



# Manuscript Rejection in Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research

**Scientific and Technical Advisory Council (STAC), of the Special Journals Publisher (SJP)**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Citation:**

Scientific and Technical Advisory Council (STAC) of the Special Journals Publisher (SJP): Manuscript rejection in Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research. Special Journal of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics [SJ- PND], 2020; 1 (1):1-14

**Correspondence:** [editorialoffice@spparenet.org](mailto:editorialoffice@spparenet.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Background**

As the world marches into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century, 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and unmet research needs in Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research are sure to move along together (1). It is clear also that every century and every decade have its peculiar issue and questions, for which answers are needed if humans must continue to live on the surface of the earth. Modern technologies have

revolutionized the dept and intent of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research questions giving us the capacity to ask deeper questions that gives deeper results and broader answers (2, 3). These Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research questions represent the true picture of the real situation of things, and asking the right questions will surely usher in the right answers to impact lives. Therefore, there is no doubt that good Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics

This open access publication is Licensed under a creative common’s attribution 4.0 international License

Research questions lead to good answers and good answers impact the social, economic, and environmental aspects of society. Any information or document that reneges on this will be a recipe for Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research rejection.

Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research stakeholders are interested in databases that have stood the test of time in quality, reliability, and availability for use where and when needed (4). Such databases and publishing houses should have taken time to pass through stringent optimization to bring out the best in the dataset. The interest of the readers and stakeholders has a part to play in what is accepted because if any manuscript is not of interest to the readers the editors will demand that authors should modify and improve their topics so that it will fit into what appeals to our readers (5). This is because readers options and scope definition to some extent the investment pattern of donors because they want to invest as much as possible what will appeal to a wider audience as well as impact the general public at large

Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research data generation, collection, and analysis are entirely different from manuscript writing especially to the standard required by publishers (6). Many good and high-quality research results are yet to be written in the form of a manuscript for publication lying fallow in the underdeveloped and developing nations. This may be because data generation and data publication are walls apart and need authors' attention to help information dissemination to stakeholders in dire need of it (7).

## **Rational**

This open access publication is Licensed under a creative common's attribution 4.0 international License

It is one thing to conduct good high-quality research but it is another thing to disseminate it to the right stakeholders for use in an effective intervention (8). Of what use is good research if it cannot be communicated concisely, and clearly to the right audience. Again, what is the benefit of a good manuscript if it does not adequately represent the true picture of the actual thing that happened in the research and cannot be incorporated into the strategic development plan of an organization? Therefore, Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research should not be complete until it is adequately publicized with the right audience in conferences, and peer-reviewed journals (9)

## **The right questions**

The right Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research questions must be asked and answered to prevent manuscripts from being rejected. There is no universal guidelines or pattern that a manuscript must take to avoid being rejected. Manuscript rejection may be one of the hardest decisions an editorial office has to make because they have to balance inclusion with diversity as well as a volume with quality if their strategic development agenda must be attained (10). Publishers have their purpose which in turn defines their scope as well as what is accepted or rejected. Authors therefore must exercise greater caution to write manuscripts to the satisfaction of the publishers because their satisfaction is defined in part by their reader's need.

## **Objective**

In this retrospective review of manuscript rejection in Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics, data were retrieved from the mainstream database and analyzed for their impact on society, academics, and the research world.

## **Materials and Methods**

In this retrospective cross-sectional study, we downloaded and perused 486 published full-length original papers, published addendum, corrections, editorials, abstracts of meetings, conference proceedings, and review articles, on the general concept of development and sustainability. This searching and corresponding download of relevant papers were made from a globally recognized research-based data repository that included but not limited to the Web of Science (WoS) (10) core collection database on the ninetens of July 2020 at about 10.25 GMT+2). The database of PubMed, Research Gate, and Google scholars was perused to be sure no new documents relevant and necessary for this study were missed out. However, the web of science formed the major and reference database for this study because our software was more compatible to recovered data encoded in the web of science database while other databases consulted served to provide other relevant articles, we considered imported but probably missing in the web of science.

### **Boolean topic search approach**

The Boolean topic search approach (11) used included “(development \* AND sustainability\$) OR (Sustainability of \* AND development\$) to encompass all relevant and available documents (12) on the subject of development and sustainability between 1990 and 2019. At the time of this study, we judged that the Web of Science Core Collection database had enough user-friendly and accessible academic research database relatively covering enough journals, books, conferences as well as millions of records

