Journal of Travel Research

FROM THE EDITORS' DESKS

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick

Co-Editors-In-Chief, ***Journal of Travel Research***

Journal of Travel Research

TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally

8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Table of Contents

Installment 1: Keys to Writing a Quality Abstract.....1

Installment 2: On Being a Conscious Reviewer.....2

Installment 3: Finding the Sweet-Spot in Multi-Study Research: How Many Studies are Enough.....4

Installment 4: Writing Strong Hypotheses.....6

Installment 5: Effective Academic Writing.....8

Installment 6: Qualitative Research: Laying a Strong Foundation.....10

Installment 7: Traditions of Inquiry.....13

Installment 8: Qualitative Methodological Integrity.....16

Installment 9: Integrating Theory into Your Manuscript.....18

Installment 10: Increasing Your Research's Impact with Altmetrics.....20

Installment 11: Drop Everything and Read This! Writing Effective Titles.....23

Installment 12: Effectively Writing the Implications and Conclusions of a Manuscript.....25

Installment 13: Identifying and Developing a Research Topic.....27

Installment 14: The Big Picture: Essential Elements Every JTR Paper [and arguably any manuscript] Should contain.....29

Installment 15: How to Verbally Convey Yourself and Your Research When Being Interviewed.....31

Installment 16: Ethics of Writing and Reviewing Manuscripts.....33

Installment 17: Writing a Strong Foundations of Tourism Manuscript.....35

Installment 18: Experimental Design: Avoiding Much Ado About Not So Much.....37

Installment 19: The Role of Letters to the Editor.....40

Installment 20: AI/LLMs and Peer Review.....42

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Table of Contents

Installment 21: Positionality Statements.....46

Installment 22: When and How Should Authors Communicate with Editors?.....49

Installment 23: Conducting Innovative Research.....52

Installment 24: Standing Out: Tips for Landing an Academic Position.....55

Installment 25: Dealing with Rejections.....58

Installment 26: Have We Lost Sight of Why We Cite.....60

Installment 27: Creating Meaningful Propositions.....62

Journal of Travel Research

TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally

8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Keys to Writing a Quality Abstract

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 1

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, Journal of Travel Research

An abstract provides an important first impression of your research. If well-written, it can increase the chances of your manuscript being read and cited. **The abstract should be the last component you work on prior to submitting a manuscript and should be as concise and informative as possible. Each should include the following elements:**

- Introductory statement of the problem (hook sentence) which often includes the rationale for the research.
- Brief and concise explanation of the methods used.
- Summary of most relevant results.
- The most substantive implications of the study.

JTR's abstracts are limited to 150 words, all of which should be carefully selected. Here are some quick tips to assist you in choosing each of those precious words:

- Don't cut and paste from the manuscript, particularly the introduction. Use different, more concise wording.
- Avoid unfamiliar terminology, laundry lists of variables, and acronyms.
- Use past tense for results, present tense for implications.
- Write -> read -> edit -> read -> edit, etc.

Also check submission guidelines for how many keywords you can include:

- Include keywords that are **not** already in your title.
- Test the keywords via search engines to make sure they find similar articles.
    - Test and use phrases, if relevant (e.g., "destination image").
- If your study employed unique methods, include as a keyword/phrase.

Examples of good abstracts can be found here:

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875221133042

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875221140903

Always make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. JTR's Submission Guidelines, as well as editorial review policies can be found **here**.

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

On Being a Conscious Reviewer

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 2

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors, Journal of Travel Research

And

Alana Dillete and Stefanie Benjamin
Editorial Board Members

There are many aspects to a good review of a manuscript. Over the coming months we'll cover a variety of these elements from time to time, but for this installment we are focusing on an under-emphasized topic that we are naming **Conscious Reviewing**. Recently there have been discussions on TRINET regarding systems of knowledge production and the dominance of Anglo- Saxon journals and the thinking that dominates those journals. While JTR is undoubtedly an English-speaking journal, we can, along with other English-speaking journals, work to be more conscious of different approaches to knowledge, self-reflect on our own biases, and as a result adjust our approach to reviewing. In many cases, a simple adjustment of a request can make a big difference.

Here are a few suggestions for your next reviewing assignment:

- When faced with a manuscript that needs editing for grammar, rather than assuming the authors aren't native English speakers and recommending a native English speaker to review/edit, ask instead that they seek **a professional review**. It takes away the assumption that the authors are not English-speaking. Many of us, regardless of our first language, could benefit from a professional editor.
- Whenever reviewing a paper that is targeting an under-studied area of research, resist the questions of "why did you only study Black travelers?" or "only women travelers?" or "only disabled travelers?" or "only indigenous communities?" This implies that these segments are less important than others, **when in fact these and many other segments are incredibly under- studied and need the spotlight shined on them**. Conversely, don't agree that a study is generalizable if the focus is solely on a broadly studied group like White European or American respondents.
- We all suffer from "reviewer bias." The trick is to recognize your biases and work to reduce them. Take advantage of on-campus or online resources, including those below, that can help you expose your unconscious biases. **Being aware is half the battle!**
- **Don't be THAT reviewer**. We've all had a reviewer who just comes across as mean. They will often use demeaning or condescending language to convey their message. Focus on constructive criticism.

- As a reviewer, consider requesting that the **authors of any paper include their reflexivity statements**. Even quantitative work could benefit from understanding the viewpoint of the researcher. Of course, it's important to recognize that sometimes these cannot be added until after the paper has gone through review as their reflexivity might reveal their identity and compromise the double-blind process.
- Ask authors to also address how **diversity, equity, inclusion, and systems of knowledge** were considered as part of the research journey and how it could be considered in future papers in the conclusions.

Unfortunately, we cannot include examples of conscious reviews as that would compromise the double-blind process, but we welcome other examples of good practices from our peers!

For more information on being a conscious reviewer, check out these resources:

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/

For more information on JTR's Submission Guidelines, as well as editorial review policies, click **here**.

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Finding the Sweet-Spot in Multi-Study Research: How Many Studies are Enough?

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 3

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, Journal of Travel Research

The primary goal of multi-study research should be to draw reliable, valid (quantitative) or transferable, confirmable (qualitative) conclusions while advancing the field's knowledge in a succinct and parsimonious manner. The correct number, order, and format of studies can depend on multiple factors including: the problem studied, resources available, and the nature of the experiments or other methods conducted. **Here are a few general recommendations when considering multi-study research:**

- Read the literature first. The process of determining the most parsimonious number of studies to conduct should not be considered until gaps in the current literature have been identified and the true purpose of the study has been clearly defined and conceptualized. The research question should drive the research design.
- Visualize the multi-study relationship, including a figure or table that shows how the studies are inter-related, is extremely helpful for reviewers and readers.
- Clearly justify your multi-study approach. Discuss other options you considered and why you feel the approach taken was the best option.
- For quantitative studies, time and resources spent on conducting small, incremental advances is likely better spent on participant randomization, controlling for extraneous variables (e.g., increasing internal validity) and better understanding the interaction effects of the independent variables examined.
- For qualitative research, include discussion of triangulation, specifically why the triangulation you chose was the best for the research question.

In addition to the problem being studied, resources available, and the nature of the experiments conducted, the correct number and type of studies can depend on multiple factors including:

- Is there a need to study different populations, perhaps in different ways?
- Conversely, does the research question and study population dictate a bricoleur approach, that is, a multi-faceted view of one group?
- Would the research benefit from being replicated in different geographic locations?

As always, we suggest young scholars consult with their advisors, peers, and other experienced researchers to help determine which manipulations have the best potential to maximize knowledge development.

Examples of recent, strong multi-study manuscripts can be found here:

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875221138788

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875231207860

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875231206542

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875231164987

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875231206989

Please make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. JTR's Submission Guidelines, as well as editorial review policies can be found **here**.

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Writing Strong Hypotheses

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 4

By Nancy G. McGehee & James F. Petrick
Co-Editors, Journal of Travel Research

Hypotheses form the backbone of quantitative research. If well-conceived, they help establish a strong manuscript. Hypotheses should only be created after intense analysis of the current literature as well as review of the state of the subject currently in practice in the "real world".

Hypotheses should:

- Be connected to an over-arching research question.
- Be testable and predictive; predict both the relationship and outcome.
- Include clearly measured independent and dependent variables.
- Be written clearly and simply.
- Consider the if-then format.

In addition to guidelines on individual hypotheses, it's also important to consider how the hypotheses interact with each other. Researchers should:

- Demonstrate how your hypotheses build upon previous research.
- Discuss other potential hypotheses you considered and why you ruled them out.
- Include a visual figure or diagram in your manuscript that shows how the hypotheses interact with each other.
- Clearly justify the variables used and demonstrate that they are both valid and reliable.
- Avoid "hypotheses overkill". The number of hypotheses for each manuscript should be directly related to the theory or model examined, parsimonious, and contribute to the larger body of knowledge.
- Clearly justify any hypotheses included that are outside the theoretical framework; these should be used judiciously.
- Confirm that your moderating hypotheses identify relationships that are conditional (e.g., the relationship between X and Y depends on M), while mediating hypotheses suggest a sequential relationship chain (e.g., X is related to M and M is related to Y).

Hypothesis writing skills can be sharpened by observing and analyzing existing hypotheses.

Here are some hypothetical examples of poorly written hypotheses:

- H: *Visitors will be satisfied due to the quality of the service they receive*. For this hypothesis, it is difficult to know precisely what "satisfied" means and multiple factors other than quality are likely related to perceptions of quality.
- H: *Travelers who travel more frequently will have more experiences*. This is a tautological hypothesis as it states that if something happens, it will happen.
- H: *All residents who receive sustainable tourism training will have more respect for visitors*. This hypothesis is an overgeneralization and assumes a universal causal relationship.

Here are some published examples of good hypotheses:

- H: *Exciting (vs. calm) endorsement generates a more favorable impact on tourists' impulsive buying* (Luo, Liu & Wan, 2023, p. 5). This is a clear, precise hypothesis that is based on emotional contagion theory. Luo, X., Liu, X., & Wan, L. C. (2023). Excited or Calm? Effects of Endorsers' Emotions on Tourists' Impulsive Buying. *Journal of Travel Research*. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00472875231213210
- H: *Destination social responsibility (DSR) mediates tourists' internal LOC and their positive WOM* (Saleh, 2023, p. 1313). Based on attribution theory, this hypothesis suggests a clear mediating relationship of one variable, between two others. Saleh, M. I. (2023). Attribution Theory Revisited: Probing the Link Among Locus of Causality Theory, Destination Social Responsibility, Tourism Experience Types, and Tourist Behavior. *Journal of Travel Research*, *62*(6), 1309-1327. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875221119968
- H: *Impulsivity moderates the relationship between risk message framing and perceived safety; specifically, high impulsivity tourists' perceived safety in response to COVID-19 messages is higher than that of low impulsivity tourists* (Xie, Zhang & Huang, 2023, p. 807). The authors of this experimental study added a clarifying statement after this proposed moderation hypothesis. Xie, C., Zhang, J., & Huang, S. (2023). Effect of risk message framing on tourists' travel intention: Roles of resilience and impulsivity. *Journal of Travel Research*, *62*(4), 802-819. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875221095212

Always make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. JTR's Submission Guidelines, as well as editorial review policies can be found **here**.

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Effective Academic Writing

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 5

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, Journal of Travel Research

The quality of one's writing can be the difference between a manuscript being rejected or accepted. Good writing is clear, concise, and organized. Below are quick tips to aid in this process.

Academic writing should:

- Use precise language. Shorter sentences and paragraphs are typically more effective.
- Be logically organized. Use headings and subheadings with all paragraphs having a smooth flow of ideas.
- Use transitions between sentences and paragraphs.
- Have a clear statement of the problem at the beginning of the manuscript.
- Have consistent use of verb tense. Here's a great guide: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/grammar/verb-tense
- Correctly use articles (a, an, and the). Here's another guide: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/using_articles.html
- Be edited. Multiple times prior to submission.

Academic writing should avoid:

- Unnecessary jargon and acronyms.
- The use of strong statements such as "always" and "never."
- Repetition. Be succinct and try not to repeat information already given.
- Tense shifts.
- Excessive conjunctions (However, Conversely, Nevertheless).
- Plagiarism. Use proper references and citations.
- Overuse of a thesaurus.
- Overuse of the word "the." "The" is definite and suggests there is only one of the noun being discussed. Hence, by stating, "the definition of x is…," you are inferring there is only one definition of x.

