



# Research Methodology

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## TEXT/ Ref.Book

- ✓ John W. Creswell, Research Design – Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition – SAGE Publishers



# Journal paper backend procedure



# Mechanics of Paper Handling (1)

- ❖ Author submitted the manuscript in **journal/Conference**
- ❖ **Number is assigned** to the manuscript
- ❖ Manuscript sent to **associate editor (AE)**
- ❖ **AE** sends paper to 2-4 reviewers, along with **a proposed deadline** and **reviewing guidelines/forms**
- ❖ AE **reminds reviewers** that reviews are past due
- ❖ AE receives **reviews from reviewers**
- ❖ AE makes decision on the recommendations from reviewers.

## Mechanics of Paper Handling (2)

- ❖ A. Editor makes decision
  - ✓ Accept
  - ✓ Accept with minor revision
  - ✓ Major revision - Require rewrite with re-review
  - ✓ Reject
- ❖ Six months is typical for this process (one iteration)

# Paper Reviewing: The Players

- ❖ What is a **journal editor**? and what do they do?
  - ✓ Typically, a **member of academia** who is essentially a volunteer
  - ✓ **Assign papers** to reviewers
  - ✓ Insure that the **reviews get done**
  - ✓ **Make decisions** on which papers get accepted
  - ✓ Might arrange for special issues,etc
- ❖ What is a **reviewer**?
  - ✓ Typically, **a member of academia**, almost always a **volunteer**
  - ✓ Could **be well established**, could be a **student**
  - ✓ It's not all they do in life
  - ✓ Their job is to write a review, **communicate information to the editor and the authors, and do it in a timely fashion**

# Typical Review Criteria (1)

1. Is the **paper appropriate** for the journal? (Topic, level, etc.)
2. Is the **work original**, and correct? (content quality) For a **review paper, will it appeal to the journal audience?**
3. Is the **presentation** clear and **well organized**?
4. Is the **notation well conceived and consistent**?
5. Does the paper **appropriately cite prior work**, and place itself appropriately in relation to the field?
6. Is the **title appropriate**?
7. Is the **abstract appropriate**?
8. Is the **introduction** appropriate?

## Typical Review Criteria (2)

- ✓ If the paper fails 1 or 2, it will be rejected. Possibly the editor will suggest an alternate venue.
- ✓ If the paper is weak on 2 in some way, it will probably require a complete-review of the revision
- ✓ If the paper fails 3 badly enough it will probably be rejected or require major rewrite and re-review
- ✓ If the paper fails 4 or 5, it will probably require appropriate rewrite, with good chance it will require some re-review
- ✓ If the paper fails 6 through 8, it will probably need revision without re-review



# Role of Reviewer (1)

Help an editor decide whether a paper is suitable (or will be suitable after revision) for publication.

- ❖ Assuming the paper had no errors, would it be worthy of publication?
  - ✓ Is the paper “interesting”?
  - ✓ Originality (New?)
  - ✓ Appropriateness for this audience
  - ✓ Is it correct? (True?)

## Role of Reviewer (2)

- ❖ Is the presentation satisfactory?
  - ❖ **References** appropriate
  - ❖ **English** satisfactory, style satisfactory
  - ❖ Sufficiently **complete**
  - ❖ Can it be **improved**?
  - ❖ Should it be **required** to improve?



# **Suggestions** for Reviewing a Manuscript



# Start out with Your Own Summary of the Manuscript

Some illustrative sample comments are:

- ❖ This paper represents a major effort to test two competing theories about user satisfaction with electronic mail ... The methodology of the paper consists of ... The data were gathered from two field sites ... The major finding was that ... The contributions to theory and practice would appear to be ...
- ❖ This manuscript pursues two somewhat conflicting goals. It attempts to ..., while it also tries to ... . The authors do a good job of the first one, but their treatment of the second one raises more questions than it answers.



