

IMPROVING MANUSCRIPT QUALITY AND FIT: A GUIDE FOR AUTHORS SUBMITTING TO THE *JOURNAL OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, DISSATISFACTION AND COMPLAINING BEHAVIOR*

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ABSTRACT

The Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior (JCS/D&CB) receives many submissions. From April 1, 2021, to November 26, 2024, there were 528 submissions. The journal published 56 manuscripts, leading to an acceptance rate of 10.61%. While this suggests that most submissions are not published, it underscores the JCS/D&CB's commitment to high research quality standards. This paper analyzes common reasons for manuscript rejection and offers guidance to improve submission quality. Higher acceptance rates depend on original contributions that align with the journal's scope. Strong literature reviews and robust theoretical foundations are also necessary. Additionally, high-quality research (both qualitative and quantitative) and effective use of relevant theories and methodologies are essential. Excellent writing and presentation are also important. If authors apply our suggestions, they can strengthen their manuscripts and boost their chances of acceptance. Ultimately, our insights aim to guide researchers in contributing valuable discourse on consumer satisfaction and related topics.

INTRODUCTION

The Journal of Consumer Satisfaction/Decision and Consumer Behavior (JCS/D&CB) receives many unsolicited manuscripts. From April 1, 2021, to November 26, 2024, the journal received 528 submissions. Only 56 were published, resulting in an acceptance rate of 10.61%. This reflects our dedication to high-quality research. To improve your chances of acceptance, submit original work aligned with the journal's scope. Strong literature reviews, robust theoretical frameworks, high-quality research (qualitative or quantitative), and attention to cross-cultural best practices, when applicable, are expected. Relevant theories and methodologies are crucial. Strong writing and presentation are also essential.

Understanding research methodologies is crucial when considering submitting to the JCS/D&CB. Quantitative research prioritizes measurable results by employing systematic observation and data analysis of real-world evidence (experiments, surveys, case studies). In contrast, qualitative research focuses on in-depth exploration of complex human experiences

¹ Newell D. Wright is the editor, and Gillian S. Naylor is editor emeritus of the *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior*. Combined, they have eleven years of experience editing the journal. They would like to thank Jacqueline A. Williams of North Carolina A&T State University for serving as editor for this paper and the anonymous reviewers for their many insightful suggestions and recommendations. The authors are listed in random order; their contributions were equal.

through methods such as interviews, focus groups, and participant observation, aiming to interpret meanings and patterns rather than establishing causality. Theoretical research, often involving literature reviews, develops, refines, or critiques concepts and frameworks to generate new hypotheses.

The JCS/D&CB welcomes submissions utilizing all three approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and theoretical research. Empirical research, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative methods, is crucial in advancing knowledge; qualitative research provides depth and context, while quantitative research delivers measurable data for clarity. These approaches enrich our understanding of complex fields. Theoretical research builds the conceptual foundation guiding practical inquiry. The following sections detail how these methodologies relate to submissions and our expectations for research on consumer satisfaction, complaining behavior, and related topics.

PATHWAYS TO SUCCESSFUL MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

Submitting a high-quality manuscript greatly enhances the likelihood of acceptance in any peer-reviewed journal, including the JCS/D&CB. Numerous studies conducted by experienced researchers and editors across various fields (Carpenter et al., 2014; Bordage, 2001; Rosenfeldt et al., 2000; Pierson, 2004) have identified common pitfalls that often lead to manuscript rejection. These studies consistently underscore the importance of several critical factors. These factors include the development of strong theoretical frameworks, the implementation of rigorous methodologies, clear and concise writing, and a thorough understanding of the target journal's specific scope and publication standards. By addressing these elements, authors can significantly enhance their chances of publication and contribute meaningfully to the academic discourse.

