

## **Secrets of Research, Publishing and Navigating the Manuscript Review Process**

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**2007 AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium**  
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**THANK YOU FOR SWITCHING OFF YOUR CELL PHONE**

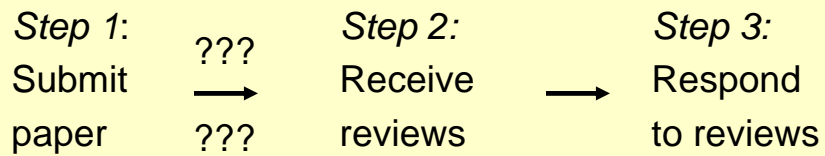
### **Session Outline**

- **Rebecca Ratner:** What do reviewers look for in manuscripts?
- **Raji Srinivasan:** What next, if your manuscript is rejected?
- **Rick Staelin:** Case history of a rejected paper at one journal transformed into an award winning paper at another journal
- **Rajan Varadarajan:** Some observations on research, publishing and navigating the review process
- Q and A

# What Are Your Reviewers Thinking?

Rebecca Ratner  
AMA Doctoral Consortium  
May 2007

## Navigating the Review Process



## Will Your Paper Receive Positive Reviews?



### The Magic 8 Ball:

#### Product Features

- “The original Magic 8 Ball has all the answers you need...”
- “Ask any question, turn over the Magic 8 Ball, and you'll get its answer”
- “Answers questions about romance, friendships, school, work, and more”
- “Great fun for kids and adults!”

## Actual Responses Generated by Magic 8-Ball

### ACCEPT

- Signs point to yes.
- Yes.
- Most likely.
- Without a doubt.
- Yes - definitely.
- As I see it, yes.
- You may rely on it.
- Outlook good.
- It is certain.
- It is decidedly so.

### REVISE

- Reply hazy, try again.
- Concentrate and ask again.
- Ask again later.
- Cannot predict now.

### REJECT

- My sources say no.
- Very doubtful.
- My reply is no.

## Reviewers *Want* to Like Your Paper

- The topic often is in their area of interest.
- Academics like to learn something new.
- The reviewers are giving up doing other things in order to work on the review.
- It's easier to review a paper when it's tightly done than when flawed.

## So... What's the Outcome?

- *You* want them to like your paper.
- *They* want to like your paper.
- Aren't the incentives aligned? Why would a paper ever get rejected?

## What's It Take to Make a Reviewer Cry?\*

### Four Major Causes for Concern:

1. "Don't Happen Twice"
2. "You Ain't Much Fun"
3. "Complicated"
4. "I Can't Believe It's True"

*\* Variation on "What's It Take to Make a Cowboy Cry?"*

## Point 1: Novelty

"Don't Happen Twice"

"No News"

"Do You Remember These?"

"Not That Different"

"Never Again, Again"

## Novelty

- The reviewer wants to learn something new, but it's not clear how this goes beyond earlier work.
  - How does it extend classic work?
  - How does it relate to and go beyond other more recent work (e.g., recently published, presented at conferences, etc.)?
  - What does the reader learn from your research that the reader didn't already know?

## Point 2: Interest

“That Don't Impress Me Much”

“I Liked You Better Before I Knew  
You So Well”

“You Ain't Much Fun”

## Interest

- It is not enough to investigate an issue that no one has investigated before.
  - The work needs to challenge assumptions.
  - The reader will be disappointed if left thinking, “So what?”
- For more on what makes an idea interesting, see Murray Davis’ article, “That’s Interesting!”

## Point 3: Clarity

“Complicated”

“Thinkin’ Problem”

“Tell Me Why”

“I’m a Ramblin’ Man”

## Clarity

- Not clearly written.
- Design is too complicated (e.g., an elegant 2 X 2 design is much better than a 3X4 design)
- Too many subtleties that aren't central to your key contributions.

## Tips on Clear Writing

“A journal article tells a straightforward tale of a circumscribed problem in search of a solution. It is not a novel with subplots, flashbacks, and literary allusions, but a short story with a single linear narrative line. Let this line stand out in bold relief. Don't make your voice struggle to be heard above the ambient noise of cluttered writing. Write simply and directly.”

