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# Bridging Academic Publishing and Real-world Impact: A Rubric from Rural-oriented Research Lenses

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## ABSTRACT

Academic publishing aims to disseminate new knowledge and innovative discoveries effectively. This requires a balance of brevity and thoroughness in expressing insightful ideas, as well as scientific advancements for sustainable development. Nonetheless, the impact of academic writing is frequently compromised by redundancy and the publication of inconsequential research, which undermines stakeholders' commitment to research initiatives and pioneering contributions that are pertinent and impactful to societal and scholarly domains. This remains a pervasive challenge in higher education that stakeholders or institutions globally strive to develop effective solutions. Drawing on perspectives from eight scholars (three Professors, two Associate Professors, and three Postdoctoral research fellows), currently affiliated with public universities in South Africa and with a significant level of research advancement in rural sociology, this case study proposes a rubric for measuring relevance in academic writing within rural-oriented higher learning institutions. The findings, based on qualitative data collected using a semi-structured questionnaire, highlighted five fundamental criteria: applicability, commercialisation, cutting-edge, novelty and social impact. The significance of the rubric lies in its capacity to facilitate critical assessments of research before implementation, thereby streamlining an effective research landscape. Its implementation will guide future academic writing toward ethical and meaningful contributions. An empirical inquiry that quantifies the relative significance of criteria in the rubric will help determine their importance and the level of emphasis required for an academic publication to be deemed relevant.

*Keywords: Academic writing, higher learning, redundant publishing, research relevance, rural development*

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## INTRODUCTION

Academic research is a systematic and rigorous process of investigation and analysis. It aims to generate innovation, new knowledge, or insights to advance scholarly discourse, inform policy, inspire impactful practice, and address real-world challenges. While this form of research plays a vital role in driving societal progress through its original contributions, a growing concern in the scholarly community is the prevalence of redundant and irrelevant outcomes, which often lack practical significance and contribute

minimally to innovation.[1] In academic writing, redundancy refers to the unnecessary duplication of established scientific findings without providing new insights to the field, resulting in wasted resources and potential ethical issues.[2] Likewise, irrelevance manifests when research findings fail to make meaningful contributions, do not address current academic or societal needs, or show minimal applicability[3] to the field, making them ineffective in advancing knowledge or solving real-world problems. Whether intentional or unintentional, redundant and irrelevant research compromises the integrity and core purpose of scientific publishing. Undoubtedly, they raise serious concerns among stakeholders, particularly governments, funding bodies, and institutions that allocate resources to research with the expectation of generating insightful, transformative, and impactful cutting-edge discoveries.

As contemporary institutions of higher education strive to address both quality and redundancy issues in academic writings, the call for a contextual, scientifically grounded framework that critically assesses relevance from a localised lens has never been clearer. Contextually, relevance is modulated by heterogeneous socioeconomic imperatives and localised developmental determinants that are specific to areas. For instance, what is deemed critical within an urban-centric institution in the Western hemisphere may not align with the locally embedded higher education paradigms prevalent in African terrain.[4] Each region has its unique features. In other words, deconstructing and contextualising such methodologies to incorporate the unique epistemological frameworks of individual institutions and/or geographical landscapes will foster the development of more conforming, academically rigorous yet practically applicable diagnostic tools, ensuring their resonance with contextual grassroots realities and facilitating more meaningful contributions to regional development.

In this study, a rubric for determining relevance in academic writings, focusing on rural-oriented higher learning institutions, was proposed. Rural-oriented higher institutions are those strategically positioned in rural areas to accelerate transformation in their surroundings, aligning their vision and mission to the needs of the community at local, regional, national, continental and international levels.[5] In this context, the significance of cultivating an exemplary research culture cannot be overstated. Researchers can generate actionable solutions for improving quality of life, stimulating economic growth, and supporting policymaking tailored to local needs, especially in rural and underserved regions, when their research focuses on locally relevant issues. Understanding these imperatives will further strengthen community engagement, trust in science, and promote innovations that are culturally and contextually grounded. Although the study primarily focuses on South African institutions, the methodologies can be harnessed in other African academic communities and beyond. The research dimension is profound, promising an ecosystem where academics, especially emerging researchers, engage in appropriate scientific writing and impactful knowledge generation. It is believed that such a paradigm can strategically position higher learning institutions as central players in development, advancing their academic reputation, generating impactful knowledge, and shaping policy and practice within their communities.

The subsequent sections provide insights and trends into the prevalence of repetitive research outcomes and redundancy. The conceptual framework introduces the rubric as a fundamental tool in academic research. It is followed by a detailed explanation of the research methodology, a discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

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[1] D. Crotty, "The Value of Redundancy in Research, or in Research, Redundancy Has Value," *The Scholarly Kitchen*, 2019; Livia Puljak and Hans Lund, "Definition, Harms, and Prevention of Redundant Systematic Reviews," *Systematic Reviews* 12, no. 1 (April 4, 2023): 63, https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-023-02191-8; Santosh Kumar Yadav, "Redundant Publications," in *Research and Publication Ethics* (Springer, 2023), 95–107; Elena Tikhonova, Daria Mezentseva, and Peter Kasatkin, "Text Redundancy in Academic Writing: A Systematic Scoping Review," *Journal of Language and Education* 10, no. 3 (39) (2024): 128–60.

[2] Hans Lund et al., "Meta-Research Evaluating Redundancy and Use of Systematic Reviews When Planning New Studies in Health Research: A Scoping Review," *Systematic Reviews* 11, no. 1 (2022): 241.

[3] Lauri Koskela, "Why Is Management Research Irrelevant?," *Construction Management and Economics* 35, no. 1–2 (2017): 4–23.

[4] Ayenachew Aseffa Woldegiyorgis, "Harmonization of Higher Education in Africa and Europe: Policy Convergence at Supranational Level," *Tuning Journal for Higher Education* 5, no. 2 (2018): 133–57.