In this context, we explore several key opportunities to enhance a manuscript's chance of acceptance. We divide the paper into two sections: general tips for academic writing and specific guidance tailored to the JCS/D&CB:

- **General Tips for Academic Writing**
 - Opportunities for Original Contributions to the Field.
 - Strengthening Literature Reviews and Theoretical Frameworks.
 - Enhancing the Quality of Empirical Qualitative Research.
 - Improving Empirical Research Design and Execution.
 - Best Practices in Cross-Cultural Research.
 - Elevating Writing Quality
- **Specific Guidance for Publishing in the JCS/D&CB**
 - Aligning with Journal Scope for Maximum Impact.
 - Using Theories and Methodologies from Adjacent Fields
 - Success with High-Quality Review Papers.
 - Storytelling
 - Minor Yet Important Refinements

These topics are crucial for authors to understand and implement. They reflect the specific concerns reviewers and editors may have when evaluating a submission. We are providing valuable insights and practical strategies for strengthening manuscripts to improve the likelihood of publication success. Our aim is to help authors.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

Opportunities for Original Contributions to the Field

The JCS/D&CB accepts manuscripts that may be empirical or non-empirical. According to Piedmont University's Arrendal Library, empirical articles may involve data collection or analysis based on observed and measured phenomena. Empirical articles include both quantitative and qualitative research or mixed-method studies. Such studies may include research questions or hypotheses and a description of the methodology used. Non-empirical research does not include data collection or analysis and is based on theoretical logic. These studies may include literature reviews, theory building, and opinion pieces (Arrendale Library, 2024). Such articles must advance knowledge in the CS/D&CB field.

Many manuscripts are rejected for not significantly contributing to the understanding of the field. This lack of originality manifests in several ways, including:

No Novel Results. While methodologically sound, some papers apply existing theories or models to new contexts without generating new theoretical insights or empirical findings. Such studies may be valuable, but they often fall short of the originality needed for publication in a leading journal. Simply replicating previous studies in a new setting without substantial theoretical or methodological innovation is insufficient. While replications are acceptable, they must provide a clear and compelling justification for the replication—for example, demonstrating the need to test the generalizability of prior findings under different circumstances or conditions (Evanschitzky et al., 2007). The justification should be detailed, transparent, and explicitly stated. The manuscript must argue why this specific replication will significantly advance the existing knowledge.

Outdated Theories and Methodologies. Using outdated theories or methodologies can often lead to manuscript rejection. A prominent example is the SERVQUAL measure, which, despite its widespread citation and use in numerous studies (Naylor, 2024), has well-documented methodological limitations that must be addressed in any submission employing this measure. As noted by Naylor (2024), these issues have been recognized for decades. When authors choose to use SERVQUAL instead of alternatives like SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992), they must thoroughly investigate these limitations and provide a clear rationale for the measure's applicability to their current study to avoid rejection. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the acceptance of papers utilizing the SERVQUAL measure has declined over the past twenty years (Naylor, 2024).

Standardized Reporting Formats. Authors should use standardized formats when reporting results. When reporting structural equation modeling (SEM) results, for example, authors should follow best practices for accuracy (Schreiber, 2008) and established guidelines (Schreiber et al., 2006) to maintain transparency and enable replication. Authors should explain their choice of methods, report their steps, and acknowledge any limitations in their approach to retain the integrity of their analysis.

Adequate Literature Reviews and Conceptualizations. Substandard research quality frequently manifests through poorly developed conceptual frameworks and inadequate literature reviews. Studies that lack relevant citations, especially from reputable journals, diminish their credibility. Authors must employ reliable measures and justify any new scales they introduce while considering cultural biases in international submissions (Chen & Stevenson, 1995; Flaskerud, 2012; Naylor, 2024).

