

Re-viewers Report Forms

This document contains the second summary of numerous reviewers' checklist questions as provide to me in response to an ISWORLD request in July 2004. The questions asked of reviewers have been rearranged by topic. Thus, the all the questions I thought were about the 'Significance, Importance or Originality' of a paper are listed under this topic. Some brief reflections on the questions are provided at the end.

Significance/Importance/Originality

- Practical and Managerial Significance?
- Significance of Research Contribution?
- Significance of research problem and/or theoretical ideas?
- Importance of Problem?
- How important is the research and/or theoretical problem?
- Significance and originality?
- Why was it done? (e.g. research relevance)
- Does the manuscript address a new issue or offer additional insights on a recurrent issue?
- Philosophical worth of the paper?
- Significance and Originality?
- Are the findings of academic and/or practitioner significance?
- Significance?
- Originality of research?
- Originality?
- Originality?
- Significance to theory and practice?
- Originality and novelty?
- Significance of the topic?
- Significance for practice?
- Originality?
- Significance/Value to international audience?
- Importance to topic of track/conference?
- Originality, novelty of results?
- Likely significance and potential contribution to the field?
- Practical/Managerial significance?
- The most exciting and interesting idea in the paper was?
- Motivation for Study? Was the importance of the research to academics, practitioners and the researchers themselves, fully explained? What was the problem in need of research?
- Problem clearly stated and area defined, importance demonstrated?
- Research Problem clearly stated and area defined, importance demonstrated?
- Does the author provide adequate motivation?
- Does the author provide adequate background information?

Audience

- Appropriateness for this Journal?
- Audience?
- Topic is RELEVANT to [our] Membership?
- Is the topic relevant?
- Is the paper of interest to a reasonable segment of [our] community?
- Is the paper of interest to practitioners?
- Interest to community?
- Relevance?
- Popularity?
- Popularity of the subject?
- Appropriateness for this journal?
- Relevance of issues examined:
- Relevant to the workshop
- Provokes discussion
- Relevance
- Relevance to this journal
- Relevance to the call for papers
- Appropriateness to Conference:
- Relevance to journal
- Likelihood of drawing and keeping an audience:
- Is the paper interesting or relevant for an international audience?

Literature Review

- Literature Review?
- Appropriate REFERENCES are cited
- Adequacy of literature review
- Thoroughness in the review of the literature
- How well-developed and appropriate are the literature reviews?
- Is the literature review adequate to support the framework presented?
- Has the author cited the relevant literature?
- The paper reflects the current state of the literature
- Has the author adequately reviewed the literature?
- Have any key papers been omitted from the review?
- Has the literature been subject to an insightful critique or just listed?
- Has the author defined the current 'knowledge boundary' and identified how he/she proposes to move that boundary forward?
- Are the references appropriate and complete?
- Adequacy of literature review
- Does the manuscript contain sufficient and appropriate references?
- References are sufficient and appropriate
- Important references are missing; more references are needed
- Number of references are excessive

- Adequacy of the literature review:
- Contributions to the literature
- Literature review
- What (in the opinion of the critiquer) was the object, thing or phenomenon under study? The object of the argument? Was it well scoped, defined, and contrasted through a literature review (including prior research)?
- From what perspective (frame) was the object studied? From what perspective was the object in the argument studies? What is the lens, theory, intellectual frame, concern, or worldview used on the object under study? Was it well scoped, defined, and contrasted, through a literature review (including prior research)?
- Are the references authoritative and representative?
- Literature Review Refers to major work relevant to topic Leads to research problem/hypothesis Logical development Identifies strengths/weaknesses of previous research Establishes clear relationship of problem to previous research
- Literature Review... refers to major work relevant to topic... leads to research problem/hypothesis... logical development... identifies strengths/weaknesses of previous research... establishes clear relationship of problem to previous research
- Is the research properly ground in the literature?
- Does the author use important, current and adequate citations? Are there too many citations? Are any irrelevant or insignificant? Are they at an adequate level for the publication (e.g., research oriented vs. trade journals; technical reports vs. journal articles)? Are there too many citations to the author's own work? Can you suggest any missing citations the author may have overlooked?

