

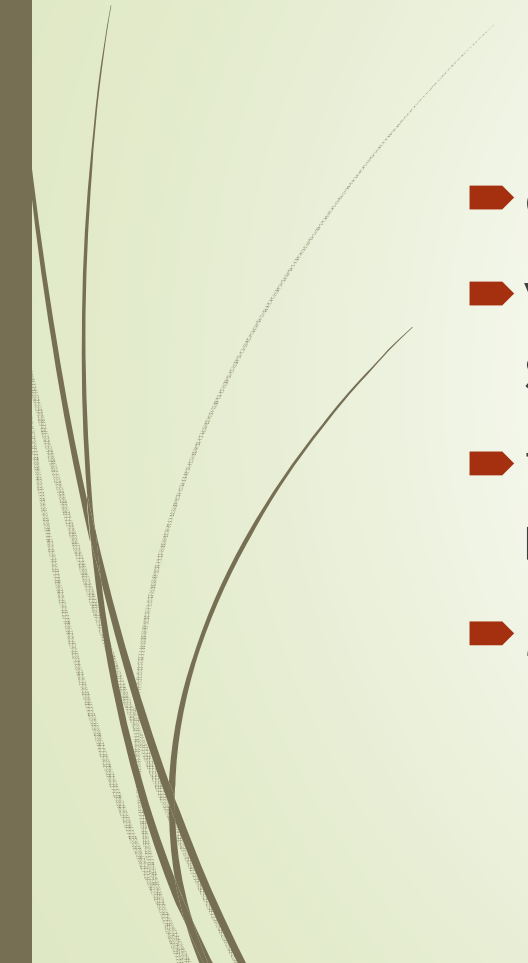
# **PUBLISHING IN FOREIGN ACADEMIC JOURNALS**

**ISSUES, OBSTACLES, AND ADVICE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SENIOR SCHOLAR  
AND A FORMER EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF A JOURNAL**

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## TOPICS:


- accredited vs. predatory journal
  - what editors are looking for before they even send things out for peer review
  - the length of time and steps of the process and revision, revision, revision
  - Minimal structure and tips
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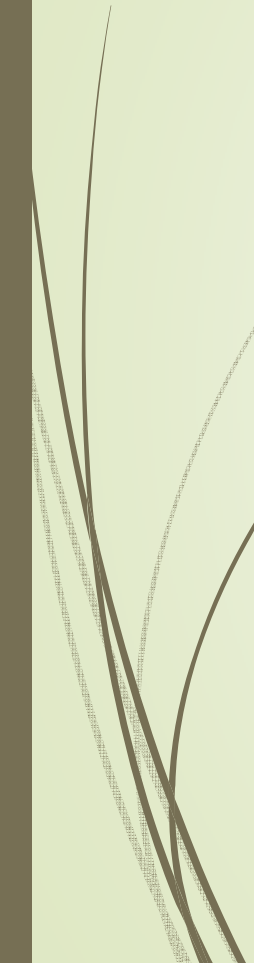
## **1. BEWARE OF PREDATORY JOURNALS:**

- ▶ **Characteristics of Predatory Journals need to be identified to contrast them with Legitimate Academic Journals in Good Standing.**
- ▶ **Predatory Journals especially prey on scholars from Developing Countries as well as junior scholars just starting in the field elsewhere in the Developed countries. Given the push for publishing in Western Academic Journals in virtually all Southeast Asian Nations predatory journals are victimizing a lot of our colleagues from ASEAN region**
- ▶ **Only in the past 8 years have we seen such exponential spread of predatory journals**
- ▶ **DON'T BE FOOLED AND BE AWARE**

## Definition

- *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Prof. Jeffrey Beall describes the phenomenon this way:
  - "Predatory open-access publishers are those that unprofessionally exploit the gold open-access model for their own profit. That is to say, they operate as scholarly vanity presses and publish articles in exchange for the author fee. They are characterized by various level of deception and lack of transparency in their operations. For example, some publishers may misrepresent their location, stating New York instead of Nigeria, or they may claim a stringent peer-review where none really exists."