Substandard Scale Usage. The selection and application of measurement scales are crucial to maintaining a study's credibility. Utilizing scales with unknown or poorly established psychometric properties, such as reliability and validity, can significantly undermine research. When authors develop a new scale, they must provide a strong justification, clearly demonstrating why existing measures do not suffice for the research question. This process requires a detailed explanation of the limitations of current scales and a comprehensive account of the new scale's development and validation, including tests for reliability, validity, and psychometric properties (DeVellis (2016). It is vital to specify the measurement level— interval, ordinal, etc.— and consider this in statistical analyses. A recent example of scale development that met these criteria is Berthiaume, Rajaobelina, and Ricard (2024).

For journals like the JCS/D&CB, authors must also address cultural biases in measurement instruments and discuss the implications of these biases for the generalizability of the findings (Van de Vijver & Tanzer, 2004). For example, satisfaction measures with well-established reliability and validity should be utilized. If authors create new scales, they must explain the necessity for these and analyze the limitations of existing measures. Thorough statistical validation of the new scale is necessary. Additionally, authors should consider whether their scales measure interval or ordinal data and use appropriate statistical methods (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). Given the international scope of the journal, researchers should be attentive to cultural biases in the measures they employ (Chen & Stevenson, 1995; Flakerud, 2012; Naylor, 2024).

Strengthening Literature Reviews and Theoretical Frameworks

A comprehensive literature review and a robust theoretical framework are fundamental to scholarly research. The review places your work within a particular field of study. It reveals how the research complements or contrasts with previously published studies. A literature review informs the reader of why a particular theory was chosen over similar theories or variables. A strong review shows how the proposed research fits within the academic landscape. Insufficient engagement with prior research or a weak theoretical base can significantly undermine a paper's credibility. To ensure the review is appropriately targeted and comprehensive, authors should cite relevant work published in the JCS/D&CB. Incorporating citations from the journal demonstrates the authors' familiarity with the journal and its key contributions to the field. Citing the journal is essential for both empirical and non-empirical research.

Reviewers expect a literature review to be thorough and critical. The review should summarize prior research, identify gaps in knowledge, and relate the current study to the broader scholarly discussion (Webster & Watson, 2002). Failing to incorporate relevant literature, especially work published in the journal, indicates a lack of understanding of the field. This also misses the opportunity to build on existing research. A complete review shows familiarity with theoretical frameworks and empirical findings. The literature should map onto the study's aims and research questions. Both supporting and contradictory findings should be reported. Effectively using the literature means summarizing previous findings to create a clear context for new research. This summary helps establish a solid theoretical foundation, enabling authors to build on existing knowledge and provide new insights.

Proper citation practices ensure continuity in scholarly discussions and reinforce the manuscript's relevance to ongoing debates within the journal. Authors can enhance the theoretical rigor of their research by aligning their work with the journal's objectives and addressing any gaps or unresolved questions left open by previous studies. Such alignment and the contribution of novel

perspectives in consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction strengthen the manuscript and increase its likelihood of acceptance for publication.

Enhancing the Quality of Empirical Qualitative Research

While qualitative research can provide rich insights into post-consumption behavior, submissions can fall short of the standards. Issues that can weaken the quality and impact of qualitative studies include:

Weak Conceptual Frameworks. Studies may lack a strong theoretical foundation. Either existing conceptual frameworks or developing a new one are essential. A robust conceptual framework is needed to guide data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Maxwell, 2013). Without a framework, qualitative research becomes a description of phenomena rather than a meaningful contribution to theory.

Inappropriate Data Collection Methods. The choice of data collection method depends on the research questions and theoretical framework. Researchers often default to interviews or focus groups. They overlook other methods. Researchers should consider alternative approaches such as ethnography, netnography, or participant observation. These alternatives might prove to be a better fit for their research questions (Kozinets, 2010; Patton, 2015).