- Firstly, secondly, thirdly, etc. as ordinal verbs. First, second, third, etc. are typically preferred or better yet, choose from some of these: https://wordselector.com/other-ways-to-say-firstly-secondly-thirdly/

Make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. A professional editing service is recommended; it can save time and rounds of revisions. *JTR*'s submission guidelines can be found **here**.

Here are a few examples of recent, well-written articles in *JTR*:

- Frochot, I., & Lenglet, F. (2023). Getting Away from It All: Development of a Scale to Measure Escapism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875231218641. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875231218641
- Sharma, A., Santa-María, M. J., & Nicolau, J. L. (2023). The Effect of Tangible Promotions on an Intangible Environment. *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875231219240. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875231219240
- Fan, D. X., Buhalis, D., Fragkaki, E., & Tsai, Y. R. (2023). Achieving Senior Tourists' Active Aging Through Value Co–creation: A Customer-Dominant Logic Perspective. *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875231214733. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875231214733
- Clark, C., & Nyaupane, G. P. (2023). Cross-Border Tourism and Community Solidarity at a Militarized Border: A Photo Elicitation Approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875231195734. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875231195734

Journal of Travel Research

TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally

8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Qualitative Research: Laying a Strong Foundation

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 6

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-In-Chief, Journal of Travel Research

We are frequently asked about our thoughts on the best methods to use for qualitative research. As with many research queries, the answer is often "it depends": it depends on the foundational aspects of the research being conducted. This includes ontological and epistemological perspectives, axiology, the methodological approach, and the role of theory. In other words, a researcher must be careful not to put the cart before the horse by jumping to methods before thoughtfully laying the conceptual foundation. As a starting point - and this is just a starting point - we have developed a table to aid in this process. The table only includes four very basic views, from positivism to critical. There are numerous other perspectives, many of which are sub-categories of these four, so we encourage you to explore on your own.

Generally, we see quantitative work emerging from positivist and post-positivist perspectives and qualitative work emerging from interpretivist and critical perspectives. Once you have established your position with each of these foundational layers, moving forward to specific methods will be much easier. Enjoy the journey!

Some brief definitions (Arini et al, 2022):

- **Ontology:** The "what am I looking at, what do I see" question
  Any way of understanding the world, or some part of it, must begin with a foundation of assumptions. We are able to interact with each other because we have implicitly agreed-upon assumptions about the world. What is the form and nature of reality? What can be known about reality? Look at the world through the eyes of your dog or a baby to help illuminate your own ontological perspective.
- **Epistemology:** The "how do we study it" question
  This is how we generate knowledge and is related to rationalism and empiricism. Rationalism is based on logic and mathematics. Hence, rationalists believe in "innate knowledge." Empiricists use impressions of "sense-experience as the basis for infallible knowledge; the human mind is a blank sheet until marked by experience." This is the process of knowing; understanding the nature of the relationship between the researcher and knowledge.
- **Axiology:** The why do we study it" question
  The philosophical study of value. We choose to study things because we value them. We learn to value some research subjects or approaches over others based on societal norms and exposure.

An overview of the various perspectives:

Aspect	Positivism	Post-Positivism	Interpretivism	Critical Approach
Ontology	Objective reality exists and can be observed/measured.	Reality exists but may not be directly observable; influenced by perspectives.	Multiple subjective realities; reality is socially constructed.	Reality is shaped by power relations and social structures.
Epistemology	Empirical observation and measurement; value-free, objective knowledge.	Empirical observation but acknowledges biases; attempts to minimize subjectivity.	Qualitative methods; understanding subjective experiences; emphasis on meanings.	Uncovering hidden power dynamics; questioning existing structures and norms.
Axiology	Values should not influence research; objectivity is crucial.	Acknowledges researcher's values but seeks objectivity through systematic methods.	Researcher's values are integral to understanding; subjective interpretations.	Values are acknowledged and often used to challenge and transform social structures.
Methodology	Quantitative methods; experiments, surveys, statistical analysis.	Mixed methods; combines quantitative and qualitative approaches.	Qualitative methods; interviews, participant observation, content analysis.	Emphasis on emancipatory methods; participatory action research, critical discourse analysis.
Role of Theory	Empirically derived; theory is used to predict and explain phenomena.	Acknowledges the role of theory, but open to revising it in light of new evidence.	Emphasizes theory-building from the data; multiple valid perspectives.	Critique and challenge existing theories; seek transformative theories.

Always remember to follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. Read examples of work that have been published in the journal you are targeting; it can save time and rounds of revisions. *JTR*'s submission guidelines can be found **here**.

Here are a few examples of recent, well-written qualitative articles in *JTR*:

- Dillette, A., & Benjamin, S. (2022). The Black Travel Movement: A Catalyst for Social Change. *Journal of Travel Research*, *61*(3), 463-476. https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/0047287521993549
- Soulard, J., Park, J., & Zou, S. (Sharon). (2024). Pride in Transformation: A Rural Tourism Stakeholder View. *Journal of Travel Research*, *63*(1), 80-99. https://doi- org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/00472875221143487
- Stanley, P., & Wight, A. C. (2023). Interrogating Racialized "Cultural Authenticity" Discourses Among Language-Learner Tourists in Australia. *Journal of Travel Research*, *0*(0). https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/00472875231194272
- Usai, R., Cai, W., & Wassler, P. (2022). A Queer Perspective on Heteronormativity for LGBT Travelers. *Journal of Travel Research*, *61*(1), 3-15. https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/0047287520967763

Here are also some additional resources and references:

Books:

- Aurini, J., Heath, M., and Howells, S. (2022). Selecting the right tools for the job. The How to of Qualitative Research (2nd edition). Sage. *An excellent resource!*
- Carol Bailey (2007). A Guide to Qualitative Field Research (2nd edition). CABI Publishing. *The Queen of Field Research in my opinion.*
- Kakali Bhattacharya (2017). Fundamentals of Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group Publishers.
- John Creswell (2016). 30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher. Sage Publishing. *Creswell has numerous books and videos. As typical of Sage, very practical, concise advice.*
- Jenny Phillimore and Lisa Goodson (2004). Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group Publishers. *This is a classic; I go back to it time and time again.*
- Brent W. Ritchie, Peter Burns, and Catherine Palmer (eds.) (2005). Tourism Research Methods: Integrating Theory with Practice. CABI publishing.

Videos:

- Ontology and Epistemology: https://youtu.be/cdmkdFJAdnw?si=P6f11yBaLXETu8rB

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
8.933 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Traditions of Inquiry

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 7

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-In-Chief, Journal of Travel Research

Building on last month's installment focusing on the importance of understanding your ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspective before pursuing a research methodological approach, this month we are outlining a few traditions of inquiry commonly used in qualitative research. While many of these terms and phrases may be familiar, you may have heard different [sometimes confusing] definitions or seen some used interchangeably. The following defines and briefly discusses how each of these differentiates from other traditions. This list is not exhaustive; for example, there are several sub-types of ethnography, phenomenology, and grounded theory. There is also exciting work with arts-based approaches. However, most forms of inquiry are either found within this group or are an offshoot of the core categories. We hope this will generate discussion and contributions of additional traditions of inquiry [particularly those *non-traditional* traditions] on Trinet.

Action Research

- **Definition:** Action research is a participatory approach where researchers collaborate with participants to identify and address practical problems, aiming for both knowledge generation and social change.
- **Differentiation:** Integrates research and action, with an emphasis on improving practices and addressing real-world issues within the research process.

Case Studies

- **Definition:** Case studies involve in-depth examination of a particular individual, group, or phenomenon within its real-life context, aiming for a comprehensive understanding.
- **Differentiation:** Provides detailed exploration of a specific case, often using multiple data sources and content analysis, to derive insights that may have broader implications.

Ethnography

- **Definition:** Ethnography involves in-depth study of a particular culture or social group, aiming to provide a holistic understanding of their behaviors, beliefs, and practice.
- **Differentiation:** Emphasizes participant observation and immersion in the cultural context, often resulting in rich, detailed descriptions.

Grounded Theory

- **Definition:** Grounded Theory aims to generate theories from the data itself, allowing patterns and themes to emerge through systematic coding and analysis. It uses a constant comparison approach to look for similarities, differences, and patterns.
- **Differentiation:** Starts with an open mind, without preconceived theories, and builds theories based on the grounded analysis of the collected data.

Historical Studies

- **Definition:** Historical studies involve the examination and interpretation of past events, actions, and contexts to gain insights into historical processes and their impact on the present. Often used to assist with current issues.
- **Differentiation:** Focuses on understanding historical events and their significance, often using archival materials and historical documents.

Indigenous Approaches

- **Definition:** Indigenous inquiry emphasizes Indigenous perspectives, values, and ways of knowing, often incorporating storytelling, relationality, and community involvement into the research process. Indigenous qualitative inquiry aims to center Indigenous voices and experiences, respecting cultural protocols and fostering decolonization and self-determination.
- **Differentiation**: Some may ask how this differs from ethnography and phenomenology. While ethnography may involve collaboration and engagement with participants, it does not necessarily prioritize Indigenous ways of knowing or center Indigenous perspectives unless explicitly focused on Indigenous communities. While phenomenology can be applied across cultures and contexts, it does not inherently prioritize Indigenous ways of knowing or challenge colonial frameworks. Indigenous qualitative inquiry situates research within Indigenous worldviews, acknowledging the interconnectedness of land, culture, spirituality, and identity.

Phenomenology

- **Definition:** Phenomenology explores and describes individuals' lived experiences and perceptions to understand the essence of a phenomenon.
- **Differentiation:** Focuses on the subjective experiences of individuals, aiming to uncover the underlying meanings and structures of those experiences.

For JTR submissions that include a qualitative component, it is important to include discussion of both the rationale and application of the tradition (or traditions) of inquiry. When using any of these traditions of inquiry, make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. Read examples of work that have been published in the journal you are targeting; it can save time and rounds of revisions. *JTR*'s submission guidelines can be found **here**.

Some excellent examples of the various traditions of inquiry can be found here:

Santos, C. A., & Yan, G. (2010). Genealogical Tourism: A Phenomenological Examination. *Journal of Travel Research*, *49*(1), 56-67. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0047287509332308

Zhang, J. (2023). Drifting Home: The Quests of Chinese Tourist-Migrants in Tibet. *Journal of Travel Research*, *0*(0). https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00472875231192310

Andéhn, M., & L'Espoir Decosta, J. N. P. (2021). Authenticity and Product Geography in the Making of the Agritourism Destination. *Journal of Travel Research*, *60*(6), 1282-1300. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0047287520940796

References:

Aurini, J., Heath, M., and Howells, S. (2022). The How to of Qualitative Research (2nd edition). Sage.

Bailey, C. (2007) *Methodology*. In A Guide to Qualitative Field Research (2nd ed). CABI Publishing.

Bhattacharya, Kakali (2017). Fundamentals of Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group Publishers.

Creswell, John (2016). 30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher. Sage Publishing.

Phillimore, Jenny and Goodson, Lisa (2004). Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group Publishers.

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
13.381 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Qualitative Methodological Integrity

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 8

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-In-Chief, Journal of Travel Research

On the heels of our theory contribution last month, we are going to pivot to methodological integrity in qualitative research. To create rigorous and impactful research, we need to understand the practical aspects of feasibility and fit, build in aspects of trustworthiness, consider various forms of triangulation, and hold precious our relationships in the field. We hope this brief overview will generate discussion and additional contributions regarding research integrity on Trinet.

Feasibility and fit. It's always important to ask yourself [at least] four questions as you consider feasibility and fit (for more questions see Aurini et al 2022). These apply to any form of research:

- **Can you afford the methods required to be rigorous?** This is both in terms of money and time.
- **Can you access the data you need to answer the question?** Either through primary or secondary data collection?
- **Is it safe for you and your informants?** Will exposure of the subject potentially cause harm to your study participants, your colleagues, or you? Take the time you need to consider all possible outcomes and impacts.
- **Is it ethical?** Will it be approved through your university Institutional Review Board or equivalent governance entity?

Trustworthiness. There are at least four types of trustworthiness (DeCrop 2004; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I've listed some approaches but please be sure to read more deeply about each.