Contribution to Knowledge

- Legitimacy of conclusions
- Potential of recommendations
- Paper is unique or important CONTRIBUTION to the field:
- Paper is unique or important CONTRIBUTION to the understanding of the field
- What is new that we didn't know before
- Legitimacy
- Contribution to theory and research
- Implications for xx practice
- Supportive/Convincing Conclusions and Inferences
- How well developed is the theoretical foundations
- How well-supported and convincing are the inferences and conclusions? Are the theoretical and practical implications appropriately indicated?
- Coverage
- Is the framework clear?
- Is the evidence, discussion, description clear and convincing and does it match the framework?
- What are the new issues here? (e.g. findings)
- Scholarship
- Results and discussion

- Originality
- Scholarship
- Have the theoretical underpinnings of the research project been clearly articulated?
- Is there conceptual clarity
- Do the conjectures to be tested flow logically from the theoretical base?
- Have the conjectures been refuted or not?
- Have the findings been adequately assessed in the context of the literature review and existing theory?
- Do the conclusions properly 'close down' all aspects of the research?
- Is there a contribution to knowledge and, if so, what is it?
- Do I feel comfortable that this person is really an expert in their field?
- Does the paper make a sufficient contribution to research so as to warrant publication?
- Is the use of theory appropriate and complete?
- Originality:
- Theoretical/Conceptual Base
- Appropriateness of conclusions:
- Contribution to practice:
- Contribution to research:
- What do you see as this manuscript's contribution to the literature in this field?
- Significance in contribution
- Theoretical soundness
- Legitimacy of conclusions:
- Contribution to the field:
- Strength of theoretical foundations:
- Theoretical base
- What was the thesis, the argument (conclusion, knowledge claim) as identified by the examiner? Was it empirically falsifiable and sufficiently novel? Was an alternative argument considered?
- Do the conclusions sensibly follow from the work that is reported?
- Are the research contributions clear? Are the contributions significant?
- Has the author performed a complete analysis and drawn insightful conclusions?
- Is the conclusion significant? Is it just a rehash of the paper? Does it provide new synthesis or insights? Does it leave the reader excited about the research, the research domain or the future?

Methodology, Analysis and/or Empirics

- **METHODOLOGY:** (e.g., research design, statistical methods, instruments, data analysis correct and appropriate:
- **EVIDENCE** supports author arguments and objectives
- Adequacy of Methodology
- Quality of Analysis

- Quality of research design
- Sufficiency of data analysis
- Technical Quality:
- Clarity of Research Issues
- Clarity of the research questions/hypotheses
- Appropriateness of the research method (e.g., sampling, instrumentation, data analysis, etc.)
- What was done ? (e.g a research for ...)
- Hypotheses and/or research objectives clearly stated Hypotheses and/or research objectives appropriate & testable or achievable
- Theoretical concepts and techniques are reviewed/explained
- Soundness of Methodology
- How sound are the methodological approaches?
- Is the treatment new or newsmaking?
- Does the paper apply standards appropriate to method (if quantitative then defensible, if descriptive then thorough enough to reflect academic responsibility)
- Research Method Addresses each objective No major weaknesses Appropriate to answer questions/hypotheses Fully described and justified Assumptions and limitations stated Appropriate steps taken to minimise bias Data Collection Carried out appropriately Problems noted and validity of data established Data Analysis Appropriate analytical techniques used Demonstrates understanding of techniques used Results Clearly presented Appropriate use of tables, figures Discussion Compares results with previous work Explains differences Weaknesses honestly conceded and discuss appropriately Suggestions for further research Conclusion Clearly stated Substantiated by the evidence presented Related to hypotheses/objectives of the research General report
- A good paper tells "a good story"
- How was it done ? (e.g. research methodology)
- How well it was done ? (e.g. theoretically robustness and rigor of research methodology)
- If the article is an empirical study, is the methodology sound?
- Are the research question and the research aims and objectives clearly articulated?
- Is the methodology appropriate for the testing of these conjectures given the underpinning theory?
- Have the concepts been adequately operationalised and have these operationalisations adequately justified?
- Has the approach to evidence collection been properly designed and has it generated robust evidence?
- Is the sample size/base of evidence adequate for the research design?
- Have the techniques been properly applied?
- Have I been given enough information to let me make up my own mind about the reliability and validity of the results?
- Has the candidate done what they claimed they would do in the introduction?
- Are there any logical inconsistencies?
- Is the paper logically and technically correct?

