

The Basics in Research Publication : Writing and publishing journal article

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Question?

- Why are you here?
- What you hope to achieve?

predicament

- Writing research papers does not come naturally to most of us
- It appears like a long way toward writing a paper that will get accepted in a peer-reviewed journal

Outline

- **A. Introduction**
 - research
- **B. Guide to writing articles for journal publication**
- **C. Publication consideration**

Research has an impact on



Research publication process

1. Research project
2. Paper writing
3. Paper submitted to journal
4. Paper published

Problem

- Lack of writing culture
 - Scientific writing - journal
 - Linguistic drawback
- Tendency to use theories from the west
 - Lack of critique, questioning/contestation
- Lack of debate –argumentation
 - Dialectic culture: thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis
- PUBLISH OR PERISH
- UNIVERSITY RANKING- competition

Research-output plan

- Normally you are doing research on a certain topic
- You have to prepare a research proposal
 - Do extensive literature review
- Even before you start field work - you can publish your initial write up – review paper on past literature (NON-ORI)
- Have a master plan

How to get started?

What do I write about?

- Have you completed a project that concluded successfully?
- Are you wrestling with a problem with no clear solution?
- Do you have an opinion or observation on a subject?
- Have you given a presentation, briefing or conference paper?
- Are you working on a Doctoral or Master's thesis?
- Do you have a new idea or initiative?

If so, you have the basis for a publishable paper



If you keep writing – can you publish your work as a journal article ?

- Need to acquire writing culture
- Need to equip with the right techniques
- Need to understand the format of scientific writing
- Need to work with lecturers / professors if you want to go into impact journals
 - Political – win-win (editors contact)
 - Strategic – review article more exposure/impact
- To convert written paper to journal article – 6 to 12 mths.

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Guide to writing articles for journal publication

- Criteria of paper acceptance
- Types of article
- Structure of an academic journal article
- Major sections in an academic article

1. Originality

- Novel or creative research methodology
- New & important research findings

2. Scientific Quality

- Appropriate statistical analysis
- Sufficient depth of investigation
- Appropriate experimental design and methodology
- Clear data presentation and interpretation
- Substance of the results
- Thorough & logical discussion of results

ISI/WoS-IF CRITERIA of PAPER ACCEPTANCE

3. Clarity of Presentation

- Organization of presentation
- Readability, clarity of writing, and grammar
- Paper is much more likely to be rejected based on poor presentation than lack of originality

4. Importance to the Field

- Usefulness of findings to scientists, specific users & the general public

Emerald's Criteria of Journal's Peer Review Process

- **Abstract**: quality, format
- **Intro**: Importance of study, contribution to field, value, rationale of study, description of background theory, research, concepts, links to previous theory, literature
- **Methodology**: validity, appropriateness for study
- **Results**: appropriate presentation, valid analysis, interpretation
- **Conclusions**: limitations of study, implications, future work
- **References**: completeness, up-to-date, format
- **Overall**: Structure - whether logical & organized suitably, clarity of presentation

Types of article in an academic journal

- Original article
- Non-original article

- “ Title
- “ Abstract
- “ Keywords
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Materials and Methods
- 3. Results/Findings and Discussion
- 4. Conclusion/s
- “ Acknowledgements
- “ References (20 or more but depends on the nature of research's originality)

“NON-ORI”

ARTICLES

CASE WRITING

1. Intro
2. Any titles/subs
3. Conclusion

- Acknowledgements
- References

THEORETICAL
CONCEPT

Detail : Types of Article contribution

- Conceptual – concept refinement
- Theoretical – new theories
- Empirical – observation/experience
- Methodological- new design
- Normative- what ought to be
- Prescriptive – what solution

What are the doors & windows of an article?

- Readers access the article
- Sequence of importance
 - Keyword
 - Title
 - Abstract
 - Introduction
 - Discussion

Major sections in an academic article

“Title “

“ Abstract”

“ Keywords”

1. Introduction

2. Materials and Methods

3. Results/Findings and Discussion

4. Conclusion/s

1. TITLE

- **Normally 15 WORDS** but law & mgmt journals can go more than 20 words!
- **Brief (short & sharp)** phrase describing/reflecting/EXPECTATIONS ABT the contents of the paper.- **THEME, ISSUE, POSITION**
 - REFLECT THE NATURE AND FOCUS OF STUDY (AND NOT CREATE FALSE EXPECTATION(FELDMAN,2004:2)
- Print authors' full names and **affiliations**, the name of the corresponding author along with **HP/office phone (International Code), fax and e-mail** information & **complete** current addresses
- Be consistent with your own names for e-search databases/citation purposes
- **Concise and informative** - titles are often used in information-retrieval systems.
- Avoid abbreviations, prepositions and formulae where possible