[5] David Charles, "The Rural University Campus and Support for Rural Innovation," *Science and Public Policy* 43, no. 6 (December 2016): 763–73, https://doi.org/10.1093/scipol/scw017; Ishmael Obaeko Iwara and Beata Mukina Kilonzo, "Towards a Conceptual Understanding of an Effective Rural-Based Entrepreneurial University in South Africa," *Social Sciences* 11, no. 9 (2022): 388.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite 21st-century technological advancements such as AI detection tools, evolving research methodologies, and an emphasis on high-impact publications, the global research landscape continues to face challenges. A significant proportion of published studies fail to contribute meaningfully to existing knowledge or introduce novel perspectives within their respective disciplinary domain,[6] reinforcing the perception that redundancy in academic publishing is a contemporary issue. Approximately 50% of published scientific research is regurgitated, predominantly containing findings that merely replicate prior research outcomes without offering new insights or niche relevance in the field.[7] Various scholars have also highlighted a similar trend, stressing that a significant number of articles in leading academic journals are variations of previously published research, often with minimal conceptual, theoretical or methodological advancements.[8] The persistence of such practices undermines the core purpose of academic research, raising ethical concerns regarding the efficient utilisation of funding and scholarly resources.

A compelling theoretical perspective centres the argument on practical significance and application, particularly in addressing real-world problems. According to McNie, Parris, and Sarewitz, a considerable fraction of published research remains confined to academic discourse, with little to no impact on society, industry, policy or practice, showing a disconnect between academia and grassroots realities.[9] This assumption is reflected in the Elsevier Report, which notes that academic publishing has expanded rapidly, at an estimated annual growth rate of 4.5%; however, its real-world influence has not kept pace.[10] In other words, scientific publication rates may have increased, but the actual utilisation in real-world settings is below the expected threshold, questioning our contemporary academic writing practices. The conspicuous narrative featured prominently in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2022 Report, emphasising that only 20% of published academic research in the social sciences and humanities disciplines is cited in policy documents or industry reports.[11] Although this trend suggests that approximately 80% of uncited papers in these disciplines remain redundant, it is essential to elucidate that citation does not inherently guarantee relevance.[12] The key concern is how this widespread issue can be effectively addressed.

### Strategies for Mitigating Redundant Publishing

A closer examination of this problem suggests a deficiency in institutional monitoring and regulatory frameworks, as redundancy issues are frequently left unresolved internally, pushing such responsibilities to journals. Regrettably, most journals violate ethical standards to maximise profit.[13] Similarly, the drive to amass research outlets. Academic productivity, recognition and incentives, which are generally determined by publication volumes,[14] lead the argument, as scholars frequently recycle ideas to easily

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[6] Puljak and Lund, "Definition, Harms, and Prevention of Redundant Systematic Reviews."

[7] John P A Ioannidis, "How to Make More Published Research True," *Revista Cubana de Información En Ciencias de La Salud (ACIMED)* 26, no. 2 (2015): 187–200.

[8] Lutz Bornmann, "What Is Societal Impact of Research and How Can It Be Assessed? A Literature Survey," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 64, no. 2 (February 17, 2013): 217–33, https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.22803; Sonia Maria Ramos de Vasconcelos and Miguel Roig, "Prior Publication and Redundancy in Contemporary Science: Are Authors and Editors at the Crossroads?," *Science and Engineering Ethics* 21, no. 5 (2015): 1367–78; James Ravenscroft et al., "Measuring Scientific Impact beyond Academia: An Assessment of Existing Impact Metrics and Proposed Improvements," *PloS One* 12, no. 3 (2017): e0173152; S. K. Yadav, " Redundant Publications," in *Research and Publication Ethics* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023), 95–107.

[9] Elizabeth C. McNie, Adam Parris, and Daniel Sarewitz, "Improving the Public Value of Science: A Typology to Inform Discussion, Design and Implementation of Research," *Research Policy* 45, no. 4 (May 2016): 884–95, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2016.01.004.

[10] Elsevier, " Elsevier Research Intelligence," 2023, https://www.elsevier.com.

[11] OECD, "Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development," 2022, https://doi.org/10.1787/sti_outlook-2022-en.

[12] Michael Golosovsky and Vincent Larivière, "Uncited Papers Are Not Useless," *Quantitative Science Studies* 2, no. 3 (2021): 899–911.

[13] Christine Laine and Margaret A. Winker, "Identifying Predatory or Pseudo-Journals," *Biochemia Medica* 27, no. 2 (June 15, 2017): 285–91, https://doi.org/10.11613/BM.2017.031; Susan A Elmore and Eleanor H Weston, "Predatory Journals: What They Are and How to Avoid Them," *Toxicologic Pathology* 48, no. 4 (2020): 607–10.

[14] Elizabeth Wager, "Why Is Redundant Publication a Problem?," *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 6, no. 1 (2015): 3; Nithya Gogtay, "Redundant Publications," in *Reporting and Publishing Research in the Biomedical Sciences* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2018), 233–40, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-7062-4_23.

accumulate ranks of publication, compromising rigour, practical relevance and impact.[15] Inter-institutional competitive pressures, coupled with performance-based metrics in higher learning institutions,[16] also instigate prioritising quantitative academic publishing output over qualitative impact. Consequently, higher learning institutions bear a significant responsibility for this shortfall and hold a crucial stake in rectifying the issue. Without deliberate efforts to institute measures, the current trajectory risks perpetuating a cycle of intellectual stagnation rather than fostering meaningful innovation.

A synthesis of global best practices delineated methodological rigour, interdisciplinary collaboration, institutional capacity building, open-access publishing, and high-impact outlets as mitigative strategies (Table 1).

**Table 1: Strategies for ameliorating low-impact and redundant academic publishing**

| Strategy | Conceptualisation |
|---|---|
| Methodological rigour. | A conscientious and systematic application of proper research techniques, methods and standards to ensure credibility, reliability, and validity of results (Ioannidis, 2014). |
| Interdisciplinary collaboration. | An integrative process in which scholars from distinct fields partner and work collectively to tackle complex problems, synthesising their diverse professional expertise, perspectives and methodologies (Wagner et al., 2015). |
| Institutional capacity building. | A strategic process of fostering an organisation's resources, skills, competence, structures, and systems to improve its effectiveness and sustainability in achieving its objectives (Hall et al., 2018). |
| Open-access publishing. | The provision of unrestricted, free online access to scientifically written materials enables wider dissemination, reach and engagement without subscription challenges (Munafò et al., 2017). |
| High-impact outlets. | Prestigious (top-tier) publication platforms, characterised by significant influence, index, high citation rates, global ranking and broad reach within respective academic fields (Beall, 2016). |

