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A-Z from Writing to Publishing Your Research



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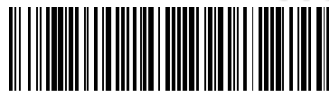
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ABSTRACT

Writing a research is much easier than the research itself, as you already spend time and effort for making a research and getting out results etc. This paper helps you in order to write your research in a proper format and structure, so it can be accepted and published in international journals. The ethics of scientific research takes an important issue to consider and how to adhere to rules and avoiding fabrication, falsification and plagiarism.



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1 INTRODUCTION

This paper is aimed to researchers at any discipline who wish to write and publish their research work. Whether you are experienced or inexperienced author, or have already wrote and published in research journals, or if you have ever had a paper rejected due to poor structure, or poor readability, then the paper will help you.

The paper is structured in an easy way to provide you with a roadmap to:

- (a) Start the first step to plan and organize your paper, structure each paragraph and each sentence so that the reader can easily follow the logical build-up towards various conclusions.
- (b) Choose a title and write abstract that will attract attention and to be read.
- (c) Decide what to include in the various parts of the paper (Introduction, Methodology, Discussion etc.).
- (d) Highlight your claims and contribution.
- (e) How to search and choose an appropriate journal, preferably with high impact factor.

The paper focuses on the ethics of scientific research, paraphrasing and plagiarism and provide a clear view to understand what is not plagiarism, how to paraphrase others people's work under the rules of ethics research.

2 Structure of the Paper

Clearly, researches from different disciplines write in different ways and sometimes follow a different structure. For example, there are significant differences between the ways an engineering, medical and sociological paper are written and constructed. However, whatever field you are in, the rules are the same: clarity, logic, conciseness (no redundancy), no ambiguity, and the highest level of readability possible.

The typical structure of a paper can be structured as shown in the figure below:

