Understanding Reproducibility Challenges and Their Impacts on Stack Overflow

Dear developer, thank you for being a part of this study!

Many questions of Stack Overflow discuss coding issues (e.g., error, exception). Such questions often contain code segments with the issue descriptions. Developers prefer to reproduce the issue discussed in the questions while attempting to answer such questions. We produced a catalog of reproducibility challenges to reproduce the issues using the code examples posted in Stack Overflow questions. This survey aims at understanding how the developers perceive the catalog of our reproducibility challenges. Besides, we plan to know the developers' viewpoints on the prevalence, impact, and potential fixes to those challenges.

This survey is used to evaluate a Ph.D. research of X and it is not used for any commercial endeavors by any means. Your inputs will help tremendously and greatly appreciated it!

The survey will take 40-45 minutes for you to complete. Two of the participants will be selected randomly for a 25 CAD gift each.

All the responses will be anonymized and we will not share your personal information with anyone else. The survey is governed by Ethics approval from the University of X and thus we are bound by law to ensure your privacy.

Thank you very much for your participation!

Sincerely, X

* Required

What do we mean by the reproducibility of issues of Stack Overflow questions?

Reproducibility means a complete agreement between the reported issues and the investigated issues. Consider the following question:

```
/**********************************/
java.lang.NullPointerException on ArrayList
I have the following code:
for (int i=0; i<wallMaterialName.size(); i++){
if (Math.abs(calculatedWallUValue - alternativeWallUValue) > 0.01){
                                                //*****ERROR IN HERE*****
 if(wallMaterialName.get(i).charAt(0) == 'A'){
   PreparedStatement prepStateMat = con.prepareStatement("select * from concretestonefloor where value <?
order by value desc limit 1");
   prepStateMat.setFloat(1, (Float)wallMaterialLambda.get(i));
   ResultSet rsMaterial = prepStateMat.executeQuery();
   //...
  }
 //...
}
When I run the code, a "java.lang.NullPointerException" appear. The error comes from this code:
if(wallMaterialName.get(i).charAt(0) == 'A')
I don't know why the arraylist is empty since I have checked that it contains some data. Anybody knows how to
solve this problem? Thanks.
```

In this question, the developer claimed that s/he was getting "java.lang.NullPointerException" while running the code. While the other developers were trying to answer the question, most likely they were facing difficulties to produce the exception using the included code example. One user thus commented, "Could you add more code to analyze?"

That is, the reported issues can be reproduced using the code examples, on the contrary, such issues can always not be reproduced due to some unmet challenges.

Please indicate whether or not you consent to participate *

Mark only one oval.

I consent to participate in the study

I do not consent, and hence prefer not to participate

Skip to section 25 (Thank You)

2.	Do you answer Stack Overflow questions related to object-oriented programming (preferably Java)? *							
	Mark only o	ne oval.						
	Yes							
	◯ No	Skip to question 66						
	formation bout You	In this section, we ask you questions to know your software development experience, experience in object-oriented programming (especially Java), and answering questions of Stack Overflow.						
3.	How many y	years of experience do you have in object-oriented programming Java)? *						
	Mark only or	ne oval.						
	2 or les	ss						
	3 - 5							
	6-8							
	9 - 11							
	12 - 14							
	15 or n	nore						
4.	Profession *							
	Mark only o	ne oval.						
	Softwa	ire Developer						
	Techni	cal lead						
	Studen	ıt .						
	Resear	rch engineer						
	Other:							

5.	Year(s) of experience in software development *
	Mark only one oval.
	2 or less
	3 - 5
	6-8
	9 - 11
	12 - 14
	15 or more
6.	What is your account age (in year) in Stack Overflow? *
	Mark only one oval.
	2 or less
	3 - 5
	6 or more
7.	How many questions have you answered in Stack Overflow? *
	Mark only one oval.
	1-10
	11 - 20
	21 - 30
	31 - 40
	41 - 50
	50+

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Challenges of Reproducibility of Issues Reported at Stack Overflow Questions In the next sections, we will present four questions that discuss code issues and include code examples. You will be asked to reproduce the issue using the code example. You could use your development environment (i.e., IDE) or this online compiler (https://www.tutorialspoint.com/compile_java_online.php) to compile and execute Java code.