- **Credibility:** How truthful your findings are particularly for the informants. Utilize prolonged engagement, persistent observation, referential adequacy, and member checks to support credibility.
- **Transferability:** How the approach might be of interest in another setting or group. Utilize thick descriptions, purposive sampling.
- **Dependability:** The correspondence between the data recorded and what actually occurred at the time. Utilize a detailed research plan, prolonged engagement, create an audit trail, and/or engage with an auditor.
- **Confirmability:** Dig deeply for a variety of possible explanations for the phenomenon. Utilize an audit trail and auditor for this as well. Also engage in reflexive journalling.

Triangulation. Once again, our friend DeCrop (2004) helps us with a thorough list of types of triangulation. As with feasibility and fit, these are also useful for both qualitative and quantitative research.

- **Methodological**
- **Investigator**
- **Theory**
- **Informant/Participant**
- **Time/Longitudinal**
- **Interdisciplinary**
- **Space**

Relationships. This is more than simply figuring out how you can gain entrée for self-serving purposes. Your informants are human beings who deserve the utmost respect (Bailey 2007).

- Take advantage of any **ethics training available to you** though your university or other entities.
- Make sure all work goes through **your institutional approval process**. This means a thorough understanding of informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality.
- **Respect and Care for your informants** and the community of co-creators of your research.
- Recognize your own **power and positionality**. Your position as a university researcher can be intimidating. Consider the intersectionality of your race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, and social class as well as that of your target population as you design your research.
- **Cultivate Emotional Intelligence**. We often think of this as "just coming naturally" to certain genders or ages, but it is a learned behavior that anyone can access through education.
- **Do not misuse informants' trust**. Keep the Hippocratic oath at the center of all that you do: First, do no harm.
- **Determine how you will compensate informants**. This can be with information, money, or other resources valuable to them.

For JTR submissions that include a qualitative component, it is important to include discussion of how you allowed for methodological integrity in your work. As always, make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. Read examples of work that have been published in the journal you are targeting; it can save time and rounds of revisions. *JTR*'s submission guidelines can be found **here**.

References:

Aurini, J., Heath, M., and Howells, S. (2022). The How to of Qualitative Research (2nd edition). Sage Publishing.

Bailey, C. (2007) *Methodology*. In A Guide to Qualitative Field Research (2nd ed). CABI Publishing.

DeCrop, A. (2004). "Trustworthiness in qualitative tourism research." Qualitative Research in Tourism: Ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies. *In* Phillimore, Jenny and Goodson, Lisa (eds.). Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group Publishers.

Lincoln, Y.S., Guba, E (1985). Naturalistic Inquiry. Beverly Hills CA. Sage Publishing.

Journal of Travel Research
TTRA Advancing Travel Insights Globally
13.381 Impact Factor
5-Year Impact Factor 10.508
Journal Indexing & Metrics »

Integrating Theory into Your Manuscript

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 9

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-In-Chief, Journal of Travel Research

After another great TTRA International Conference, we've come away with many interesting and relevant ideas from our colleagues, JTR Editorial Board members, and PhD students. Based on their input, this month we want to touch on the importance of correctly using theory in manuscripts and research.

Theory: it begins in your lit review

Researchers typically learn very early about the importance of theory as a means of setting the foundation for research. However, there seems to be some variation as to how to appropriately write this component of a lit review.

- Arguing for a theoretical perspective is more than just a brief and superficial definition of your theoretical approach. Authors should demonstrate a deep knowledge of the theory in a concise manner.
- Manuscripts should include the who, what, when, where, and how of a theory. Who has used it? In what fields? When was it first used? Where has it been used (e.g. Western vs Eastern thought) How has it evolved and how is it being used now?
- While some research begs for a poly-theoretical approach, this is more the exception than the rule. Resist playing "theory bingo" by including many theories (e.g. one for each set of survey items) and instead read deeply enough that you are able to focus on 1 or 2 theories or theoretical perspectives.
- Be sure to include other theories considered and justify why the theory chosen is the best for the research problem. Sometimes researchers "fall in love" with one theoretical perspective without surveying the greater theoretical landscape. Other times they may feel rushed and don't take the time to explore the various options. The difference between good and great research is often in this detail. Take the time to read deeply across various theoretical areas and think deeply about which perspective is the most informative.
- What are the shortcomings of the theory chosen and how can they be overcome? This is a section that is quickly disappearing from manuscripts. There are no perfect theories; understanding the shortcomings of the theory selected and being transparent about them will make the work stronger.

Theory: it's not *just* for your lit review

- Far too many manuscripts include a description of the theoretical perspective in the literature review, only to have the theory disappear from the rest of the paper. This is a fatal flaw for a potential JTR manuscript.
- A successful manuscript needs to show how the theory informs the research questions, hypotheses if applicable, the methodological approach, and the findings. Be specific and clear, use citations and reference other similar work. If it's a ground-breaking approach, even better, but explain why and how.
- Don't forget to include how the research findings impact and contribute to the theory in the conclusions section of the manuscript. What aspects of the theory were supported? What aspects were not supported? How has it expanded or changed the theory?
- Include discussion of theory in the limitations and future research. What were the shortcomings of the theoretical perspective used? Could another theory have been useful? Should future work consider the theory used or are there other possibilities?

For JTR submissions it is vital to thread the theoretical perspective throughout the manuscript. As always, make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. Read examples of work that have been published in the journal you are targeting; it can save time and rounds of revisions. *JTR*'s submission guidelines can be found **here**.

Some excellent examples of using theory throughout the research can be found here:

Zhao, Y., & Agyeiwaah, E. (2024). How Do Tourism Stakeholders Co-Create Destination Images with Photos on Social Media? *Journal of Travel Research*, *0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241253006

Guo, S., Deng, N., & He, Z. (2024). Influential and Worthy: A Video-centric Exploration of Travel Influencers' Value Chain Logic. *Journal of Travel Research*, *0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241249428

Malodia, S., Otterbring, T., Taheri, B., & Dhir, A. (2024). How Negative Framing Affects VR Tourism Adoption: Exploring the Role of Travel Anxiety During Crisis Events. *Journal of Travel Research*, *0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241234387

References:

Hammond, M. (2018). 'An interesting paper but not sufficiently theoretical': What does theorising in social research look like? *Methodological Innovations, 11*(2), 2059799118787756.

Huff, A. S. (2009). *Designing research for publication.* Sage.

Oswick, C., Fleming, P., & Hanlon, G. (2011). From borrowing to blending: Rethinking the processes of organizational theory building. *Academy of Management Review, 36*(2), 318–337.

Ravitch, S. M., & Riggan, M. (2016). *Reason & rigor: How conceptual frameworks guide research.* Sage Publications.

Journal of Travel Research

TTRA

Impact Factor: 8.0 / 5-Year Impact Factor: 9.7

Scimago Impact Factor: 13.1
CiteScore 15.1

Increasing Your Research's Impacts with Altmetrics

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 10

By James F. Petrick & Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

Good research ideally helps us to understand and contribute to solving the world's problems. Academic researchers of all types often struggle with communicating their research in a way that can make an applied contribution while meeting traditional expectations (such as high citations from peer-review journal publications and generating strong h and i10 index numbers). Some Deans, Department Heads, and Directors are beginning to recognize that traditional metrics show how well our colleagues value and consume our research but they fail to measure the effect on larger society. Many are turning to Altmetrics as an added measure to gain a fuller picture of genuine global impact.

Alternative metrics (Altmetrics) capture the digital footprint of our research and enable us to better understand the broader societal impacts of our research (beyond traditional metrics). Altmetrics include, but are not limited to mentions, shares and downloads from news outlets, social media and policy documents. Hence, they reflect how our research is being consumed globally, via digital channels. This increased attention can help facilitate collaborations, reveal funding opportunities, and ideally help meet the goal of improving the human condition.

Here are some tips for employing Altmetrics to complement tourism research:

1. **Familiarize Yourself with Altmetrics**: Understand where and how to find mentions on social media, downloads, views, saves, and citations. Each metric provides a different perspective on the impact of your research. An easy way to track is to get an altmetric.com account or add the Altmetric Bookmarklet to your browser so you can see scores for any article.

2. **Choose Relevant Channels**: Identify the most relevant digital platforms for where your research would have value to participants. This might include ResearchGate, Twitter, Linkedin, travel-specific blogs/vlogs and forums.

3. **Be Active on Social Media**: While it is often difficult to self-promote, sharing key results with key populations can greatly increase the impact of your research. Hence, share your findings, engage with followers, and follow relevant hashtags to increase visibility and

engagement metrics. Match your approach to the personality of each type of platform; some are more visual, others written, and many a little of both. Short videos, infographics, and action shots gain attention.

4. **Write Eye-Catching Titles and More Specific Abstracts**: Craft clear, concise, and engaging titles and abstracts for your research papers. This can improve discoverability and encourage readers to share your work on social media and other digital platforms. Abstracts which do not specifically reveal findings and implications will be less likely to be found or shared. This is why we ask that JTR abstracts include specific implications rather than simply stating that there are implications.

5. **Utilize Academic Social Networks**: Beyond TRINET, join academic social networks like ResearchGate, Academia.edu, or Mendeley. Also, create an ORICID account, and use it to uniquely identify yourself. These platforms can increase your visibility and help generate collaborations and synergy around your research.

6. **Collaborate With Other Disciplines**: Multi-disciplinary research has the potential to grow your networks and increase your visibility.

7. **Share Preprints and Open Access**: Consider sharing preprints of your research and publishing open access articles to make your work more accessible to a greater number of people.

8. **Promote Beyond Academia**: Tailor your communication strategies to reach broader audiences such as policymakers, industry professionals, and the general public. Highlight the practical implications of your research to these audiences using non-academic, concise language. These can include op-eds and press releases to news outlets. Often your college or university has staff dedicated to assisting with this; take advantage of them as they are likely looking for great stories like yours!

The above reflects just a few ways that strategically leveraging Altmetrics might enhance the visibility, influence, and societal impact of one's research in today's digital age. We do not intend to suggest Altmetrics replace typical metrics, but they can be complementary and used to better understand and increase your research's impacts. Moreover, it is important to note that Altmetrics (like most metrics) are subject to biases inherent in digital communication, such as geographic and disciplinary biases, which should be considered when interpreting data. We look forward to a broader discussion on the topic.

Here are the top Altmetric attention score articles in *JTR* in the past six months:

Magrizos, S., Kostopoulos, I., & Powers, L. (2021). Volunteer Tourism as a Transformative Experience: A Mixed Methods Empirical Study. *Journal of Travel Research*, *60*(4), 878-895. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520913630 (Altmetric score 282)

Chen, C.-C., & Petrick, J. F. (2013). Health and Wellness Benefits of Travel Experiences: A Literature Review. *Journal of Travel Research*, *52*(6), 709-719. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287513496477 (Altmetric score 160)

Gössling, S., & Higham, J. (2021). The Low-Carbon Imperative: Destination Management under Urgent Climate Change. *Journal of Travel Research*, *60*(6), 1167-1179. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520933679 (Altmetric score 140)

The following recent JTR OnlineFirst publications are examples of recent research that warrant discussion beyond our TRINET community:

Qin, X., Muskat, B., Xia, H., Mair, J., & Li, G. (2024). Communicating Green Innovation to Online Communities: Evidence from Sports Mega Events. *Journal of Travel Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241260327

Doan, T., & Darcy, S. (2024). Autoethnographic Disability-Related Research in Hospitality and Tourism Journals: Empowering Marginalized Identity Scholars' Voices. *Journal of Travel Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241257270

Rossmannek, O., David, N., Sandoval, C., & Garay, L. (2024). Bridging the Green Gap in Homesharing: How Platforms Can Increase Hosts' Sustainability Intentions and Behavior. *Journal of Travel Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241249444

As always, please make sure you follow the specific submission guidelines for the journal in which you are submitting. JTR's guidelines can be found **here**.