– Daryl Bem, “Writing the Empirical Journal Article”

## Point 4: Evidence

“A Little Less Talk  
(A Little More Action)”

“Fishing in the Dark”

“I Can’t Believe It’s True”

“What Might Have Been”

## Evidence

- What you are claiming is compelling and important, but your evidence is not convincing.
  - Weak results.
  - Flawed analyses.
  - You haven’t ruled out alternative explanations.
  - To what situations will your results generalize? I think there are important boundary conditions that you haven’t explored.
- You seem to be overstepping your data.

## What's It Take to Make a Reviewer Smile?\*

Four Major Causes for a Positive Outcome:

1. Novelty
2. Interest
3. Clarity
4. Evidence

*\* Variation II on "What's It Take to Make a Cowboy Cry?"*

*Congratulations!*

"Amazed"

"When You're Hot You're Hot"

"I Still Believe in You"

"I Like It, I Love It"

"Close Enough to Perfect"

## Your Manuscript is Rejected: What's Next?

Raji Srinivasan  
University of Texas at Austin  
AMA Sheth Doctoral Consortium  
Arizona State University, May 2007

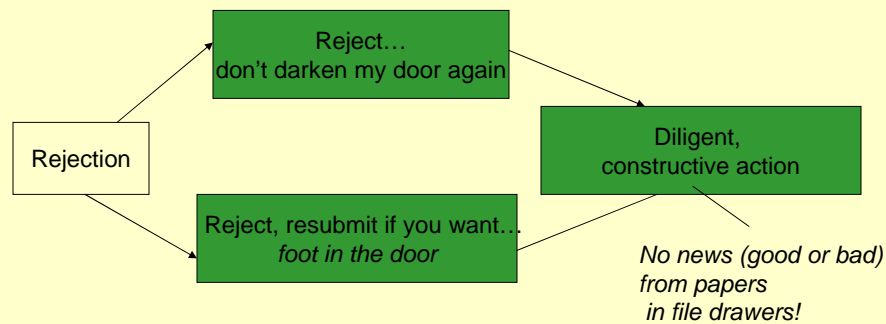
### Rejection is Common

- *Widely Prevalent*: More than 90% of manuscripts rejected at the top tier social science, statistics and economics (including marketing) journals.
- *Equal Opportunity*: All authors (senior, and junior) have their manuscripts rejected...and at all stages in their careers.
- So, we will all have much more experience with rejections than we might ever want.

## Authors' Common Responses

- **Anger**
  - Reviewers did not read the paper! It was all there in Column 3 of Table 5.
  - Stupid reviewers did not understand the point of the paper!
- **Anxiety, sadness, disappointment and even, shame**
  - I wasted so much time working on the paper!
  - My pipeline is empty!
  - Now, back to the drawing board!
- **Helplessness, negative affect**
  - I don't want to ever look at the paper again!
- **What to do next?**
  - Breathe deeply
  - Shift attention to some other project
  - Get back to the manuscript in a few days.

## Potential Situations



### *4 unobserved possibilities for manuscript's outcome:*

- Potentially significant contribution
- Potential to be published in the target journal
- Potential to be published in another journal
- No potential to be published (*this dog won't hunt*)

## Unknowns in Rejections

- *At the time of reviewing manuscript's outcomes:*
  - Unknown to authors and Review Team
  - Depends on review process as manuscripts can improve (or worsen) during review process
- *Asymmetry in the Review Team's response about the manuscript's potential:*
  - Greater certainty (among reviewers and Editor) about manuscripts that *cannot* make a contribution
  - Much less certainty about manuscripts that can contribute significantly
    - since the review process, for the most part, favors cumulative knowledge building and therefore, incremental rather than frame-breaking papers.

## What do these Papers have in Common?

- Akerlof, George A. (1970) "The Market for 'Lemons': Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 84(3), 488-500.
- Black, Fisher and Myron Scholes (1973), "The Pricing of Options and Corporate Liabilities," *Journal of Political Economy*, 81(3), 637-54.
- Hotelling, Harold (1931), "The Economics of Exhaustible Resources," *Journal of Political Economy*, 39(2), 137-175.
- Lucas, Robert E. (1972), "Expectations and the Neutrality of Money," *Journal of Economic Theory*, 4(2), 103-24.
- Modigliani, Franco (1949), "Fluctuations in the Savings-Income Ratio: A Problem in Economic Forecasting," *Studies of Income and Wealth*, Vol 11, 371-440, York, PA: National Bureau of Economic Research,
- Sharpe, William (1964), "Capital Asset Prices: A Theory of Market Equilibrium under Conditions of Risk," *Journal of Finance*" 19 (3), 425-442.