**Source:** Author's illustration based on literature.

From a global perspective, mitigating redundant publishing within academic research is multifaceted, fundamentally rooted in fostering methodological rigour and transparency in research outputs. According to Ioannidis, emphasis on robust research designs, unequivocal hypotheses and adherence to best scientific practices is paramount to building relevant, credible, and replicable findings.[17] The pervasiveness of inadequate methodological rigour frequently results in irreproducible research, adversely affecting the credibility of academic literature and diminishing its impact on subsequent studies. Munafo *et al.* advanced a similar theoretical stand, arguing that adopting open science practices, which include pre-research registration, data sharing, and publishing negative or inconclusive results, will significantly reduce duplication, ensuring credibility and relevance.[18] The obligatory adherence to established scientific reporting guidelines, such as PRISMA for systematic reviews and CONSORT for clinical trials, further enhances methodological transparency, standardisation, rigour, and reliability, which essentially deals with redundancy.

High-impact outlets promise a solution to the problem. This emphasised the critical importance of publishing with reputable journals, especially among early-career researchers who may

[15] F. Habibzadeh and M. A. Winker, "Duplicate Publication and Plagiarism: Causes and Cures," *Notfall + Rettungsmedizin* 12, no. 6 (October 3, 2009): 415–18, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10049-009-1229-7; Aparna Muraleedharan and B Aravinda Kumar, "The Malady of Redundant Publications: Common yet Poorly Understood," *Journal of Current Research in Scientific Medicine* (Medknow, 2022).

[16] Seema Rawat and Sanjay Meena, "Publish or Perish: Where Are We Heading?," *Journal of Research in Medical Sciences: The Official Journal of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences* 19, no. 2 (2014): 87; Marcel Knöchelmann, "Formal Authorship in the Wake of Uncertain Futures: The Narrative of Publish or Perish in the Humanities," *Research Evaluation* 33 (July 22, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvae044.

[17] Ioannidis, "How to Make More Published Research True."

[18] Marcus R Munafò et al., "A Manifesto for Reproducible Science," *Nature Human Behaviour* 1, no. 1 (2017): 0021.

unintentionally submit their studies to predatory or low-impact journals.[19] In the academic sphere, predatory journals are illegitimate self-proclaimed scientific publishing entities that exploit the open-access model by prioritising quantity and profit over scholarly integrity,[20] leading to compromised publishing standards, insufficient peer review and the circulation of low-quality studies that undermine credibility.[21] The assumption here is that high-impact outlets are rigorous, stringent and ethically sound. This illustrates the imperative to foster optimal practices that enhance the scholarly rigour, relevance and originality of published academic works. To achieve this, education and awareness programs, strategically designed to equip researchers with essential skills for navigating journal selection, evaluating impact factors, and utilising indexing databases like Scopus and Web of Science, should be considered.[22]

Interdisciplinary collaboration and open-access publishing may also mitigate the risks of low-impact and redundant academic publishing.[23] This practice facilitates the integration of diverse methodologies and perspectives, enriching scientific discourse, expanding audience reach, and enhancing citation potential. In tandem with this narrative, international research partnerships have the potential to elevate publication visibility and facilitate cross-border knowledge exchange.[24] The academic publishing landscape is transforming through the rise of open-access platforms, which dismantle access barriers imposed by subscription-based journals, thereby democratising access to important research findings.[25] When compared, open-access publications typically garner more citations than their subscription-based counterparts, explaining the critical importance of unrestricted dissemination of scientific knowledge. This publishing strategy implies that researchers effectively engage with the content of a diverse array of scientifically published materials within a specific area of study. A comprehensive literature review of existing knowledge can empower scholars to identify significant gaps in contemporary discourse[26] while highlighting emerging domains for further investigation. Such strategic research engagement directs scholars to novel insights, thus avoiding replication of existing studies that consistently produce convergent outcomes across diverse topical domains.

Contemporary literature presents a diverse array of insightful strategies aimed at mitigating redundancy and ensuring quality publishing, including methodological rigour, interdisciplinary collaboration, institutional capacity building, open-access publishing, and high-impact outlets. Nonetheless, the prevailing concern among researchers and stakeholders lies in the effective implementation of these strategies. Similarly, given the prevalence of redundant and irrelevant academic publishing, it is unclear whether these strategies proactively address the underlying issue. In addition, what remains uncertain is the existence of a context-specific index that institutions, particularly rural-oriented universities in Africa, may deem essential for addressing redundant and low-impact publishing in academic writing, optimising their research relevance. This conspicuous gap necessitates the current study, which aims to develop a rubric in that context.

## The Rubric as a Conceptual Framework

As an academic evaluative framework, rubrics evolve in response to the imperative for establishing more precise, consistent, transparent, and objective assessment standards across diverse disciplinary

[19] Chris William Callaghan and Denise Rosemary Nicholson, "Predatory Publishing and Predatory Journals: A Critical Review and Proposed Research Agenda for Higher Education," *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 44, no. 10 (2020): 1433–49.
[20] Elmore and Weston, "Predatory Journals: What They Are and How to Avoid Them."
[21] Yuki Yamada, "How to Protect the Credibility of Articles Published in Predatory Journals," *Publications* 9, no. 1 (January 24, 2021): 4, https://doi.org/10.3390/publications9010004.
[22] Muraleedharan and Kumar, "The Malady of Redundant Publications: Common yet Poorly Understood"; Puljak and Lund, "Definition, Harms, and Prevention of Redundant Systematic Reviews."
[23] Kara L Hall, Amanda L Vogel, and Robert T Croyle, "Strategies for Team Science Success," *Springer International Publishing. Doi* 10 (2019): 973–78.
[24] Caroline S Wagner, Travis A Whetsell, and Satyam Mukherjee, "International Research Collaboration: Novelty, Conventionality, and Atypicality in Knowledge Recombination," *Research Policy* 48, no. 5 (2019): 1260–70.
[25] Heather Piwowar et al., "The State of OA: A Large-Scale Analysis of the Prevalence and Impact of Open Access Articles," *PeerJ* 6 (2018): e4375.
[26] Hannah Snyder, "Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines," *Journal of Business Research* 104 (2019): 333–39.

contexts.[27] Initially, evaluative practices in the education system predominantly relied on subjective individual judgments, which engendered variability and compromised the reliability of assessments. The quest for a systematic, criteria-based approach to outcome evaluation spearheaded the formalisation of rubrics as a fundamental formal instrument that delineates explicit performance standards, fostering comparability and fairness in assessments.[28] Articulating specific performance parameters and benchmarks, rubrics aid evaluators at various levels to discern nuanced distinctions in performance. This process facilitates a comprehensive and equitable appraisal process that highlights strengths and weaknesses for development with greater granularity. Consequently, rubrics constitute a crucial segment of the contemporary education curriculum and learning framework.