References

Sage has a concise and informative resource for Altmetrics:
https://journalssolutions.sagepub.com/support/solutions/articles/7000083405-what-are-the-different-ways-to-analyze-article-metrics-and-citations-

Background on the Altmetric donut, including how to interpret the sources of attention and how the total score is calculated:
https://www.altmetric.com/about-us/our-data/donut-and-altmetric-attention-score/

How to find an Altmetric score for your paper:
https://help.altmetric.com/support/solutions/articles/6000241963-finding-the-altmetric-data-for-a-particular-paper

How to set up the Altmetric Bookmarklet on your browser:
https://www.altmetric.com/solutions/free-tools/bookmarklet/

Everything You Need to Know about Altmetrics:
https://blog.mdpi.com/2022/07/18/altmetrics-faqs/

Altmetrics: Improve your Altmetrics Scores
https://libraryguides.mayo.edu/altmetrics/improve_altmetrics

Scimago Impact Factor: 13.1
CiteScore 15.1

Drop Everything and Read This! Writing Effective Titles

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 11

By James F. Petrick & Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

Titles are the "face" of a manuscript. If they are not written well, reviewers or editors might have bad first impressions. Worse yet, a title might be the only part of the manuscript that is read. Hence, writing effective titles is an important academic skill to develop. According to Tullu (2019), titles should be "simple, direct, accurate, appropriate, specific, functional, interesting, attractive/appealing, concise/brief, precise/focused, unambiguous, memorable, captivating, informative (enough to encourage the reader to read further), unique, catchy, and…not be misleading." She also explained that titles can be descriptive, declarative or interrogative. That's a tall order!

Most titles fall into the descriptive category. They summarize the main contents of the manuscript and make it easier for an article to be found via search engines. Descriptive titles do not interpret findings; this allows the reader to start analyzing the manuscript without bias. Conversely, declarative tiles include the main findings, which can make the reader less curious and can be potentially biased. Finally, interrogative titles pose a question, which gives them the potential to be more intriguing but may be less informative to the reader.

Here are some tips for writing effective tiles:

1. **Check the Journal's Submission Guidelines:** Determine if you have a character limit or if a journal does/does not allow subtitles to aid in starting the process.
2. **Start Long and Reduce**: Start by summarizing your paper in two to three sentences, including the primary concepts studied. Then reduce to a single sentence, using the traits discussed above to form a more succinct version. The final title should avoid: a) the place of study (unless it's integral to the study), b) obvious, unneeded words (e.g., examination of, etc.) and ambiguity (e.g., acronyms or technical jargon).
3. **Accurately Reflect the Study**: Misleading titles can frustrate the reader and hurt your credibility. Do all you can to represent the scope and content of your study.

4. **Be Eye-Catching and Engaging**: Try to capture the reader's interest while ensuring accuracy and professionalism in your title. The catch-22 is that your title needs to give a synopsis of what you've studied, while still giving a mystery of what was found.

5. **Be Cognizant of the Order of Words in the Title**: Search engines use the words within your title to retrieve other articles in a search. Hence, place the most important words/variables at the beginning of a title as well as the beginning of your keywords.

The following recent JTR publications are examples of recent studies with excellent titles:

- Frochot, I., & Lenglet, F. (2023). Getting Away from It All: Development of a Scale to Measure Escapism. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00472875231218641

- Ribeiro, M. A., Gursoy, D., & Chi, O. H. (2022). Customer Acceptance of Autonomous Vehicles in Travel and Tourism. *Journal of Travel Research,* https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0047287521993578

- Qiao, G., Hou, S., Chen, Q., Xiang, G., & Prideaux, B. (2024). Role of Body in Travel: Wheelchair Users' Experience from a Multi-Sensory Perspective. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875241249391

- Tan, J., & Cheng, M. (2024). Tourism, War, and Media: The Russia-Ukraine War Narrative. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875241245047?af=R&ai=1gvoi&mi=3ricys

References

Tullu, M. S. (2019). Writing the title and abstract for a research paper: Being concise, precise, and meticulous is the key. *Saudi Journal of Anesthesia*, *13*(Suppl 1), S12-S17.

Annesley, T. M. (2010). The title says it all. *Clinical Chemistry*, *56*(3), 357-360.

Journal of Travel Research

TTRA

Impact Factor: 8.0 / 5-Year Impact Factor: 9.7

Scimago Impact Factor: 13.1
CiteScore 15.1

Effectively Writing the Implications and Conclusions of a Manuscript

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 12

By James F. Petrick & Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

The implications of a study reveal the value of a study's findings to both theory and practice while conclusions give the author(s) a final opportunity to leave a strong impression on the readers' perceptions of their study's worth. The following are some pointers on how to write these final sections of your manuscript.

1. **Highlight the Main Contribution(s)**: Concisely summarize the most important findings of your study.
2. **Discuss the Study's Novelty:** Clearly communicate what is new or unique about your study and include why it matters. This should be done to reinforce the primary takeaways that set your manuscript apart. Be sure that your justification goes beyond simply stating that "there's not been a study on this topic before."
3. **Connect your Findings to a Bigger Picture**: Explain connections that your study has to past findings, highlighting both similarities and differences. Include discussion of how these differences/similarities can be used to aid both practitioners and academics to advance knowledge, policy, and/or practice.
4. **Discuss Practical Implications**: Identify real-world applications or impacts of your findings. For example, how might your research influence decision-making, inform public policy, or lead to new technologies or interventions? Make sure that this discussion centers specifically on the direct findings of the current study. Avoid stating generic applications that might apply to any number of studies. Also avoid obvious findings that are commonly agreed-upon by industry.
5. **Discuss Theoretical Contributions:** Based directly on the findings of the study, explain how existing theory and/or frameworks have been challenged, broadened, or honed, as well as how these theories and/or frameworks should evolve for future study. One

element that often is neglected is how the research contributes back to the theory, especially if the theory comes from another field or discipline.

6. **Be Focused**: Be realistic about the scope of your findings and avoid making sweeping claims that aren't directly supported by the data.
7. **Avoid Repetition**: Avoid simply restating what was covered in previous sections. You should be providing a synthesis of the findings rather than a restatement.
8. **Use Limitations as a Call to Action**: Use limitations to illuminate how the methods used might have affected the stated implications. By doing so, your overall results should have more credibility.
9. **Provide Future Research Directions**: Give detailed information for future researchers on areas for future inquiry, based on the gaps left behind from your study. Reviewers and editors will be looking for propositions for future research avenues that could build on your work.
10. **Try to offer Final Thoughts**: End with a compelling, forward-looking statement that realistically discusses the study's relevance in the context of ongoing developments in the field. Many studies miss a golden opportunity by not including this.

The following recent JTR publications are examples of studies with strong implications and conclusions:

- Nørfelt, A., & Kock, F. (2024). Leveraging Evolutionary Psychology for Tourism Research: Identifying and Addressing Key Challenges. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00472875241277530

- Hu, F., Wen, J., Zheng, D., Ying, T., Hou, H., & Wang, W. (2024). The principle of entropy increase: A novel view of how tourism influences human health. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00472875241269892

- Kim, J. H., Badu-Baiden, F., Kim, S., Koseoglu, M. A., & Baah, N. G. (2024). Evolution of the memorable tourism experience and future research prospects. *Journal of Travel Research*, *63*(6), 1315-1334. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00472875231206545

Journal of Travel Research

Identifying and Developing a Research Topic

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 13

By James F. Petrick & Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

It has often been said that the first step of any journey is the most difficult. This is often true for the research process, especially for graduate students trying to determine their thesis/dissertation topic. The following are suggestions to assist in this sometimes-daunting process.

1. **Start with a REAL Problem:** Identify a real-world problem that you would like to understand and help solve. The bigger the problem, the more likely research is needed. Start with a broad problem and try to narrow its focus to something you can manageably study. Avoid doing something trivial just to do it.
2. **Choose a Sexy Problem**: If you aren't enamored by your topic, it's going to be difficult to focus on it. Good topics are exciting for you to study and important to the field. They are timely, relevant, and innovative.
3. **Align the Problem with your Long-Term Goals:** Leading scholars often work on a research agenda that involves multiple studies. Try to determine a series of studies that relate to a bigger purpose than a one-off study.
4. **Examine Feasibility:** Realistically examine whether the topic you are contemplating can be researched with the time, resources and methods available to you. Consider taking on a collaborator if they can make the project more feasible.
5. **Determine Originality**: Review the literature to help ensure the problem you want to address is unexplored and that you are filling an important gap in knowledge.
6. **Bounce the Idea off Others:** Seek input from mentors, advisors and colleagues whose opinions you value. Include people who have diverse backgrounds and are trustworthy. They can provide valuable feedback and identify potential problems.
7. **Don't fall in Love with a Topic too Soon**: Be critical of your ideas and listen to others who may have critiques of your idea. Take in as much information as you can, and do not be afraid to alter your idea or move on to a different topic.

The following recent JTR publications are examples of studies with strong research questions:

- Crabolu, G., Font, X., & Miller, G. (2024). The Hidden Power of Sustainable Tourism Indicator Schemes: Have We Been Measuring Their Effectiveness All Wrong? Journal of Travel Research, 63(7), 1741-1760. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231195736

- Fernández-Morales, A., McCabe, S., & Cisneros-Martínez, J. D. (2024). Is Social Tourism a Vector for Destination Resilience to External Shocks? Evidence From Spain. Journal of Travel Research, 63(7), 1606-1625. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231200493

- Lyu, J., Huang, Y., & Wang, L. (2024). When Essence is Lost: The Consequences of Commercialization in Historical Towns. Journal of Travel Research, 63(7), 1671-1687. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231200494

- Oriade, A., Osinaike, A., & Adebayo, A. D. (2024). Can I do My Job in Peace? Hotel Employees' Wellbeing in the Face of Sexual Harassment Awareness and Organizational Commitment. Journal of Travel Research, 63(8), 2005-2022. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231202178

Journal of Travel Research

The Big Picture: Essential Elements Every JTR Paper [*and arguably any manuscript*] Should Contain

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 14

By Nancy G. McGehee & James F. Petrick
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

Like many of you, we were happy to see the announcement that JoST has introduced a format-free submission process for authors. At JTR we largely follow this for the early stages of a manuscript, with a requirement of APA formatting (which we changed from Chicago style when we took the Co-Editor helm), upon acceptance.

Xavier's announcement did get us thinking, however, about the difference between format and those somewhat technical "essential elements" that were also included in the JOST announcement: abstract, author affiliation, figures, tables, funder information, and references. While these are the most common in academic publishing, there are also other essential elements for JTR submissions, and arguably any manuscript, that are sometimes overlooked. These oversights sometimes lead to multiple un-submissions before an article can be reviewed, which is no fun for anyone. To perhaps streamline the process and save both authors and editors some time and sanity, we thought it might be useful to review and highlight these other essential elements.

1. **Include actual implications in the abstract:** We know that word count limits can be challenging for abstracts but including a major theoretical or practical implication is an enticing nugget that may just inspire colleagues to consume the whole paper! Authors don't have to include all the implications, or even an example of both theoretical and practical implications; just include the one that feels the most delectable.

2. **Run iTHenticate or other reputable software:** Make sure you haven't inadvertently self-plagiarized or not properly cited a source.

3. **Use only common acronyms, and even those sparingly**: No one wants to read a paper that needs an acronym dictionary. Common abbreviations like USA or AI are fine, but even AI needs to have the full term included the first time it is mentioned, e.g., Artificial Intelligence (AI). We believe most tourism journals currently enforce this requirement. When in doubt, write it out!

4. **Include DOIs in all appropriate references:** This protects the author from unintentionally including a false citation generated from AI.

5. **Include a Limitations section**: We've mentioned this one before in installments about conclusions but it's worth mentioning again. Not including limitations raises a red flag to reviewers and editors.

6. **Remove all evidence of authors names in the manuscript/response to reviewers:** We work hard to preserve the double-blind process and expedite papers through the system as smoothly as possible. It makes us sad when a paper is in a final revision and the authors have included their names in the response to reviewers' table/letter, or an IRB certification, and the reviewers see it. We try to catch these (and usually do), but we aren't always perfect in our efforts. Depending on where the paper is in the process, this can mean many lost weeks as we need to get a new submission from the authors and find fresh reviewers.

7. **Include the response to reviewers' table/letter and highlight your changes in the manuscript**: We are fine with either a table format or letter format for response to reviewers. The more thorough, the better, and include page number references to the revised paper. Be sure to highlight changes made in the body of the paper. We love our reviewers and want to make it as easy as possible for them to see the wonderful changes the authors have made to the paper in response to their wisdom.

8. **Respect the word limit:** ours is 10,000 words. We know some folks feel that there should no longer be word limits, but we believe that practicing the art of being concise benefits the final product.

9. **Know your paper category:** JTR offers three categories of papers: empirical, tourism foundations, and letters to the editor. Please thoroughly review the requirements for each before making a submission.