*We are in great company!*

## Akerlof's Lemons Paper

- Before publishing in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, three journals called it a 'lemon':
  - *American Economic Review*: "Article is interesting, but we do not publish such trivial stuff"
  - *Journal of Political Economy*: "Too general to be true"
  - *Review of Economic Studies*: "Too trivial"
- Akerlof believes that the article may have been rejected because of:
  - The novelty of the idea of economics of information
  - The article may have been too readable given the usual solemnity of economic journals!

## Time for Reflection

- **Assess which unobserved possibilities fits manuscript:**
  - Significant contribution (an Akerlof paper in the works?)
  - Can be published in the target journal
  - Can be published in another journal, may be a lower tier journal
  - No potential for publication (*this dog won't hunt*)
- **Of course, easier said than done:**
  - Read the reviews, reflect on the reviews, read between the lines (what are the reviewers actually saying?)
  - Get inputs from colleagues and coauthors
  - As creators of the work, we may be too attached to our work– *my baby is not ugly?*
- Finally, listen to your heart about the paper's prospects, even if it means ignoring advice.

## Outright Rejection: What to do?

- **If at first, you don't succeed, try again**
  - Either at this journal or another journal.
  - If a reviewer points out a major issue, it needs to be addressed.
  - Attempt to incorporate suggestions and/or address reviewers' concerns before submitting it again...the same reviewer may get it again!
  - But, if paper is rejected  $n$  times, you may want to consider that there is a serious flaw in the paper, that needs to be fixed.
- Understand that “paper rejection” is a natural part of the research process, not a career-threatening event.
- Diversify research portfolio beyond this paper.

## Reject and Resubmit: What to do?

- Assess what needs to be done to meet Editor's threshold.
- Let the Editor know that you intend to resubmit the manuscript.
- Read Editor's letter to see whether you are getting a new team of reviewers or not? That will influence your revision plan (and accompanying documents).
- Focus attention on the revision, go the extra mile:
  - This may involve new data, new methods. In essence, could be a new manuscript.
- Do it fast!

## Rejection: What not to do?

- Don't take the Review Team's comments personally.
- Don't ignore the Review Team's comments.
- Don't attack the reviewers or the Editor – you need their support.
- Don't rush into writing a rebuttal letter to the Editor. Reflect, and write it only if you think you have a strong case.
- Although remember, you are entitled to state your opinion and state it strongly.

## Conclusion

- Rejections never pleasant, are integral to the research process.
  - *Accept it.*
- Be persistent
  - *If at first, you don't succeed, try, try again....*
- Be realistic – cut your losses:
  - *Knowing when to hold 'em, when to fold 'em, and when to walk away....*
- Finally, diversify your research portfolio
  - *Don't pin your research career on one paper.*

## Case Histories of “Rejected” Paper(s)

Richard Staelin  
2007 AMA Doctoral Consortium

### Three Case Histories

- McGuire and Staelin (1983) Marketing Science (Converse Award)
- Boulding, Kalra, Staelin and Zeithaml (1993) JMR (O’Dell Award)
- Biyalogorsky, Boulding and Staelin (2006) JM (2007 Maynard Award)

## McGuire and Staelin

- Idea started in 1971 with a legal case
- First paper finished in 1974
- Paper presented at Economics conference in 1975
- Paper submitted to AER, Journal of Industrial Organization and Rand Journal of Economics prior to Marketing Science
- Paper “scrapped” until the founding of Marketing Science

## Boulding, Kalra, Staelin and Zeithaml

- Work started in 1988 with an internal “consulting” project to improve the service quality at Fuqua
- Migrated to a PhD thesis
- Rejected by JMR
- Decision appealed
- John Lynch assigned as reviewer

## Biyalogorsky, Boulding and Staelin

- Initial idea came from prior research. 1993 JMR paper and 1997 JMR paper on escalation of commitment. First drafts written in 1996
- Paper sent to Marketing Science, JMR, ASQ, OBHDP
- 1 reviewer “loved” paper
- 2 reviewers “hated” paper
- Could not believe results that went against conventional wisdom