2. ABSTRACT

- ✓ **100-250 WORDS**, sometimes **350 words**
- ✓ **Informative** and completely **self-explanatory**
- ✓ Briefly present the topic with 1-2 lines of:
 - ⑩ **introductory** statement,
 - ⑩ **objective/s**,
 - ⑩ scope of the **experiments/methodology**,
 - ⑩ major **results/findings** (indicate significant data & results)
 - ⑩ **conclusions** (with research limitations/Implications (if applicable) – Exclusions/next steps, practical implications (if applicable) – Applications to practice/'So what?' Social implications (if applicable) – Impact on society/policy/future work/suggestions/recommendations)
 - ⑩ Originality/value – Who would benefit from this and what is new about it?
- ✓ Sentences must be complete & **passive** verbs used. The **3rd. Person (He, She, They)** **should not** be used,
- ✓ Should be written in the **past** tense & standard nomenclature should be used and **NO abbreviations**
- ✓ **No** literatures be cited or quoted in the abstract since your abstract is your summary highlights of your own work/research

3. KEYWORDS

- Usually 5-8 WORDS
- For the purpose of indexing/references. i.e to enable searches in databases, include all the keywords of your research
- NOT necessarily represent all the words in your title
- Some journals, esp. submission through ScholarONE Manuscript Central already specified the keywords in a particular chosen field
- Try to avoid abbreviations except standard ones

4. INTRODUCTION

- **Normally 1-1.5 PAGE** but more with social science papers
- should provide a **clear statement** of the problem, **the relevant literature** on the subject, and the proposed gap/approach or solution in **present** tense
- Lays the overview/groundwork for why the paper that follows is important-often includes the definition of relevant terms, a literature review, any hypotheses, and how this paper differs from other studies or papers on this topic
- Provides insights to the current or past problem
- It should be **understandable** to colleagues from a broad range of scientific disciplines.
- At least **15-20 REFS** cited with most current literatures of 1-3 years back from the year of submission. Eg. 2010 submission must have 2009, 2008 & 2007 refs although your research has been conducted 5-10 years ago.
- May include research **questions & justifications** of study
- Outline how your work adds to knowledge/fills the gap
- **Objective** must appear in the last paragraph

Introduction: Funnel approach



Objective –method- results

- Congruence and consistent
 - Ex. 1 objective – 1 method – 3 results
 - Ex. 2 objectives- 2 methods- 4 results
- Primary method tailor to objective

5. METHODS & MATERIALS

- **NO LIMITED PAGE NOS**
- Should be **complete enough** to allow experiments to be replicated or reproduced.
- Only truly new procedures should be described in detail
- Previously published procedures should be cited, and important modifications of published procedures should be mentioned briefly.
- Capitalize trade names and include the manufacturer's name and address (if applicable).
- Subheadings should be used & consistent with the order of methodology
- Explain why you selected the sample & group you did/participants
- Other previous relevant research must be presented adequately.
- Why did you use a particular questionnaire/instrumentation & why was it selected?
- What is its validity?
- Describe the measure you used.
- Why did you use a four or five scale Likert questionnaire?

6. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- **CLARITY & PRECISION**
- **MUST BE IN-LINE/IN ORDER WITH YOUR AIM & METHODOLOGY, WRITTEN IN PAST TENSE**
- **RESULTS should be explained, but largely without referring to the literature**
- **BETTER ILLUSTRATED WITH CHARTS/GRAPHICS/TABLES (CHARTS/GRAPHS PREFERABLE THAN TABLES)**
- **ALL FIGURES & TABLES MUST BE REFERRED TO AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE IN TEXT**
- **Past tense when describing findings in the authors' experiments**
- **EXPLAIN & DISCUSS WHY YOU GET SUCH RESULTS-may cite previous refs for comparisons. Be crisp!**
- **Previously published findings should be written in the present tense**

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FORMAT

- Feature 1
- Feature 2
- Feature 3
- Discussion –
reasons

- Feature 1
 - Reason 1
- Feature 2
 - Reason 2
- Feature 3
 - Reason 3
- Discussion
 - reason for all