We hope that these tips will help assure that your next submission contains all the "Essential Elements" of a great article. To learn more about submission guidelines for JTR, explore the Sage website: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

How to Confidently Present Yourself and Your Research in Interviews

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 15

By James F. Petrick & Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

Communicating your expertise and research effectively is often key to securing a new position. However, many candidates find it challenging to convey the significance and value of their research to search committees. To address these challenges, this installment of *From the Editors' Desks* provides practical tips, drawing from our experiences, to help you succeed.

1. **Do Your Research:** Know the research, faculty, teaching, mission, etc. of the department and college you are interviewing with. Use that information to show how you can complement what they already do and to provide details about your unique skills that might fill gaps in their offerings. Also, acknowledge the interviewing university's research to help demonstrate your fit and knowledge of their work.

2. **Be Confident and Enthusiastic:** You should express genuine enthusiasm for the opportunity to work in the new position, while being clear and confident in your communication. This includes taking time to articulate without rushing statements.

3. **Have Summaries in your Application Materials:** Your cover letter, statements and vita should include summaries which concisely show your impact in the field. Give totals whenever possible and applicable (e.g., total grant dollars, total publications, total classes taught, etc.). Also, number your articles, grants, awards, etc., chronologically to make it easier for you to refer to them. Additionally, highlight your name in bold within your publication entries.

4. **Go Beyond Your CV:** Your audience should have your CV. Share information about yourself and accomplishments that enlighten beyond what they already know. Refer to specific articles, grants, awards, etc. by number (as stated in #3 above) and go into detail about your contributions to them and what you learned. Be prepared to discuss your role in each paper or project, whether it was the methodology, literature review, data collection, crafting implications, supervision, etc. In addition, you should be able to identify and articulate your favorite paper and explain why it stands out to you, reflecting on its significance, impact, or personal connection to the research.

5. **Focus on Impacts, not Topics**: When asked to describe your research, focus on the impact (both practical and theoretical) your research has had on the field and society. General statements about what or who you study are much less important than impact statements. Your ability to do this is possibly the most important part of your interview.

6. **Be Succinct:** Try to make short, clear statements that avoid redundancy. Saying virtually the same thing, more than once, should be avoided.

7. **Know the Format and/or Logistics of the Interview:** If you are being interviewed online, become familiar with the technology used. If you are doing a presentation, ask for ample time to be in the room to familiarize yourself with the computer, projector, audience seating, etc.
8. **Be Prepared to Ask Questions:** You will most likely be asked if you have any questions multiple times during the interview process. Know your audience and ask questions that show you are interested and curious as to what working there will be like. These could include: what courses you might be able to teach, your teaching load, which journals you prefer for publications, etc. Avoid questions that suggest you are there for extrinsic reasons such as salary, start-up funds, etc. These questions should be asked and negotiated once an offer is made.

9. **Be Kind, to EVERYONE…Always**: You are being interviewed by an institution, not just the search committee. Be courteous to all staff, grad students, faculty and administrators as they all should have input regarding whether you are going to be a good colleague. Also be gracious toward your current employer and colleagues, even if your current working conditions are not ideal.

We hope that these tips will help, should you be an interviewer or an interviewee. To learn more about submission guidelines for JTR and whether it's the right fit for you, explore the Sage website: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Special thanks to Dr.'s Courtney Suess-Raeisinafchi and Babak Taheri for input on this edition.

Journal of Travel Research

Ethics of Writing and Reviewing Manuscripts

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 16

By James F. Petrick & Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

To maintain the integrity and credibility of our shared knowledge, it's imperative that, as a field, we adhere to ethical practices. Doing so will foster an atmosphere of knowledge sharing that is accurate, honest, and trustworthy. Below are just a few ways in which we believe ethical behaviors should be practiced.

1. **As a Writer:**

    - Thoroughly understand what plagiarism is and do not do it.
    - Acknowledge the sources of the information you use by going to the original source and making sure you are citing correctly.
    - Avoid conflicts of interest and clearly state potential conflicts should you believe you have any.
    - Make sure you have played an integral part of any publications your name is on. Similarly, avoid arbitrarily adding authors who have played minimal roles in your publications in the hope that they will add you on theirs.
    - Even after your manuscript has been submitted or accepted it is not too late to make corrections to mistakes that you find in your research. Contact the editors should you ever find mistakes in a submission.
    - Illuminate all your findings, not just those which support your hypotheses. Unsupported hypotheses are often the source of a study's most important recommendations.
    - Be accountable for the content you produce by making research recommendations that truly reflect findings.

2. **As a Reviewer:**

    - Always remember to "review unto others as you'd have them review unto you."

- Make sure you focus your feedback on being constructive and respectful. Remember that your primary role is to improve the quality of the manuscript, not to accept or reject.
- Recognize any potential biases you might have and be impartial by reviewing manuscripts based on their quality and impact on the field's knowledge.
- Maintain confidentiality by not sharing or discussing work that is in progress.
- Respect the author(s)' intellectual property by not using unpublished results for your personal reasons.
- Don't recommend that authors cite your own works unless your research is the best to guide the current author.

3. **As an Editor:**

- Be impartial during desk reviews without bias (including both positive and negative) to the authors or their institutions when making decisions on a manuscript.
- Have a process in place to defer desk reviews to someone else in cases of possible conflict of interest.
- Choose reviewers based on who you believe will be best at increasing the quality of the manuscript.
- Don't require that authors cite manuscripts from your journal; however, do recommend specific articles (regardless of the journal) which are relevant to the study.
- Make decisions based on advancing science and NOT on how an article might increase impact factors for the journal.

We hope that these tips will help grow the ethical integrity of the science we produce, should you be an author, reviewer or editor. Sage's ethics and responsibility statement can be found here: https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/ethics-responsibility

To learn more about submission guidelines for JTR and whether it's the right fit for you, explore the Sage website: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

Writing a Strong Foundations of Tourism Manuscript

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 17

By Nancy G. McGehee & James F. Petrick
Co-Editors, *Journal of Travel Research*

The *Journal of Travel Research* publishes three types of articles: Empirical Research Articles, Letters to the Editor, and Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Articles. Foundation manuscripts are broadly conceptual, with the goal of building theory and/or reviewing and evaluating the body of research in a substantive and important area. Formally known as Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Articles, the goals of these papers should include improved conceptual clarity, holistic and systematic review of the current research, theory building and expansion, and perhaps most importantly, innovation with forward looking outcomes that propose new opportunities and ideas. These articles may be wholly conceptual or conceptual/empirical with meta-analytic data. Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Articles are not simply bibliometric analyses.

The topics of such articles must be initially vetted by the Editors-In-Chief. Lead authors will typically be internationally leading experts in the field with the ability to deeply analyze the topic at hand but can be at any stage of their careers. Researchers who feel they may be in a position and have an interest in writing such an article must first contact the Editors, via e-mail, with a detailed proposal (not a manuscript at this stage) including a case demonstrating their expertise to be able to write such an article. If the proposed article has the potential to meet the above goals and the author demonstrates a clear capacity to produce the article, the Editors will then invite the author(s) to proceed. Articles in this series will be evaluated through the normal double-anonymized review process.

If you are considering making a Tourism Foundations submission, here are some tips:

- Remember to please submit a proposal to us before simply submitting a manuscript. This will save you time and effort.
- Please clearly outline the approach you will be taking to the review: will it be systematic, utilizing a framework such as PRISMA? Bibliometric analysis is a good starting point but is not sufficient for a Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Article.
- A review is not simply a laundry list of articles on the topic. A Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Article requires deep analysis of the existing research, including critique and calls for additional lines of inquiry.
- Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Articles should include propositions and extensive recommendations for future research. This should be more than simply a paragraph or brief table; it should reflect deep thought in the area being reviewed.

- As with all JTR submissions, and most other journal submissions, please refrain from the use of acronyms.
- In your proposal, differentiation between your proposal and other recent systematic reviews is crucial. Please let us know how your paper is clearly different from others.
- The title is important – try to stay away from "A systematic review of X." Make it more interesting than that! (See Installment 11 for more advice in this area).

Some excellent examples of outstanding Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Articles include the following:

Buckley, R. (2023). Tourism and Mental Health: Foundations, Frameworks, and Futures. *Journal of Travel Research*, *62*(1), 3-20. https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/00472875221087669

Crompton, J. (2025). Reflections on the Six Motives That Drive Tourists' Pleasure Vacation Behavior. *Journal of Travel Research*, *64*(1), 3-34. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241281520

Filep, S., & Laing, J. (2019). Trends and Directions in Tourism and Positive Psychology. *Journal of Travel Research*, *58*(3), 343-354. https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/0047287518759227

Lesar, L., Weaver, D. B., & Gardiner, S. (2023). An Updated Framework for Theoretical and Practical Engagement With Sustainable Tourism Quality Control Tools. *Journal of Travel Research*, *62*(2), 271-289. https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/10.1177/00472875221115177

For more information, including submission guidelines and instructions, please click https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

Experimental Design:

Avoiding Much Ado About Not So Much

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 18

By Nancy G. McGehee, Alexander Josiassen, Jungkeun Kim, and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-in-Chief and Editorial Board Members, *Journal of Travel Research*

One of the most interesting aspects of editing a journal is the opportunity to engage in conversation with our reviewers about the larger issues we face in tourism research today. Recently I was particularly impressed with the way editorial board member Alexander Josiassen expressed concern over the potential overuse of the experimental design method. For this month's installment of FTED, this is not a discussion of how-to or do's and don'ts of experimental design (for that, please see the great JTR Letter to the Editor by Jungkeun Kim, also a co-author here), but more a call to consider your options before assuming that experimental design is the best approach to take.

Thoughts to ponder before engaging in experimental design

Be careful not to confuse enthusiasm for a new approach with it being the best approach. Some experimental studies can feel a bit like "much ado about not so much," where a set of numerous studies and analyses result in modest insights. The growing popularity of experimental methods can be attributed to several factors: Some traditional methodologies are approaching conceptual saturation; researchers are increasingly seeking novel approaches to generate impactful contributions; and there has been a growing acceptance of experimental studies in leading tourism journals.

As with any method, familiarizing yourself with its flaws is important. Even though experimental methods have the potential to demonstrate and test causal relationships, they are not without flaws. For example, as Kim (2023) indicated, experiments have many shortcomings. They can be one of the most artificial, reductionist, and sometimes wasteful approaches we have and can strip away the complexities that define a practical and context-dependent area like tourism. They are often created with many assumptions and typically place more weight on internal validity than ecological and external validity.

Avoid a rushed, cookie-cutter approach that does not first come from a rich immersion in the problem. Many fields and disciplines are suffering from a recent replication crisis, which has arguably occurred with the overuse of experimental methods.

Allow your research question to dictate the pace and difficulty of the method used. The increased enthusiasm for experiments in tourism research is often seen as a response to perceived weaknesses of other methods, but replacing some imperfect methods with a method with different weaknesses is not necessarily the solution. It is important to first determine the research question rather than to select a method and then force the research to fit the method. Choosing an experimental setup because it is perceived as quicker or easier to publish also risks ignoring more important, time-intensive, and complex phenomena in lieu of narrow and more easily testable questions.

Building and advancing theory, not just methods

Remember to keep your theoretical approach front and center. Over-reliance on a single methodological approach risks stifling theoretical development. When one method dominates, it often signals an imbalance that may hinder intellectual diversity and depth.

This diversity should drive your research agenda. An overemphasis on experimental procedures can create an illusion of analytical robustness, while masking the limited interpretative power of the findings. This is particularly problematic in a field like tourism, which operates within highly diverse cultural, social, and environmental contexts (Crompton & Petrick, 2024).

Systematic effort toward methodological diversity, based on the richness of recent advances

Your methodological approaches should evolve with rigor to address any fundamental limitations. The robust research landscape in tourism requires deliberate support for methodological diversification.

Consider alternative and sometimes underutilized approaches, such as mobile- and GIS-based geospatial analysis, longitudinal studies, immersive qualitative research, indigenous research, and comparative case methods, among others, which provide unique and valuable perspectives on the multifaceted nature of tourism phenomena. Fostering a vibrant and comprehensive research ecosystem in tourism demands the intentional promotion of methodological pluralism.