- Is the research methodology rigorous and sound?
- Adequacy of theoretical framework
- Quality of research design
- Adequacy of data analysis
- Rigor of methods employed:
- Clarity of objectives:
- Is the manuscript technically sound?
- Research method
- Development of concepts/hypotheses:
- Quality of research design:
- Adequacy of data analysis:
- Technical content
- Scientific contents, technical correctness:
- Quality of the method or analytical techniques:
- Appropriate methodology and analysis
- The quality of the conceptual analysis and theoretical development would be enhanced by the following three actions:
- The quality of the data gathering and empirical analysis would be enhanced by the following three actions:
- Sufficient and convincing supporting evidence? What evidence was brought to support the argument/conclusion/knowledge claim, was it convincing, novel, insightful? Would it have stood up in court? Were the counter evidence and arguments fully considered? Was all available empirical evidence sought? Were all those mentioned in the research given a voice?
- Implications, so-what? What were the recommendations, how should people act differently as a result of this research? Has the research improved peoples' choices, how so?
- Does the paper develop a logical argument or a theme?
- Hypotheses and/or research objectives clearly stated appropriate & testable or achievable
- Theoretical concepts and techniques are reviewed/explained
- Research Method...addresses each objective... no major weaknesses ... appropriate to answer questions/hypotheses... fully described and justified... assumptions and limitations stated... appropriate steps taken to minimise bias... data collection carried out appropriately Problems noted and validity of data established... Data Analysis Appropriate analytical techniques used... Demonstrates understanding of techniques used Results Clearly presented ... Appropriate use of tables, figures... Discussion Compares results with previous work Explains differences... Weaknesses honestly conceded and discuss appropriately... Suggestions for further research... Conclusion Clearly stated... Substantiated by the evidence presented... Related to hypotheses/objectives of the research
- Are the equations, algorithms, methods, experiments, and conclusions: correct, robust comprehensive and sensible?
- Has the author expressed the limitations of the research and the author's approach?

Presentation, Purpose and Definitions

- Quality of Presentation
- Organization of Manuscript
- Clear and well-defined OBJECTIVES
- General Organization and Presentation
- Quality of Writing
- Presentation clarity of the manuscript
- Scholarship and cogency
- How well-organized, well-written, and readable is the manuscript?
- Length:
- Style and Literary Quality
- Style and literary quality
- Is the paper well-written, well organized
- Does the manuscript suit the enclosed guidelines for an article, short feature, or commentary?
- Is the English satisfactory?
- Clarity/Organisation
- Clarity and liveliness
- Appeal
- Clarity:
- Definitions and language? Were all key words defined with consideration of alternative interpretations?
- Clarity of presentation
- Are the title and abstract appropriate?
- Is the discussion well organized?
- Language and expression
- Are the points clearly developed?
- Quality of writing:
- Clarity in paper presentation
- Does the title accurately reflect the content and of the Paper?
- Is the abstract sufficiently concise and informative?
- Mechanics/Grammar
- Quality of evidence/arguments presented:
- Are the title, abstract, and keywords appropriate?
- Does the manuscript contain title, abstract, and/or keywords?
- Does the introduction state the objectives of the manuscript in terms that encourage the reader to read on?
- How would you rate the organization of the manuscript?
- Is the manuscript focused?
- Is the length of the manuscript appropriate for the topic?
- Please rate and comment on the readability of this manuscript
- Readability and organization
- Clarity of presentation:
- Clarity/Organisation