As appraisal-related techniques emerged and evolved, the rubric concept progressed from rudimentary checklists to complex tools embodying multidimensional performance descriptors, mirroring disciplinary particularities and task complexities. The transition seamlessly integrates detailed descriptions, reflecting varying proficiency levels, whether in educational, research, or professional environments, acknowledging the diverse nature of outcomes.[29] Rubrics have become indispensable for cultivating shared expectations in different milieus, enhancing transparency, promoting consistency, guiding constructive feedback and facilitating targeted developmental interventions.

Given its established credibility in assessing performance and precision in delineating a focused orientation, the rubric concept will serve as a crucial instrument for determining and enhancing the quality and impact of academic writing in higher education, while concurrently guiding the alignment of research output with the specific thrust, mandates, visions and missions of the institutions. Consequently, the rubric conceptualisation within the scope of this paper is anticipated to facilitate a targeted, contextually pertinent academic writing evaluation process that eliminates redundancy and fosters relevance.

## METHODOLOGY

A qualitative case study research design was utilised. This is an in-depth, contextualised methodological approach that focuses on exploring a bounded system, such as an individual, group, organisation, or community, in its real-life setting to gain a comprehensive understanding of complex phenomena.[30] This methodology emphasises rich data through interviews, observations, documents, and artefacts, allowing researchers to capture the nuanced complexities of the case within its specific context. It is especially valuable for gaining a deep understanding of issues, processes, or events, making it well-suited for exploring unique or complex cases where contextual factors are integral to understanding the phenomena under investigation. A purposive and snowball sampling strategies were followed to enrol African scholars affiliated with South African universities for interviews. These are non-probability techniques that facilitate the selection of individuals with relevant expertise, aiming to gather in-depth and context-specific knowledge. While purposive sampling intentionally selects participants based on attributes essential to the study's objectives, snowball sampling enables the recruitment of subsequent eligible participants from the networks of already enrolled cohorts, making it resourceful for accessing hard-to-reach but relevant stakeholders from the population. Three recipients of the South African National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings were initially interviewed. Subsequently, they recommended five additional participants with extensive expertise in ethical and impactful research practice relevant to the rural context.

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[27] Y Malini Reddy and Heidi Andrade, "A Review of Rubric Use in Higher Education," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 35, no. 4 (2010): 435–48.

[28] Kiruthika Ragupathi and Adrian Lee, "Beyond Fairness and Consistency in Grading: The Role of Rubrics in Higher Education," in *Diversity and Inclusion in Global Higher Education: Lessons from across Asia* (Springer Singapore Singapore, 2020), 73–95.

[29] Veronica Boix Mansilla et al., "Targeted Assessment Rubric: An Empirically Grounded Rubric for Interdisciplinary Writing," *The Journal of Higher Education* 80, no. 3 (2009): 334–53.

[30] Jennifer Tetnowski, "Qualitative Case Study Research Design," *Perspectives on Fluency and Fluency Disorders* 25, no. 1 (2015): 39–45.

**Table 2: Participant Demography**

| | Rank | Expertise |
|---|---|---|
| Participant 1 | Full Professor (NRF-rated) | Development studies with 25 years of extensive experience in teaching, academic writing, community engagement, international collaboration, and pedagogical practices. |
| Participant 2 | Associate Professor | International relations and economics with over 15 years of teaching, active research and national development policy analysis. |
| Participant 3 | Full Professor (NRF-rated) | Development policy expert in economics and sociology with over 20 years of editorial and peer review roles in academic journals. |
| Participant 4 | Postdoctoral research fellow | A microbiologist with five years of teaching, active research and postgraduate supervision. |
| Participant 5 | Full professor | A research professor in disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies on academic writing |
| Participant 6 | Postdoctoral research fellow | Expert in rural sociology with extensive publications and community engagement records. |
| Participant 7 | Postdoctoral research fellow | Expert in Agricultural science |
| Participant 8 | Associate Professor (NRF-rated) | An academist and seasoned researcher with expertise in environmental science |

Data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide. This qualitative data interview structure combines predetermined questions with the flexibility to explore new insights that arise during the interview process. This approach encourages extensive interaction, yielding detailed and meaningful responses while maintaining a structured framework. The interview duration spanned 30 to 60 minutes. The entire data collection process was guided by the saturation principle, where information derived subsequently no longer contributed novel insights to existing data, thus indicating the threshold for sufficient data acquisition.

The gathered data was consolidated, transcribed and captured in a Microsoft Word document, subsequently coded and systematically processed through thematic analysis. Coding qualitative data for thematic analysis involves familiarising oneself with the information by skimming and scanning the transcripts to become immersed in the content. Relevant segments were highlighted and assigned preliminary codes, which were then reviewed to identify groups and common themes. The labels were reviewed to identify and categorise commonalities. This coding strategy was consistently applied across the dataset, ensuring all relevant information segments were categorised into various themes.