Shared responsibility for better theory and methodology

Whatever your current role, you have an opportunity to implement change! The task of reshaping methodological norms calls for collective engagement from key actors across academia, including researchers, reviewers, editors, doctoral educators, and institutions (Gard-McGehee, 2025). Reviewers have a responsibility to evaluate submissions based on their theoretical alignment, methodological appropriateness, and implication rather than through rigid preferences for specific techniques. Further, doctoral programs in tourism significantly shape how emerging tourism scholars approach research, including methodological choice, and if an experimental setup is still chosen, the right use of experimental methods. Teaching researchers to let research problems and theory guide the choice of methods leads to more thoughtful and impactful scholarship.

JTR, like many other journals, does not give preference toward any specific methods. As clearly stated in our submission guidelines, we prioritize cutting-edge topics with strong practical implications—regardless of the specific methodological approach employed.

It is increasingly evident that our research practices must evolve. This evolution calls for the deliberate integration of theoretical innovation and methodological advancement, encompassing all research methods. Equally important is a sustained commitment to best practices in research design, analysis, and reporting. When these elements align, they foster a more transparent, reliable, and impactful scientific enterprise.

References

Crompton, J. L., & Petrick, J. F. (2024). A half-century reflection on pleasure vacation motives. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *104*, 103692. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2023.103692

Gard-McGehee, N. (2025). Letter from the co-editor: Yes,"shit's got to change." but how? A call for a deep scholarship social movement. *Journal of Travel Research*, *64*(4), 1025-1028. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241288510

Kim, J. (2023). Why do Experiments Fail? Six Practical Suggestions for Successful Online Experiments. *Journal of Travel Research*, *63*(7), 1835-1844. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231209983 (Original work published 2024)

For more information, including submission guidelines and instructions, please go to: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

The Role of Letters to the Editor

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 19

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

Recently we discussed the specifics of submitting a manuscript for our Foundations of Tourism Research Conceptual Articles category of papers. This month we want to provide details and encouragement for Letter to the Editor submissions. In general, Letters to the Editor serve three main purposes: scholarly dialogue, a source of concise communication, and maintaining journal standards.

Scholarly Dialogue

Letters to the Editor can be a conduit for debate and the ongoing evolution of the understanding of a specific topic. They can also be used to respond to critiques and enrich discussion of previously published articles. Letters are most useful when they push the needle of the academy by being innovative or disruptive.

Quick and Concise Communication

Sometimes important research, discoveries, or topics don't require a full-length journal article. A current event may inspire a short but insightful paper or commentary. It is important to note that Letters to the Editor are not simply opinion pieces. Empirical evidence is needed to support any argument made in a *JTR* letter.

Maintain Journal Standards

Letters to the Editor are incredibly important as a mechanism to preserve and ensure the integrity of a journal. They are a way for readers to highlight concerns or offer corrections. Simply by offering a Letter to the Editor format, journals are signaling their openness to dialogue and critical analysis.

JTR Letter to the Editor Submission Guidelines

Submission guidelines for *JTR* letters to the editor are purposefully quite broad and open-ended: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

The *Journal of Travel Research* encourages conversation. Potential purposes of Letters to the Editors are to: provoke conversation, review our research endeavors, address current issues, provide commentary and innovative ways of thinking about our research problems, and to challenge assumptions and methodologies. These include constructive commentary concerning recent research publications as well as our publication process and expectations. Acceptance of Letters to the Editors will be evaluated through the normal double-anonymized review process.

As with Empirical Research Articles and Tourism Foundation contributions, Letters to the Editor must meet the standard for publication in the *Journal of Travel Research:* they must make substantive theoretical and/or methodological contributions to the tourism research literature.

While we do not have an expected word count, past Letters to the Editor range from 4,000 to 8,000 words. If you are currently engaged in a project that you think fulfills the requirements – and spirit – of a *Journal of Travel Research* Letter to the Editor, we look forward to your submission!

Recent examples of *Journal of Travel Research* Letters to the Editor:

Benjamin, S., Lee, K.-S., & Boluk, K. (2024). Shit Has to Change, Right? A Call for "Good Trouble" in Tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, *64*(4), 1016-1024. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241276542 (Original work published 2025)

Carr, T., & Newbold, S. C. (2025). More People Would Visit Yellowstone If It Weren't So Crowded: Optimal Congestion Pricing for High Demand Protected Areas. *Journal of Travel Research*, *0*(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875251316267

Nørfelt, A., & Kock, F. (2024). Leveraging Evolutionary Psychology for Tourism Research: Identifying and Addressing Key Challenges. *Journal of Travel Research*, *64*(5), 1262-1270. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241277530 (Original work published 2025)

Williams, N. L., Wassler, P., & Fedeli, G. (2023). Social Representations of War Tourism: A Case of Ukraine. *Journal of Travel Research*, *62*(4), 926-932. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875221146797 (Original work published 2023)

For more information, including additional submission guidelines and instructions, please click https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

AI/LLMs and Peer Review

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 20

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

This latest installment of *From the Editors' Desks* will be brief but important. Increasingly we are all seeing evidence of the use of AI/LLMs to conceptualize, edit, and even write papers. It is disappointing and frankly endangering our field. It should come as no surprise that misuse of AI/LLMs is also spreading to peer review. At JTR, we stress that reviewers may not use AI/LLMs as a shortcut for peer review. The following are key reasons for our stance, along with policy statements from Sage and other publishers.

Short-term fix, long-term damage

The pressure to use AI/LLMs for review is understandable given the increasing time constraints under which academics are operating. Yet while it may be a short-term fix for the individual, it could be devastating in the long term for the academy.

Betrayal to Your Colleagues

Depositing a manuscript into an LLM and asking it to write a review without express permission from the authors (which you do not have in a double-blind review) is compromising the privacy of the authors. For most publishers, this is a severe offense.

Not even half of the job

Keep in mind that an LLM is a tool, not a peer. It cannot produce a complete, accurate, thoughtful, and constructive review on its own.

We understand that humans are not perfect, and human reviewers come with their own biases, but the level of bias and incorrect information is much worse with current LLMs. "The real risk here is that the LLM produced a review report that looks properly balanced but has no specific critical content about the manuscript or the described study " (Donker, 2023, p 781) .

Ambiguity persists in enforcement

There is general agreement that using AI/LLMs to conduct peer reviews is inappropriate. But the devil is always in the details. As Mollaki (2024, p. 239) asks, "What would be an appropriate policy for editors to follow in the case that authors expressed their concerns, or editors themselves have suspicions that the peer review report is a result of, or it includes parts produced by, generative AI tools? How should these allegations be investigated? Should the reviewer be excluded from peer reviewing?" There is much ambiguity around how to monitor, verify, and sanction the use of AI/LLMs for peer review. However, many publishers of tourism journals are becoming more pro-active in their policies. These are ever evolving, so we recommend that reviewers check in on policies from time to time, but below are the latest from Sage, Elsevier, and Wiley.

Some examples of current policies

Sage Publishing

Use of LLMs for reviewers

"While LLMs can create a critical summary that would look like a review report, it is unlikely to be able to capture the reviewer's experience as a researcher in the field, any local or contextual nuances of the study or indeed what impact the study may have on various populations. We ask that Editors ensure the reviewers invited are aware of the confidentiality issues presented by generating a review report using language models or generative AI. If an Editor is concerned about a review report that appears to be generated by ChatGPT or another tool, they should flag this to Sage for advice."

At JTR, if a complete review has been verified as being generated by an LLM that involved the dumping of an unpublished manuscript into the model and submitted by a member of the Editorial Board, they will be immediately removed from the board.

Elsevier (partial)

The use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the journal peer review process

"When a researcher is invited to review another researcher's paper, the manuscript must be treated as a confidential document. Reviewers should not upload a submitted manuscript or any part of it into a generative AI tool as this may violate the authors' confidentiality and proprietary rights and, where the paper contains personally identifiable information, may breach data privacy rights.

This confidentiality requirement extends to the peer review report, as it may contain confidential information about the manuscript and/or the authors. For this reason, reviewers should not upload their peer review report into an AI tool, even if it is just for the purpose of improving language and readability.

Peer review is at the heart of the scientific ecosystem and Elsevier abides by the highest standards of integrity in this process. Reviewing a scientific manuscript implies responsibilities that can only be attributed to humans. Generative AI or AI-assisted technologies should not be used by reviewers to assist in the scientific review of a paper as the critical thinking and original assessment needed for peer review is outside of the scope of this technology and there is a risk that the technology will generate incorrect, incomplete or biased conclusions about the manuscript. The reviewer is responsible and accountable for the content of the review report."

Wiley (partial)

"Wiley is a member of COPE and is committed to supporting reviewers, authors and editors in ensuring integrity across all aspects of the publishing process. COPE's Core Practices are at the center of our publication workflows and inform our work in protecting confidentiality throughout peer review. Accordingly, we require all peer reviewers to maintain the confidentiality of peer review and peer reviewer comments and not reveal any details of a manuscript or communications related to it, during or after the peer review process, beyond those that are released by the journal. For journals with single-, double- or triple-anonymized review models, this confidentiality obligation extends to the review and all communications regarding the review. This includes not uploading manuscripts (or any parts of manuscripts including figures and tables) into Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools such as ChatGPT and others based on large language models (LLMs) because this could infringe upon rights of confidentiality, privacy and copyright; see STM guidance here. If such tools are used to improve a peer review report, then they must be transparently declared in the report."

We look forward to continuing conversation about this on Trinet and in the coming months and as we gather for various conferences and meetings.

References

Donker, Tjibbe (2023). The dangers of using large language models for peer review. *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, 23:7, 781. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(23)00290-6.

Elsevier Generative AI policy for journals. https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies-and-standards/generative-ai-policies-for-journals#2-for-reviewers

Mollaki, V. (2024). Death of a reviewer or death of peer review integrity? the challenges of using AI tools in peer reviewing and the need to go beyond publishing policies. *Research Ethics*, *20*(2), 239-250. https://doi.org/10.1177/17470161231224552 (Original work published 2024).

Sage Using AI in peer review and publishing. https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/using-ai-in-peer-review-and-publishing#pt3.

Watkins, R. (2024). Guidance for researchers and peer-reviewers on the ethical use of Large Language Models (LLMs) in scientific research workflows. *AI Ethics* **4**, 969–974 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-023-00294-5.

Wiley Peer Review Policy. https://authorservices.wiley.com/Reviewers/journal-reviewers/tools-and-resources/review-confidentiality-policy.html

As always, for more information on the Journal of Travel Research, including additional submission guidelines and instructions, please click https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR.

Journal of Travel Research

Positionality Statements

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 21

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

Positionality statements, often referred to as reflexivity statements, are intended to disclose various biases that might influence a researcher's work. While these statements have predominantly been used in qualitative research, there have been recent pushes for including them in quantitative studies.

Authors should consider adding positionality statements as a way to be transparent about their own biases or credibility. While it is common practice to see these statements in studies grounded in feminist theory, critical theory and Indigenous methodologies as well as for examining marginalized/vulnerable groups, most research could benefit from their inclusion.

Positionality statements are often placed in a study's introduction or methods sections, but they can be included in the theoretical framework, methods, or findings. For example, a cis white male may include a positionality statement in the introduction if they are using a more traditional, mainstream theoretical approach. An indigenous researcher may include a positionality statement to add credibility to their use of indigenous methods.

The statement(s) should address all dimensions of oneself that are relevant to the study. These might include, but not be limited to: socioeconomic background, political viewpoint, religion, race, gender, sexuality, nationality, language, personal motivations, insider/outsider status and professional background.

The following is an example of the positionality statements from a recent Letter to the Editors in JTR (Benjamin, Lee and Boluk, 2025, p. 1017):

Before entering the heart of our letter, we offer the following positionality statement for our readers. This paper is written as a trio of voices who believe it is necessary to unpack the critical issues that cloud the goodness of our academy,

- *The first author (i.e., Stefanie Benjamin) is a white, American female associate professor based in the Southeastern United States, who earned her PhD critiquing, through a critical race theory lens, how power and politics inform higher education and travel.*
- *The second author (i.e., Kai-Sean Lee) is a Chinese Malaysian male assistant professor based in the Southeastern United States, who has first-hand experiences in the neoliberal takeover in both Southeast Asia and the United States.*
- *The third author (i.e., Karla Boluk) is white female associate professor based in Canada, who studied in Canada, New Zealand and South Africa and has previously worked in Sweden, and Northern Ireland. Her scholarship adopts feminist theory examining the need for enhanced care practices in tourism.*

A key to these statements is to address how your personal background, assumptions, and beliefs may shape how you choose and then view the problem, your preferred research approach, methodological tools, and/or your interpretation of data. A positionality statement may also expose any privilege or power the researcher may possess, including influence over participants, among other potential biases. The word "reflexivity" infers the inclusion of how you are embracing these influences and are attempting to include them as part of your interpretation.

