

Getting Your Scholarly Papers Published: A Guide on How to Avoid the Top Ten Most Common Causes of Paper Rejection

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Abstract

Scholarly writing and publishing are activities marked by intellectual honesty, integrity, and excellence. Together, they are an indispensable requirement for academics to maintain and sustain their careers in various academic institutions. However, in higher education institutions, the infamous aphorism 'publish or perish' has resulted in unethical academic practices. These practices derail the quality expected of scholarly writing and publishing. This paper is a collection of advice to novice writers on the ten most common reasons why scholarly papers are rejected, offering sound solutions to these problems. Though an unpleasant experience, scholarly paper rejection keeps authors on guard against unethical academic writing practices. It helps them to transform their scholarly papers to meet the high standards of academia. The paper contends that scholarly paper rejection is an important activity in scholarly writing and publishing because it ensures quality in academic knowledge production and dissemination.

Introduction

The research outputs from academic writing have been a top priority in higher education institutions and an essential metric for rating the performance of scholars and their institutions globally. Academic publishing is an influential way of disseminating and validating the research findings of both budding and seasoned researchers (Johnson & Dumon, 2012). Questions are often asked about the number of research outputs in terms of academic paper publication; the impact of the journals where those scholarly papers were published; and their citation counts during the promotion of faculty members in higher education institutions or for funding opportunities (Adib & Nimehchisalem, 2021). The need to publish scholarly papers in academic institutions as an indispensable requirement for hiring has been further fuelled by the infamous aphorism 'Publish or perish'. This desire to publish for ranking and bibliometrics has led to various unethical academic writing practices that undermine research findings. These include an increasing rise in plagiarised published content, 'salami slicing' of research findings published, deliberate duplicate publishing, data falsification, and fabrication, as well as ghost and guest authorship strategies that derail the quality of academic writing. The increasing rise and thriving of predatory journals is also as a result of the publish or perish approach. These unethical practices are contrary to the expected principles of academic writing, which are intellectual honesty, integrity, and excellence.

To arrest all forms of unethical practices in academic writing and publishing, journal editors and peer reviewers act as academic gatekeepers, quality control officers, or referees to judge and maintain the quality expected of scholarly papers. Their voluntary and exceptional work helps in scrutinising scholarly papers and safeguarding the rigour of academic knowledge.

Paper rejection is an important and necessary activity in academic writing (Krausman, 2020) because it assists authors in revising and/or transforming their scholarly papers to meet the standards of academic publishing. Scholarly paper rejection is caused by many factors. Previous authors such as Khadilkar (2018) and Krausman (2020) have highlighted some

common reasons for the rejection of scholarly papers, listing them with little to no explanation to guide graduate students and early career researchers. Others such as Pierson (2004), Ajao (2005), Ali (2010), Martin (2015), Fischer et al.(2017), Nair (2020), Adib and Nimehchisalem (2021), Delport (2021), Menon et al. (2022), and El-Gilany (2022) have approached the issue from disciplinary grounds and are domain-specific.¹ Based on the study's framework,² these scholarly papers were enough for me to offer more descriptive and straightforward guidelines on the causes of the ten most common reasons for paper rejection and suggest time-tested remedies for them. This paper attempts to discuss these ten reasons by adopting a universalist stance. This is because, after working with various journals and as an interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary researcher working with numerous research teams, I have noticed that this problem exists in all disciplines. This paper discusses causes and remedies for these problems to effectively guide especially graduate students and early career researchers. These ten common reasons for paper rejection include the scholarly paper's failure to follow journal-specific guidelines; lack of novelty or originality; improper study rationale; flawed or questionable methodology; poor presentation and/or packaging; lack of interpretation/discussion; wrong, incomplete or unjustified conclusions; lack of ethical approval; poorly written abstracts; and failure to address reviewers' comments satisfactorily.