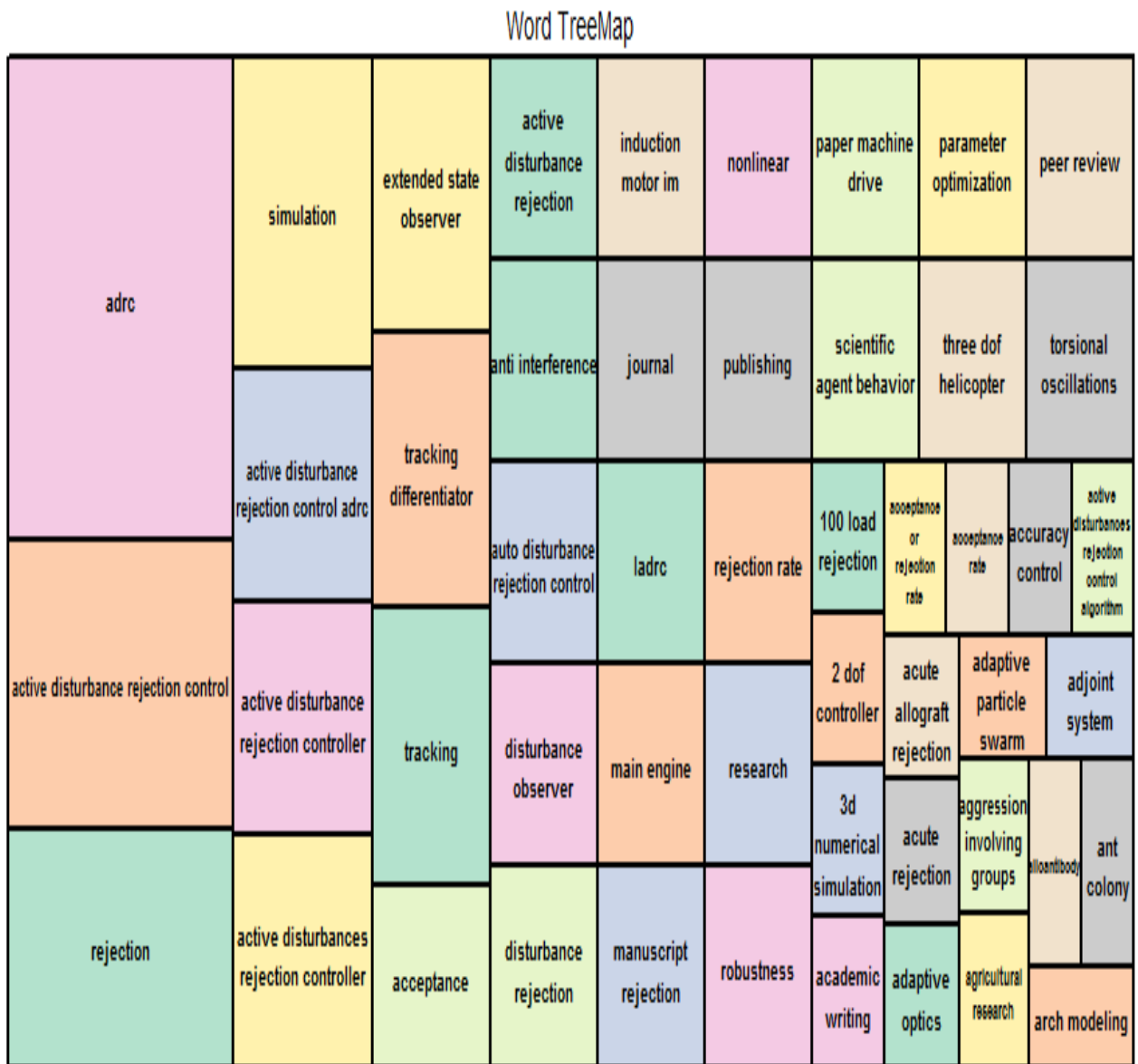
from clarivate.libguides.com (references). To ensure the inclusion of abbreviated or shorten words, the wildcard \* and \$ were added to the end of the search algorithms. Thereafter, all documents that meet the eligibility criteria of sustainable development were retrieved and exported into BibTex file format and the authors, titles, abstracts mined in PDF file format.

### **Data analysis**

All the bibliometric variables were retrieved filtered and normalized for quality control. The results were analyses in the bibliophagy plug in the package of 3.5.1 version of R-studio software, while the codes and commands were adopted from <https://www.bibliometrics.org> to evaluate the bibliometrics indices. Tables and graph were made in Microsoft excel 16 version and network maps were visualized in 1,6 Vox-viewer software

### **Results:**

In this study of Innovations in Research design, 177 papers written by 480 authors over a period of three decades were recovered, perused and analyzed as shown in table 1 above. Forty-nine (49) documents were written by single authors while 432 authors wrote 432, multi-author documents giving 3.38 collaborative index and authors and co-authors per documents indexes of 2.71 and 2.96 respectively. Fifty-two (52) proceedings papers, 9 meetings abstract, 1 editorial material, 47 articles, 6 articles that were originally a book chapter, 4 reviews, 36 editorial material and 6 book chapters among others.



**Figure 1: Word tree-map of manuscript rejection in Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research**

From Figure 1, The most conspicuous category is **adrc** and associated subcategories include active disturbance controller, disturbances observer, nonlinear, robustness, and academic writing. The next category is active disturbance rejection control and associated subcategories are tracking differentiator, main engine, rejection rate, 2 of the controllers, adaptive particle swarm, and arch modeling. The next category is rejection while the associated subcategories are tracking, active disturbance rejection control, anti-interference, ladrc, 100 load rejection, and adaptive optics. The next category is a simulation, and the subcategories are Active disturbance rejection controller, extended state observer, acceptance or rejection rate, parameter optimization, and agricultural

research. The next category is active disturbance rejection control and associated subcategories include auto disturbance rejection control, manuscript rejection, research, 3<sup>rd</sup> numerical simulation, and adjoint system. The next category is journal, with subcategories of publishing, acute rejection, accuracy control, torsional oscillators, and ant control