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- ▶ Predatory publishers began proliferating in the past few years with the increase in open access publishing, and we are now also seeing an increase in predatory conferences, some which choose a name nearly identical to an established, well-respected conference.
  - ▶ Use the following checklist, provided by Declan Butler in [Nature](#), as a guide for assessing publishers and journals:

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- Check that the publisher provides full, verifiable contact information, including address, on the journal site. Be cautious of those that provide only web contact forms.
  - Check that a journal's editorial board lists recognized experts with full affiliations. Contact some of them and ask about their experience with the journal or publisher.
  - Check that the journal prominently displays its policy for author fees.
  - Be wary of e-mail invitations to submit to journals or to become editorial board members.
  - Read some of the journal's published articles and assess their quality. Contact past authors to ask about their experience.
  - Check that a journal's peer-review process is clearly described and try to confirm that a claimed impact factor is correct.
  - Use common sense, as you would when shopping online: if something looks fishy, proceed with caution.

## Further Characteristics of predatory journals:

- Articles published without complete author approval.
- Papers published without peer-review.
- They require the author to PAY VERY HIGH PRICES
- **“predatory” journals don’t just take your money, they also take away your control over your scholarship.**
- Once they have “published” your paper, it may be impossible to submit it to a true journal.

## 8 top indicators of questionable publishers

1. The journal asks for a submission fee instead of a publication fee or tries to keep the copyright to authors' work.

- OPEN ACCESS VS. PREDATORY JOURNAL. The majority of **open access journals** are supported by contributions from authors. Having authors pay a fee allows for the published material to be **free to readers**. This cost should come in the form of a publication fee that is **paid only when an article is accepted for publication, and the amount of the fee should be stated clearly on the website**—AND SHOULD BE A NOMINAL FEE (around \$50.00—if it is more than DO NOT AGREE TO THE PUBLICATION!!!!).
- Some dishonest or predatory journals require a submission fee (or “handling fee”), payable whether or not the manuscript is accepted. At times, this fee can be \$700 (US) or more, and may not be mentioned before submission.
- Likewise, open access journals should let authors maintain the copyright.



## 2. The editorial board is very small or “coming soon.”

- ▶ The strength of a journal is reflected in the members of its editorial board. When good scientists are involved in running a journal, the peer review process is strong and thorough. The journal also receives stronger papers. Unfortunately, some disreputable journals are launched without finding any highly regarded scientists in the field to serve on the editorial board.
- ▶ If the journal is in your area of research, you should recognize some of the names on the editorial board. If you do not, search for publications from the board members and see if they are publishing good research in good journals.
- ▶ Never submit to or rely on research from a journal that has no editorial board or editor-in-chief – you have no idea who is reviewing the work and deciding if it will be accepted! Choosing editors is one of the first steps in launching a new journal, so if a journal does not have editors, it is probably just trying to collect money in exchange for posting any manuscript online.



### **3. A single publisher releases an overwhelmingly large suite of new journals all at one time.**

- ▶ Dishonest publishers often expand their selection of “journals” to try to catch any possible author, and the journals typically begin with the same set of words (e.g., “*The New Journal of...*”). If the publisher you are considering is offering hundreds of new journals, it is unlikely that the publisher can actually find appropriate editors to support each journal. Launching that many new journals also frequently leads to the “editorial board coming soon” issue described above.




#### **4. The journal says an issue will be available at a certain time, but the issue never appears.**

- ▶ A good journal will receive enough content to publish an issue when scheduled. If the journal you are investigating says its next issue was due six months ago, but no papers have been published, be wary.

#### **5. The website is not professional in quality.**

- ▶ Many journals make revenue with advertisements from scholarly societies, biotechnology firms, and manuscript service companies. However, beware of journals that post advertisements from rental car agencies or florists, as this is a sign that the journal is not deeply tied to the scholarly world. In addition, if the language on the website is highly flawed (more than just the occasional typo), or if no contact information is available, it may be best to move on.