1. Failure to follow journal-specific guidelines

Problem

Some scholarly papers are desk-rejected due to their failure to meet journal-specific guidelines (Bowler, n.d.). To me, it is absurd that authors fail to address journal guidelines. Journals have their content scope within a well-defined field or research niche. For instance, Adib and Nimehchisalem (2021) indicated that papers to be submitted to the *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies* should be focused on topics related to the broad fields of education and literacy. Submitting a paper outside these two broad fields will result in a desk-reject decision. Sometimes, well-written papers are desk-rejected by editors as a fair treatment decision to speedily allow authors to resubmit their scholarly papers to suitable journals.

Suggested remedy

This problem can be avoided if authors take considerable time reading the content; research niche, or field and field-specific keywords accepted by the journal on their website. Moreover, journals have their house styles such as paper word count and page limits; abstract formats and word-count limits; keywords type and number accepted; general layout specifications such as font style and size specifications; and illustration, table and figure specifications; as well as in-text citation and referencing formats. While this may be ignored by fairly new journals, high-impact and top-tier journals that are flooded with submissions would not proceed with the submission if these journal-specific guidelines are breached. This is because failure to follow a journal's submission guidelines reduces the face value of the paper and its credibility (Adib & Nimehchisalem, 2021). Another helpful way of avoiding paper rejection as a result of failure to follow journal-specific guidelines is to download, read, and carefully scrutinise some of the already published scholarly papers from the journal's website. Also, prospective authors can contact the editor asking if their paper could be a good contribution to the journal before they submit it (Griffiths & Norman, 2016). This would potentially inform the authors of the suitability or otherwise of their manuscripts early before deciding to submit.

2. Lack of novelty or originality

Problem

Novelty is one of the most important elements in a scholarly paper (Ali, 2010). Its absence could potentially render the paper non-scientific and of no interest to readers (Krausman, 2020). That said, there are exceptions especially when a study's purpose is to replicate existing studies to confirm results obtained or theories formulated. Journals that publish replication studies may not prioritise this reason. However, broadly, it is expected that a scholarly paper demonstrates

¹ The appendix gives detailed information on the purpose, methods, key results, and conclusions from those studies.

² Find an explanation of the study's framework in the appendix section.

something new and adds to the existing knowledge (Shibayama & Wang, 2020). Editors are interested in papers that make new and genuine contributions rather than reporting on what is already known (Griffiths & Norman, 2016).

Suggested remedy

If researchers keep up well with the ongoing studies in their field, they can keep abreast of the trends and topics that are recent and relevant. In any scholarly paper, authors need to discuss the contributions of previous authors in the field and establish the gaps that necessitate the research to be conducted. Fixing the problem of novelty can only be done at the research conceptualisation stage. This can be done through careful and thorough reading of previous and recent studies published in the field of inquiry. Knowledge gaps that often serve as seeds of further research are often provided by existing studies. This is an essential requirement of every published scholarly paper. It serves as an acknowledgment of the cyclical nature of the research process. It is incumbent on authors to consciously elevate the layer of novelty as they introduce the study after exposing the research gaps. Moreover, in the discussion section of the manuscript where they scholarly interpret and make academically robust meaning(s) of the results of their study, they must intelligently argue strongly on their study's novel contributions to the field.

3. Improper study rationale

Problem

A study's rationale offers the single motivating factor for embarking on a particular research project. This rationale must have solid theoretical or empirical evidence of its worth. Otherwise, the efforts put into the conduct of the research would be wasted. Thus, scholarly papers whose study's rationale fails to offer substantial scholarly justifications are viewed as lacking strong foundations akin to a house with a weak foundation. Such a study would lead to poor research results. Serving as a peer reviewer, I have recommended the rejection of some manuscripts because the study's rationale or aims were not well described. Others were presented with little or no theoretical and/or empirical justification(s). For such studies, the study's results and discussion sections are flooded with irrelevant and redundant material (Pierson, 2004).

Suggested remedy

As a remedy to this problem, a study's rationale must be focused and should form the central theme of the scholarly paper (Ajao, 2005). Every issue discussed in the paper must revolve around and adhere to the study's rationale. Writing texts that are too wordy or verbose to impress and/or to increase word counts only introduces unrelated and irrelevant content that buries a study's rationale. Authors must learn to write on related content using the study's rationale as the central focus. Moreover, authors must learn to offer academically robust justifications for their study's rationale. They must support their research motivations with sufficient literature and include factual preliminary surveys where possible.