As shown above, the statements should be meaningful, but brief (typically 1-3 sentences). They should also focus on honesty and clarity without overemphasizing or minimizing your identity. Further, the statement(s) should be framed as a strength that illuminates one's position, such that scientific rigor and ethical transparency are increased.

Other recent examples of *JTR* articles that include positionality statements:

Chepkwony, M. C., & Buzinde, C. N. (2025). Partnering on Social Advocacy: Indigenous Communities and Tourism Enterprises. *Journal of Travel Research*, (Online First) https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875251341306

Doan, T., Truong, T. L. H., Huang, W.-J., El-Manstrly, D., & Ha, V.-S. (2025). Creating Spiritual Values in Tourism: Insights From Buddhist Monks and Tour Operators. *Journal of Travel Research* (Online First). https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875251342192

References:

Benjamin, S., Lee, K. S., & Boluk, K. (2025). Shit has to change, right? A call for "good trouble" in tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, *64*(4), 1016-1024, https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875241276542

Gani, J. K., & Khan, R. M. (2024). Positionality statements as a function of coloniality: Interrogating reflexive methodologies. International Studies Quarterly, 68(2), https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqae038

Jamieson, M. K., Govaart, G. H., & Pownall, M. (2023). Reflexivity in quantitative research: A rationale and beginner's guide. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *17*(4), **https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12735**

Journal of Travel Research

When and How Should Authors Communicate with Editors?

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 22

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

Like many academics, editors receive dozens, if not hundreds, of e-mails per day. The sheer quantity of messages can cause delays in responding to messages and brief replies. While we empathize with most messages received by authors, as we have had many similar experiences in our careers, we especially appreciate thoughtful and concise communications.

We recognize that this may be unchartered territory for early career researchers. The following are a few tips intended to provide a basic understanding of when and how to communicate with journal editors from the perspective of *JTR*. We look forward to hearing other editors' thoughts as well.

When to Contact Editors

1. When you notice that you have made a mistake with your submission. This includes downloading the incorrect file(s), co-author or affiliation mistakes, etc.

2. If you have an ethical concern, including suspicion of a conflict of interest during the review process, discovering methodological or statistical inaccuracies after you've made a submission, or post-publication errors discovered that require an erratum.

3. If your manuscript has been at one step of the review process for an inordinately long time. Initial editorial decisions for *JTR* should typically be made within two weeks of submission while reviews should typically be completed within ten to twelve weeks. Post-acceptance production should take 30 days.

4. If you require post-review clarifications. These might include needing interpretation of reviewer/editor comments or if you believe that a reviewer/editor has a factual

misunderstanding within their review. Like all messages to editors, these should be framed inquisitively and not argumentatively.

5. If you need an extension for completing second, third, etc. rounds of edits. These requests should be rarely used, succinct, and state the date you promise to get the manuscript submitted. Please also make the request at least seven days before the existing deadline so that editors have time to access the system and make the extension.

6. If you wish to submit a Foundations of Tourism article, *JTR* requires a proposal to be emailed to the editors before authors submit the article within the system. Please see the submission guidelines for details.

When Not to Contact the Editors

1. To ask the editor(s) to pre-review your manuscript prior to submitting. Carefully read the aims and scope of the journal to which you are submitting to determine if it is a good fit for your research. If so, directly submit via their web portal.

2. If the answer to your question can be found within the journal's website. These would include formatting, allowed word count, fees, etc.

3. To repeatedly ask for status checks without justification for the multiple requests.

4. To argue with a reviewer's opinion that you cannot factually dispute.

5. To let the editors know you have re-submitted your article. The system will send us a message once a manuscript has been resubmitted.

6. To see if you can resubmit after a final decision to reject has been made. Please accept the decision and use the input received to improve the manuscript for submission elsewhere.

Tips for Writing Messages to Editors

1. Include your name, the manuscript id, title and submission date whenever possible. The manuscript ID is especially helpful and can help facilitate a quick response.

2. Be concise, professional and polite.

3. Give information related to your inquiry in the subject line.

4. Clearly state precisely what you are requesting.

5. Please don't send multiple follow-ups in a short span of time. Allow 1-2 weeks for a response.

As always, for more information on the Journal of Travel Research, including additional submission guidelines and instructions, please click https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR.

*These are opinions of the current editors of *JTR* and likely do not reflect the opinions of all editors.

Journal of Travel Research

Conducting Innovative Research

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 23

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

We desk review more than 150 manuscripts each month for *JTR*. Being exposed to this level of research gives us a unique awareness of work being conducted around the globe. While much of this work has important impacts at the local level, informs policy and has practical implications, much of it is also repetitive and not particularly distinctive. What keeps us excited about the editing process is receiving innovative submissions. Innovative research can take many forms and is critical to advancing our fields' knowledge.

The below includes a non-exhaustive list of potential ways to make your research more innovative, across different sections of your manuscript. Please note the below are from the perspective of *JTR*. We look forward to getting feedback from other perspectives.

Before you begin

1. Scour the news and your industry contacts for current challenges and opportunities. This can be globally, nationally, or regionally.
2. Consider specialized but growing areas of research in the field.
3. Identify industry experts and connect with them to hear their concerns.
4. Attend as many conferences as you can, either live or online, to stay up to date on industry and research trends. Interacting with your peers face-to-face is a refreshing way to generate useful ideas.
5. Explore a broad range of theoretical perspectives, then dig deeply into those in which you are interested.
6. Stay up to date on both high- and low-tech methods. Don't assume that the most innovative research comes from highly technical methods. As always, it's about matching the research problem with the right approach.

Get to the Point

1. As we have stated often, a good title is crucial. Put the innovative aspect of your work front and center.

2. Do the same with the abstract. Avoid a cookie-cutter abstract that doesn't highlight what the most unique aspect of the paper is all about. Don't just say there are implications, tell us specifically what those implications are, at least the top one or two most unique.

Introduction/Literature Review

1. Clearly introduce a highly important problem to the field and an under-explored gap in the current literature related to it. Highlighting the importance of this area of inquiry, and the gap to be studied, write a strong problem statement that gives direction for the rest of the manuscript.
2. Consider studying underserved or unique populations. Including multiple populations and showing differences and similarities will amplify the utility of the results. Be sure to explain how a focused study is of value to a larger audience.
3. Thoroughly review the literature across disciplines and compile it in an easily digestible format. If conducting a systematic review, make sure it is significantly different than previous ones and includes discussion of other reviews. Presenting the results in a table which shows the differences and similarities across studies is generally useful.
4. As stated above, a deep knowledge of the theoretical perspective you use is crucial. Consider theories from across disciplines and fields. The theory should help to understand the problem being studied and should guide the rest of the manuscript. Equally importantly, applying theory post-hoc, after a study has been developed, or adding new moderating/mediating variables to well-established theories is not innovative or rigorous.

Methods

1. If your research question leads you, using mixed methods that strategically complement each other can deepen your work considerably. Nested, sequential, concurrent, parallel, and convergent approaches all have great potential to advance our field.
2. Consider incorporating novel methods from related disciplines and/or adapting methodological techniques in innovative ways. Collaborating with people from different backgrounds can help this process. The methods should be chosen based on which are the best for studying the developed problem and the theory chosen to ground the study.
3. Appropriately integrate new technologies (e.g., machine learning, AI, metaverse, etc.), that best assist in learning about the problem being studied, if the research question leads you there.

4. That said, while new technologies are often helpful, don't abandon time-tested low-tech approaches. Intercept surveys, field work, interviews, and unique sources of secondary data can add polyvocality and depth to your work, raising the level of innovation.
5. Improve the reproducibility/transparency of your results by precisely documenting protocols, open-source scripts, etc.

Results and Discussion

1. Broadly synthesize your results. Draw clear connections and disconnections from other disciplines as well as your own.
2. Clearly report non-confirmatory or serendipitous results and attempt to explain why you believe they occurred.
3. Present your data using curated and creative visual techniques to reveal nuanced findings. More is not necessarily better. One unique figure or graphic representation of your work can speak volumes.
4. Explain very specific examples of how the results can be used practically. Avoid cookie-cutter examples that have been used ad nauseum. Also, fully explain how your results have contributed to the theory being studied.
5. Creatively address limitations and provide innovative solutions for future researchers to overcome these limitations.

References

Lê, J. K., & Schmid, T. (2022). The practice of innovating research methods. *Organizational Research Methods*, *25*(2), 308-336.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Johnson, R. B. (Eds.). (2021). *The Routledge reviewer's guide to mixed methods analysis*. Routledge.

For more information on the Journal of Travel Research, including additional submission guidelines and instructions, please click: http://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

*These are opinions of the current editors of *JTR* and likely do not reflect the opinions of all editors. Further, being innovative alone does not guarantee a manuscript will be published, as good manuscripts should also have strong methodological, practical and theoretical impacts on the field.

Journal of Travel Research

Standing Out: Tips for Landing an Academic Position

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 24

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

Whether you are pursuing your first faculty position or seeking to progress within academia, careful preparation and a strategic approach to each stage of the application process is important. This is more crucial than ever, as the current market for academic positions is highly competitive. Hence, this edition of From the Editors' Desks attempts to offer practical strategies to help you present your strongest case, while assisting the search committees you are attempting to impress. We recommend this as a companion piece to FTED Installment 15, entitled "How to Verbally Convey Yourself and Your Research When Being Interviewed".

Preparing Your Application Materials

1. Thoroughly study the job announcement to help ensure your submission includes all required documents and is submitted prior to deadlines.
2. Tailor your application to the position in which you are applying. Your cover letter and CV should predominantly highlight the primary roles of the position (e.g., if a research position, your publications, etc. should be center stage).
3. Your cover letter should clearly state why you are a great fit for the program's needs as well as why you truly want to work there.
4. Have a clear, concise research statement that includes discussion of the specific impact your research has, and will have, on the field of study. Consider impact beyond impact factors.
5. Include thoughtful discussion related to your approaches to teaching. Make these unique to your learning and teaching style.
6. Highlight (in your cover letter and CV), what strengths you'll bring to the department, particularly based on their needs.

7. Include summary statements before each section of your CV. These could include total number of publications, total courses taught, total grant dollars, percentage of publications in tier one journals, etc.
8. Include the impact factors for each publication you have, as well as your contribution to each study.
9. Make all your references aware of each position you are applying for and make sure that you are only asking persons with whom you have faith will positively, and honestly, represent you.
10. Proofread ALL materials you are submitting. Once you've completed proofreading, proofread again, then ask a colleague and or advisor to proofread for you.

Preparing for Interviews

1. Study the entire faculty and staff with whom you will be interviewing. Know their areas of research, teaching, duties, etc. Be prepared to ask targeted questions and suggest possible collaborations as well as areas in which you could fill departmental needs.
2. Study what courses the department teaches and or needs to be taught. Be prepared to say which courses you can teach, and which courses you would prefer to teach, based on their feedback.
3. Practice responding to interview questions in a mirror to learn your mannerisms. Whether you are on a Zoom or in-person interview, the committee will be reading your non-verbal communication and making judgements about you (e.g., how sincere, cordial, confident, excited, nervous, you are).
4. Always have copies of your CV with you. The search committee is likely going to ask you questions based on your CV. Having it with you will assist you in accurately answering their questions.
5. Be prepared to precisely discuss the roles that you played in each of your publications, as well as the roles each of your co-authors played.
6. Understand that you are "on stage" during your entire visit. How you act and react to staff, grad students, faculty, even servers at meal functions, will be noticed. Collegiality is a primary difference maker when making hiring decisions.

Post-Interview

1. Write personalized thank you e-mails to members of the search committee and others you connected with during the interview process.
2. Be patient. Academic searches are time-consuming as there are typically multiple levels of approvals that must take place.

3. Should you receive another offer from another program, consider letting any other programs where you have interviewed know. They will either respond with a "best of luck at your new position" or potentially consider a counteroffer. Be sure to phrase it humbly and simply as a point of information for the search committee.
4. Learn from the process. Should you not get the position, reflect on what you could have done better and/or what deficiencies your academic credentials might have. You can reach out to members of the search committee and ask them what you could have done better, to better prepare you for future positions.