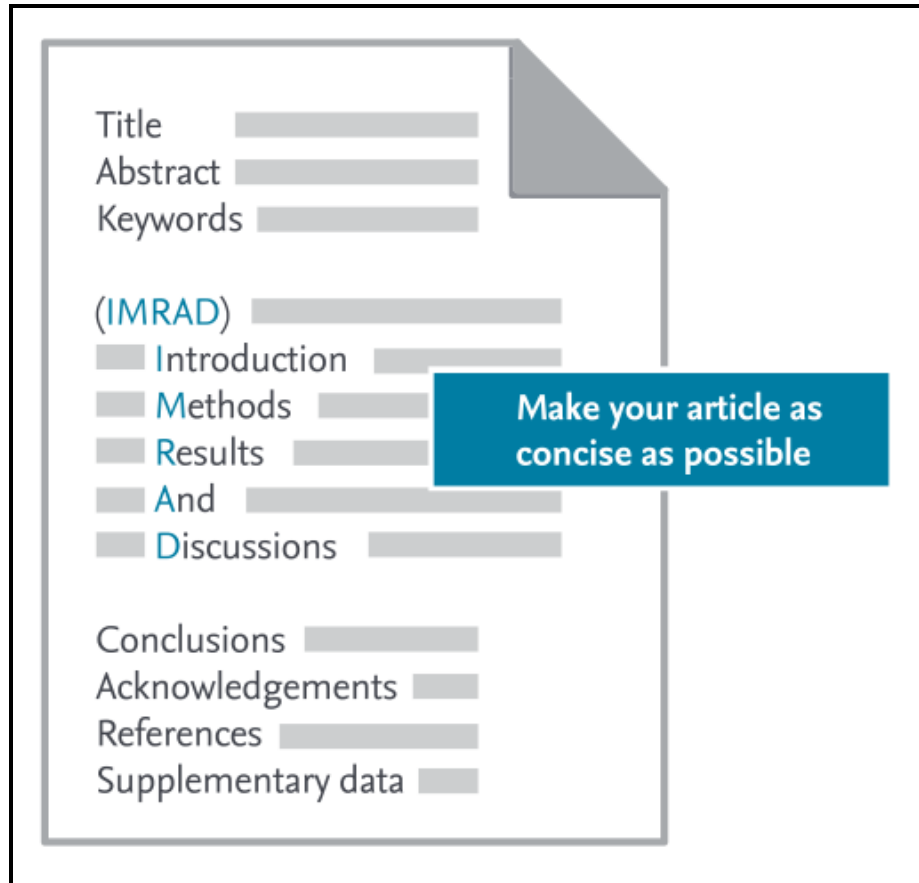


Figure 1: Structure of research paper.

2.1 Title

Although it is the shortest section in your research paper, but it is the most important one. Search engines on the internet looking for a paper may read hundreds of titles before they select an abstract to read; for this reason, the gurus of research writing tend to dedicate more pages to discussing the importance of the title than they do to any section in the paper itself.

The title is no more than two lines, so every word in your title is important. The key is to devise a title that [1]:

1. Will immediately make sense to the referee.
2. Will easily be found by a search engine or indexing system.
3. Will attract the right kind of readers rather than discouraging them, and will also catch the attention of browsers. Note "attraction" does not mean resorting to newspaper like headlines, but simply containing those words that readers in your field would expect to find.

4. Does not consist of a string of nouns and will be immediately comprehensible to anyone in your general field.
5. Is short.
6. Has a definite and concise indication of what it is written in the paper itself. It is neither unjustifiably specific nor too vague or generic.

As it stands, the title is just a sequence of nouns. The reader will only understand the meaning of the title after reading the abstract and introduction.

Before you select a title for your research, think about the following questions [1]:

- What have I found that will attract attention?
- What is new, different and interesting about my findings?
- What are the 3-5 keywords that highlight what makes my research and my findings unique?

On the basis of your answers, you should be able to formulate a title.

2.2 Abstract

First impressions are very important, if your paper makes a bad initial impression there is a very strong chance that the reader will quickly stop reading. It will also have a negative effect on referees if they struggle to read your abstract or introduction, this will impact on their reading of the rest of the paper. They will expect the rest of the paper to be difficult too, and may only look for evidence that confirms this initial impression, even if the rest of the paper is in fact quite readable.

The key skills to write an abstract can be summarized as [2]:

- Limit the amount of background information you provide. Any critical background information should only be presented in 1-3 sentences.
- Never refer to figures or tables in your abstract.

- When writing an abstract, always use the past tense, since you are giving a summary of what was done in your research. One exception is if you mention future directions in your concluding statement.
- Write a clear and concise abstract. The reader has to understand the study rationales, the methods used, and the study findings. Many researchers will only read the abstract of your paper, so it must contain the most pertinent information.
- Be sure to check journal guidelines for abstract length. Many journals will not accept abstracts longer than 200-250 words.
- Feel free to hook readers with a "big picture" statement to open the abstract.
- A reader should quickly identify what the paper is about, to judge how relevant it is to their interests, and so to decide whether they should buy/read the whole paper or not. This process is sometimes known as "screening".
- Remember that many action editors will know very little about your topic area and in some cases, your abstract will be only element of your manuscript that determines whether or not you get through the initial screening process.

There are four main types of abstracts:

1. Unstructured Abstract: A single paragraph of between 100-250 words containing a very brief summary of each of the main sections of your paper.
2. Structured Abstract: The same as (1) but divided into several short sections.
3. Extended Abstract: A mini paper organized in the same way as a full paper (e.g. Introduction, Methods, Discussion...), but substantially shorter (two to four pages). Depending on the journal, conference or competition, the extended abstract may or may not include an abstract, for example, it may begin directly with an introduction.
4. Conference Abstract: Normally a standalone abstract (sometimes up to 500 words), designed to help conference organizers to decide whether they would like you to make an oral presentation at their conference. It may be of any of the three forms above.