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis identified five fundamental indices that should be considered as constituting the rubric for determining relevant and impactful academic publishing (Table 3). These include:

- **Applicability** – the practical implementation of research findings
- **Commercialisation** – the potential for marketable applications
- **Innovation** – pioneering, groundbreaking contributions
- **Novelty** – originality and uniqueness of the research
- **Social Imperative** – the relevance and unique contributions to society

**Table 3: A Rubric for determining relevance in academic publishing**

| Premise | Context | Critical questions | Implications |
|---|---|---|---|
| Applicability | Relevance to real-world challenges, practical implementation, influencing policy, industry, skills, social impact and community development. | Who are the key stakeholders affected by this research, and what are their specific needs or concerns?<br><br>How can my research findings inform decision-making or policy development for stakeholders?<br><br>What methods can I use to engage stakeholders throughout the research process? | Identifying and involving the primary stakeholders can tailor the research questions and objectives to real-world issues, thus strengthening the study's applicability.<br><br>Designing research instruments with consideration of how the outcomes translate into actionable insights will enhance relevance and utility for those involved.<br><br>Planning for effective community entry and stakeholder involvement during the research design, implementation, and dissemination phases ensures that grassroots perspectives are acknowledged and integrated into the framework. This ethical practice increases the likelihood of generating impactful results. |
| Commercialisation | Transforming innovative research findings into market-ready products, services, or technologies, sellable or implementable for economic and societal benefit. | What is the market demand for the problem the proposed research addresses?<br><br>What are the potential applications of the research findings, and how can they be translated into products or services?<br><br>What partnerships or collaborations are required to ensure market-readiness of the research | Familiarity with the institutional research thrust, societal needs and preferences, and end-users' dynamics will ultimately aid in identifying the commercial viability of the research and ensure that it tackles a significant market gap.<br><br>An understanding of how the research findings can be developed into needed innovations or tangible solutions will facilitate the commercialisation process and enhance their market appeal.<br><br>Identifying key industry partners, investors, or organisations to support with funding, resources, or expertise will be critical for navigating the commercialisation pathway effectively. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cutting-edge | Scientific advancements at the forefront of innovation frequently represent the latest developments in a particular field. | What are the most recent advancements or breakthroughs in the field?<br><br>What are the boundaries of the current advertisements, and which areas require further interrogation?<br><br>What are the future implications and potential applications of the proposed research findings? | Staying informed about the latest research can help identify areas currently pushing the boundaries of knowledge and innovation.<br><br>A comprehensive literature review, trend analysis and stakeholder engagement can lead to an understanding of existing gaps, innovative solutions and novel perspectives that address complex problems.<br><br>Considering how research can shape future developments, influence policy, or lead to practical applications ensures that the work remains relevant and impactful in the long term. |
| Novelty | The quality of being new, original, or unique, frequently characterised by innovative ideas, methods, or perspectives that distinguish it from existing knowledge or practices. | What gaps exist in the current literature?<br><br>How can existing theories or methodologies be applied or adapted to new contexts?<br><br>What emerging trends or technologies could influence the proposed research? | Identifying areas understudied will reveal opportunities for original contributions to the field.<br><br>Exploring the various applications of established concepts has the potential to yield unique insights and innovative approaches.<br><br>Staying informed about recent developments in the field will enable mapping out cutting-edge topics that could lead to significant new findings. |
| Societal impact | Research implications directly benefit, affect, or inform the lives of people or | Whose needs and values are being addressed by this research? | Ensuring research aligns with societal needs and values, rather than simply addressing the concerns of a narrow group. This involves understanding the social context and potential consequences of the research, beyond just the technical or methodological aspects. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | communities beyond the academic sphere. | How can the findings be disseminated and translated into actionable knowledge for relevant stakeholders?<br><br>What are the potential social and ethical implications of this research, and how can they be mitigated? | Consider how findings can be effectively communicated and utilised by actors who can make a tangible difference. This entails collaborations between researchers, grassroots communities, policymakers, and organisations to translate findings and recommendations into implementable mandates.<br><br>Researchers must be aware of emerging practices that could significantly alter existing sociocultural perspectives and behaviours. Proactively analyse social and ethical implications and seek ways to address them through stakeholder engagement, community input, and appropriate ethical review processes. |

**Source:** Author's illustration based on primary data

**Applicability**

Academic writing that is directly applicable to industry, societal issues, policy-making, or technological advancement is more predisposed to be acknowledged and translated into real-world solutions. It raises considerable apprehension that several studies are confined to academic circles. The nuanced findings suggest a lack of practical feasibility, inadequate stakeholder engagement, and insufficient consideration of economic, social, and policy constraints widen the disconnect between theoretical findings and real-world applications of research.

> *"I believe applicability is essential—the extent to which research findings can be implemented in real-world settings. This is even more critical for studies conducted in rural areas, as such areas need evidence-based solutions and proactive approaches to solving problems* (Participant 8). *Research that merely exists in theoretical frameworks and models without pointers for practical utility fails to create a meaningful impact. It cannot address real-world problems effectively. We should indulge and produce research that end users will be eager to utilise and apply easily…* (Participant 3).

Application flaws are common in research that is overly abstract, methodologically deficient, or misaligned with the practical needs of the end-user. Research lacking practical relevance often struggles to gain traction. When research aligns with real-world challenges, it ensures that academic work remains relevant, positioned as a pivotal catalyst for innovation, economic transformation, and social development. This calls for adherence to rigorous, ethical, and sound methodological practices to produce credible and impactful research. Moreover, findings should be communicated in accessible ways that enable practitioners, policymakers, and community members to understand and apply them in decision-making processes:

> *"…bearing in mind that a study's applicability ensures that academic research transcends academia and provides tangible benefits to society, institutions must emphasise this importance…"* (Participant 5).

Producing implementable research is imperative because it bridges a crucial gap between academic work and real-world impact, ensuring that scholarly insights translate into actionable solutions for sustainable development. It enforces the practical relevance of academic writing, directly informing policy decisions that improve societal well-being.[31] When research is practically relevant, it enhances the role, credibility and societal value of academia, bolstering trust and encouraging evidence-based decision-making. Consequently, the motivation for rigorous knowledge generation that is accessible and adaptable for real-world implementation cannot be overemphasised.

**Commercialisation**

Product commercialisation in academia explains the sellability of scientific discoveries, ensuring financial gain and value for both the researcher and the institution. This entails transforming research outputs into innovative and marketable products, services, or technologies with the potential to generate economic value. To simplify, it translates to the monetisation of academic writings, distinguished by their originality, practical applicability, and market relevance, ensuring a clear need or gap in the industry and society.