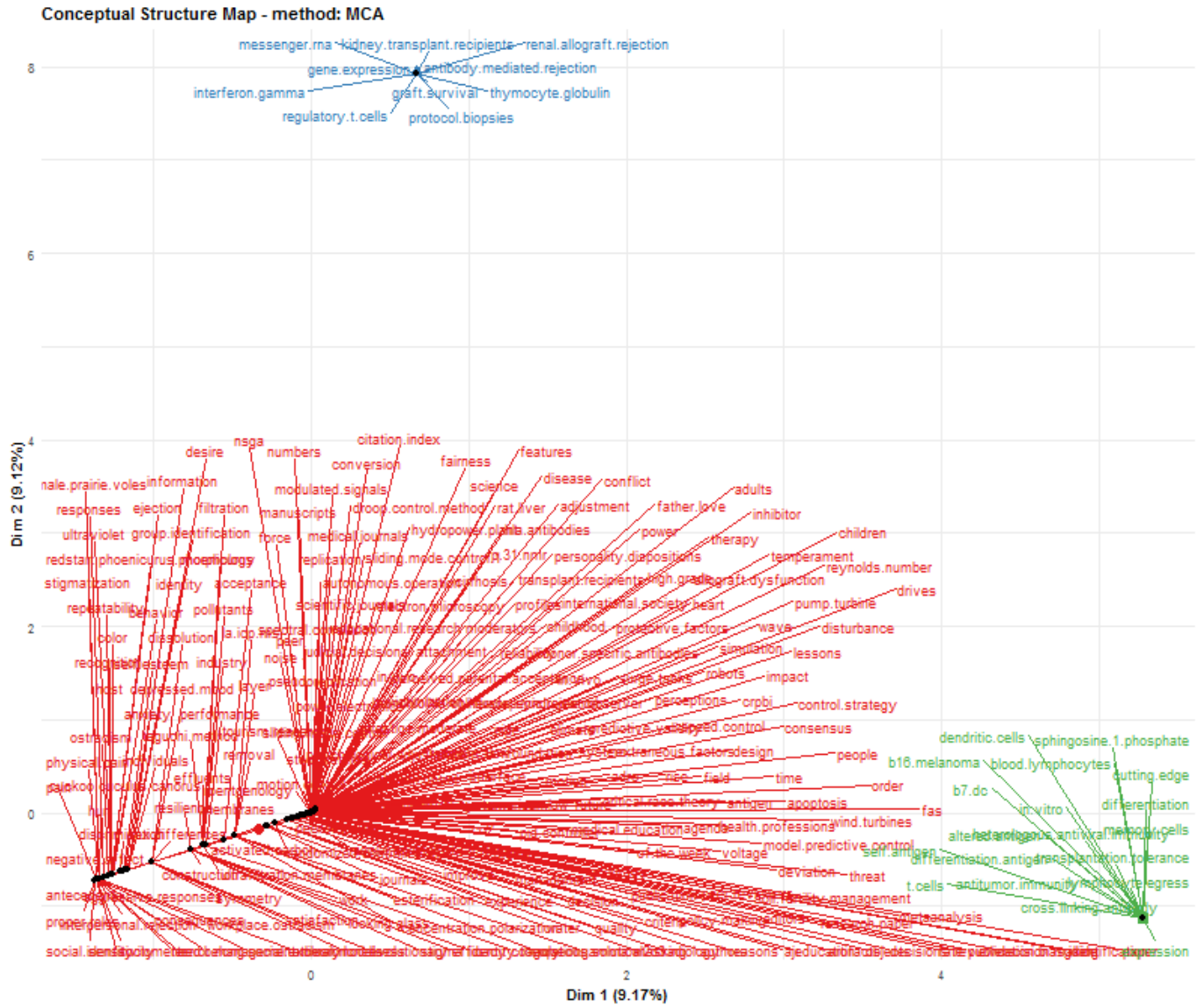
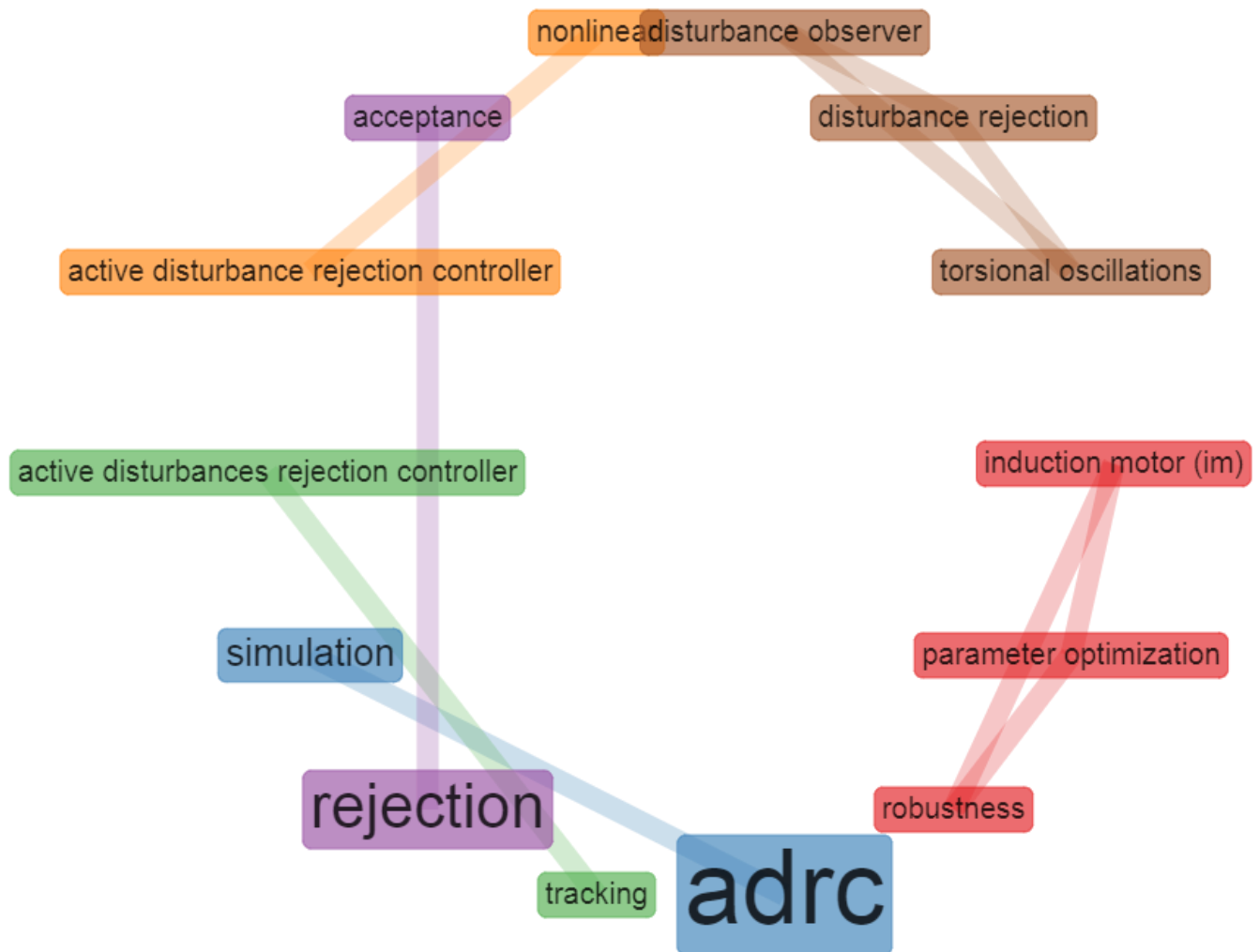