4. Flawed or questionable methodology

Problem

The methodological framework is pivotal to the undertaking of every research study. Appropriate research methods that relate to the nature of the research, dictated by the study's rationale and underlying research objectives or questions must be adopted for the study. When the choice of the methodological framework for a particular study is flawed or inappropriate, it affects the data garnered which is likely not to sufficiently answer the research questions laid out for the study (Ajao, 2005). It must be noted that fixing the problem of a flawed methodology is not possible after the study is conducted, unlike the other reasons for paper rejection. Owing to this, the methods section is one of the most important sections of a manuscript that needs attention.

Suggested remedy

To avert this pitfall, authors must diligently review the methodological approaches used by previous researchers who have carried out similar studies. This is done at the literature survey stage where related scholarship is comprehensively reviewed. This should reliably inform authors of the methodological choices that work best in similar studies and could potentially yield the right data in answering research questions. In a scholarly paper, the methods must be thoroughly described to allow possible replication of the study by other researchers. When the methods are explicitly described, it allows future researchers who adopt them for the same or similar research settings to yield the same or similar results. Moreover, authors must offer enough justification from the literature to support the appropriateness of their methods to make the section scholarly.

5. Lack of interpretation/discussion

Problem

Scholarly papers are sometimes rejected based on the lack of interpretation or discussion of their results. Some authors just use the discussion section to reiterate and/or elaborate the results of the study in another manner (Ali, 2010). Others fail to offer robust and scholarly interpretations of the exact results presented. In some instances, some authors discuss unrelated results which have not been presented. There are cases where authors fail to dialogue with previous authors to appropriately situate their current findings within the field of inquiry. The authors usually engage in the conversation alone. This flaw in writing the discussion section of scholarly papers often leads to paper rejection.

Suggested remedy

The discussion section is supposed to intelligently draw sound and valid interpretations of the study's results. It is supposed to make meaning of the results or findings for readers to appreciate their worth. Only results based on the research objectives or questions presented must be discussed so that the focus of the study will not be lost. In discussing the results, authors are expected to compare and contrast their results with related findings and theories in previous studies. Authors should involve previous authors in an intellectually captivating discourse, giving what Fischer et al. (2017) term 'theoretical argumentation' on the 'why' of the results. Do the study's results support or refute the established theories and findings in existing studies? What underlying reasons might have accounted for the 'why' of the results? They must use the section to elevate the novel or original contributions their study makes to the field.

6. Wrong, incomplete or unjustified conclusions

Problem

Conclusions drawn from the key results or findings of a study are supposed to offer scholarly inferences that offer legitimate answers to the research questions and/or hypotheses set for a study. Unfortunately, some authors present wrong or unjustified conclusions that are not based on the results of the study (Ali, 2010). Some authors use the conclusion section to reinvent the abstract section of the paper or reiterate the results that have already been presented and discussed thereby leading to the rejection of their submitted papers.

Suggested remedy

To write a good, complete, and justified conclusion, the authors must present a concise summation of the contributions of the study. They must use the section to draw inferences about each of the research questions or hypotheses for the study. Afterward, limitations that might have affected the study's results and its allied conclusions can be described. Implications of the study and recommendations for policy and practice are then often discussed. Finally, the concluding section usually ends with a suggestion for further areas of research. When this is done by authors, they acknowledge the cyclical nature of the research process.

7. Poorly written abstracts

Problem

Abstracts, whether structured or unstructured, are supposed to be the second point of contact for editors and peer reviewers after the title. They are expected to advertise the paper and present its summarised content to the readership audience. As such, great care ought to be taken by authors in writing it. Many abstracts lack important ingredients such as the methods section as well as key conclusion(s) drawn from the principal results of the study. Many submitted manuscripts only give elaborated information on the study's aims and its importance. Others highlight the key results after the study aims. The main problem is that these authors use the word count limit for the abstract section to overly elaborate on some sections at the expense of other equally important sections such as the methods and conclusion (the most ignored sections in abstracts from my personal experience in serving as a peer reviewer for over 50 journals).