Then, we ask a question to know the reproducibility status (i.e., reproducible or irreproducible). If the issue cannot be reproduced, we ask to list the challenges that prevent reproducibility. Otherwise, we ask the list of actions that you perform to modify the code example to reproduce the issue. Finally, you need to give the modified code examples.

Question 1: Java: Resetting all values in the program I am working on this program where at the end of the game I ask the user if they want to play again. If they say yes, I need to start a new game. I made a restart() method:

```
public void restart(){
   Game g = new Game();
   g.playGame();
}
```

However when I call this method some of the values in my program stay at what they were during the previous game.

Is there a game to just clear everything and create a new instance of the game with all the default values?

8. Reproducibility status *

Mark only one oval.

I can reproduce the issue Skip to question 12

I cannot reproduce the issue

Reproducibility challenges for question 1

Report the challenges that prevent the issue the reproducibility using the given code examples.

9.	Did you find the following	challen	nges? *		
	Mark only one oval per row.				
			Yes	No	_
	Class/Interface/Method not	found			_
	Important part of code miss	ing			_
10.	•	_		-	cing the issues (other than the challenges and explain briefly why
11.	Please give the modified Copy and paste your modified c			*	
Ski	p to question 15				
	st of editing actions for uestion 1		ne actions to		formed to modify the given code example

	List of actions performed to reproduce the issue *							
	Check all that apply.							
	Addition of Classes and Methods							
	Inclusion of Native and External Libraries							
	Exception Handling							
	Object Creation, Identifier Declaration and Initialization							
	Invocation of Methods							
	Deletion of Redundant and Erroneous Statements							
	Code Migration							
	External File, Database and Dataset Creation							
	Debugging							
	No Action							
	above-mentioned list of actions)? Report the actions and explain briefly why such							
	actions need to perform.							
	actions need to perform.							
	actions need to perform.							
	actions need to perform.							
	actions need to perform.							
1.4								
14.	Please give the modified code example. *							
14.								
14.	Please give the modified code example. *							
14.	Please give the modified code example. *							
14.	Please give the modified code example. *							
14.	Please give the modified code example. *							

Mental demand: How much mental and perceptual activity was required (e.g., thinking, deciding, calculating, remembering, looking, searching, etc.)? Was the task easy or demanding, simple or complex, exacting, or forgiving?

Physical demand: How much physical activity was required? Was the task easy or demanding, slow or brisk, slack or strenuous, restful, or laborious?

Please evaluate your task completion experience for questions 1 by answering the following questions. Temporal demand: How much time pressure did you feel due to the rate or pace at which the tasks occurred? Was the pace slow and leisurely or rapid and frantic?

Performance: How successful do you think you were in accomplishing the goals of the task set by the experimenter (or yourself)? How satisfied were you with your performance in accomplishing these goals?

Effort: How hard did you have to work (mentally and physically) to accomplish your level of performance?

Frustration: How insecure, discouraged, irritated, stressed, and annoyed versus secure, gratified, content, relaxed, and complacent did you feel during the task?

15. Mental demand *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low											High

16. Physical demand *

Mark only one oval.

Mark o	only one	oval.									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low											High
Perfo	rmanc	e *									
Mark o	only one	oval.									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low	*										High
Effort	** only one	oval.	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High
Effort	only one		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High
Effort Mark o	only one	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Effort Mark of	1	2 evel*	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Effort Mark of	1 ration I	2 evel*	3 3	4	5 5	6	7 7	8	9	10	

Question 2: Getting Error On Xml resultSet in java when I try to run to execute java code it displays an error. which I used to get XML type resultset from oracle using the flowing method in java

poxml = XMLType(rs.getOPAQUE(1));

it shows cannot find symbol --- symbol : method getOPAQUE(int)

21.	Reproducibility status *				
	Mark only one oval.				
	I can reproduce the issu	-	question 25	5	
	producibility challenges question 2	Report the cl using the giv		at prevent the issue the r imples.	eproducibility
22.	Did you find the following o	challenges?	*		
	Mark only one oval per row.				
		Yes	No		
	External library not found				
	Identifier/Object type not four	nd 🔘			
	Too short code snippet				
23.	Did you find additional chal above-mentioned list of ch such challenges appear.	•		•	