Superficial Analysis. Submissions may be limited to only surface-level thematic analysis. They often lack second-level interpretations or any contribution to theory. With qualitative research, the author(s) can always reinterpret the data and develop a second-level interpretation without collecting new data. Successful qualitative research requires careful interpretation and thorough analysis. It should go beyond simple descriptions to uncover important patterns, themes, and theoretical insights (Wright & Larsen, 2023). Researchers can use techniques like constant comparison, negative case analysis, and theoretical sampling to enhance the depth and credibility of their findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Lack of Transparency. Researchers must outline their methodological procedures. Otherwise, it is difficult for readers to assess the study's rigor. According to Tracy (2010), authors need to ensure their manuscript's details of the study's sampling, data collection, and analytical processes

Insufficient Attention to Reflexivity. Reflexivity refers to the role and process the researcher plays. Researchers must examine their biases, perspectives, and experiences to understand how they might influence the research process and interpretations of data (Finlay, 2002). Qualitative researchers need to be cognizant of the fact that their personal perspective can impact the research process.

Inadequate Data Saturation. Many studies don't show that they have reached data saturation, which means collecting more data brings no new insights. Guest et al. (2006) point out that this raises concerns about the completeness of the findings and whether the sample size is sufficient.

Over-reliance on Software. Relying on qualitative data analysis software (e.g., NVivo, Atlas.ti) can be problematic. As Wright (2023, p. 312) pointed out, software allows researchers "to manage large volumes of textual material, as well as graphics and video. It does not generate interpretations of the data — that is the scholar's job — but it helps one tag and organize data and identify intertextual linkages that enrich the meaning of a passage or that develop themes across a set of related passages." Researchers must demonstrate creative and insightful interpretive work beyond the mechanical coding processes facilitated by software (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

Lack of Second-Level Interpretations. Many qualitative studies stop at the first level of interpretation, merely summarizing and categorizing data. Second-level interpretations, which delve deeper to offer substantial new theoretical insights, are crucial for publication. This often involves revisiting and reinterpreting the data to extract more profound and nuanced understandings (Gioia et al., 2013; Wright & Larsen, 2023).

Poor Integration of Theory and Data. Successful qualitative research should demonstrate a clear and meaningful dialogue between theory and data. Many submissions fail to effectively integrate their empirical findings with existing theoretical frameworks or develop new theoretical insights (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Insufficient Attention to Context. Researchers must pay attention to the broader social, cultural, and historical contexts related to the study. Many studies do not properly consider these factors. This limits the depth and relevance of their findings (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011). To address these issues, qualitative researchers should emphasize strong methods, thorough analysis, and clear theoretical contributions. Creating clear narratives that explain post-consumption behavior and provide deeper insights can enhance our understanding of consumer satisfaction and complaining behavior.

To publish qualitative research in the JCS/D&CB, your paper must adhere to the standards of methodological rigor and provide a compelling second-level interpretation (see Wright and Larsen, 2023, pp. 108-112). For two recent examples of qualitative studies that accomplish this, see Petersen et al. (2020) and Nordstrom and Egan (2021).

Improving Empirical Research Design and Execution in Quantitative Research

Researchers must use effective strategies to improve empirical research design and execution. Many potential pitfalls can weaken the validity and reliability of their findings (Rosenthal, 1979). Common pitfalls include:

Researcher Bias A common issue is researcher bias. Researchers may unconsciously design studies or interpret data that aligns with their own preconceptions or desired outcomes (Greenwald, 1980). Researchers should employ double-blind procedures as a precaution (Moher et al., 2010).

Small Sample Sizes. Due to the small sample size, studies with insufficient statistical power are more likely to produce spurious findings that cannot be replicated (Button et al., 2013). An *a priori* power analysis should be conducted to determine the appropriate sample size to attain adequate statistical power (Cohen, 1988).

Statistical Significance. Selective reporting is another common issue. It can lead to overestimating effect sizes and publishing false-positive results (Rosenthal, 1979; Simmons et al., 2011). Researchers must report all relevant findings, including non-significant results, to ensure a balanced and transparent representation (Nosek et al., 2015).