- Mechanics/Grammar
- Writing skills, format, clarity:
- Use of English:
- How well-defined is the purpose?
- Clarity of paper's organisation and writing:
- QUALITY of WRITING is clear and grammatically correct
- Paper is WELL-ORGANIZED with logical flow of argument
- The strongest point about the way that you presented this idea was:
- In reading the paper I found that the clarity of your ideas was hindered by:
- Do the keywords provide adequate index entries for this paper?
- In the introduction, is the purpose of the paper clearly stated?
- Does the paper achieve its declared purpose?
- Do the figures and tables aid the clarity of the paper?
- Are the English and syntax of the paper satisfactory?
- Is the paper concise? (If not, please indicate which parts might be cut?)
- Abstract clear and concise? includes all important information on project, clearly outlines conclusions & addresses objectives/hypotheses Research
- Important terms and/or assumptions clearly defined
- Format is consistent with guidelines Logically organised Clear writing style Few spelling/typographic errors Layout and referencing consistent with Style Guide format
- Format is consistent with guidelines... Logically organised... Clear writing style... Few spelling/typographic errors... Layout and referencing consistent with Style Guide format
- Does the author cover everything promised in the introduction?
- Are all descriptions clear? Are the tables and figures clear? Do they make sense on their own or only if one has read the text carefully? Are there too many? Would an additional table or figure help? Would an example help?
- Is the approach clearly explained and well laid out? Does the author justify each of the points made?
- Has the author described his or her future research plans? Is it clear where the research described in this paper will lead and what the next step will be?

Not Allocated

- Discuss two good things about this paper
- Discuss two bad things about this paper
- What do you see as the strongest aspect of this manuscript?
- What do you see as the weakest aspect of this manuscript?
- With revisions, this paper would be appropriate for the following three journals:
- The following three issues would need to be addressed to improve the paper for submission in the recommended journals:

- I finished the paper thinking that it might be more persuasive if you omitted:
- In addition, you might like to consider the following:
- Relative to the theme of the conference on xx I found the following two ideas to be attractive and novel:
- Important terms and/or assumptions clearly defined
- Abstract clear and concise? includes all important information on project, clearly outlines conclusions and addresses objectives/hypotheses

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MY REFLECTIONS

To re-view something suggests looking at it for a second time, perhaps from a different perspective or due to a different purpose (driver). What overall perspective will be used and why may need to be explained.

There were perhaps a disproportionate number of questions about presentation for research papers.

There were not a lot of questions about the presence of theory (explanations-why) or conceptual frames. I suspect this is because the term theory is confused.

There were not a lot of 'so what' questions for our pragmatic discipline, i.e. questions about whether the paper provided useful recommendations and/or implications and/or actionable knowledge.

There were a few mentions of 'foundational knowledge'. I am not comfortable with this metaphor of knowledge preferring instead the Quine's network or 'web' of knowledge metaphor.

While not shown above, some checklists asked for numbers while some asked for a written response. Written, or both, responses may be preferable.

There may have been more emphasis given to asking if the paper had 'well supported conclusions', or 'well argued to a logical conclusion'. Asking if a paper makes a contribution to anything strikes me a bit vague.

There may have been more emphasis on checking the validity or logical justification of evidence in support of the conclusion. For example, few asked if the paper adequately gave voice to all those mentioned in any research.

There seemed to be more emphasis on rigor and presentation than on insight.

It was not clear what distinguishes a conference paper from a journal paper.

Those designing the questions might want ask about their own theory of knowledge validation, epistemology. This could drive the questions asked. For example a positivist should ask if the empirics are carefully measured, if they can be repeated and if alternative theories (explanations why) have been considered. A Jamesian Pragmatist might ask if the argument of the paper was well justified into the reviewer's understanding of the world. A post-structuralist might ask if there was any assumption of life cycles in non biological entities in the paper. A interpretivist might ask if all participants' interpretations of the research situation were included and well argued. Questions intended to cover most epistemologies might focus on reasonable argument and a quality of supporting evidence that would stand up in court.

Mike Metcalfe, August 2004