Abstracts are found before a full article in a journal, standalone in databases and in conference program, all of which summarize the highlights of your research and all of which will be judged in isolation from the accompanying paper (if there is one). Abstracts are sometimes are called summaries.

Most of the researchers ask the question: When should I write the Abstract? Write a rough draft of the abstract before you start writing the paper itself. This may help you to decide what to include in the paper and how to structure it. But experienced writers always write the abstract (and often the introduction too) last, i.e. when they have finished the rest of the paper. This reflects the research process itself, the first thing you write about is what you found, then how this can be interpreted.

2.3 Introduction

The introduction presents the background knowledge that readers need so that they can appreciate how the findings of the paper are an advance on current knowledge in the field. A key skill is to be able to say the same things that have been said many times before but in a different, interesting, intriguing way.

An introduction generally answers the following questions, you can use the answers to these questions to structure your introduction [3]:

- What is the problem?
- Are there any existing solutions (i.e. in the literature)?
- Which solution is the best?
- What is its main limitation? (i.e. what gap am I hoping to fill?)
- What do I hope to achieve?
- Have I achieved what I set out to do?

The introduction of a research paper is extremely important. You will typically present a brief literature review, discuss a specific problem that needs to be investigated and tie in how your research work aims to address that problem. This is the point when you will write about the purpose of your research work.

The introduction should be simple, powerful, realistic and logical, so it will entice the reader to read the full paper. Throughout your introduction, use the past tense. One exception to this is when you are speaking about generally accepted facts and figures.

Try to avoid using new acronyms, unless absolutely necessary; they will confuse your readers. Avoid using unnecessarily long paragraphs, break up your paragraphs into smaller units. Do not be afraid to use headings in your introduction (and discussion).

2.4 Review of the Literature

The key skill needed when writing a review of the literature is to provide readers with just the right amount of literature regarding the sequence of events leading up to the current situation, not too much to make it tedious, nor too little so that the context of your research is not meaningful to them.

The background information is useful because it allows you to:

- Systematically elaborate the achievements and limitations of other studied.
- Relate your new facts and data to these studies.

A literature review generally answers the following questions and generally in the following order:

1. What are the seminal works on my topic? Do I need to mention these?
2. What progress has been made since these seminal works?
3. What are the most relevant recent works? What is the best order to mention these works?
4. What are the achievements and limitations of these recent works?
5. What gap do these limitations reveal?
6. How does my work intend to fill this gap?

You can use the answers to these questions to structure your literature review.

There are various styles for making reference to other authors. The four styles below contain the same information, but focus is different [1]:

STYLE 1 Blinco [1992] found that Japanese elementary school children showed ...

STYLE 2 In [5] Blinco found that Japanese elementary school children showed ...

STYLE 3 A study of the level of persistence in school children is presented by Blinco [1992].

STYLE 4 A greater level of persistence has been noticed in Japan [number of the reference].

Note that redundancy is often high in the review of the literature, so remove the redundancy when reporting.

Use present simple tense in descriptions of established scientific fact, present perfect tense at the beginning of review to give general overview; for past to present evolution, the past simple tense when specific dates are mentioned within a sentence and verbs to introduce an author's findings.

2.4 Methods

In most journals the methods section follows the literature review, in others, it follows conclusions.

The secret of writing this section is to be able to describe the materials you used in your experiments and/or the methods you used to carry out your research, in a way that is sufficiently detailed to enable others in your field to easily follow your method and, if desired, even replicate your work.

A key skill is to make sure the descriptions are complete and yet are also as concise as possible, for example by referring to other works in the literature, including your own, that make use of the same or similar methods.

The Methods section should answer most of the following questions, obviously depending on your discipline [4]:

- What / Who did I study? What hypotheses was I testing?
- Where did I carry out this study and what characteristics did this location have?