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- R&D 1

R 1

- R&D2

R2

- R&D3

R3

- R&D4

R4

D – 1,2,3,4

GUIDE TO USE OF GRAMMATICAL

TENSES

- ✓ ABSTRACT: PAST TENSE BECAUSE YOU DESCRIBED WHAT YOU DID & WHAT YOU FOUND
- ✓ PRESENT TENSE WHEN REFERRING TO PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED WORK
- ✓ INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION: PRESENT TENSE IF YOU REFER TO PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED WORKS
- ✓ RESULTS: PAST TENSE {IF REFER TO TABLES & FIGURES. IDEAS SHOULD BE PRESENTED IN PRESENT TENSE}
- ✓ PAST TENSE WHEN REFERRING TO YOUR PRESENT RESULTS {NORMALLY WE GO BACK & FORTH BETWEEN THE PRESENT & PAST TENSES}

TENSE IN WRITING : TWO RULES

- ⑩ When a scientific paper has been validly published in a primary journal, it becomes knowledge.
- ⑩ Therefore, whenever you cite previously established work, ethics requires you to treat the work with respect – you therefore use the present tense.
- ⑩ Your own present work is not presumed to be established knowledge until after it has been validly published.
- ⑩ You therefore refer to it in the past tense.

- The Discussion should interpret the findings in view of the results obtained in this and in past studies on this topic.
- Describe how your data fits in with previous work and how it could contribute to further research.
- The Results and Discussion sections can include subheadings, and when appropriate, both sections can be combined.

7. CONCLUSION

- ❑ **MUST FULFIL THE STUDY OBJECTIVES (eg. Two conclusions for two objective statements)**
- ❑ **INCLUDE HOW THE PAPER ADVANCES RESEARCH IN THIS AREA. WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT IT?**
- ❑ **REFERS TO ONLY WORK DONE IN THE STUDY**
- ❑ **SHOULD NOT BE MORE THAN ONE THIRD of A PAGE (OR BETTER STILL 1 PARA)**
- ❑ **INCLUDE STUDY PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS* OR FUTURE WORKS**

(*RECOMMENDATIONS MUST BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH FUTURE STUDY IMPROVEMENTS FOR BETTER ACCURACY TO BE CONDUCTED BY FUTURE RESEARCHERS)

Conclusion



- Present global and specific conclusions
- Indicate uses and extensions
- Answer the original question
- Apply to theory and practice
- State limitations
- State implications for further research



- Summarise the paper – the abstract is for this
- Start a new topic/introduce new material
- Make obvious statements
- Contradict yourself

8. REFERENCES

Responsibility for the accuracy of bibliographic citations lies entirely with the authors