> *Institutions such as Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stanford University, and the University of Oxford are global educational leaders and exemplify excellence not merely through traditional teaching and learning. These establishments seamlessly translate pioneering academic innovations [research output] into commercially viable products and solutions that significantly influence global markets and societal development. The core intended meaning I am endeavouring to convey is that commercialisation represents a critical value proposition. I argue from this perspective because a research project*

[31] Melanie Pellecchia et al., "Community–Academic Partnerships in Implementation Research," *Journal of Community Psychology* 46, no. 7 (2018): 941–52; Abinash Panda and Rajen K. Gupta, "Making Academic Research More Relevant: A Few Suggestions," *IIMB Management Review* 26, no. 3 (September 2014): 156–69, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iimb.2014.07.008.

*with such potential is typically characterised by originality, niche applicability, practicality, and market relevance. It addresses a specific need or problem, offers a competitive advantage over existing solutions, and demonstrates scalability for broader industry adoption* (Participant 1). *…let's think 'commercialisation' and sell our products; it's one of the ultimate goals of higher education. Undisputedly, a research framework tailored to commercialisation can strengthen our orientation...* (Participant 8).

The participant's perception supports the traditional conception of research commercialisation, opening new pathways for relevant academic publishing in higher education. Ishmail *et al.* articulate a theoretical position in this context, emphasising that the government considers the commercialisation of research products to be fundamental in shaping, particularly boosting, the economy; consequently, strategizing methodologies that enable researchers and business stakeholders to maximise this practice.[32] As Tweheyo *et al.* illustrated, some influencing strategies or methodologies include transformational leadership culture, as well as researchers' competence, motivation, and attitude in engaging in meaningful initiatives that align with industrial demand and are suitable for commercialisation.[33] Beyond commercialisation, these attributes combined can enhance the interaction between scientific research, its applicability, and a wealthy local economy, a lacuna identified by Laperche that purportedly impeded the transfer of scientific resources from public research to the business world.[34]

Tweheyo *et al.* further stressed that "Universities are presently experiencing rapid transformation, shifting emphasis from pure teaching to equal their strength in teaching and research to increase their capacity to commercialise. The universities are not only accountable for teaching and research accomplishments; they are also expected to commercialise their research outputs into marketable products and services."[35] As this unfolds, the institutional research culture stiffens to a level that guarantees commercialisation, making it a standard for relevant academic publishing. In parallel, participants sustain the view:

*"There must be standards and concerted efforts to shift our research culture from the usual 'garbage in, garbage out' […]"* (Participant 5). *"It is the responsibility of the varsity to motivate, regulate and impose measures that ensure this is possible. Once we pursue research initiatives oriented towards enhancing societal and economic outcomes, the challenges associated with irrelevant academic publishing and redundancy will be effectively addressed. Research commercialisation strengthens the role of academic institutions in economic development and industrial innovation, positioning them as key players in knowledge-driven economies. I would wager that emphasising and strategically positioning socioeconomic valuation as an underlying pedagogical research principle has the potential to inspire researchers towards ethical practices"* (Participant 4).

The impact of research commercialisation extends beyond the commonly emphasised economic gains;[36] it significantly contributes to the cultivation of ethically grounded research practices in higher education,[37] as it requires a shift from basic research initiatives to more applied innovation.[38] It incentivises transforming scientific insights into tangible socioeconomic benefits while upholding rigorous standards of scholarly integrity - a paradigm that encourages scholars to approach research with

[32] Norain Ismail, Mohd Jailani Mohd Nor, and Safiah Sidek, "A Framework for a Successful Research Products Commercialisation: A Case of Malaysian Academic Researchers," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 195(2015):283–92.
[33] Gregory Tweheyo, Ernest Abaho, and Anju M Verma, "The Commercialisation of University Research Outputs: A Review of Literature," *Texila International Journal of Management* 8, no. 2 (2022): 1–19.
[34] Blandine Laperche, "The Four Key Factors for Commercialising Research," *The Case of A*, 2002.
[35] Tweheyo, Abaho, and Verma, "The Commercialisation of University Research Outputs: A Review of Literature."
[36] Ismail, Nor, and Sidek, "A Framework for a Successful Research Products Commercialisation: A Case of Malaysian Academic Researchers."
[37] Kamarulzaman Ab Aziz et al., "Commercialisation of University Research: An Investigation of Researchers' Behaviour," *Communications of the IBIMA* 2013 (2013): 1; Urszula Wnuk, Adam Mazurkiewicz, and Beata Poteralska, "Commercialisation Strategies: Choosing the Right Route to Commercialise Your Research Results," in *European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (Academic Conferences International Limited, 2016), 869.
[38] J. Irlam and C. M. L. West, "Time to Rethink Commercialisation: Spin out or Lose Out?," *Clinical Oncology* 34, no. 7 (2022): 439–41.

a conscientious regard for ethical considerations. Implementing a research framework that mirrors commercialisation will engender an environment that accelerates the dissemination of unique and compelling innovations, thus mitigating redundancy.

**Cutting-edge**

Like novelty, cutting-edge research is pivotal for advancing modern knowledge and emerging innovation across various disciplines. It pushes the boundaries of current paradigms, enabling stakeholders to explore previously uncharted domains and develop novel interventions to pressing and evolving societal issues. According to one of the professors who participated in the study, regardless of discipline, institutions of higher learning require cutting-edge, evidence-based research to keep track of events in rural areas and contribute meaningfully to their development:

> *"When conducting research, …understand that rural societal issues are dynamic and evolving, influenced by cultural shifts, changing demographics, and technological advancements. As these issues progress, reliance on outdated methodologies can hinder effective responses or deserved interventions for society. The core of my intended assertion is that, failing to engage in cutting-edge research that resonates with emerging issues, academics and policymakers may lose track of events, limiting their ability to adapt to new challenges. This can perpetuate not only ineffective interventions but also inconsistency with the current grassroots context. Such stagnation can exacerbate existing societal issues and hinder progress, reaffirming the critical essence for innovative research pathways that reflect the complexities of contemporary rural society"* (Participant 3).

The participant's view on cutting-edge research aligns with arguments in existing literature. Several studies in Africa highlight the disconnect between research and its practical implementation,[39] highlighting that many higher education institutions, especially universities, despite increasing pressure to contribute meaningfully to Africa's socio-economic development, fall short of this mandate.[40] The disconnect results in a lack of innovative solutions that can effectively translate scientific findings into practical applications. When research efforts are grounded in conventional thinking and outdated methodologies rather than emerging realities, they fail to address the rapidly changing dynamics of contemporary issues. To facilitate re-engagement, researchers must be persistently reminded that the fundamental purpose of academic writing is to systematically elucidate groundbreaking ideas, leading innovation, or methodologies that challenge existing knowledge and reshape scientific or societal paradigms.