- How did I design my experiment/sampling and what assumptions did I make?
- What variable was I measuring and why?
- How did I handle / house / treat my materials/subjects?
- What equipment did I use (plus modifications) and where did this equipment come from (vendor's source)?
- What protocol did I use for collecting my data?
- How did I analyze the data? Statistical procedures? Mathematical equations? Software?
- What probability did I use to decide significance?
- What references to the literature could I give to save me having to describe something in detail?
- What difficulties did I encounter?
- How does my methodology compare with previously reported methods, and what significant can advances does it make?

You should provide enough quantitative information (parameters, concentration, temperature, weight, size, length, time, duration etc.) so that other researchers can replicate what you did.

Describe everything in a logical order to enable readers to easily follow what you did.

The way you begin the methods depend very much on your discipline. To help you decide, take a look at the methods section in papers from your chosen journals, and see how authors start this section. Most methods sections are written in the past simple using the passive form. The past simple is required because the actions you describe took place in the past (i.e. before you started to write your paper). The past simple also helps to distinguish what you did from what other have done (which is often described in the present simple). The passive is good style in the methods because the focus is on what was done rather than who did it. Thus you can ignore any expert advice that tells you that the passive should always be avoided.

Researchers generally agree that the methods the easiest section to write because your methods are likely to be clear in your mind, so it may be a good point for you to begin writing your manuscript.

2.5 Results

First, you have to note that not all journals require a separate results section, often it is integrated with the discussion, under the section title Results and Discussion.

If you have a separate results section, then the standard procedure is to present them with little or no interpretation or discussion. This means that the result is generally the shortest section in the paper.

The Results should answer the following questions:

1. What did I find?
2. What did I not find?
3. What did I find that I was not expecting to find? (e.g. that contradicts my hypotheses)

A typical structure is to follow the order you used for the protocols or procedures in your Methods. You then use figures and tables to sequence the answers to the above questions.

"One picture is worth a thousand words" Sue Hanaver (1968). Make sure your graphs and tables can speak for themselves. The results section should contain only a description of your results, it should not discuss what the results mean, as this is saved for the discussion section.

Do not repeat everything conveyed in your tables and graphs, you can, however, point out key findings and offer some text to complement those finding. The graphs should be clear to read, do not overload graphs with data. Make sure that your axis description are not too small. You should also mention any important negative results here.

2.6 Discussion

People read papers in different ways. Readers in a hurry, may read the title and then just look at the figures! Many begin from the part that they find the most interesting which is often the discussion [5].

In writing your discussion section you should consider the following:

- Your Discussion section should answer why you obtained the observed results; do not simply restate the results. In this section, also address why your results are important (i.e., how do they advance the current understanding of this topic?).
- If there are multiple possible explanations for your results, be sure to address each one.
- If your research findings are suggestive or supportive rather than decisive, make sure you report that.
- Understand the primary message of your paper.
- Highlight your research contributes to the existing knowledge in your field and make sure to mention any next steps, additional tests, or experiments that need to be performed.

The secret in writing your discussion is to sound both convincing and credible at the same time. You can do this by being positive about your own limitations and constructive when discussing what you believe to be the limitations of others.

2.7 Conclusions

Although the conclusions may not be the last section that readers read, there is a strong probability that they will be the last thing the referee reads.

The importance of the Conclusion section should not be overlooked. This section should briefly restate the other parts of your research paper by referring to the methodology, data analysis, and results from your study. This section concludes the overall discussion; it should be brief, concise, and worth remembering.

2.8 Reference

It is important to mention all references (sources of information) in your text to strengthen your article. You must cite your references in the text, and list your references either in a dedicated References section in your manuscript, or in your manuscript's footnotes (depending on your target journal's requirements); otherwise, your paper may be flagged for plagiarism.

When citing a reference from your reference list, please use the following conventions. Put in parentheses the author(s) last names, the year, and optionally the page number(s) separated by commas.