## **6. The journal title notes a national or international affiliation that does not match its editorial board or location.**

- ▶ Use of the term 'American' or 'British' is somewhat misleading if the journal is published in another country. Typically, journals with 'American' or 'British' in the title are associated with top societies based in those nations.
- ▶ Claiming 'International' status in the title without the appropriate distribution of editorial functions across the globe may denote a false claim as well. Sometimes a journal adds one of these terms to seem more established than it really is. As with all of our points, the inclusion of these terms is not necessarily a problem, but it is worth investigating further.



## There are fundamental errors in the titles and abstracts.

- ▶ An occasional typo is not a big issue; everyone makes mistakes. However, a fundamental error in the title and throughout a paper may indicate that the reviewers and editors were not truly familiar with the topic. An example would be repeated mention of “*Vibrio cholera*” in place of the correct species name “*Vibrio cholerae*” (cholera is the name of the disease, not the bacterium). When looking through the articles from a journal that interests you, keep an eye out for repeated basic errors.

► **7. The content of the journal varies from the title and stated scope.**

If a mechanical engineering journal is publishing articles on the treatment of pediatric cancers, chances are there is little or no editorial management of the content. Journals in one discipline will have expertise in reviewing the scholarship of that discipline. Interdisciplinary articles should at least have some relevance to the stated focus of the journal. Journals that expect to be “Multidisciplinary” will reflect that in the range of subjects represented by their editorial board.

► Taken together, these diverse indicators should make it easier for both authors and readers to identify credible online open access journals.

Ref.: (<https://www.aje.com/en/arc/8-ways-identify-questionable-open-access-journal/>; and also <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/beware-academics-getting-reeled-scam-journals/>)



- <http://archive.fo/6EByy>

- This is an archived list of PREDATORY JOURNALS—compiled up to December 2016





## **SUGGESTIONS FOR IDENTIFYING LEGITIMATE ACADEMIC JOURNALS**

- **Most Research Universities abroad subscribe to only legitimate academic journals. So here is what I tell my students who wish to find a venue for their publishing:**
- **Go to the library Site of a respected Research University abroad—just to search you will not need log in**
- **Check their list of journals in YOUR particular field.**
- **When you see a potential journal or two note the details on the journal**



- ▶ Next go to the website of that journal and learn further details:
  - ▶ For how many years has the journal been publishing
  - ▶ Is that social science journal part of the Taylor and Francis group in the UK [most but NOT ALL journals in social sciences are now under the Taylor and Francis Group]
  - ▶ What kind of articles/ topics do their publications focus on
  - ▶ Description of the journal
  - ▶ Editors and their e-mail addresses
  - ▶ Clear information on the formatting and submissions process
  - ▶ Contact scholars abroad and ask them about the journal and their publishing experience with the journal
  - ▶ <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/vasa20/current> an example of a journal that will have such information and the list of articles (content) for current and past issues



## EXAMPLE OF FOREIGN RESEARCH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY WEBSITE

► <http://library.niu.edu/ulib/>

OR SEE

<http://anulib.anu.edu.au/http://anulib.anu.edu.au/>

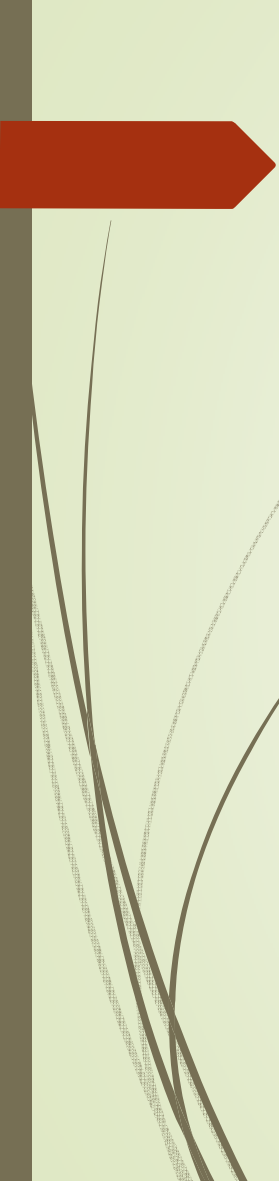
► ALSO YOU CAN CHECK THE LIST OF JOURNALS  
FROM SCOPUS—THESE ARE LEGITIMATE  
ACADEMIC JOURNALS:

<https://journalmetrics.scopus.com/>

## **2. What editors are looking for before they even send manuscript out for peer review**

When I was the Executive Editor for the Southeast Asia section of the journal *Asian Affairs: An American Review* here are the things I was looking for.