## On Research, Publishing and Navigating the Review Process : Some Observations

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2007 AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium  
(Arizona State University, Tempe. May 17, 2007)



## Reasons for Rejection\*

<u>Nature of Problem</u>	<u>Manuscripts(%)</u>
No theory	51
Concepts and operationalization not in alignment	31
Insufficient definition -- theory	24
Insufficient rationale -- design	24
Macrostructure -- organization and flow	23
Amateur style and tone	21
Inadequate research design	20

\* Based on 111 manuscripts reviewed for AMJ and ASQ by R. Daft. In L. L. Cummings, and P. J. Frost (Eds.) *Publishing in Organizational Sciences*. 1985. R. D. Irwin



## Reasons for Rejection

- The question addressed was not a very meaningful one.
- The same thing had already been said enough times.
- The procedure (not the statistical analysis) used in the study could not answer the question(s) that were asked.
- The measures used in a study had no reliability or validity.
- It was simply not possible to understand what the author was trying to say.

Source: Excerpts from L. L. Cummings, and P. J. Frost (1985), "Reflections on Realities", in L. L. Cummings, and P. J. Frost (Eds.) *Publishing in Organizational Sciences*, R. D. Irwin, p. 323-324.



### Reasons for Rejection: No Theory

- Unless a study provides a *theoretical explanation* of the findings, it severely limits the contribution of the research, regardless of how clean the pattern of results may be.
- It is simply not enough to demonstrate an effect, without providing an explanation of what is driving it.



### Reasons for Rejection: Lack of Journal Fit

**Research Domain:** Not a single variable in the research reported falls within the knowledge domain of marketing.



### **Literature Review**

- The paper vastly understates what we already know on the topic being studied.
- The literature reviewed is not organized in any systematic way.
- The relevance of the studies reviewed to the issues addressed in the paper is not clear.



### **Motivation for the Study**

- How the research reported either extends or complements prior research on the topic, and its positioning relative to the existing body of research is not clearly articulated.
- A stronger justification than merely stating that the research questions examined in the study have not been previously investigated must be provided.
- Some potentially researchable questions may not have been addressed in past research because they might have been deemed as unimportant research questions.



### **Nature and Scope of Incremental Contribution**

- Merely enumerating the deficiencies in previously published works does not make for a contribution of sufficient magnitude.
- The potential for actually making a significant contribution resides in presenting/proposing solutions or enhancements to overcome these deficiencies.



### **Conceptual Development**

- Many of the constructs and terms used in the manuscript are not precisely defined and/or explained.
- Since constructs that are not clearly defined cannot be meaningfully operationalized, the results of the empirical test of the proposed model cannot be viewed as valid.



## On the Importance of Definitions

“There was a hint of this new science in Socrates’ maddening insistence on definitions, and in Plato’s constant refining of every concept. Aristotle’s little treatise on definitions shows how his logic found nourishment at this source. “If you wish to converse with me,” said Voltaire, “define your terms.” How many a debate would have been deflated into a paragraph if the disputants had dared to define their terms! This is the alpha and omega of logic, the heart and soul of it, that every important term in a serious discourse shall be subjected to strictest scrutiny and definition. It is difficult, and ruthlessly tests the mind; but once done, it is half of any task” (Source: Durant 1961).



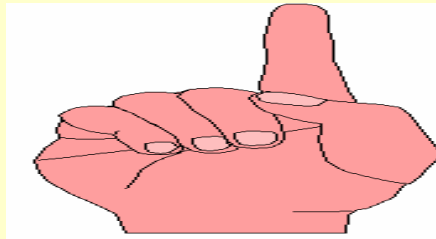
## Conceptual Model

- The conceptual support presented for the proposed model is weak and superficial. It comes across as a potpourri of unrelated variables with no unifying conceptual or theoretic logic underlying their choice.
- Rather than providing carefully developed arguments in support of relationships delineated in the model, a number of past studies is listed as blanket support for all the effects posited in the proposed model.
- The model proposes every conceivable direct and moderating effect. The implied approach here appears to be to propose all possible effects and then let the empirical analyses help weed out the non-significant links.