24.	Please give the modified code example. *									
	Copy and paste your modified co	Copy and paste your modified code below.								
Skip	to question 28									
Lis	t of editing actions for estion 2	List the actions that are performed to modify the given code example to reproduce the issue.								
25.	List of actions performed	d to reproduce the issue *								
	Addition of Classes and	Methods								
	Inclusion of Native and	External Libraries								
	Exception Handling									
		er Declaration and Initialization								
	Invocation of Methods									
	Deletion of Redundant a	and Erroneous Statements								
	Code Migration									
	External File, Database	and Dataset Creation								
	Debugging									
	No Action									

26.	above		ioned I	ist of a					_			han the why such
27.	Pleas	e give t	the mo	dified (code e	vamnl	e *					
۷,		nd paste					·.					
				sk con	npletio	n expe	rience	for que	estions	s 2 by a	nswerir	ng the
TOI	owing	questi	ons.									
28.	Ment	al dema	and *									
	Mark	only one	oval.									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	Low											High

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29	. Phys	ical der	mand *									
	Mark	only one	e oval.									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	Low											High
30	. Temp	ooral de	emand	*								
	Mark	only one	e oval.									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	Low											High
31	. Perfo	ormanc	e *									
	Mark	only one	e oval.									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	Low											High
32	. Effor	+ *										
32		only one	a oval									

 $1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 5 \quad 6 \quad 7 \quad 8 \quad 9 \quad 10$

for question 3

33. Frustration level * Mark only one oval. 2 3 5 7 8 10 Low High I have an @Test method with invocationCount=3. Each time this method is run, there is a call for preparing some doc into All it's working GREAT when the @Test is run for the 1st time. The doc is succesfully found and loaded: final DocumentRegistryResource documentRegistryResource = Question 3: get RestClientFactory.getInstance ().createDocumentRegistryResource (resource is null getUserRestAuth()); final File importFile = new File(this.getClass().getResource("/documents-templatetest.xml*).getFile()); BUT, at the 2nd and 3rd invocation, i receive a null exception: this.getClass().getResource("/documents-template-test.xml") is no longer found. 34. Reproducibility status * Mark only one oval. I can reproduce the issue Skip to question 38 I cannot reproduce the issue Report the challenges that prevent the issue the reproducibility Reproducibility challenges using the given code examples.

5.	Did you find the following	challenge	s? *		
	Mark only one oval per row.				
		Υ	'es	No	_
	Class/Interface/Method not	found	\supset		_
	Database/File/UI dependend	су С			_
6.	•	_		-	ng the issues (other than the challenges and explain briefly wh
7.	Please give the modified of		nple. ^s	*	
Skip	to question 41				
	t of editing actions for estion 3	to reproduc			ormed to modify the given code example

38.	List of actions performed to reproduce the issue *
	Check all that apply.
	Addition of Classes and Methods Inclusion of Native and External Libraries Exception Handling Object Creation, Identifier Declaration and Initialization Invocation of Methods Deletion of Redundant and Erroneous Statements Code Migration
	External File, Database and Dataset Creation
	Debugging No Action
39.	Did you perform additional actions while reproducing the issues (other than the above-mentioned list of actions)? Report the actions and explain briefly why such actions need to perform.
40.	Please give the modified code example. * Copy and paste your modified code below.

Please evaluate your task completion experience for questions 3 by answering the following questions.

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Low

41. Mental demand * Mark only one oval. 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10 High Low Physical demand * 42. Mark only one oval. 3 10 High Low 43. Temporal demand * Mark only one oval. 3 10 High Low Performance * 44. Mark only one oval. 2 3 7 10 High

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	45.	Effort	*										
		Mark o	only one	oval.									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
		Low											High
	46.	Frustr	ation l	evel*									
		Mark o	nly one	oval.									
			1	2	2	1	5	6	7	Q	0	10	

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Understanding Reproducibility Challenges and Their Impacts on Stack Overflow

When I create an object from below class and send the address of audio to its constructor, I have to send the complete address like:

"C:\Documents and Settings\TheHero\My
Documents\NetBeansProjects\project1\src\project1\s1.wav"

But I want to use this code just with the name of sound like: "s1.wav".

I copied the sound into the src folder and then use "s1.wav" and the result was "java.io.FileNotFoundException".

If I use the complete address of sound when I run the program on another computer it does not work. I'm right?