- ▶ Did the submission follow the journal specified format from the author information section on our webpage
- ▶ Did the submission follow the guidelines for the WORD LIMIT
- ▶ Is the topic and research consistent with our journal's focus
- ▶ Is the submission readable—i.e. did the author put it through a copy editing process, proper grammar, etc.
- ▶ Is it an Analytical paper?

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- ▶ **Did the author use the most CURRENT literature in the analysis – including comparative material from other parts of the world**
  - ▶ **Did the author use the most CURRENT theoretical paradigms in the analysis**
  - ▶ **Did the author explain about the methodology and are these methodologies the most current and sophisticated methodologies**
  - ▶ **Did the author clearly define and explain key terms, definitions, concepts, theoretical frameworks etc. so that the analysis is accessible by readers from various social science disciplines**
  - ▶ **What is the exact contribution of the article ; how does the article grow our knowledge**
  - ▶ **Did the author address all implications of the research, including applied, policy, etc. implications**

## Here are a few general tips to keep in mind:

### **Pick the right journal: it's a bad sign if you don't recognise any of the editorial board**

- ▶ Check that your article is within the scope of the journal that you are submitting to. This seems so obvious but it's surprising how many articles are submitted to journals that are completely inappropriate. It is a bad sign if you do not recognise the names of any members of the editorial board. Ideally look through a number of recent issues to ensure that it is publishing articles on the same topic and that are of similar quality and impact.  
*Ian Russell, editorial director for science at Oxford University Press*

### **Always follow the correct submissions procedures**

- ▶ Often authors don't spend the 10 minutes it takes to read the instructions to authors which wastes enormous quantities of time for both the author and the editor and stretches the process when it does not need to.  
*Tangali Sudarshan, editor, Surface Engineering*

## **Don't repeat your abstract in the cover letter**

We look to the cover letter for an indication from you about what you think is most interesting and significant about the paper, and why you think it is a good fit for the journal. There is no need to repeat the abstract or go through the content of the paper in detail – we will read the paper itself to find out what it says. The cover letter is a place for a bigger picture outline, plus any other information that you would like us to have.

*Deborah Sweet, editor of Cell Stem Cell and publishing director at Cell Press*

## **A common reason for rejections is lack of context**

Make sure that it is clear where your research sits within the wider scholarly landscape, and which gaps in knowledge it's addressing. A common reason for articles being rejected after peer review is this lack of context or lack of clarity about why the research is important.

*Jane Winters, executive editor of the Institute of Historical Research's journal, [Historical Research](#) and associate editor of *Frontiers in Digital Humanities: Digital History**



## **Don't over-state your methodology**

Ethnography seems to be the trendy method of the moment, so lots of articles submitted claim to be based on it. However, closer inspection reveals quite limited and standard interview data. A couple of interviews in a café do not constitute ethnography. Be clear - early on - about the nature and scope of your data collection. The same goes for the use of theory. If a theoretical insight is useful to your analysis, use it consistently throughout your argument and text.