## Critique of Hypotheses

- No supporting logic / Weak supporting logic
- Self evident (Intuitively obvious)
- Internally contradictory
- Stated within the narrow confines of the empirical setting
- Lack specificity/stated very broadly
- At variance with the literature reviewed
- Not in congruence with the stated research questions
- Not in congruence with the model proposed
- Not in congruence with the model tested
- Tautology
- Truism
- Definitional artifact



### Definitional Artifact!

**H:** The greater the *cost and/or demand inter-relationship* between a particular business in a firm's portfolio and other businesses in the firm's portfolio, the greater is *synergy* as a source of *competitive advantage* of the business.

Source: Bharadwaj, Varadarajan and Fahy, p. 89. *Journal of Marketing*, October 1993.

**Synergy** refers to the existence of cost and/or demand interdependencies between two or more businesses.



### Imprecisely Stated

**H:** Goal conflict between principal and agent is negatively related to behavior-based contracts and positively related to outcome-based contracts (Eisenhardt. *Academy of Management Review*, 1989, p. 62).

**Comment:** *Type of contract* is the underlying variable. Outcome-based and behavior-based contracts are the two *values* that the variable can possibly assume.

**H:** The greater the goal conflict between principal and agent, the greater the likelihood of employing outcome-based contracts relative to behavior-based contracts.



### Imprecisely Stated

**H:** Outcome measurability is negatively related to behavior-based contracts and positively related to outcome-based contracts (Eisenhardt 1989, *Academy of Management Review*, p.62).

**Comment:** *Type of contract* is the underlying *variable*. Outcome-based and behavior-based contracts are the two *values* that the variable can possibly assume.

**H:** The greater the difficulty of measuring the outcomes of an agent's task, the greater is the efficiency of behavior-based contracts in relation to outcome-based contracts (Bergen, Dutta and Walker 1992, *Journal of Marketing*, p.5).



### Imprecisely Stated

**H:** The goal conflict between principal and agent is negatively related to behavior-based contracts and positively related to outcome-based contracts (Eisenhardt 1989, *Academy of Management Review*, p. 62).

**Comment:** *Type of contract* is the underlying *variable*. Outcome-based and behavior-based contracts are the two *values* that the variable can possibly assume.

**H:** As the level of goal conflict between a principal and an agent decreases, the greater is the efficiency of behavior-based contracts in relation to outcome-based contracts (Bergen, Dutta and Walker 1992, *Journal of Marketing*, p. 5).



### Imprecisely Stated

**H:** Outcome uncertainty is positively related to behavior-based contracts and negatively related to outcome-based contracts (Eisenhardt 1989, *Academy of Management Review*, p. 61).

**Comment:** *Type of contract* is the underlying variable. Outcome-based and behavior-based contracts are the two *values* that the variable can possibly assume.

**H:** As environmental uncertainty increases, behavior-based contracts become more efficient in relation to outcome-based contracts (Bergen, Dutta and Walker 1992, *Journal of Marketing*, p. 5).



### Imprecisely Stated

**H:** The risk aversion of the agent is positively related to behavior-based contracts and negatively related to outcome-based contracts (Eisenhardt 1988, *Academy of Management Review*, p. 62).

**Comment:** *Type of contract* is the underlying variable. Outcome-based and behavior-based contracts are the two *values* that the variable can possibly assume.

**H:** As an agent's aversion to risk decreases, the greater is the efficiency of outcome-based contracts in relation to behavior-based contracts (Bergen, Dutta and Walker 1992, *Journal of Marketing*, p. 5).



## Intuitively Obvious

**H:** When the principal has information to verify agent behavior, the agent is more likely to behave in the interests of the principal (Eisenhardt 1989; *Academy of Management Review*, p. 60).

**Comment:** How could it be otherwise? What could have potentially gone wrong for the above to be not empirically supported? (Potential problems with validity of the measures, unreliable measurement, lack of experimental control, etc.)

**H:** As the cost of monitoring an agent's actions decreases, the greater is the efficiency of behavior-based contracts in relation to outcome-based contracts (Bergen, Dutta and Walker 1992, *Journal of Marketing*, p. 5).