> *"These days, we prioritise incremental advancements over groundbreaking discoveries because they offer a lower-risk approach that aligns with funding agencies' expectations and evaluation criteria. Incremental research builds upon existing knowledge, making it easier to justify its feasibility and potential impact, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing research project grants and institutional support. However, this cautious approach can stifle radical innovation, as scholars may avoid exploring uncharted territories with higher risks of failure. Consequently, scientific progress may become stagnant, with many studies frequently refining existing concepts rather than pushing the boundaries of knowledge and practice. Having unique principles guiding research relevance in this direction can help us avoid such unethical practices"* (Participant 2).

In their research endeavours, scholars must engage in groundbreaking research advancement that significantly transforms existing knowledge, practices, or methodologies in a particular field. A groundbreaking contribution entails developing, modifying or extending critical discoveries that explain

[39] Steven Were Omamo, "Bridging Research, Policy, and Practice in African Agriculture," 2004; Daniel Dramani Kipo-Sunyehzi, "Implementation Research in Developed and Developing Countries: An Analysis of the Trends and Directions," *Public Organization Review* 23, no. 3 (September 10, 2023): 1259–73, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-022-00659-0.;

[40] Roberts Kabeba Muriisa, "Rethinking the Role of Universities in Africa: Leadership as a Missing Link in Explaining University Performance in Uganda," *Journal of Higher Education in Africa/Revue de l'enseignement Superieur En Afrique* 12, no. 1 (2014): 69–92; Iwara and Kilonzo, "Towards a Conceptual Understanding of an Effective Rural-Based Entrepreneurial University in South Africa."

societal phenomena, human behaviour, technological transformation, or economic structures. A leading discovery that significantly contributes to the development of theoretical or methodical scholars and policymakers to make sense of existing gaps, contradictions, or inadequacies in prevailing knowledge and practice. Importantly, the groundbreaking study provides a foundation for future research, enabling scholars to build upon existing work and develop more comprehensive theories and new frameworks that reshape academic discussions, policy decisions, and institutional practices from this perspective.

**Novel pursuit**

In academic publishing, novelty refers to the capacity to introduce original theories, methodologies, or perspectives, differentiating the current study from existing paradigms. When research is novel, it challenges conventional knowledge, fills a critical gap in the literature, or presents groundbreaking findings that reshape academic discourse and reforms. Shedding light, the professor explains:

> *"...publishing practice in contemporary academia, especially in an era where AI generative content publishes within a fleeting temporal juncture, suggests a relook at what is considered scholarly. Frequently, I find it challenging to attribute sole culpability to the scholars, especially emerging researchers, as their actions are not entirely attributable to their moral responsibility. The "publish or perish" philosophy in academia, particularly institutions striving to rank among leaders, pressures researchers, mostly emerging scholars such as doctoral researchers, postdoctoral fellows and tenured research staff, to produce a high volume of publications, frequently at the expense of quality and originality. ...this culture resulted in repetitive studies that contributed little or no new knowledge, making several academic writings redundant. What then is the essence of the research if it's irrelevant?"* (Participant 6)

The "*publish or perish*" dilemma is a widely debated, persistent issue in academia. The adage reflects the institutional pressure in academia, which mandates that researchers consistently produce and disseminate scholarly work. This is seen as essential for career advancement, academic recognition, and professional viability, highlighting the intrinsic link between prolific publication and institutional survival.[41] This pressure has intensified, exacerbated by an increasing reliance on quantitative metrics, such as publication counts, that significantly determine professional trajectories. While the fundamental expectation for research remains constant, the current scholarly environment has heightened the stakes, raising concerns regarding ethical considerations, research quality, and potential compromises to academic integrity.[42] In light of these concerns, it is both appropriate and necessary to critically examine the "publish or perish" culture and propose reforms of the institutional research framework. In parallel, a postdoctoral fellow detailed that it is the "*publish or perish*" culture.

> *"...browsing research engines like Google Scholar, ERIC, BASE and Semantic Scholar for a specific research focus, it is very likely to encounter numerous publications spanning different years that appear strikingly similar in content, methodology, and findings. This became conspicuous during systematic review research I undertook last year, in which I observed that some studies were purely regurgitative... I think this challenge emanated from academic pressure or a lack of innovative perspectives. Academics should be empowered to understand that novelty is evident when the research generates solutions, contributes to emerging fields, or pioneers unexplored areas of inquiry. Believe me, the problem is confined to a specific institution or peculiar to a geographical location, it cuts across borders"* (Participant 7).

A professor, whose ethical principles frown at redundant publishing, suggests a series of intervention strategies to optimise novelty in research within higher learning institutions.

> *"All hands on deck, knowledge regurgitation can be avoided. ... to begin with, there must be internal control. Institutions, through their research ethics board structures, should intensify regulations. Establish internal scrutiny for replication, novelty, reliability of results, and ethical*

[41] Hendrik P Van Dalen and Kène Henkens, "Intended and Unintended Consequences of a Publish-or-perish Culture: A Worldwide Survey," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 63, no. 7 (2012): 1282–93; Wager, "Why Is Redundant Publication a Problem?"; Gogtay, "Redundant Publications."

[42] Muraleedharan and Kumar, "The Malady of Redundant Publications: Common yet Poorly Understood."

*practices in academic writing. Similarly, a well-defined threshold that measures academic novelty will ensure new and insightful perspectives, clarity, rigour, and scholarly integrity. Secondly, researchers should be brought to the fore, nurtured and motivated to inculcate an ethical research culture. Before each project, there should be a room for a thorough literature review, as this helps determine whether the perspective offers new insights, is novel or merely reiterates past studies"* (Participant 5).

Scholarly research is defined by its capacity to introduce original and innovative perspectives that contribute to the evolution of knowledge. Originality refers to the extent to which research presents new ideas, theories, methodologies, or insights that contribute meaningfully to the field. Innovation, on the other hand, involves the application of novel methods, technologies, or interdisciplinary approaches that challenge conventional paradigms and generate groundbreaking insights. A highly original study provides alternative frameworks or theoretical perspectives, pushing academic frontiers while fostering intellectual diversity and academic progression.[43] To stakeholders involved in this study, emphasis on these attributes is anticipated to reshape academic writing, particularly shifting from merely replication to fresh intellectual contributions that enhance scholarly discourse and real-world solutions.