*Fiona Macaulay, editorial board, Journal of Latin American Studies*

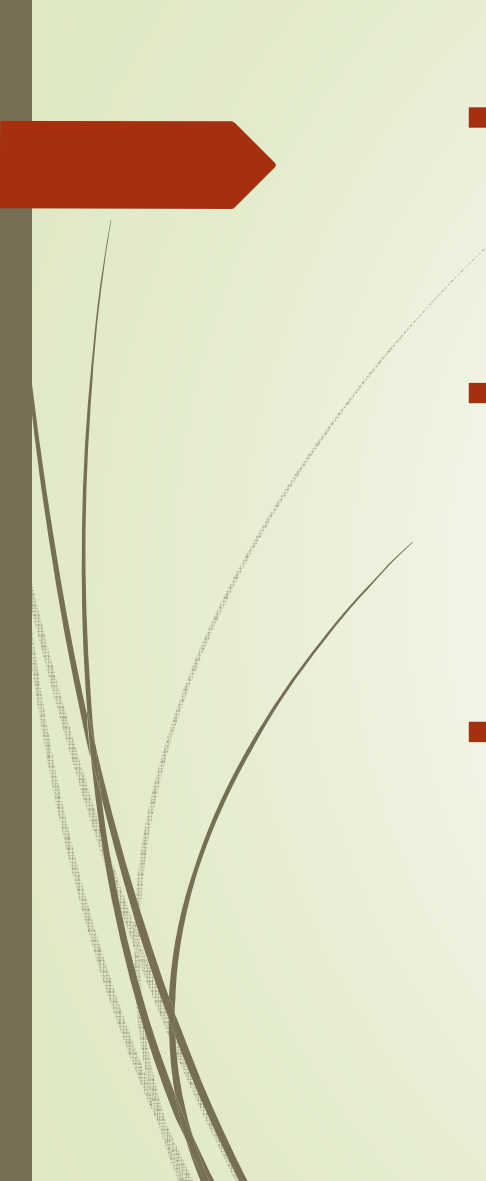
### **3. The length of time and steps in the process and revision, revision, revision**


- **The process may vary to some degree from journal to journal**
- **In some cases it can be lengthy such as 2 even 3 years from time of submission and final print appearing**



## Key junctures in the process

- ▶ Editor will review the submission if it meets established criteria
- ▶ Editor contacts potential reviewers in the field and topic of the submission providing clear DEADLINES by which the review must be sent to the editor—usually ONE MONTH time limit
- ▶ Once 3-5 peer reviewers agreed to do the review (by the deadline) the Editor sends them the article submission.
- ▶ Once the reviews are in (minimum 3; if not then time to find alternate reviewers and another month time limit) the Editor makes the decision based on these reviews whether it is publishable and communicates the reviews to the author providing a deadline by which a revised resubmission is required. In my experience, I would also ask the author to send an Author Justification document as well, justifying why any of the peer review required revisions were not done.

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- ▶ When the author's revisions are sent the Editor checks if the required revisions were done and usually sends the revised manuscript to the peer reviewers –whether the revisions have satisfied their concerns. This again can take a month
  - ▶ Once the peer reviewers responded, the editor contacts the author either with a final decision and prospective volume the article will appear OR requests further revision if the reviewers' response suggested that the author did not fully address their concerns.
  - ▶ If the article is ready for publication (that is revisions were to the satisfaction of the peer reviewers) the editor sends the article to the copy editor/production manager who then handles it from there

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- ▶ The copy editor / production manager then places the article in queue for the next available journal volume to appear in. This can take time depending on the volume of article submissions from 1 month to 6 months and on how often the journal publishes a volume annually. It is the copy editor/ production manager then who will be in touch with the author with the print proofs usually a month or two before the actual volume.
  - ▶ It is important that the author responds in a timely manner with regards to the print proofs or else the article gets delayed to the next volume.

# Dealing with feedback from peer reviewers

## Respond directly (and calmly) to reviewer comments

When resubmitting a paper following revisions, include a detailed document summarising all the changes suggested by the reviewers, and how you have changed your manuscript in light of them. Stick to the facts, and don't rant. Don't respond to reviewer feedback as soon as you get it. Read it, think about it for several days, discuss it with others, and then draft a response.

*Helen Ball, editorial board, Journal of Human Lactation*

## ► **Revise and resubmit: don't give up after getting through all the major hurdles**

You'd be surprised how many authors who receive the standard "revise and resubmit" letter never actually do so. But it is worth doing - some authors who get asked to do major revisions persevere and end up getting their work published, yet others, who had far less to do, never resubmit. It seems silly to get through the major hurdles of writing the article, getting it past the editors and back from peer review only to then give up.