## No Supporting Logic / Weak Supporting Logic

- **No Supporting Logic:** A hypothesis that merely states that a relationship exists among certain variables without a clear articulation of the *justification* for the hypothesized relationship and the *directionality* of the relationship is of limited value.
- **Weak Supporting Logic : Empirical precedence** does not constitute a sufficient justification for a hypothesis. A firm conceptual grounding -- exposition of the theoretic logic underlying the hypothesis -- is essential.
- **Weak Supporting Logic : Anecdotal evidence** gleaned from the business press does not make a compelling case for justifying a relationship.



### Hypothesis Stated within the Narrow Confines of the Empirical Setting

**H:** Models in *cigarette advertisements for mentholated brands* will be perceived as *younger* than models in *cigarette advertisements for regular brands* (Source: From a manuscript submitted for review to a scholarly journal in marketing sometime during the 1990s).

**Research Focus:** Perceived age of models appearing in cigarette advertisements for mentholated versus regular brands!



### Hypothesis Stated within Confines of the Empirical Setting

**H:** The exercise of aggressive forms of power by *U.S. suppliers* relates negatively to *Japanese distributors'* perceptions of relationship quality (As stated in a published journal article).

**H:** The exercise of aggressive forms of power by *suppliers* relates negatively to *distributors'* perceptions of relationship quality.  
(Restated with the words "Japan" and "U.S" deleted).



## Potential for Conceptual Development and Hypothesis

### Statement at a Higher Level of Abstraction

#### Hofstede's Research on Dimensions of National Culture

- Individualism
- Power Distance
- Masculinity
- Uncertainty Avoidance



### Hypothesis Statement at a Higher Level of Abstraction \*

**H:** The strength of the negative relationship between exercising of aggressive forms of power by *suppliers* and perceptions of relationship quality by *distributors* will be *moderated* by national culture.

**H:** The magnitude of the negative relationship will be greater under conditions of *suppliers* being from individualistic cultures and *distributors* being from collectivist cultures than under other conditions.

\* *For illustrative purposes only. Not a literature based, conceptually grounded hypothesis statement*



## Limitations of Hypothesis Stated within the Narrow Confines of the Empirical Setting

Scholarly journals are primarily interested in publishing articles reporting research findings that are **not highly context specific**, but **generalizable** to a broader class of:

- products,
- markets/market segments/customer groups/ countries, regions,
- industries, and/or
- enduring.



## Lacks Specificity/Stated Very Broadly

**H:** Firms emphasizing global standardization will view the importance of the components of the marketing plan *differently* from firms that do not stress standardization (As stated in a published journal article).

**H:** Firms emphasizing global standardization will view the importance of key marketing policies and strategies *differently* from firms that do not stress standardization (As stated in a published journal article).

**Comment:** Merely hypothesizing that a relationship will exist (differences will be found to exist), but nothing about the *directionality* of the relationship (the *nature of differences*) is of limited value from the standpoint of gaining insights into the phenomenon and/or marketing practice.



## Tautology!

**H:** The *longer and more stable the prior history of the business relationship* between partners in a co-marketing alliance, the greater the *effectiveness* of the relationship (As stated in a published journal article).

**Comment:** In an alliance, “the length of the relationship” and “stability of the relationship” in themselves are indicators of the effectiveness of the relationship.



## Measurement Issues

- The **independent and dependent measures** are confounded. Some of the items used to operationalize a key explanatory construct and the dependent variable are worded similarly.
- The **explanatory measures** are confounded. Items used to measure one explanatory construct confound with items used to measure another explanatory construct.
- The validity of measures borrowed from published sources are seriously compromised by **arbitrarily dropping items from the original scale**.



## Measurement Issues

- Valid and reliable scales for measuring the constructs relevant to the research reported are available in the public domain. Rather than employing these scales, the research reported develops and employs new measures of questionable conceptualization and poor psychometric properties.
- If on the other hand, one of the intended contributions of the research is to develop new measures of these constructs, then the question of why and how existing measures are inadequate must be first addressed.



## Research Design Issues

- The hypotheses as stated imply causation, but the research design used to test them is not amenable to making causal inferences.
- The experimental manipulation does not make it possible to rule out alternative explanations of findings.
- Researchers are often required to make certain compromises in order to enlist the cooperation of the sponsor(s) of the research. However, one has to guard against science being compromised.