Suggested remedy

As a good advertising medium for the paper, the abstract is supposed to be a concise version of each of the ingredients in the scholarly paper. Though simple, it must be informative enough to offer an holistic understanding of the study. In many disciplines, the abstract should follow what I refer to as a mini IMRaD-C (introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion). Because of its key feature, abstracts of scholarly papers are ideally written as a last activity. Word count limits set by journals for abstracts must be heeded by authors. As the accepted practice, abstracts report on an already conducted study and as such, should be written in the past tense. Aside from this, the abstract section must ideally have no references.

8. Lack of ethical approval or following ethical protocols

Problem

The conduct of research is a rigorous process and authors are mandated to secure the required ethical approval and follow meticulous ethical protocols that govern the conduct of research. Unfortunately, some scholarly papers are silent on ethical approval and protocols (El-Gilany, 2022). Ethical approval is not necessarily relevant for all types of studies but a frequent reason for paper rejection. Failure to strictly follow ethical protocols in conducting research could give room for compromises of the expected research standards.

Suggested remedy

To avert this problem, authors are advised to seek approval for the conduct of their studies from their Institutional Research Ethics Committee and Review Boards. More so, study participants who are recruited must be asked to consent officially to participate. This should be done by asking them to sign an informed consent form that clearly describes the nature of the study and expectations of them. More so, authors are expected to describe measures they have taken to protect the identity and general welfare of study participants during data collection, data treatment, and writing of the paper such as using pseudo-identity elements in representing their names, organisations, and views.

9. Poor presentation and packaging

Problem

When the general organisation of the contents in a scholarly paper is haphazard, contrary to the dictates of a journal's template or author guidelines, it is said to be of poor presentation and packaging. Also, when a paper's content is flawed with numerous grammatical errors and inconsistencies in expressions, as well as syntax errors such as sentence structure, it is seen as poorly presented and packaged. Since language is the medium for reporting on a study's findings, they should be expressed well (Adib & Nimehchisalem, 2021).

Suggested remedy

To remedy this situation, authors must carefully follow the guidelines for authors prescribed by the journal. Also, it would be advantageous for authors to ask a language expert or editor to

thoroughly proofread their scholarly papers before they are submitted to fix all syntax and grammatical errors. Authors can use editing software tools such as Grammarly, Ginger, and others to edit their scholarly papers. Authors must understand that the worth of scholarly papers is not judged by the volume of word count but rather by the crispiness, logic, and clarity of thoughts.

10. Failure to address peer reviewers' comments satisfactorily

Problem

One of the most painful paper rejections is the post-peer-review rejection which is caused by the failure of authors to satisfactorily address the comments raised by peer reviewers. While an initial acceptance of an academic paper pending some degree of revisions is good news, it requires a careful and thoughtful response to each of the comments and concerns raised by the peer reviewers. This stage offers the author(s) a chance to increase the academic rigour and quality of their papers with constructive suggestions from the peer reviewers, as this paper has equally benefitted from. Yet, some authors rush through the revisions and/or omit to respond to some. Others decline every suggestion from the peer reviewers, even crucial comments that would have enhanced the academic rigour of the manuscript.