# Let the Editor and **Author Know** What **Your Expertise** Does, and Does Not, Cover

- ❖ By stating where you have expertise and where you lack expertise
  - ✓ **to help the editor and author to interpret and weigh your comments**
  - ✓ to gain additional credibility for claims where they do have expertise

# Let the Editor and **Author Know** What **Your Expertise** Does, and Does Not, Cover

- ❖ I read the paper from two perspectives: 1) someone who has employed the same methodology that the authors are using and 2) someone who is not familiar at all with the substantive area that the authors are investigating. My criticisms and suggestions are offered entirely from the first perspective.
- ✓ For the reader, such as myself, **who is unfamiliar with concepts X, Y, and Z**, the authors present no helpful explanation of these concepts or justification for their inclusion in the study in the first place ...
- ✓ **Another problem I had is that, probably like most of the people who read this journal, I am not deeply read in all three of the research fields that the authors draw upon. I cannot judge how well this paper builds on past research.**

## Give “Action-able” Advice

- ❖ Advice stated in the form of do-able tasks is mutually advantageous to the author and the reviewer
  - ✓ to point the author to a "fixed target" where he or she may aim the revision
  - ✓ to serve a criterion used by the reviewer to judge the revision
- ❖ In contrast, a reviewer who offers vague generalities and no action-able advice
  - ✓ no real "handle" with which to approve or disapprove the revision

## Give “Action-able” Advice to Editor

- ❖ **If my concerns can be addressed** successfully in a revision, then I believe the paper should be published. I have **four major concerns**. They are ...
- ❖ Therefore, I recommend rejection, **but would be willing to review a revised version if (1) ... and (2) ...**
- ❖ The following **suggestions are provided to improve the weaknesses** pointed out above:
  - ✓ Clearly state the objectives, contributions, and limitations of the study.
  - ✓ Provide a definition of what you mean by 3D textured meshes and use it consistently throughout the paper.
  - ✓ Using this definition, narrow down the literature review.



# Convince the Authors by Arguing from Their Own Assumptions and Framework

- ❖ A reviewer can always take issue with a manuscript's assumptions and framework
- ❖ Two strategies
  - An ineffective strategy. Disagreeing with the assumptions is not always an effective reviewing strategy
    - ✓ meaning all assumptions are incorrect
  - An alternative strategy is to accept the manuscript's assumptions
    - ✓ then point out any shortcomings by examining the consequences
    - ✓ if the assumptions lead to no objectionable consequences, then the assumptions might not be bad assumptions in the first place
- ✓ The later is more likely to convince the authors to review rather than by disputing the authors

# Convince the Authors by Arguing from Their Own Assumptions and Framework

On the first page, the paper says that it **will do the following** ... The rest of the paper, however, does **not follow through adequately** on what it promised to do. In particular, according to the standards of the research framework that the authors themselves have chosen, the following things still need to be done or need to be done better ... Still, there is much potential value in what the paper initially proposed and I encourage the authors to **flesh out the paper's ideas more thoroughly**. Along these lines, my suggestions are ...

- ❖ If the reviewer **suggests a different framework and set of assumptions**
  - ❖ only when the authors' original framework is given due consideration
  - ❖ **dismissing it outright is not a good idea**

# Provide Both (1) Your General, Overall Reaction and (2) a List of Specific, Numbered Point-by-Point Comments

- ❖ Reviews consisting entirely of numbered, point-by-point comments
  - ✓ gives the impression that the reviewer was simply typing up while reading linearly, sentence-by-sentence, turning it page-by-page
- ❖ With no statement of an overall reaction from the reviewer
  - ✓ author is left wondering about what the reviewer really means
  - ✓ editor wonders if the reviewer himself knows what he means

# Provide Both (1) Your General, Overall Reaction and (2) a List of Specific, Numbered Point-by-Point Comments

- ❖ A linear, sentence-by-sentence, and page-by-page reading might be useful
  - ❖ followed by amendments by paging through the manuscript once more
- ❖ Numbering the major points in a review is helpful to the editor and author.
  - ✓ For instance, an editor could then conveniently say to the author, "Pay particular attention to points 2, 3, and 5 by Reviewer 1."