## Lack of Congruence

There is a lack of congruence between the:

- Stated research objectives/questions and the hypotheses.
- Model presented in the figure and the hypotheses stated in the text of the paper (Not all of the stated hypotheses are captured by the constructs and linkages shown in the conceptual model or vice-versa).
- Stated hypotheses and the hypotheses tested (A significant portion of the empirical section dwells on non-hypothesized relationships).
- Stated findings (in the text of the paper) and results reported (in figures and/or tables).



## Excessive Post hoc Rationalization

- Excessive post hoc rationalization of unexpected results diminishes the credibility of the results which are consistent with prior expectations. If there is reason to believe that certain confounding factors might have influenced the unexpected results, a compelling reason must be offered to support the claim that they might have affected only the unexpected results and not the expected results.
- Advancing several plausible explanations from literature to support results that are contrary to *a priori* hypothesized relationships is indicative of weak conceptual development, to begin with.



## Interpretation of Results That are Contrary to Expectations

Besides the lack of any true relationship among the latent variables, the decision not to reject the null hypothesis can be a function of lack of power, lack of validity of the measures, unreliable measurement, lack of experimental control, and so on. Studies that wish to give a substantive interpretation to negative results must be reasonably well done.

*L.L. Cummings and P. J. Frost (1985), "Reflections on Realities", in L. L. Cummings and P. J. Frost (eds.) Publishing in Organizational Sciences, R. D. Irwin, p. 323-24.*



## Discussion, Implications and Conclusion

- The stated implications do not stem from the findings reported.
- The stated implications for practice are already widely in use in practice, intuitively obvious, common sense, and/or very general.



**A Positive Attitude Toward Reviewers and Their Critique,  
Comments and Suggestions Can Make You a Better Researcher**

- Reviewers' comments, viewed in positive light, can be an extremely valuable instructive tool that is **conducive to your becoming a better researcher** over the long-term.
- One can learn a lot about the nuances of scholarly research by carefully and critically reading the reviewers' comments, regardless of whether the outcome on a particular submission is reject, revise and resubmit, or accept.
- Train your mind to view the reviewer as **your teacher and anonymous co-author**, rather than as an adversary.



**A Positive Attitude Toward Reviewers and Their Critique,  
Comments and Suggestions Can Make You a Better Researcher**

- Looking back at my years as a journal editor, I consider myself to be very fortunate to have had the opportunity to be tutored by a few hundred scholar reviewers on various *substantive and theoretical issues, and the nuances of the philosophy of science and research methods.*



## Keys to Success in Research and Publishing: The Four Ps

### **P1 Passion for a Field of Study**

Research and publishing is a lot more fun when it is on a topic that you find to be *interesting, intriguing, invigorating and intellectually* challenging (the four “I”s!).



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**P3 Pragmatic (Philosophical!)**

Research and publishing will be a mixed bag of accepts, rejects, desk rejects, revise and resubmits, risky revise and resubmits, rejects following multiple iterations of revise and resubmits, accepts following multiple iterations of revise and resubmits, excellent reviews, superficial reviews, nasty reviews, timely processing by reviewers and editors, lethargic processing by reviewers and editors, and Type I and Type II errors by reviewers and editors. Accept it. Learn to live with it.



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**P2 Programmatic in One’s Research**

Reputation as a renowned scholar in a field of study comes from being programmatic in one’s research and publishing endeavors.

**P3 Pragmatic (Philosophical!)**

Research and publishing will be a mixed bag of accepts, rejects, desk rejects, revise and resubmits, risky revise and resubmits, rejects following multiple iterations of revise and resubmits, accepts following multiple iterations of revise and resubmits, excellent reviews, superficial reviews, nasty reviews, timely processing by reviewers and editors, lethargic processing by reviewers and editors, and Type I and Type II errors by reviewers and editors. Accept it. Learn to live with it.

**P4 Perseverance**

Amidst other demands on one’s time (teaching, interacting with students, service to the university, service to the profession, service to the community) and most importantly, quality family time, success in research and publishing calls for perseverance.



## Pluralism in Research Passions

Considerable diversity will always exist in topics that each of us are **passionate about** in the context of research and teaching. That is, topics that we view as:

- Intellectually challenging
- Interesting
- Intriguing
- Invigorating

**Your Niche:** Topics in the discipline of 4Ps that meet the test of 4Is.

**Good Luck and Best Wishes**



# Thank you