Measurement Error. Poorly designed or unreliable measures can introduce systematic biases and lead to inaccurate conclusions (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Researchers should carefully evaluate the psychometric properties of their measures and, if necessary, develop and validate new instruments (DeVellis, 2016).

Generalizability. Findings based on samples that are not representative of the target population may have limited applicability (Henrich et al., 2010). Generalizability would be an issue. Researchers need to recruit a diverse sample to enhance generalizability. Consideration must be given to the potential limitations of the chosen sampling method when interpreting and generalizing findings (Simons et al., 2017).

Best Practices in Cross-Cultural Research

It is essential to ensure that the design and execution of cross-cultural studies are executed effectively. Poorly constructed cross-cultural studies can yield largely meaningless results. As Naylor (2024) notes regarding the SERVQUAL measure, many issues need addressing when applying a measure developed in one context with specific cultural assumptions to another with different cultural norms. Cross-cultural papers must detail the cultures studied and their differences concerning the constructs investigated. There are many potential variations in satisfaction and/or complaining behavior across cultures. This includes differences in antecedents and consequences of satisfaction and the best theoretical explanations for these differences. Hofstede's (1984) and Hall's (1976) models offer valuable frameworks to examine cultural differences. Usunier and Lee (2005) identify five types of equivalence that must be considered before using such measures:

Conceptual Equivalence. Conceptual equivalence requires that the concepts used have similar meanings across cultures. For instance, does “self-orientation” resonate in collectivist cultures?

Translation Equivalence. Translation equivalence is the second consideration. Effective cross-cultural research requires thoughtful planning and careful execution, going beyond simple instrument translation. It is crucial to preserve meaning when translating survey instruments into different languages. Lack of oversight can lead to insufficient attention to back-translation, causing potential confusion. Researchers must tailor their approaches to specific cultural dynamics before data collection. For example, the word satisfaction might translate to the word happy. These terms are not synonymous. *Satisfaction* is often viewed in relation to meeting expectations whereas *happy* is associated with a more emotional response.

Calibration Equivalence. Calibration equivalence refers to the differences in measurement units between cultures. For example, In the U.S., fuel efficiency is discussed in miles per gallon, while in Europe, it is measured in liters per hundred kilometers. In the U.S. context, a higher number indicates better fuel efficiency, whereas a lower indicates better fuel efficiency in Europe. These differences in measurement can lead to misunderstandings in cross-cultural research.

Score Equivalence. Score equivalence addresses whether recorded scores are equivalent across cultures. For example, the number four in China is considered unlucky, akin to the number thirteen in the U.S. This cultural difference could distort results when using a five-point Likert scale, as it is rarely selected. A seven-point Likert scale can mitigate this issue in China by making the number four the midpoint, whereas a five-point or nine-point scale might be more suitable in Ghana, where the number seven is also seen as unlucky.

Data Collection Equivalence. Researchers frequently overlook critical cultural considerations in submitted papers, particularly when using measures designed for different cultural contexts. Specifically, factors such as social desirability bias can differ in collectivist versus individualistic cultures. Thought must be given to the chosen method used to gather data in different cultures to ensure they are comparable and produce meaningful results across those cultures.

Evaluating Writing Quality

While producing high-quality review papers is essential for successful publication in academic journals, the quality of writing and presentation is equally important. Regardless of the depth of research or insights offered, poorly written manuscripts can hinder the clarity and impact of the findings. Authors must address various writing challenges to ensure their research is communicated effectively. By improving writing techniques and adhering to the specific

formatting and style standards required by academic journals, researchers can enhance their papers' readability and overall acceptability. This focus on writing quality complements the rigorous standards expected in review papers and ensures that valuable contributions to the field are effectively conveyed.

