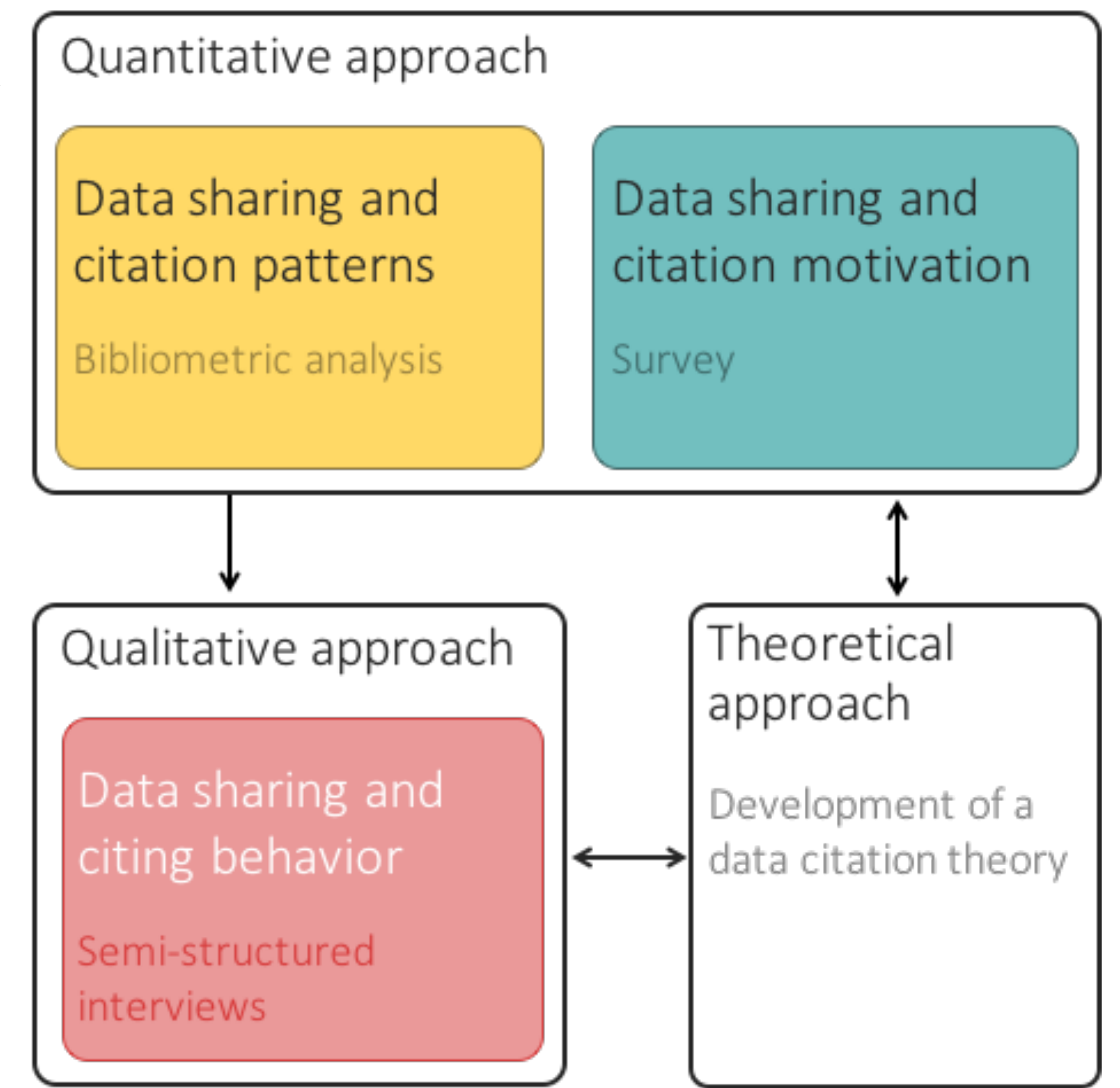
To understand underlying motivations to (not) share, reuse and cite datasets, we will conduct a survey among researchers from different scholarly disciplines and various academic career stages.

Data sharing and citing behavior

For an in-depth analysis of researchers' motivations and their data sharing and citing behavior, the survey will be complemented by semi-structured interviews.

Data citation theory

Our empirical research will be complemented by a theoretical approach to explain data citations.



What can publishers do to support open research data?

Beyond encouraging (or requiring) researchers to deposit data in online repositories, publishers should instruct authors to cite data and properly index data citations (see poster: "Data Citation: A Fundamental Step in Supporting Open Data").