Suggested remedy

To avoid this problem of paper rejection, authors should not take chances. Instead of rushing through the revisions and/or failing to respond to all comments, a useful strategy is to use an author response table to respond point-by-point to all comments raised by each of the assigned reviewers. In the author response letter or table, the authors must refer to the page(s) and line numbers where the revisions have been made or highlight those sections with a different font colour to make it easy for the peer reviewers to track the changes. Granted, authors may not agree with all of the comments raised by the peer reviewers, but in clarifying the disagreement, it is kind and scholarly to use polite language with scholarly justifications in clarifying the disagreement. State your point clearly after appreciating the concern of the peer reviewers. This takes time. If authors feel that the substantial revisions requested by the journal editor after the peer-review process cannot be done within the timelines given, they should request revised paper submission extensions. Journal editors only want to publish quality submissions and are likely not to turn down a request for more time to address the peer review comments satisfactorily. A short note of appreciation for the efforts of the journal editor and peer reviewers in the cover letter following the revised paper submission would be good. After all, we all need commendation for our hard work.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed ten potential reasons why scholarly papers are rejected by journals and has offered suggestions on how to avoid each of them. This study's novelty, which is not evident in most of the reviewed articles, is with its applicable guidelines to potential authors in diverse disciplines as well as the uniqueness of the personal experiences of the author, many of which are not explicit in similar studies. More so, the paper identifies the most significant reasons among the wider set of ten for which prospective authors most need to be on the lookout. The reasons that stand tall among the others are wrong or questionable methodology; lack of novelty or originality; and improper study rationale. While the others can be repaired after the study has been conducted, these significant reasons for paper rejection cannot. It must be noted that not all papers are rejected as a result of their potential flaws being identified. Some scholarly papers may meet all the requirements of academic writing but may not be accepted for publishing due to constraints of journal space. As mentioned earlier, scholarly papers of seasoned and budding scholars can equally be rejected. When this happens, authors need to keep calm and should not get emotional about it. Paper rejection must be seen positively, as a learning experience in improving the standards of scholarly papers. Authors who receive a rejection decision must do well to revise their manuscripts based on the extensive comments received to heighten the academic rigour of the paper and resubmit to another appropriate journal. While this paper makes a significant contribution in exposing some common reasons for paper rejection and their remedies, future studies could elaborate further with practical examples from extracts of case studies. Moreover, other studies could draw on

the plural experiences of a wide range of astute journal editors and peer reviewers to get diversified views on the potential reasons for paper rejection.

Acknowledgment

I thank Dr. Jun S. Camara, Center Head for the Center for History, Culture, Arts, Languages and Innovative Education (CHCALIE) – Pangasinan State University, Philippines for inviting me to present a lecture themed 'Getting Published' at their publication workshop for graduate students (PUMASA 3) where the desire to write this paper to help graduate students and early career researchers globally was developed.

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Appendix

Study's Framework

This practice paper adopted a narrative or traditional review procedure (Baker, 2016) in conducting a synthesis of the current knowledge on reasons for paper rejection and remedies to them. This gave the author the flexibility to select articles deemed relevant to the topic under discussion without following the rigid procedures in conducting other review types (Chinn, 2021). Relevant articles on the topic were selected from the year 2000 to 2024. The selection criteria included papers with author(s) who are seasoned editors or peer reviewers and have engaged in conversations on the reasons for paper rejection discussed in the study. There was no restriction on the discipline or domain treated in the manuscripts selected. Sixteen (16) scholarly papers were included in the scholarly discussion

Authors & Title of Paper	Purpose	Methods	Key results	Conclusions
Khadilkar, S. S. (2018). Rejection Blues: Why Do Research Papers Get Rejected? <i>The Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology of India</i> , 68(4): 239–241.	This is an editorial that briefly analysed five top reasons for paper rejection of 400 journal articles that were submitted to the <i>Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology of India</i> and how to deal with rejections. It was aimed at helping and inspiring authors to develop better manuscripts to reduce their chances of paper rejection.	No clear methodology though it is a narrative of the editor-in-chief's observation of paper rejection cases in the <i>Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology of India</i> .	The editorial unearths five top reasons for paper rejection which were poor methodology; no new information; poor scientific content; reported cases not rare enough or of low priority; and similar papers existing in the literature.	Paper rejection should be viewed as an avenue to improve the manuscript and resubmit rather than as a discouragement.

