Editorial Preface

How to Promote your PhD Research in the Top Publication Venues:
An Effective Plan for a Successful PhD Publication Outcome – Advices From my Editing Experience

Miltiadis D. Lytras, The American College of Greece, Athens, Greece

I decided in this short editorial to share with young researchers a few of my experiences and ideas related to publishing research works in top journals. Having the privilege to lead editing several journals and special issues in prestigious high impact factor journals, I think some of my key observations can be of value for young researchers that pursue their PhD and they are enthusiastic about their research and worried about its impact and dissemination. In the last 15 years I have edited more than 50 special issues in impact factor journals and had the opportunity to supervise the peer review of more than 1200 articles.

One of the most important virtues in academic publishing is the capacity of a young researcher to have open ears and eyes in the suggestions of reviewers. This is especially important when some comments are tough and seem to be discouraging for the promotion of the research. There are though some good practices that enhance the quality of research papers and at least can secure a major revision decision in most journals.

I compiled a list of good practices especially targeted to our PhD students. I also ordered them in an objective way based on my perception about their key contribution to the success of a phd study and publication potential:

1. The most important recommendation is that a PhD research must be multidisciplinary. Especially in the domains of IJSWIS the variety of technologies and computational techniques must be enriched with insights from other disciplines e.g. management, social sciences, healthcare. To have an attractive PhD study, it is critical to choose a domain of human activity where your research will address a significant social, economic, etc., problem.

2. The second important advice is that each PhD student has to deliver fast, e.g. in the first 6 months of PhD program, a detailed thorough study of the literature review. This must be published as a survey paper in good publication venue. The researcher also has to work in the contribution through a critical perspective and by aligning the discussion of the survey to the real-world problem that the intended PhD study will address.

This kind of paper also helps other researchers, and potentially gains great visibility and citations. This critical literature review can also support the key research contribution of PhD students soon. Many papers are rejected because of the weak literature review that is address to the discussed research
problem. I have also realized that in IJSWIS this is one of the main weaknesses of many applied research works. Authors must work more systematically in the literature review section of their work. The literature body of any paper should be concise, detailed and up-to-date.

3. Every PhD study should capitalize in the body of knowledge published in the top journals of the domain. A good advice for PhD students is to identify and elaborate on top 5-10 special issues published in the relevant domain in Q1 and Q2 journals the last 2-3 years. One of the key reasons for the rejection of papers is the weak interpretation of the state of the art literature to the research problem specification and to the research design.

4. Every good research study has to specify from the abstract to the Research methodology, the research problem and the key research questions. It is disappointing to realize that in many papers in the conclusions and discussion section there is limited reference to the initial research questions.

5. It is more than significant to add in your research paper at least two additional visualizations. One is the figure that summarizes the Research Phases from literature review to generalization of findings. The second figure must be always a figure that summarizes the research model. In IJSWIS many papers that are rejected are good papers with applied research but with missing research models (including research questions and hypothesis).

6. For the core body, innovation of the research, the key recommendation is that you must always provide a benchmarking with similar or complementary approaches already found in literature. The comparative evaluation not in ‘numerical’ terms but better in qualitative features is more than a requirement for an acceptance decision.

7. For applied research with prototypes, many times researchers are forced by deliverables of R&D projects and they miss the key requirement to “sell” their system as a research contribution. SO instead of analyzing the various components in a research paper it is much more important to highlight the key contribution to theory and practice of their approaches.

8. Testing of any proposition is critical. All the top journals require in a way or another, a detailed section on empirical testing. Here is another important reason for rejections. Many times, papers are rejected because the empirical component part is missing. Thus, it is better in such case to promote your work as Research in Progress and to wait for more empirical testing before you submit your mature research paper to a top venue.

9. PhD students for sure are always worried by the quality of their contribution and their uniqueness. Here it comes again my recommendation one. If your study is multidisciplinary then sometimes it is easier to justify the uniqueness and the novelty of your contribution. In any case PhD students should discuss extensively their contribution in all aspects of their research (applied, theoretical, methodological, practical contribution).

10. Last but not least, PhD students should take some risk. I will come back to this in one of my next editorials.

In IJSWIS we have set as a key objective of our contribution to the community to promote PhD students research. I have also set this as my personal role as Editor. I want to see young enthusiastic people to be happy with the quality of their published work. From our side we will do our best to provide constructive and fair reviews, with the limitations of a volunteer service based academic journal. I encourage PhD students to read my kind advices and to adjust their writing style to them. In such a case, most of the journals where they will submit their work will offer at least an Accept with Major Revision decision.

I will come back to this matter in the near future, because I want also to discuss some observations for peer reviewers. For sure there are some inconsistencies that must be discussed. As a conclusion of this short editorial I want to invite young researchers to submit the best of their work in IJSWIS. We will honor their trust and we will provide to our full capacity constructive comments.
I am happy to share with you the contents for the latest issue of IJSWIS 15(2).

1. A Real-Time Twitter Trend Analysis and Visualization Framework
2. Language-Independent Type Inference of the Instances from Multilingual Wikipedia
3. An Integrated Recommender System using Semantic Web with Social Tagging System
4. Deriving Competitive Foresight Using an Ontology-Based Patent Roadmap and Valuation Analysis
5. Exposing Social Data as Linked Data in Education

From this issue as well, I want to welcome Professor Ernesto Damiani, a top scholar, who will serve at his full capacity as the Co-Editor in chief. Dear Ernesto Welcome on board. We are so happy to have you in our IJSWIS.

Miltiadis D. Lytras
Editor-in-Chief
IJSWIS