References

Kelsky, K. (2015). *The professor is in: The essential guide to turning your Ph. D. into a job*. Crown.

Vick, J. M., Furlong, J. S., & Lurie, R. (2016). *The academic job search handbook*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

*These are opinions of the current editors of *JTR* and likely do not reflect the opinions of all faculty members.

Why not publish in the *Journal of Travel Research*, to give your CV a boost?! Our submission guidelines can be found here: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

Dealing with Rejections

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 25

By James F. Petrick and Nancy G. McGehee
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

The top journals in our field accept less than 10% of all submissions. Hence, having journal submissions rejected is a normal, albeit painful, part of being an academic. Even the top scholars in our field regularly face submission rejections. Yet they are leading scholars because they think strategically about rejections to strengthen their work. For this edition of From the Editors' Desks, we provide tips to help you recover, revise, and resubmit your manuscripts successfully.

Recover

1. Rejections happen. Don't take it personally. It just means that the current state of your manuscript wasn't deemed a good enough fit for that specific journal.
2. Allow yourself some time to process the rejection before starting to resubmit.
3. Have an open mind and assess each of the reasons the editor and/or reviewers stated for the manuscript being rejected.
4. Distinguish the differences between journal specific decisions (e.g., not a good fit) and content specific decisions. All content specific decisions should be addressed during the revision stage.
5. If the manuscript has fatal flaws, you will need to consider whether it is worth resubmitting to another journal, or if the flaws are large, you might need to contemplate making major changes (e.g., gathering new data).

The next categories, Revising and Resubmitting, are not mutually exclusive. You need to think about the next potential home for your paper as you revise it.

Revise

1. Start by creating a summary table that includes every reviewer's comment. Consider each comment and develop responses that will strengthen the manuscript. Incorporate your responses into your manuscript. Do NOT ignore the reviewer comments and send on the manuscript before addressing the reviewer

comments and making the changes; in our field there is potential for your paper to go to the same reviewer again; if it does, and you did not make the recommended changes, they will not be pleased.

2. Once all suggested edits are made, read through the entirety of the manuscript to make sure it has a proper flow. Smooth out the additions and changes so they merge with the existing document and do not feel abrupt or disjointed.
3. Next, double check that: the research problem is stated clearly; the argument for the chosen theoretical grounding is strong; the entire manuscript is grounded in theory; the methods are written so that others can easily replicate; and the findings and implications are clear and specific.
4. Finally, re-read and edit for grammar and spelling. Check that all tables, figures, citations and references are accurate.

Resubmit

1. Strategically choose the tier of the journal to which you should be submitting. Do this by realistically thinking through whether the contribution of your manuscript belongs in a tier1, tier 2 or lower journal.
2. Choose the specific journal, in the most applicable tier, by checking which journal's "Aims" and Scope" best match the topic and implications of your study.
3. Study the submission requirements for the journal in which you will be submitting and ensure that you follow them holistically.
4. Prepare the resubmission package. This includes personalizing the cover letter to the editors and journal to which you are submitting.

References

Sullivan, G.M. (2015). What to Do When Your Paper Is Rejected. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education,* Mar;7(1):1-3. doi: 10.4300/JGME-D-14-00686.1

Do your future submissions fit the *Journal of Travel Research*? Our Aims and Scope can be found here: https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/journal-travel-research#aims-and-scope

Our submission guidelines can be found here: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

Have We Lost Sight of Why We Cite?

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 26

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

A few months ago, there was an interesting conversation on Trinet about citing work in our research. Much of the discussion framed citations as commodities. The thread focused on citation counts, who gets cited, whether citing certain authors is the price of admission for some journals, and the journals from which citations were derived. Frankly, we found the exchange disconcerting, as it felt we'd lost sight of ***why we include citations in our work***.

The following are a few of our thoughts on the core reasons why we include citations.

Citations aren't "the thing;" the content of the citation is "the thing". Along with an examination of our field and its problems and issues, reading the current literature on a topic, both within and outside our field, is paramount. As researchers, we need to have a deep understanding of what is being studied, how it is being measured, where the focus of research is located, and how long a phenomenon has been examined. It is not about merely collecting references and citations to populate the paper in a way that we think will impress editors and reviewers. It is about learning, engaging, and deliberately building a strong intellectual foundation, reflected in our scholarship and internalized in our own expertise.

This may seem obvious, but including a citation in our work implies that we have closely READ, ENGAGED WITH, and THOUGHT CRITICALLY about the work. Researchers should consult the original source and draw their own conclusions, not depend on a second-hand interpretation from another work (unless that is clearly acknowledged and justified).

Including a citation signals that we have intentionally positioned our work within the broader scholarly conversation. We may support or challenge the cited work, build directly upon it, explain why we chose a different approach, or point to it as evidence of a gap our study addresses. In each case, citation reflects engagement and intellectual accountability rather than a perfunctory acknowledgment of prior research.

Citing editors out of context will not get you in the door. Quite the opposite. We have received manuscripts that cite one or both of us in the opening paragraph, even when the work is unrelated to our research. In such cases, we require those citations to be removed. This action also raises concerns about the accuracy and relevance of other references in the manuscript.

We have also seen articles cited that are unrelated to the sentence or paragraph in which they appear. Please avoid this. Ensure that every citation clearly and directly supports the specific point being made.

Lastly, this may be a bit controversial, but before we 100% dismiss the idea of a reviewer asking an author to "cite their work", let's consider that they might be right! As editors, we intentionally invite reviewers with demonstrated expertise in the topic under study. It is reasonable to expect that such reviewers may have published relevant scholarship in that area. If a manuscript does not cite that work, it may signal that the authors have not fully engaged with the key literature (*engage* being the operative word here, not simply *cite*). When a reviewer's prior research is genuinely relevant and advances the argument or framing of the manuscript, its omission is a gap that should be addressed. As editors, we support requests to include relevant scholarship in these cases. However, this does not justify asking authors to cite numerous works that are tangential or self-serving. Ultimately, manuscripts should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the research in the field, and reviewers play an important role in helping ensure that standard is met.

As we move forward with our research, it is important for the academy to create space for the time it takes to truly read, value, and consider each other's work. This, coupled with a keen interest in the problems facing our field, will only make our work stronger.

Do your future submissions fit the *Journal of Travel Research*? Our Aims and Scope can be found here: https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/journal-travel-research#aims-and-scope

Our submission guidelines can be found here: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR

Journal of Travel Research

Creating Meaningful Propositions

From the Editors' Desks: Installment 27

By Nancy G. McGehee and James F. Petrick
Co-Editors-in-Chief, *Journal of Travel Research*

Defining and creating research propositions can be challenging. Since *JTR* requires Tourism Foundation submissions to include research propositions, we offer some tips and information on how to develop and express them well. These suggestions are not exhaustive, but rather a starting point for further exploration.

Potato, Patata: Defining a Proposition

Here are just a few examples of definitions of a proposition across various fields and disciplines. They are quite diverse:

SOURCE	PROPOSITION DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES
Bhattacherjee, A. (2012). *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices*. USF Tampa Bay Open Access Textbooks Collection.	"A proposition is a tentative and conjectural relationship between constructs that is stated in a declarative form. An example of a proposition is: "An increase in student intelligence causes an increase in their academic achievement." This declarative statement does not have to be true, but must be empirically testable using data, so that we can judge whether it is true or false. Propositions are generally derived based on logic (deduction) or empirical observations (induction). Because propositions are associations between abstract constructs, they cannot be tested directly. Instead, they are tested indirectly by examining the relationship between corresponding measures (variables) of those constructs." (p. 13)
Kozloff, M. A. (1998). *Constructivism in Education: Sophistry for a new age*. University of North Carolina at Wilmington.	Propositions assert relationships among concepts (classes or families of specific events). Examples of propositions include the following: 1. "The greater the strength of social networks, the better the health of its members." [This is a hypothetical proposition asserting a direct relationship that could be bi-directional or reciprocal.] 3. "The stronger the social integration in a community, the lower is the rate of social ills." [This is a hypothetical proposition asserting an indirect or inverse relationship that might be reciprocal.] Theorists and

	researchers are easiest to read when they link propositions in a logical way--one proposition leads to the next. (p.42)
Reynolds, Paul D. (1971). *A Primer in Theory Construction*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill.	One abstract statement within a theory.
Shoemaker, P. J., Tankard Jr, J. W., & Lasorsa, D. L. (2003). *How to Build Social Science Theories.* Sage publications.	"Propositions are descriptive, providing information about only one variable at a time. Propositions take on a normative tone in which scholars state how they think things should be, according to their ideological views." (p. 38) Examples: "No one should go hungry." "Tourism planning is a good investment."

These definitions, while helpful, can be contradictory, vague, and limiting. Some describe relationships between constructs, others, between concepts. Some define propositions as involving a single variable, while others emphasize relationships among multiple variables. Some situate propositions within theory, while others treat them as separate.

Propositions may also be expressed mathematically. It's no surprise that early career researchers find this confusing! **Despite these differences, there is general agreement that propositions are statements—not questions—that include at least one variable, and more often multiple variables. They can be either true or false, but not both.**

Assumptions versus Propositions

Sometimes assumptions are confused with propositions. An assumption is a theoretical statement that's taken for granted, not tested, untestable, or beyond the scope of the study. All studies begin with assumptions, but these are often difficult to identify because they are deeply embedded in individual perspectives and broader social norms. Assumptions can be about the relationship between variables, or the usual value of one variable.

There are many agreed upon assumptions we use in tourism. For example, although there is extensive literature on the subject, there is still no universally agreed-upon definition of tourism, yet we proceed with the assumption that it exists. It is important to clearly differentiate assumptions from propositions in empirical research.

Best Practices Examples from the Literature

The best way to learn about propositions in your field is through exposure to good examples.

This is an excellent, classic example in the field of tourism:

Ankomah, P. and Crompton, J (1992). Tourism cognitive distance: A set of research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(2) 323–342.

- ***Proposition I :*** Distances between an origin and a destination that are in different superordinate hierarchies are likely to be overestimated, while a similar distance between an origin and a destination located within a superordinate hierarchy are likely to be underestimated.
- ***Proposition I(a):*** Distances between two relatively close tourism destinations that are located in different superordinate hierarchies are likely to be overestimated, while distances between destinations that are far apart and located in different superordinate hierarchies are likely to be underestimated.
- ***Proposition I(b):*** Cognitive distance estimates of tourist destinations within information rich superordinates are likely to be underestimates, while those within information poor superordinates are likely to be overestimates.
- ***Proposition I(c):*** The distance between tourism destinations located on the same main route is likely to be underestimated, and to be perceived as less than the distance between destinations located a similar distance apart but on different main routes.

Another good example in the field of tourism:

Xiao, H. and Smith, S.L.J. (2007). The use of tourism knowledge: research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *34(2) Issue 2*, *310-331.*

- **Proposition I(a)**. Tourism knowledge has accumulated in quality and quantity to such an extent that agencies, organizations, and businesses rely more on explicit than tacit knowing for policy, planning, and management decisions.
- **Proposition I(b)**. Tourism is such a multidisciplinary body of knowledge that some of its contributing disciplines make significant contributions to conceptual understanding whereas others contribute more to instrumental, political and process uses.
- **Proposition I(c).** Tacit knowledge will be used mostly for instrumental purposes, whereas explicit knowledge will be used mostly for conceptual and political purposes.

More Good Examples from JTR to Explore

Hunter, V., Northey, G., Gardiner, S., Weaven, S., & Mulcahy, R. (2026). What Tourism Forgot to Feel: A Foundational Realignment of Emotion Theory and Measurement in Tourism Marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875261424433.

Weidenfeld, A., Hall, C. M., & Baggio, R. (2025). Knowledge Networks of Destination Regions: A Systemic Cross-Sectoral and Regional Perspective. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875251388338.

While less overt, this article provides specific future research directions and statements:

Hosany, A. R. S., & Hosany, S. (2025). On Scarcity and Tourism: Theoretical Perspectives and Implications. *Journal of Travel Research*, https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875251406552.

We hope that you find this of assistance. To explore whether your research may fit the *Journal of Travel Research*, our Aims and Scope can be found here: https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/journal-travel-research#aims-and-scope . Our submission guidelines can be found here: https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/JTR