

# Internalist and Externalist Aspects of Justification in Scientific Inquiry

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## Abstract

While epistemic justification is a central concern for both contemporary epistemology and philosophy of science, debates in contemporary epistemology about the nature of epistemic justification have not been discussed extensively by philosophers of science. As a step toward a coherent account of scientific justification that is informed by, and sheds light on, justificatory practices in the sciences, this paper examines one of these debates—the internalist-externalist debate—from the perspective of objective accounts of scientific evidence. In particular, we focus on Deborah Mayo’s error-statistical theory of evidence because it is a paradigmatically objective theory of evidence that is strongly informed by methodological practice. We contend that from the standpoint of such an objective theory of evidence, justification in science has both externalist and internalist characteristics. In reaching this conclusion, however, we find that the terms of the contemporary debate between internalists and externalists have to be redefined to be applicable to scientific contexts.

**Keywords:** evidence, justification, internalism, externalism, error-statistics, security

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