Authors & Title of Paper	Purpose	Methods	Key results	Conclusions
Adib, S., & Nimehchisalem, V. (2021). Reasons for manuscript rejection at internal and peer-review stages. <i>International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies</i> , 9(3): 2-8.	The paper was aimed at describing the common reasons for paper rejection internally by journal editors and externally by peer reviewers in the <i>International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies (IJELS)</i> to offer a pathway for increasing their acceptance rate.	An inductive thematic analysis of review reports of 100 rejected submissions to the journal between 2018 and 2020 was carried out.	The study revealed that the main reasons for paper rejection internally by journal editors are problems with originality, out of the journal's scope, format, poor diction/language, and general organisation. On the other hand, the principal reasons for paper rejection by peer reviewers were poor methodology; organisation; language; insignificance of the study's results; poor literature review; lack of clear and conventional results; and lack of in-depth discussions, as well as thick conclusions, and the lack of relevant, current and impactful references.	Paper rejection is an important aspect of journal publishing and should be taken as a means of improving a paper to heighten its quality and scientific impact when it is improved and finally published.
Griffiths, P. D., & Norman, I. J. (2016). Why was my paper rejected? Editors' reflections on common issues which influence decisions to reject papers submitted for publication in academic nursing journals. <i>International Journal of Nursing Studies</i> , 57(2016) A1–A4.	The paper presents a reflection of editors of the <i>International Journal of Nursing Studies</i> on common issues that often result in a paper's rejection.	A narrative and discussion of the issues.	The key results show that the principal reasons for paper rejection in the journal on the part of editors. On the other hand, peer reviewers' rejections were based on obscurity in English language expressions, the paper not being well written, not reporting essential details of the study, failure to follow the author's guidelines, and drawing unwarranted conclusions.	In summary, the authors highlighted two issues that authors need to take note of when submitting manuscripts if they want to avoid rejection which are ensuring that the research holds substantial merit and scholarly reporting on it.
Johnson, A. M., & Dumon, O. (2012). <i>Charting a course for a successful research career: A guide for early career researchers</i> . Elsevier.	The book offers specific guidance to early career researchers on how they can become successful researchers.	The author approached the subject from his perspective and experience as an established researcher and information in other secondary resources.	The author advises early career researchers to take cognizance of author guidelines as well as the style of the journal they want to publish in as a first step in getting published. He went on to offer guidelines on how to write a plausible introduction, methods, results, discussion, and concluding sections of a manuscript.	The book advises authors to follow the principles of excellence, logic, accuracy, and quality in the procedures from the conduct of the research to the writing of the paper if they want to get published.

Authors & Title of Paper	Purpose	Methods	Key results	Conclusions
El-Gilany, A. (2022). Editorial (desk) rejection without peer review of a manuscript revisited: A note to researchers. <i>Egyptian Journal of Community Medicine</i> , 40(4): 230-232.	The paper discusses briefly desk rejection from the editor, the reasons for a desk rejection, and what authors can do.	An editorial with a narrative approach based on personal experience and information from other published articles.	The paper discusses six common reasons for desk rejection, which include the paper being out of the scope of the journal; poor manuscript preparation, which includes missing crucial aspects such as tables, figures, etc.; lack of originality, novelty and impact; flaws in the research methods; poor writing quality; and lack of ethical considerations for the conduct of the research.	The author advises authors to carefully weigh and use the few editorial comments to improve their manuscript and resubmit to another journal.
Fischer, E., Gopaldas, A., & Scaraboto, D. (2017). Why papers are rejected and how to get yours accepted: Advice on the construction of interpretive consumer research articles. <i>Qualitative Market Research</i> , 20(1): 60-67.	The paper discusses eight key reasons for paper rejection and offers a path on how to reduce rejection.	The paper adopts a dialogical collaboration between a co-editor of the <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i> and two junior scholars who represent the intended audience of this paper who are potential authors, especially junior researchers who conduct research in interpretive consumer research.	The paper describes the eight most common reasons for paper rejection and offers solutions to them. These are not clearly establishing the theoretical conversation the paper aims at contributing to in the early part of the paper; failure to situate the paper within the scope of the journal; and failure to scholarly expose the gaps, problems, and questions after reviewing the extant literature in the field. Others include failure to ask questions that are answerable from the data garnered from the research, and failure to build theoretical claims about the descriptive observation of contexts in the paper.	The authors advise potential authors who aspire to publish in top-tier journals to consider helping them avoid these flaws by adopting their proposed solutions to increase their chances of paper acceptance.
Ali, J. (2010). Manuscript rejection: Causes and remedies. <i>Journal of Young Pharmacists</i> , 2(1): 3-6.	The paper is a guest editorial paper intended for readers and potential authors of the <i>Journal of Young Pharmacists</i> on the causes of paper rejection and remedies for research and review papers.	This is an editorial that is based solely on the experiences of the author.	The paper discusses some common reasons for rejecting manuscripts such as lack of novelty, improper study rationale, flaws in the study's methods, lack of interpretations of the study's results, submission not within the scope of the journal, and the use of inadequate and obsolete literature survey.	The author implores potential authors to critically follow the suggestions given in the paper to prevent the common reasons for paper rejection described.