Figure 2: Conceptual structure map of manuscript rejection in Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research

Rejection of manuscripts which is the main category is matched against many subcategories representing conditions under which the term rejection was used found at the edges of the red blue and green domain in the figure above. The father away some keywords subcategories are located from the center the more distantly are they discriminated against the main category of rejection of

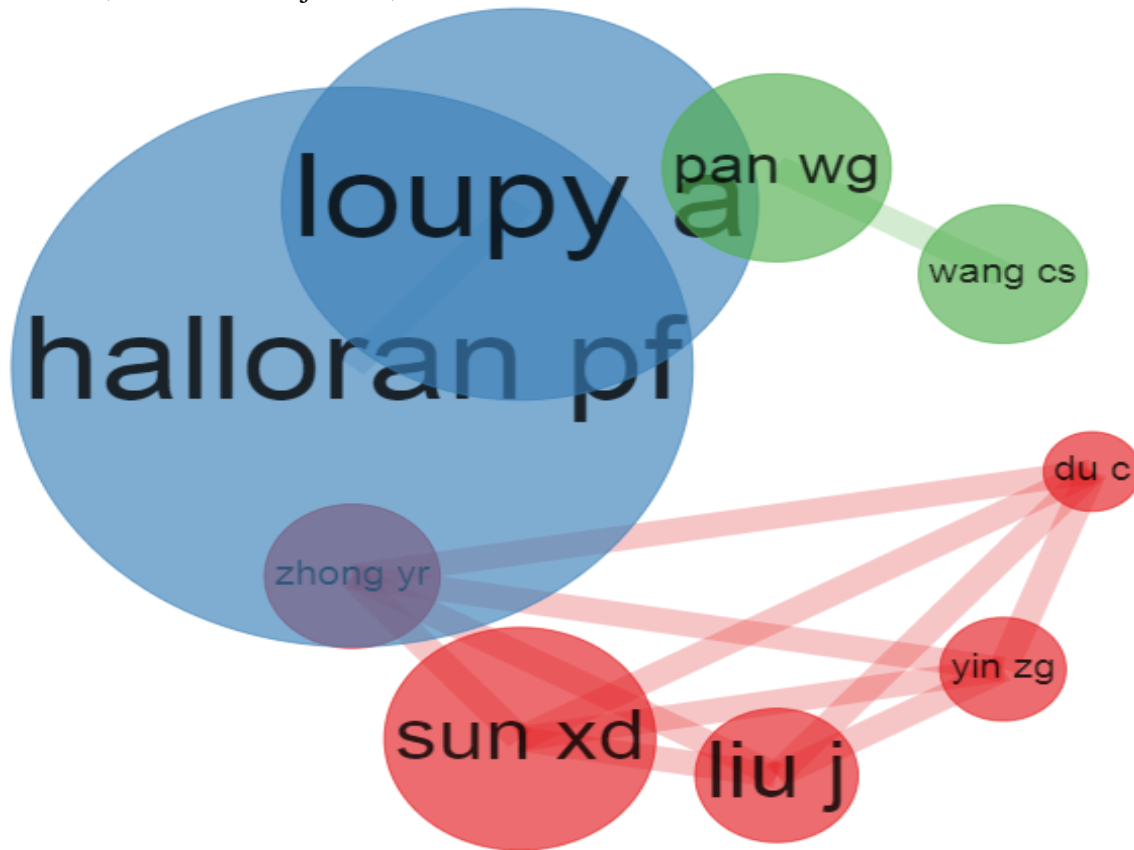
manuscripts. Key terms that are distantly discriminated against the main key terminology represented by the black dots at the center are located at the edges of three main domains in the figure above. Distantly discriminated terms are unlikely to have a relationship while closely discriminated terms are more likely to have a relationship. Some terminologies were distantly discriminated against rejection in the red domain such as numbers, citation index, adults, children, fairness desire, control strategy, therapy, power, and more. In the blue domain, renal allograft rejection and interferon gama were more distantly discriminated than the antibody-mediated rejection and gene expression.