For one author, use the author's last name and year separated by a comma. For example: (Walters, 2016) or (Austin, 2017). For two to five authors, use their last names separated by commas and with an ampersand "&" before the very last name in the list, then the year separated by a comma. For example: (Li & Crane, 2017) (Charniak, Riesbeck, McDermott & Meehan, 2017). For more than five authors, use the first author's last name and "et al." For example: (Walters, et al., 1992). If there are specific page numbers for a citation, add them after the year (Walters, 1994, pp. 31-49).

The references are to be alphabetized by the first author's last name, or (if no author is listed) the organization or title. If you cite more than one paper by the same first author, sort them by year of publication, earliest year first. Do not use footnotes for citations.

Example:

[1] Aseel Abdan, Khaled Basulaim. "MANET Routing Protocols Comparison for Performance Evaluation". International Journal of Computer Trends and Technology (IJCTT)-Volume 44, Issue 1, February 2017 (pp.1-7).

3 Journal Selection

Since each research article often features multiple/overlapping disciplines and methodologies, many researchers make the mistake of submitting their manuscript to the wrong target journal. This can result in immediate rejection. Even if the article is encouraging and presents methodologically sound and rigorous work, it will not be accepted by the wrong journal.

Look for journals that have previously published articles on your topic, as this suggests that your work may appeal to the journal editors. If you need help with this, Journal Prep offers a journal recommendation service.

Look at a journal's impact factor; the higher the impact factor, the higher the quality (impact factor is based on how many of a journal's articles are cited in other manuscripts in a given year). A journal's impact factor will give you an idea of the journal's quality, and it also

indicates how difficult or easy it might be for you to submit and publish an article with that journal.

Look at the journal acceptance/rejection rates. These are sometimes (not always) inversely correlated with impact factor values.

Look at the average time to publication, as well as the average time to acceptance/rejection notification. If you want to publish your work quickly, make sure you choose a journal that offers rapid processing. Some journals will highlight their rapid processing times to encourage authors to submit their work to those particular journals.

Some journals charge various fees, including manuscript processing or color figure reproduction fees, for accepted manuscripts. Make sure you are familiar with the publication costs associated with a given journal before you submit your work.

4 Research Ethical Issues

Ethics are about the principles of doing right and wrong. In research they guide you in determining how you should relate to participants and the information you collect when you are in a position of power as a researcher. While there are slight variations in the guidelines of different organizations, there are common standards to which you need to pay attention [6]:

- Voluntary Participation
- Informed Consent
- Anonymity and Confidentiality
- Assessment of Risks to Participants
- Benefits Outweighing Risks
- Debriefing
- Protection of Vulnerable Populations

5 Paraphrasing and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, or words without giving appropriate credits, including those obtained through confidential review of other's research proposals and manuscripts [1].

Conventions regarding exactly what constitutes plagiarism vary from country to country. Plagiarism in its simplest terms means cutting and pasting from other studies and papers. It also means taking credit for work that others have done.

Plagiarism includes plagiarizing your own work. In fact, some journals stipulate that you cannot use more than five consecutive words from another paper that you have written.

If a referee thinks you may have plagiarized other people's work or your own, then there is a very high probability that he or she will recommend rejecting your paper.

If you commit plagiarism within your university or institute then you may risk expulsion.

Plagiarism is a serious issue in international science ethics, even though it may not be considered so in your country of origin. It is easy for native speakers to spot it in the work of non-native speakers. If you commit plagiarism your credibility and reputation will be seriously compromised. If you are not sure whether you have plagiarized your own or someone else's work, use CrossCheck.

6 CONCLUSION

The paper aims to give a clear roadmap to write and publish a research, giving a full view of the structure in which the research should be written with hints to avoid errors that can result in rejecting your research from publishers.

The ethics of scientific research were taken in consideration as it is an important issue in the field of research and the why that you adhere to the rules and prevent you from any legal issues.

7 REFERENCES

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