Authors & Title of Paper	Purpose	Methods	Key results	Conclusions
Martín, E. (2015). Letters of rejection. <i>Current Sociology</i> , 63(7): 937–942.	This editorial paper presents three key problems that often lead to paper rejection in the <i>Journal of Current Sociology</i> and how they can be reduced.	Editorial is is a narrative based on personal experiences working as an editor in the <i>Journal of Current Sociology</i> .	The study discusses some reasons for paper rejection such as the paper not meeting the scope of the journal and authors not following the editorial policy and author guidelines such as word count limits, paper formats, serious grammatical flaws, etc. Also, the problem of content has to do with the lack of relevance and originality; missing important literature in the field of inquiry. The paper discusses how these issues that often lead to paper rejection could be reduced.	The author contends that though quality and excellence in a scientific sense are required for paper acceptance, a good paper is often the product of effective collaboration between authors, editors, and peer reviewers.
Pierson, D. J. (2004). The top 10 reasons why manuscripts are not accepted for publication. <i>Respiratory Care</i> , 49(10):1246–1252.	This paper describes ten top reasons for paper rejection in the <i>Respiratory Care</i> and offers practical resources for authors to overcome them.	The paper is a perspective on the top ten reasons for rejecting papers in <i>Respiratory Care</i> and the advice offered is domain-specific, in the field of respiratory care.	The paper discusses how wrong formats and choice of journal, not following instructions, poor writing, suboptimal reporting of results, getting away from the discussion, poor study design, and failure to satisfactorily address peer reviewers' comments could lead to paper rejection. It offers practical advice on how to prevent these ten top causes of paper rejection.	The author advises authors to pay careful attention to study designs as the wrong choice after conducting the study can be repaired unlike the others discussed. It offers hope to first-time researchers that if they meticulously follow the practical advice given, they may potentially be able to publish in <i>Respiratory Care</i> .
Nair, B. (2020). Pitfalls in article submissions for publication. <i>Indian Dermatology Online Journal</i> , 11(6), 937-943.	This paper offers sound guidelines on how to avoid the pitfalls of paper rejection, customised for especially clinical dermatologists.	The paper is a reflection on research on paper rejection.	The paper discusses how to avoid paper rejection in the areas of paper conceptualisation, statistical machinations, authorial misconceptions, article structuring, and final journal selection.	The author presents a checklist of the pitfalls for authors to be aware of to get published.