**Figure 3. Co-occurrence Network of Author keywords in manuscript rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research**

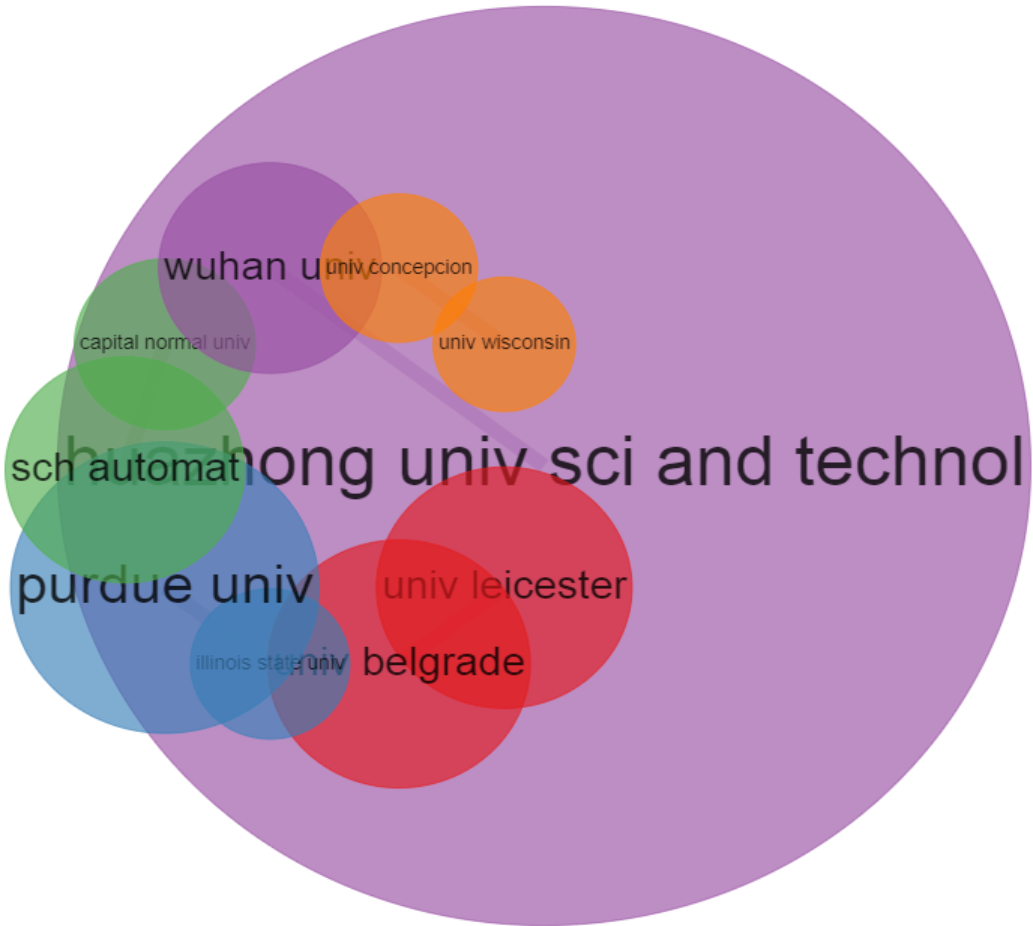
The terms that are connected with visible lines of similar thickness cooccurred in their research such as acceptance and rejection, simulation and adrc, active disturbances rejection controller and This open access publication is Licensed under a creative common’s attribution 4.0 international License

tracking, induction motor, parameter optimization and robustness, and finally disturbance observer, disturbance rejection, and torsional oscillations.



**Figure 4. Author collaboration network in manuscript rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research**

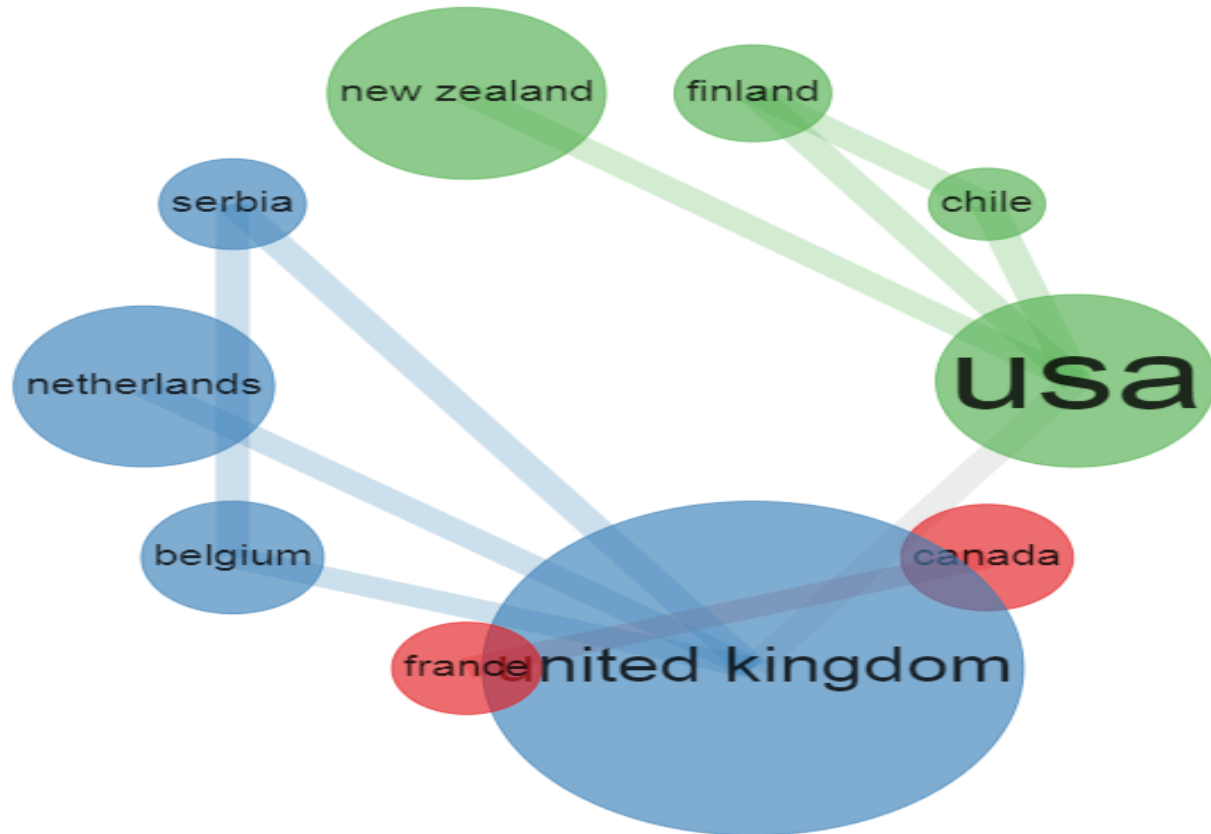
The 5 authors of the red domain had more collaboration than the 2 authors of the green domain whereas the authors of the blue domain did not collaborate with anyone