□ Citations in the text

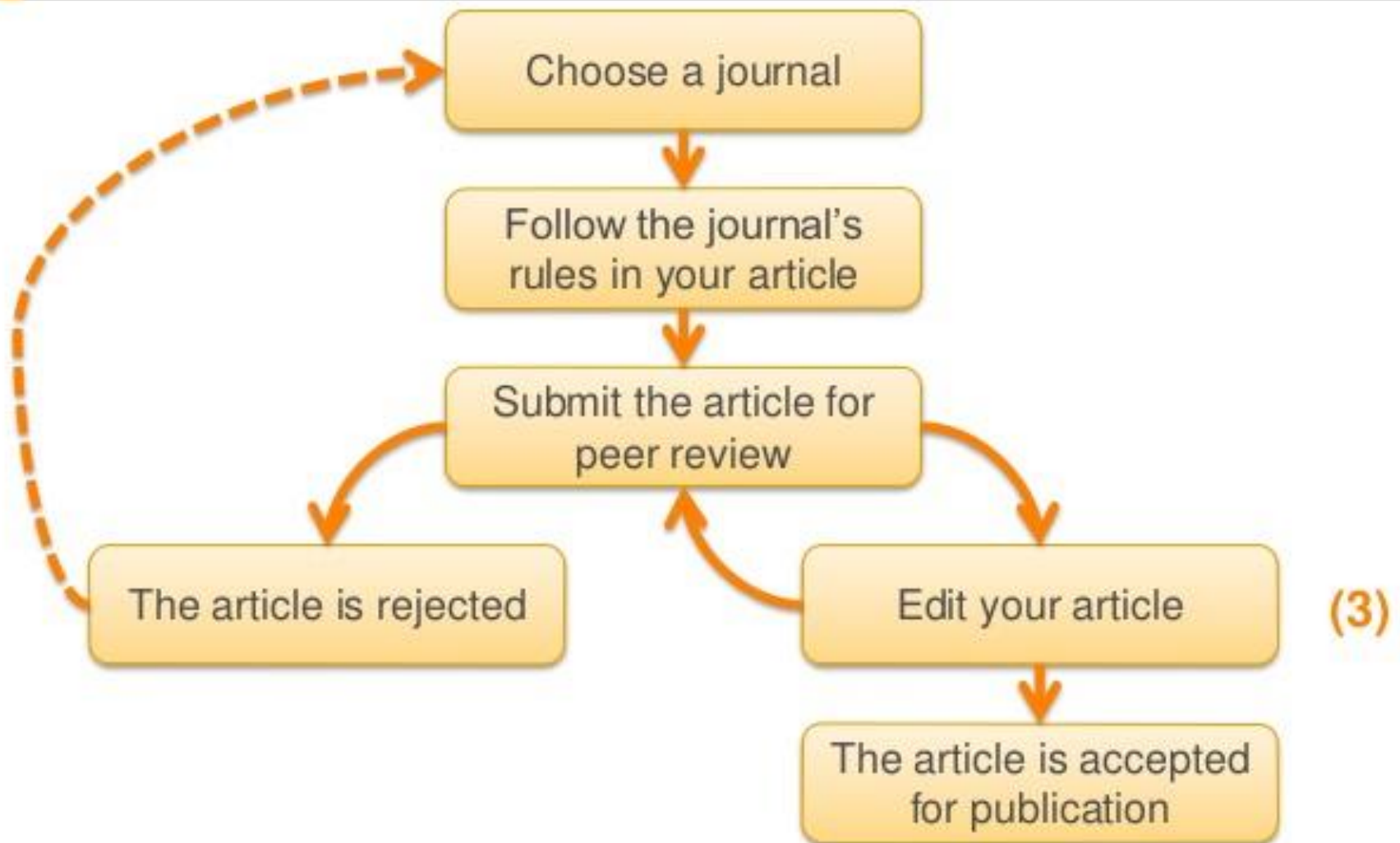
- Cite your own past relevant work, referees you like & journals you are going to submit
- Please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa).
- Avoid citation in the abstract.
- **Unpublished results and personal communications** should not be in the reference list, but may be mentioned in the text.
- Citation of a reference as '*in press*' implies that the item has been accepted for publication.

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C. Publication consideration

Stages of the publication process



hierarchy in journals

- **ISI – Institute for scientific information**
 - ISI-WoK (Web of Knowledge) - 16K
 - ISI-WoS (Web of Science)– IF – 11.6K
(Thomson Reuters)
- SCOPUS
- SSCI (Social Science Citation Index)
- Indexed journals
- Others- Emerald, Sage, etc

SPECIAL ISSUE

- FROM SEMINAR/CONFERENCE
- GUEST EDITOR AND GUEST EDITOR BOARD FROM SEMINAR COMMITTEE
- IDENTIFY 3 REVIEWERS FOR EACH PAPER
- DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCESS (PROOF OF EVIDENT)
- EX. 1: PERTANIKA- 8-10 PAGES- 5000 WORDS

CO-AUTHORSHIP

- CRITERIA
 - WRITING TEAM
 - RESEARCH TEAM (IDEA)
 - EDITING TEAM
- WHY CO-AUTHORSHIP
 - MORE AUTHORSHIP → MORE CITATION
→ MORE H-INDEX → MORE EXPOSURE
 - Ideal-writer vs Game-writer

Considering co-authorship

Benefits

- First time authors
- Demonstrates the authority and rigour of the research
- Especially useful for cross-disciplinary research



Where to find a co author

- Supervisor or colleague
- Conferences
- Journals

Considering co-authorship Tips

- Ensure the manuscript is checked and edited so that it reads as one voice
- Exploit your individual strengths
- Agree and clarify order of appearance of authors and the person taking on the role of corresponding author
- Distributing work
- Extending your work
- Co-ordination and revision



How to select the right journal?

Choosing a journal to publish in is an investment decision. A good choice can enhance the impact of your work and your reputation

- Factors to consider are relevant readership, recent articles, communicative, societies and internationality, likelihood of acceptance, circulation, time from submission to publication
- What type of paper are you planning to write i.e. practice paper, research paper, case study, review, viewpoint? Check first what type of paper the journal accepts.
- Be **strategic** (e.g. five articles in international peer reviewed journals vs one in 'top' ranked journal)

How to select the right journal?