# Quote, Give the Page Number, or Otherwise Explicitly Locate the Parts of the Manuscript to Which You Are Referring

## ❖ Pinpoints

- ✓ what you find difficult to understand,
- ✓ what you disagree with, or
- ✓ what you believe needs to be changed

## ❖ If the author should disagree then may respond precisely to the objection

- ✓ In the third paragraph on page 9, it is not clear to me that the authors understand the concept of construct validity.
- ✓ On page 3, in the literature review section, the paper says, "...only 12 percent of the past studies examined the same factors..." Exactly which studies were these? I do not doubt your statement, but I would like to be able to evaluate it for myself.
- ✓ On page 2, why does the prior research suggest that we need to study this topic, as you claim?


# Offer Comments on Tables, Figures, and Diagrams

- ❖ A **detailed comment about an illustration impresses** the author and editor
  - ✓ suggesting a new table, figure, or diagram encourages the author to sharpen his or her argument
- ❖ Examples
  - ✓ **Table 6 is difficult to understand.** The **labels along the vertical axis** are mentioned **nowhere** in the text.
  - ✓ **I don't understand the reason for including Figure 4.** What is the relevance of the number of X broken down into three categories?

# Be Kind

- ❖ There are tactful ways to express negative criticisms. For example,
  - ✓ if you are unsure what the contribution of the manuscript is, say “What's new in the proposed approach?” instead of “So what?”

Unkind remarks that are otherwise valid may create difficulties for the editor to persuade the author that the review does have merit.



# If Rejecting the Manuscript, Suggest What Future Research Efforts Might Examine

- ❖ Rejecting a manuscript and offering only the reasons for rejection
  - ✓ reveals a person who has no contribution to make to the overall community of scholars
- ❖ Rejecting a manuscript, but also offering suggestions about what the author could pursue instead or pursue differently in future research
  - ✓ reveals a person who is integrated into the community of scholars and seeks to foster its growth





# If Recommending a Revision, Spell Out Alternative Scenarios for How the Revision Could be Done

- ❖ Simply saying "**this paper needs a good rewrite**" is not, by itself, helpful, especially if it is true
- ❖ Often, there is more than one way to revise a manuscript
  - ✓ **Suggest two or more scenarios**
  - ✓ **Mention what you believe to be better and leave the choice up to the author**



# Provide Citations or a Bibliography

- ✓ A citation that the author finds helpful can be as valuable as a thousand or more words in the rest of the review

# Prepare a **Rebuttal** document!



## Rebuttal

**Manuscript ID: SUPE-D-X-XXX “.....”**

This document provides a statement of the revisions to the manuscript # SUPE-D-x-xxxxx Entitled “.....”. We would like to thank the reviewers for their valuable comments, which helped us in improving the paper at several places. We took each comment into consideration and did the necessary modifications in the revised version. Our revisions reflect all reviewer’s suggestions and comments. The revision, based on the review team’s collective input, includes a number of positive changes.

In this document, we first provide a summary of all the modifications followed by a point-by-point reply to the reviewers’ recommendations. To improve the readability of this document, and to help differentiate the reviewer’s comments from our response, we have used different color formatting in this document.

**Black color: Represents the reviewer comments.**

**Blue color: Represents the authors’ response to the reviewer.**

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**Table of Responses to Reviewer Comments**

Reviewer #	Reviewer Issue/Comment to Be Addressed	Response/Action Taken	Document Location
1	Fig. 2 should be described more clear; many elements in this figure are not named or labeled.	Thank you for your comments. We have revised the entire manuscript with clear descriptions of figures.	Please see revised manuscript
1	2. Figure 3 shows the sample execution of the algorithm, but the authors didn't describe the detail steps of the example.	As per your comments, detailed description of Figure 3 has been added to its caption. Moreover, the framework explanation also includes a discussion on the figure.	Please see page 11, Fig. 3 in revised manuscript