**Figure 5. Institution collaboration network in in manuscript rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research**

There were no clear collaborations between institutions except Wuhan University and Huazhong University of Science and technology





**Figure 6. Countries collaboration network in in manuscript rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research**

The United Kingdom, collaborated with Belgium, Netherlands and Serbia collaborated while USA New Zealand, fine land, UK, and chile collaborated while Canada and France collaborated

## Discussion

Figures 1-6 represents observations made after the 3-decade review of the web of science database showing key words map, a collaboration between authors, countries, and institutional affiliations, the co-occurrence of keywords, and word map. In three decades, the word rejection and manuscripts appeared in manuscripts found in the database used. While rejection was mentioned in many scientific articles, this minireview will outline reasons for rejection of research papers sent for publication in any of the

journals published by the special journals' publisher.

### **The decision to reject a paper is difficult editorial tasks**

The decision to reject a paper is probably one of the most difficult tasks the editorial committees and Journal publishers must make in the business of publishing due to but not limited to the following reasons (13). First, no publisher wants stakeholders to attribute the rejection to bias in any form or under any guise (14). Second, the vision,

This open access publication is Licensed under a creative common's attribution 4.0 international License

mission, and overall objective of a journal may not be easily achieved by paper rejection (15). Third, human error and technical challenges should not hinder stakeholders from accessing the content of research that can impact the social, economic, and environmental aspects of society (16). Forth, exclusion of papers from the public databases should be with caution so as not to undermine diversity principles (17). Fifth, publishing the research results of a project is for the greater good of society should not be hampered by the rejection of research papers

### **Data selection principle and ultimate goal**

On the other hand, Special Journals Publisher want to publish data that will: stand out in adding significant value to knowledge, appeal to readers, impact the society, and positively discriminate the publisher from the masses and help push the publisher to the top of the pack of big old names (18). Publishers want to publish research results that will have policy implications and not the one with spurious results because it would be a historic colossal mistake that develops patency or policy based on debatable results (19). Therefore, to balance quality and impact with volume and diversity some papers may be rejected in their present format until issues raised by reviewers are addressed (20).

### **Ten reasons to reject a paper**

#### **Plagiarism**

First, rejections of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to plagiarism occurs when authors add someone's work or research as part of our work without full permission, acknowledgment, reference, or due citation (21). In most cases, it may be unintentional or intentional but such an act is largely frowned

at by publishers and stakeholders as it speaks volumes regarding what type of information stakeholders wants from the database. The awareness and campaign against plagiarism including so many free user-friendly software is so magnanimous that intentional plagiarism may have declined. Plagiarism is a dent in the novelty and quality of manuscripts and authors usually have the chance to defend or explain it.

#### **Duplicate research paper**

Second, rejections of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to suspected duplication of the articles occur when authors send research papers to more than one publisher or publishing the same or similar content in two or more journals (22). Stakeholders and publishers' frown at such act as it makes the novelty of research manuscripts debatable. Any such paper will be rejected without a second thought.

#### **Absence of major components of research paper**

Rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to lack of the key element of research expected of all papers submitted for publication such as affiliation, abstracts, introduction, methods, conclusion, as directed by the author's instruction (23). A clear lack of key elements of research articles also undermines the originality of the study. In some cases where these key elements of research are present, they are poorly written with too basic approach or terminologies and lacking the minimum expected professional input. To this kind of paper, the editorial officers of journal publishers simply understand that such authors may have carelessly omitted some of these vital sections of a normal manuscript and are therefore expected to provide them. Therefore, editors will simply say papers are not publishable in their present format until such details are updated.

**Poor language**

Fourth, rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to language issues judged based on the quality, concise nature, readability, and clarity of the articles writing (24). Poor writing has to do with the overuse of jargon to express a point, lengthy sentence due to inability to use the right adjective, typographical errors, poor use of the right grama relating to the field of study, poor table design and caption, unclear legend and figure and more. There is much software that can be used by authors to improve language strength and accuracy. A senior professional or expert is advised to see the paper before submission.