**Societal Impact**

A succession of terms has been used to delineate and conceptualise the concept, spanning social impact, societal benefits, public values, knowledge transfer, and societal relevance. Nonetheless, it explains evidence-based insights into addressing contemporary societal challenges, influencing public policy, and improving the quality of life in areas of need. The analysis of participants' excerpts elucidated that an intensified focus on the tangible social impact of academic publishing may yield novel insights into researchers' perceptions of research, thereby potentially enhancing consciousness, the overall quality, and efficacy of the research intervention. Participants' excerpts explain:

*"The essence of research is to advance intellectual discourses while concurrently addressing emerging global issues, importantly, social problems"* (Participant 7).

*"Research findings that lack practical and societal impact risk becoming redundant and remaining confined within academic circles without contributing to real-world progress. Social impact should be at the centre of our research"* (Participant 7).

"*When a research project is designed with social imperatives, it advances contextual knowledge and influences the formulation of conforming policies, interventions, and economic development strategies that empower communities"* (Participant 1).

Just as the concept itself is inherently dynamic, there is no globally acceptable standard or methodology for measuring the societal impact of research, rendering it inherently context-dependent and subject to variation based on specific local circumstances. Articulating the concept, therefore, is contingent on the level of interaction with societies, understanding emerging needs and designing conforming and reliable research methods of social relevance.[44] This consideration is crucial as it ensures that scientific advancements align with broader social, economic, and environmental goals, serving the genuine needs of grassroots communities, addressing real-world challenges and promoting overall well-being.[45] Participants' insights reflect these theoretical illustrations, pointing out that universities must commit to a rigorous process of assessing, selecting, approving and supporting research projects with societal impact:

[43] Ralf Buckley, "Originality in Research Publication: Measure, Concept, or Skill?," *Journal of Travel Research* 62, no. 5 (2023): 1159–63.

[44] Pellecchia et al., "Community–Academic Partnerships in Implementation Research"; Benedikt Fecher and Marcel Hebing, "How Do Researchers Approach Societal Impact?," *Plos One* 16, no. 7 (2021): e0254006.

[45] Bornmann, "What Is Societal Impact of Research and How Can It Be Assessed? A Literature Survey."

*"The ability of a study to address pressing community issues, such as inequality, unemployment, poverty, climate change, and technological advancement, determines its relevance beyond academia"* (Participant 6).

*"Scholars must ensure their research findings conform with evolving grassroots community realities, inform policy frameworks, skill development programs, and industry best practices, effectively bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge, practices and tangible solutions"* (Participant 2).

Similarly, another participant expressed concern by citing a panel discussion in which an illustrative example was presented. This example highlighted the divergent reactions elicited by two publications: a highly cited article that, despite its academic prominence, lacks tangible societal impact. On the other hand, a less cited counterpart, although less recognised academically, demonstrated greater potential for practical implementation and societal development. This scenario stresses the complex dynamics between scholarly influence and real-world applicability, prompting a re-evaluation of the criteria used to assess research significance beyond mere citation metrics.

*"I recently encountered a thought-provoking illustration that left me bewildered and reconsidering my research approach. In the first panel, a scholar poses with pride: A publication with over a thousand citations amassed within a year. However, a voice from the audience questioned: How does the well-cited research impact our society? The final panel substantiates the uncomfortable truth: a widening impact/implementation gap, where astute scholars, despite high citation metrics and prestigious top-tier journals, struggle to link their research to real-world issues and grassroots realities. It renders research useless… My illustration, in essence, is to encourage that we bring our research home to the people it serves and not shelves"* (Participant 7).

Aligning research with existing societal issues substantially enhances the applicability and relevance of academic scholarship, thereby ensuring that higher learning institutions, especially universities, maintain significance within a rapidly evolving socioeconomic landscape. As research focuses on pressing challenges such as unemployment, public health crises, inequality, poverty, security, and environmental sustainability, institutions are increasingly motivated to invest in academic writing and remain driven by critical societal needs, making them instrumental in informing and shaping policies and practices.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The current findings provide a blueprint for relevant academic writings, specifically in rural-based higher learning, drawing perspectives from South Africa; they also suggest further areas of study to explore a holistic approach to develop a contextual index that conforms seamlessly with Africa's grassroots realities and is implementable across contexts. A statistical analysis, capable of quantifying the relative significance of the five indicators, will enable stakeholders to discern the relative importance of each criterion in the rubric. This will determine the requisite level of emphasis necessary for an academic publication to be deemed relevant. There is a need to raise researchers' awareness of the importance of ethical and meaningful contributions in research. This can be ascertained through circulars, workshops and seminars. It is equally important for higher institutions to introduce systems that monitor redundant academic writings, and likewise, enact and implement stringent regulations against such practices.

## CONCLUSION

The prevalence of redundant and irrelevant publications in the higher education environment motivated the development of a rubric, an instrument designed to assess the relevance of academic writing. In this context, relevance is measured through five fundamental attributes: applicability, commercialisation, cutting-edge advancement, novelty and social impact. Applicability assesses the potential for research outcomes to be implemented in real-world contexts, while commercialisation is concerned with the

market potential of the research findings. Innovation highlights pioneering contributions that reshape knowledge and practices. Similarly, novelty refers to original contributions and discoveries that advance existing knowledge. Lastly, social impact highlights the positive contributions of research to the well-being of society and its communities. The rubric enhances research efficiency by promoting critical assessments of proposed or conducted research before implementation. Systematic evaluation enables researchers to identify inconclusive or redundant studies, helping guide future research toward more meaningful contributions. This process strengthens the reliability of findings and ensures that research outputs are impactful and applicable across various fields. Adopting a rubric approach to research will lead to a more streamlined and purposeful research landscape, maximising the potential for groundbreaking discoveries and informed decision-making. Further studies, quantifying the relative significance of criteria in the rubric, will help determine their potency and the level of emphasis required for an academic publication to be deemed significant and relevant.

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