Measuring quality

Are rankings important to you? Thomson Reuters ISI is the most well known ranking, **but others exist**. Citations are a good, but not complete, guide to quality

- Impact Factor
- Scopus
- H-index
- Usage
- Peer perception

Plagiarism check

- Before submit to blind review
- Process through “Turn it in”

Possible editor decisions

You will be advised of one of three possible decisions:

Accept

Reject

Revise

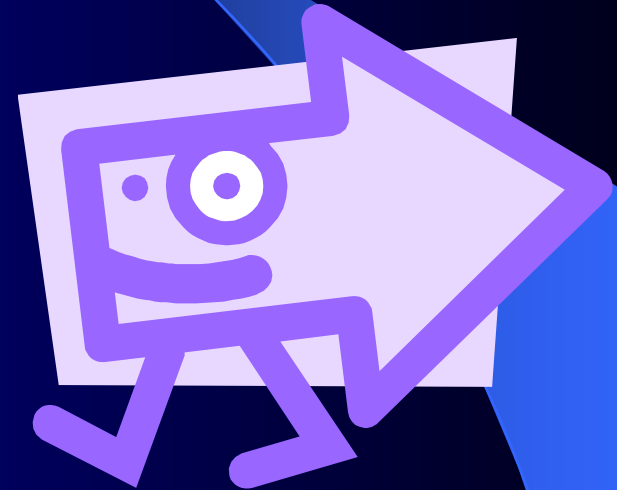
What if your paper is rejected?

- **Don't give up!**
Everybody has been rejected at least once
- **Ask why, and listen carefully!**
Most editors will give detailed comments about a rejected paper. Take a deep breath, and listen to what is being said
- **Try again!**
Try to improve the paper, and re-submit elsewhere. Do your homework and target your paper as closely as possible
- **Keep trying!**

Reasons for rejection

- Not following instructions – author guidelines
- Lack of fit (‘why was it sent to this journal’?)
- Problem with quality (inappropriate methodology, not reasonably rigorous, excessively long)
- Insufficient contribution (does not advance the field, a minor extension of existing work, there is no ‘gap in our understanding’)
- Did you understand the “journal conversation”?

Sorry!



Where submissions often fall short

- The theory base or market analysis is dated and general
- The conceptualization is weak - either the questions, or the 'big idea'
- The level and depth of discussion is shallow, weak, and lacks critical reflection
- More needs to be done to apply findings to theory and practice
- The presentation lacks clarity and could be a more compelling read

Request for revision



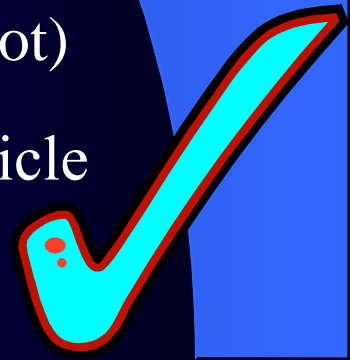
A request for revision is good news! It really is

- You are now in the publishing cycle. Nearly every published paper is revised at least once
- Don't panic!
- Even if the comments are sharp or discouraging, they **aren't** personal

“One Emerald author likes to let reviews sit for a week to let his blood pressure return to normal”.

How to revise your paper

1. **Acknowledge** the editor and set a revision deadline
2. **If you disagree**, explain why to the editor
3. **Clarify understanding** if in doubt –
‘This is what I understand the comments to mean...’
4. **Consult with colleagues** or co-authors and tend to the points as requested
5. Meet the revision **deadline**
6. Attach a **covering letter** which identifies, point by point, how revision requests have been met (or if not, why not)
7. For example “The change will not improve the article because...”



Beyond journal article

Other important publishing work that you might wish to get involved in includes:

- Book reviewing
- Refereeing/peer review
- Editorial advisory board membership
- Contributing editorship
- Regional editorship
- Editorship

Interested in proposing a book/series or a journal?



To conclude....

Keep these points in mind to achieve....

Presentation

Understand your target market

Be ethical

Learn from the review process

In collaboration

Check and check again

Attention to detail

Take your time

Involve your peers

Originality

Now spread the word!

Source

- Adapted from slides provided by Prof Kamarulzaman Jusof (UPM, 2011), Emerald Publication (2015) and inputs from the presenter.

Thank you bah