**Poor tables and figures**

Fifth, rejection of rejections of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers based on tables and figures issues may happen when tables in a manuscript are seen as incomplete, unclear, unnecessary or inconsistent with the central message for which the authors attempted to design the table (25). Authors many times use figures when they are supposed to use tables or tables where there should be figures. The quality and type of figure also matter because graphs and charts and pictures have their specific importance in conveying the points being delivered by the authors. Publishers specify what is needed in their author's guide to avoiding confusion. While there may be no universal guidelines for use of pictures, graphs, and charts, efforts should be made to avoid ambiguity and bias while striving to strike a relevance in the mind of assessors and stakeholders to avoid exposing the paper to the question of relevance and novelty. Once this is the question there is the likelihood the paper may be rejected

**Shallow response to reviewers' questions**

Sixth, rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to poor responses to reviewers' questions is critical as it borders on expertise which the publisher must try to reconcile between the reviewers and the authors (26). While the authors bring on board the technicalities of the paper, reviewers remove bias as they confirm the skills of the manuscript and the editorial office coordinates these activities to ensure the balance between skills, quality, and excellence in writing and result dissemination are synchronized in the best interest and greater good of the stakeholders. However, if the authors disagree with some of the reviewer's opinions, the authors have the chance to adequately explain with some specific examples and illustrations why they think certain points should be ignored or adopted. At this point the editorial committee and the editor in chief has the final say cunningly

**Ethics**

Seventh, rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to Ethics is both critical and delicate because it borders human rights (27). By law, many scientific studies must be cleared by the research ethics board recognized by the government of the land. Therefore, papers that do not adequately prove that the papers were ethically and scientifically okayed by appropriate authorities stand rejected until such issues are addressed. Informed consent is needed to ensure nobody is denied any rights.

**Research design issues**

Eight, rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to research design ensures that the research approach used incorporates the right questions, sets the

right objectives, used the right methods, and arrives at the right conclusion (28). Rejection comes when editors feel or understand the wrong design was used with wrong questions and wrong protocols and therefore the outcome may not have adequately answered the questions that led to the conduct of the research in the first instance. This puts the message of the study in doubt invalidating conclusions and recommendations of the study. If the editors believe the paper lead to more confusion and aberrations and did not add any clear value to knowledge then the paper is bound to be rejected

### **Ambitious result presentation**

Ninth, rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers can also be attributed to the value of the presented result which editors can conclude is very ambitious and speculative than realistic despite claims by the authors regarding authenticity (29). The onus is now on the authors to present and discuss results adequately comparing them to what is known on the world stage and explaining any clear discrepancies. Results should not be preempted to suit the reader's expectations. It should be original and representative of the real situation of the research environs. The result should also be complete as incomplete results can lead to paper rejection. The result must also be properly interpreted because of an impression that even the authors have inadequate knowledge and expertise in the field of study for which results are poorly interpreted risk paper rejection

### **Out of scope**

Tenth, rejection of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research papers due to scope happen when papers are seen as out of scope (30). Every Journal has a clearly defined scope and expects authors to send papers within the confines of that specification. This open access publication is Licensed under a creative common's attribution 4.0 international License

Therefore, papers that did not fall within the defined scope are outrightly rejected without being sent to the external reviewers. Journals scope help outline the area of specialization of the journal so all papers must clearly articulate their central theme to fall within the scope of that journals if the papers must be accepted for publication.

### **Caution and take-home message**

To avoid this doubt Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research authors must define the objective or aims or mission or goal of the papers and must also clearly define the hypothesis being tested in the paper. Where these are not defined or are missing or is not clear then the paper may be rejected. The authors can fix this issue and resubmit the papers for reevaluation. In most cases, papers rejected by journals published by the Special Journals publisher are rejected in their present format for authors to show the course why the papers should not be rejected. Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research authors are informed their papers cannot be published in their present format. However, if they wish to pursue the future of their papers they should attend to reviewers and editorial boards questions and resubmit for reevaluation

### **Conclusions/recommendations**

Quality, concise, clear, verifiable, novelty, appealing and more characteristics are the underpinning principles behind any decision to accept or to reject any Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics Research paper, and authors are advised to understand and work with editors to achieve this objective while editors and publishers are advised to execute their jobs in fairness, eschewing all forms of bias in this noble duty. When properly executed manuscript acceptance and publication will significantly advance the course of human existence on earth by providing answers to our curiosity as we

explore the whole wide world, whereas the reverse will draw us back to the ancient world before the beginning of civilization. The choice is ours to chose between sustainable development or extinction