Question 4: Use Sounds in java

```
public class MusicPlayer {
private String filename;
public MusicPlayer(String filename) {
    this.filename = filename;
}
public void play() {
    try {
        InputStream in = new FileInputStream(filename);
        AudioStream as = new AudioStream(in);
        AudioPlayer.player.start(as);
} catch (IOException e) {
        e.printStackTrace();
}
```

47. Reproducibility status *

Mark only one oval.

I can reproduce the issue Skip to question 51

I cannot reproduce the issue

Skip to question 51

Reproducibility challenges for question 4

Report the challenges that prevent the issue the reproducibility using the given code examples.

48.	Did you find the following	g challenge? *			
	Mark only one oval per row.				
			Yes	No	
	Outdated code (e.g., AudioS AudioPlayer class is outdate				
49.	Did you find additional ch above-mentioned list of o such challenges appear.	_	-	_	
50.	Please give the modified Copy and paste your modified co		*		
Skin	o to question 54				
Lis	t of editing actions for estion 4	List the actions to reproduce the		rmed to modi	fy the given code example

51.	List of actions performed to reproduce the issue *
	Check all that apply.
	Addition of Classes and Methods Inclusion of Native and External Libraries Exception Handling Object Creation, Identifier Declaration and Initialization Invocation of Methods Deletion of Redundant and Erroneous Statements Code Migration External File, Database and Dataset Creation Debugging No Action
52.	Did you perform additional actions while reproducing the issues (other than the above-mentioned list of actions)? Report the actions and explain briefly why such actions need to perform.
53.	Please give the modified code example. * Copy and paste your modified code below.

Please evaluate your task completion experience for questions 4 by answering the following questions.

Mark only one oval.

58. Effort *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low											High

59. Frustration level *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Low											High

Impacts of Reproducibility

61.

60.	What are the impacts on the reproducibility challenges to answer a question? *
	Here, moderate means kind of irritating, got past it and was able to answer properly; severe means wasted a lot of time to reproduce the issue, but got past it and was able to answer it properly; blocker means could not reproduce and hence could not answer.
	Mark only one oval per row.

	Not a problem	Moderate	Severe	Blocker	No opinion
Class/Interface/Method not found					
Important part of code missing					
External library not found					
Identifier/Object type not found					
Too short code snippet					
Database/File/UI dependency					
Outdated code					
Please provide the rationale for	your select	tions above i	n a coup	le of sent	ences *

62.	Given a strict budget to solve the catalog of reproducibility challenges, which								
	three you would like to prioritize above others? *								
	C1: Class/Interface/Method not found; C2: Important part of code missing; C3: External library not found; C4: Identifier/Object type not found; C5: Too short code snippet; C6: Database/File/UI dependency; C7: Outdated code								
	Mark only one oval per row.								
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	
	First choice								
	Second choice								
	Third choice								
63.	If you found ad	lditional (challenge	s (other t	han the a	shove-me	antioned a	challenges	١
03.	rank the challer						ritionea	crialieriges	,,
	For example, you fo think that challenge challenge3.	und three a	additional ch	nallenges, su	ich as challe	enge1, chall			you
Too	ol Needs								
64.	What kind of to	nol sunna	ort do voi	i need to	accict wit	th these r	enroduci	hility	
04.	challenges? *	or suppo	or cao you	a neca to	033131 WI	ur tricse i	Сргосис	Dility	

Tool Support

◯ No

Skip to section 25 (Thank You)

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
improve t	at suggests users the code examples to eproducibility		\bigcirc	\bigcirc		
reproduci	at warns users about ibility challenges that are may block the ibility	0	0	0	0	0
	.g., Eclipse) plugin eproducibility	0	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc
A browse reproduci	er plugin to support ibility	0	0		0	\bigcirc
	e that guides users to reproducibility	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
code segi	nalyzer that examines ments to find ibility challenges		\bigcirc		\bigcirc	

67.	Would you like to be con this survey? *	ould you like to be considered for a gift in appreciation for your participation in is survey? *					
	Mark only one oval.						
	Yes Skip to quest	ion 68					
	No Skip to section	n 25 (Thank You)					
Em	nail						
68.	Please provide your ema	il to send a summary of the survey responses. *					
Th Yo	nank provided. Your respon	the time to complete this survey. We truly value the information you have uses will contribute to our study of understanding reproducibility					

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