Authors & Title of Paper	Purpose	Methods	Key results	Conclusions
Delport, W. (2021). Peer reviewers' reasons for rejecting manuscripts submitted to the Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa. <i>Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa</i> , 18(1): ix-xx.	The paper discusses some reasons for paper rejection from the perspective of peer reviewers who review manuscripts submitted to the <i>Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa</i> , limiting it to studies in the field of music in Africa.	The paper presents a case study of some of the peer reviewers' comments on rejected manuscripts that were submitted to the <i>Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa</i> .	The paper benchmarks the peer review comments against the standard requirements of a good article set by the journal and how many authors failed to meticulously follow them. The key requirements include weak methodology and poor presentation of results and discussion, as well as inappropriate study rationale, amongst others.	The paper argues that authors need to take considerable time in writing their research papers, ensuring that the scientific methods are rigorously followed while paying attention to the requirements of the <i>Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa</i> if they want to get published.
Ajao, O. G. (2005). Some reasons for manuscript rejection by peer-reviewed journals. <i>Annals of Ibadan Postgraduate Medicine</i> , 3(2): 9-12.	The paper attempts to discuss some reasons for paper rejection with a focus on clinical research papers.	It is a perspective paper shared by the author who is an editorial board member of <i>Annals of Ibadan Postgraduate Medicine</i> directed to students who undertake clinical studies.	The authors discuss some key reasons for paper rejection which include lack of objective; irrelevant and unimportant subject matter; questionable and flawed methodology; and lack of originality, as well as inadequate "packaging" of the report.	The paper contends that authors need to follow the rudiments of good research by keeping up to speed with the latest research procedures in scientific writing.
Bandewar, S.V.S., Aggarwal, A., & Kumar, R. (2018). Medical Council of India's amended qualifications for Indian medical teachers: Well intended, yet half-hearted. <i>Indian Journal of Urology</i> , 34(1): 3.	The paper discusses India's amended qualifications for medical teachers especially in the area of research and publication in indexed journals.	It is a perspective paper on the Indian Medical Council's amended qualifications for medical teachers which places a premium on the quantity of publications aside from the quality metrics required for societal development.	The paper presents the best practices that should be followed in conducting rigorous and well-meaning research that could be published in indexed journals.	The paper advises the Indian Medical Council to provide the needed training and logistics to equip medical teachers to publish in indexed journals while avoiding paper rejection which is often caused by poor conduct of the research.

Authors & Title of Paper	Purpose	Methods	Key results	Conclusions
Bowler, S. (n.d.). <i>Common reasons why scholarly papers are rejected by journal editors</i> . https://www.deakin.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/269831/reasons_papers_rejected-24.08.pdf	The paper discusses common reasons why academic papers are rejected by journal editors and peer reviewers.	The paper presents a list of reasons why journal editors and peer reviewers reject submitted academic papers.	The paper presents the list of paper rejections from editors and peer reviewers and discusses the checklist in the publication manual of the American Psychological Association that authors can use in assessing their manuscripts before they are submitted.	The author advises authors, especially budding authors, to ensure that they use the checklist in the paper to benchmark their papers before submitting them to journals.
Menon, V., Varadharajan, N., Praharaj, S. K., & Ameen, S. (2022). Why do manuscripts get rejected? A content analysis of rejection reports from the Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine. <i>Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine</i> , 44(1): 59-65.	The paper presents a content analysis of rejection reports submitted by peer reviewers in the <i>Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine</i> for potential authors to be aware of best practices in academic writing accepted by the journal.	The paper adopts a content analysis of sampled paper rejection reports from peer reviewers and discusses the key issues that need to be considered critically by authors.	The key issues discussed included establishing a good study rationale, novelty, strong methodology, and scholarly presentation of results and discussion, as well as drawing tentative conclusions as good strategies to get published in the journal.	The thorny issue of rejection of papers in the journal discussed was to help prospective authors avoid similar flaws to bolster their chances of getting published in the <i>Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine</i> .
Krausman, P. R. (2020). The necessity of manuscript rejection. <i>The Journal of Wildlife Management</i> , 84(5):839-840.	The paper presents a discussion of reasons for rejection of papers submitted to the <i>Journal of Wildlife Management</i> .	The paper is an editorial message from the desk of the Editor in response to numerous calls by authors on reasons why their manuscripts submitted were rejected.	The paper presents a case study analysis of 100 manuscripts submitted to the journal that was rejected from 3 September 2019 to 27 March 2020. It discusses reasons for paper rejection from the least reasons (such as poor writing, inaccurate terminology, unclear methodology and unsupported inferences) to most serious flaws (such as poor methods, failure to present a strong theoretical framework, and lack of novelty).	The paper concludes that authors must design the study protocols well enough especially the methodology and the novelty of the study if they are serious about getting published.