## References

1. Incerti D, Browne J, Huber C, Baker CL, Makinson G, Goren A, Willke R, Stevens W. An empirical tool for estimating the share of unmet need due to healthcare inefficiencies, suboptimal access, and lack of effective technologies. *BMC Health Serv Res.* 2019 Feb 11;19(1):113.
2. Weatherall D, Greenwood B, Chee HL, et al. Science and Technology for Disease Control: Past, Present, and Future. In: Jamison DT, Breman JG, Measham AR, et al., editors. *Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries*. 2nd edition. Washington (DC): The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank; 2006. Chapter 5. Co-published by Oxford University Press, New York.
3. Vale RD. The value of asking questions. *Mol Biol Cell.* 2013 Mar;24(6):680-2.
4. Gliklich RE, Dreyer NA, Leavy MB, editors. *Registries for Evaluating Patient Outcomes: A User's Guide [Internet]*. 3rd edition. Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US); 2014 Apr. 11, Data Collection & Quality
5. Tumin D, Tobias JD. The peer review process. *Saudi J Anaesth.* 2019 Apr;13(Suppl 1): S52-S58.
6. Bajwa SJ, Sawhney C. Preparing manuscript: Scientific writing for publication. *Indian J Anaesth.* 2016 Sep;60(9):674-678.
7. Nsubuga P, White ME, Thacker SB, et al. Public Health Surveillance: A Tool for Targeting and Monitoring Interventions. In: Jamison DT, Breman JG, Measham AR, et al., editors. *Dis Cont Priorities in Developing Countries*. 2nd edition. Washington (DC): The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank; 2006. Chapter 53. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK11770/> Co-published by Oxford University Press, New York.
8. Brownson RC, Eyler AA, Harris JK, Moore JB, Tabak RG. Getting the Word Out: New Approaches for Disseminating Public Health Sc. *J Public Health Manag Pract.* 2018 Mar/Apr;24(2):102-111.
9. Balakumar P, Inamdar MN, Jagadeesh G. The critical steps for successful research: The research proposal and scientific writing: (A report on the pre-conference workshop held in conjunction with the 64(th) annual conference of the Indian Pharmaceutical Congress-2012). *J Pharmacol Pharmacother.* 2013 Apr;4(2):130-8
10. Sevinc A. Web of science: a unique method of cited reference searching. *J Natl Med Assoc.* 2004 Jul;96(7):980-3.
11. Bramer WM, de Jonge GB, Rethlefsen ML, Mast F, Kleijnen J. A systematic approach to searching: an efficient and complete method to develop literature searches. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2018 Oct;106(4):531-541.
12. Chatterjee A, Ghosh A, Chakrabarti BK. Universality of Citation Distributions for Academic Institutions and Journals. *PLoS One.* 2016 Jan 11;11(1): e0146762. Erratum in: *PLoS One.* 2016;11(2): e0148863.
13. Kelly J, Sadeghieh T, Adeli K. Peer Review in Scientific Publications: Benefits, Critiques, & A Survival Guide. *EJIFCC.* 2014 Oct 24;25(3):227-43.
14. Pannucci CJ, Wilkins EG. Identifying and avoiding bias in research. *Plast Recons Surg.* 2010 Aug;126(2):619-25..

This open access publication is Licensed under a creative common's attribution 4.0 international License

15. Ghahramani Z, Mehrabani G. The Criteria Considered in Preparing Manuscripts for Submission to Biomedical Journals. *Bull Emerg Trauma*. 2013 Apr;1(2):56-9.
16. Wolf ZR, Hughes RG. Error Reporting and Disclosure. In: Hughes RG, editor. *Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses*. Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US); 2008 Apr. Chapter 35.
17. Patino CM, Ferreira JC. Inclusion and exclusion criteria in research studies: definitions and why they matter. *J Bras Pneumol*. 2018 Apr;44(2):84.
18. Logan CJ. We can shift academic culture through publishing choices. *F1000Res*. 2017 Apr 20; 6:518.
19. Grimes DR, Bauch CT, Ioannidis JPA. Modelling science trustworthiness under publish or perish pressure. *R Soc Open Sci*. 2018 Jan 10;5(1):171511.
20. Kotsis SV, Chung KC. Manuscript rejection: how to submit a revision and tips on being a good peer reviewer. *Plast Reconstr Surg*. 2014 Apr;133(4):958-64
21. Debnath J. Plagiarism: A silent epidemic in scientific writing - Reasons, recognition and remedies. *Med J Armed Forces India*. 2016 Apr;72(2):164-7. Epub 2016 Apr 16.
22. Uzun C. Multiple submission, duplicate submission and duplicate publication. *Balkan Med J*. 2013 Mar;30(1):1-2.
23. Arvey SR, Fernandez ME. Identifying the core elements of effective community health worker programs: a research agenda. *Am J Public Health*. 2012 Sep;102(9):1633-7Epub 2012 Jul 19.
24. Plavén-Sigray P, Matheson GJ, Schiffler BC, Thompson WH. The readability of scientific texts is decreasing over time. *Elife*. 2017 Sep 5;6:e27725.
25. Rooper L, Carter J, Hargrove J, Hoffmann S, Riedel S. Targeting Rejection: Analysis of Specimen Acceptability and Rejection, and Framework for Identifying Interventions in a Single Tertiary Healthcare Facility. *J Clin Lab Anal*. 2017 May;31(3):e22060. Epub 2016 Sep 15.
26. Wong GL. Tips for Responding to Reviewers' Comments-from an Editor's or Reviewer's Points of View. *Gut Liver*. 2019 Jan 15;13(1):7-10.
27. Flite CA, Harman LB. Code of ethics: principles for ethical leadership. *Perspect Health Inf Manag*. 2013;10(Winter):1d. Epub 2013 Jan 1.
28. National Academy of Sciences (US), National Academy of Engineering (US) and Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Ensuring the Utility and Integrity of Research Data in a Digital Age. *Ensuring the Integrity, Accessibility, and Stewardship of Research Data in the Digital Age*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2009. 2, Ensuring the Integrity of Research Data.
29. Schaan VK, Schulz A, Bernstein M, Schächinger H, Vögele C. Effects of rejection intensity and rejection sensitivity on social approach behavior in women. *PLoS One*. 2020 Jan 17;15(1):e0227799.
30. Dhammi IK, Rehan-Ul-Haq. Rejection of Manuscripts: Problems & Solut. *Indian J Orthop*. 2018 Mar-Apr;52(2):97-99.

Submit your papers for publication to Special Journal of Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics [SJ-PND] online below  
<https://sjphealth.spparenet.org/submit/> or by email attachment to us at  
[editorialoffice@spparenet.org](mailto:editorialoffice@spparenet.org)