*Fiona Macaulay, editorial board, Journal of Latin American Studies*

► **It is acceptable to challenge reviewers, with good justification**

It is acceptable to decline a reviewer's suggestion to change a component of your article if you have a good justification, or can (politely) argue why the reviewer is wrong. A rational explanation will be accepted by editors, especially if it is clear you have considered all the feedback received and accepted some of it.

*Helen Ball, editorial board of Journal of Human Lactation*

► **Think about how quickly you want to see your paper published**

Some journals rank more highly than others and so your risk of rejection is going to be greater. People need to think about whether or not they need to see their work published quickly - because certain journals will take longer. Some journals, like ours, also do advance access so once the article is accepted it appears on the journal website. This is important if you're preparing for a job interview and need to show that you are publishable.

*Hugh McLaughlin, editor in chief, Social Work Education - the International Journal*

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- **Remember: when you read published papers you only see the finished article**

Publishing in top journals is a challenge for everyone, but it may seem easier for other people. When you read published papers you see the finished article, not the first draft, nor the first revise and resubmit, nor any of the intermediate versions – and you never see the failures.

*Philip Powell, managing editor of the Information Systems Journal*

## **A minimalist general structure to your article draft for publication.**

- **Once you have selected the journal you must adhere to the FORMATTING, CITATION and WORD LENGTH SPECIFICATIONS of the journal.**
- **Social Science journals DO NOT ACCEPT RESEARCH REPORTS.**
- **You can also check the structural styles of articles appearing in the journal you choose to submit**
- **Remember that an article manuscript has a different structure in many foreign journals**

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND with regards to your writing and the way you structure writing:

### Focus on your main arguments that progresses logically, rather than chronologically

- ▶ Take some time before even writing your paper to think about the logic of the presentation. When writing, focus on a story that progresses logically, rather than the chronological order of the experiments that you did.

*Deborah Sweet, editor of Cell Stem Cell and publishing director at Cell Press*

### Don't try to write and edit at the same time

- ▶ Open a file on the PC and put in all your headings and sub-headings and then fill in under any of the headings where you have the ideas to do so. If you reach your daily target (mine is 500 words) put any other ideas down as bullet points and stop writing; then use those bullet points to make a start the next day.
- ▶ If you are writing and can't think of the right word (e.g. for elephant) don't worry - write (big animal long nose) and move on - come back later and get the correct term. Write don't edit; otherwise you lose flow.

*Roger Watson, editor-in-chief, Journal of Advanced Nursing*



## **Don't bury your argument like a needle in a haystack!!!!!!**

If someone asked you on the bus to quickly explain your paper, could you do so in clear, everyday language? This clear argument should appear in your abstract and in the very first paragraph (even the first line) of your paper. Don't make us hunt for your argument as for a needle in a haystack. If it is hidden on page seven that will just make us annoyed. Oh, and make sure your argument runs all the way through the different sections of the paper and ties together the theory and empirical material.

*Fiona Macaulay, editorial board, Journal of Latin American Studies*

## **Ask a colleague to check your work [or hire a copy editor]**

- ▶ One of the problems that journal editors face is badly written papers. It might be that the writer's first language isn't English and they haven't gone the extra mile to get it proofread. It can be very hard to work out what is going on in an article if the language and syntax are poor.

*Brian Lucey, editor, International Review of Financial Analysis*



## Don't forget about international readers

- ▶ We get people who write from America who assume everyone knows the American system - and the same happens with UK writers. Because we're an international journal, we need writers to include that international context.  
*Hugh McLaughlin, editor in chief, Social Work Education - the International Journal*

## Don't try to cram your PhD into a 6,000 word paper

- ▶ Sometimes people want to throw everything in at once and hit too many objectives. We get people who try to tell us their whole PhD in 6,000 words and it just doesn't work. More experienced writers will write two or three papers from one project, using a specific aspect of their research as a hook.  
*Hugh McLaughlin, editor in chief, Social Work Education - the International Journal*



## ***Minimalistic Structure:***

- **This is a guide and outline to a structure that may help you organize your article in a LOGICAL manner. NOTE that after the introduction, each section needs to be organized under logical subheadings to make the flow of arguments and analysis crystal clear. Each subheading should be the grounding for what follows next.**

**INTRODUCTION** –**briefly** and **concisely** state the following in simple declarative sentences [and then in subsequent sections you may expand in more detail]

- Thesis statement—the focus of the research article
- Research Questions and subquestions (MAIN research questions and limited subquestions)
  - All terms must be precisely defined
  - All variables must be clearly stated
- From what theoretical/analytical frameworks will you address these questions
- What methodologies did you use for collecting data that would answer your research questions
- How do you situate your study in relation to existing recent literature;
- What is the contribution of your study to your FIELD and to other related fields; what is **UNIQUE** about your research (what has not yet been addressed by existing research and literature??? Etc.)



**Background of the study: [you can choose your own subheading]**

- **Research site; population; or theme/topic of your research topic???**; any literature that has focused in existing published research on the research site; population or on the topical theme of your research [even from other countries]
- **What is lacking in the existing literature (this includes similar studies in populations outside of the Indonesian). How will your research address these gaps in literature?**
- **This is where you also provide background on ethnography/history/ etc. that is relevant to study**

## Analytical frameworks and methods:

- ▶ **Main theoretical frameworks that guided your research design and the analysis presented in this article—please do not assume and briefly explain the key aspects of the theory and how you are applying these -- HOW YOUR research articulates with or tries to advance key theoretical /analytical arguments; why did you choose those analytical frameworks—again linking your research project to the analytical framework**
- ▶ **Also key current literature that advances analytical/theoretical arguments to which you are linking your own research [context of your research in relation to current literature]**
- ▶ **Methods: what methods of data collection you used; which methods did you use to collect what data to answer which research questions**



## Data presentation AND ANALYSIS

- Discuss the data on which this article is based on and **ORGANIZE** into under sub-headings [this will depend on the breadth and scope of research questions you are addressing in this article manuscript]. Make sure you provide an analysis at the end of the data **SECTION** and not just a description of the data. Or if you are a sophisticated writer you may interweave your analysis with the data presentation

## Conclusion and discussions:

- ▶ Start with discussions and in the discussion you may expand the analysis presented in previous section and LINK the analytical conclusions reached as well as relate it all back to relevant literature. Do NOT repeat what you wrote in the previous section. But this is the place to expand since this is a discussion
- ▶ Implications of your study—contribution towards existing knowledge in your and related fields; any applied or even policy implications/ implications for future research; limitations of the study, etc.

## COMPLETE Bibliography

- ▶ be precise, no mistakes
- ▶ Double check against manuscript for ALL cited sources



## REMINDER:

- ▶ **ABSOLUTELY NO RESEARCH REPORTS!!!** And research report formats will be accepted by reputable academic journals.
- ▶ **Your work must be RELEVANT and CURRENT; that means you must always :**
  - ▶ **Keep up with most current theoretical and analytical frameworks and methods in your field**
  - ▶ **Keep up with most current international literature and publications -- be comparative; you do not want to repeat what has already been done UNLESS you were testing a hypothesis that would also be applicable to your particular case study**
  - ▶ **DO NOT JUST PRESENT A CASE STUDY—‘so what’? but your article must explain the relevance of that case study FOR YOUR FIELD OR SUBFIELD.**
  - ▶ **Address the relevance to current issues and debates in the field! E.G.: So what is the main contribution not just to Indonesian or ASEAN sociology but to sociology (or subfield of sociology) as a whole**

**CITE! CITE! CITE! -- NO plagiarism allowed--everything must be properly cited within the text of your article with proper page numbers (or page number ranges) EVEN WHEN YOU ARE PARAPHRASING and NOT directly quoting.**

**➤ Your BIBLIOGRAPHY [OR REFERENCES] MUST BE COMPLETE WITHOUT MISTAKES.**