Academic writing presents many challenges that can affect authors regardless of their linguistic background. Common mistakes among native English speakers often include unclear sentence structures, improper use of jargon, and a lack of cohesion and coherence throughout the manuscript (Sword, 2012). Native writers may struggle with overly complex sentences or fail to adequately support their claims, which can confuse readers (Hyland, 2019). Many writers ignore the importance of following the specific formatting and citation styles required by academic journals. This leads to submissions not meeting publication standards (Norris, 2016). Poorly written manuscripts with grammatical errors or unclear arguments decrease the likelihood of acceptance (Wright & Larsen, 2016).

Non-native English speakers often face extra challenges due to language proficiency. For example, grammatical errors like subject-verb agreement and verb tense usage can make the intended message unclear (Flowerdew, 2008). They may also struggle with idiomatic expressions and academic vocabulary, which can lead to miscommunication or vague wording (Swales & Feak, 2012). Additionally, not being familiar with academic writing conventions in English can cause awkward phrasing and an uneven tone (Hyland, 2016).

To mitigate these challenges, it is beneficial for both native and non-native authors to seek feedback from peers and utilize editing resources (Glasman-Deal, 2010). Writing tools like Grammarly, Microsoft Word Editor, or ProWritingAid can be tricky. While these tools help fix grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes, they might miss some errors. Sometimes, their suggestions can even change the meaning slightly. Consider implementing a few additional strategies for a more comprehensive approach to improving writing. First, review your writing manually to catch nuances or contextual elements that automated tools may miss. Second, obtaining feedback from peers or colleagues can provide valuable insights and suggestions based on their perspectives. Third, utilizing additional writing guides or resources can assist with structure, style, and formatting. Fourth, easy-to-read charts and tables are very helpful. Rougier et al. (2014) provide simple rules for better figures. They emphasize clarity and simplicity, which are equally important in tables. Lastly, hiring a professional editor for a thorough evaluation is recommended for important documents or publications.

In summary, while writing assistance tools are a good starting point, combining them with other methods will yield the best results in enhancing writing. A collaborative approach can improve clarity and professionalism, ultimately increasing the chances of successful journal submission (Murray & Moore, 2006).

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR PUBLISHING IN THE JCS/D&CB

This section will attempt to spell out what we are looking for in manuscripts submitted to the JCS/D&CB. We will focus on aligning with the journal scope for maximum impact, using theories and methodologies from adjacent fields, cross-cultural CS/D&CB research, success with review articles, and storytelling.

Aligning Your Manuscript with our Journal's Mission

We provide detailed information about the types of research papers accepted at the JCS/D&CB on the journal masthead under the ABOUT tab.

The primary objective of the Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior, along with our biennial conference, is to publish and disseminate groundbreaking research on the antecedents and consequences of consumer experiences that are either satisfying or dissatisfying. The journal is dedicated to promoting theoretical development in these areas by reporting quantitative and qualitative inquiries and conceptual studies spanning various relevant business disciplines. It is important to note that we are NOT a general consumer behavior journal; therefore, the focus of your article MUST be explicitly on the antecedents or consequences of satisfying or dissatisfying experiences. Authors contemplating a manuscript submission should review several recent issues and make use of our archive function to ensure they cite relevant literature that has already been published in our journal.

Additionally, under the Journal History subheading, we state:

The mission of the Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior is to advance scholarly discourse in marketing on a range of satisfaction-related topics. JCS/D&CB is an international, peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles of both scholarly and managerial relevance across a broad spectrum of satisfaction-related themes. Consequently, we are particularly interested in research focused on consumer or organizational satisfaction/dissatisfaction, complaining behavior, and topics related to buyer choice, loyalty, and commitment. The journal welcomes a variety of methodological approaches and encourages authors to utilize diverse research methods. Each article published in JCS/D&CB undergoes a rigorous double-blind review process to ensure its relevance and quality.

Complaining behavior is a major consequence of dissatisfying consumer experiences, which is why it is included in the title of our journal. These statements clearly indicate that the JCS/D&CB maintains a focused scope and is not a general consumer behavior journal. As a result, many manuscripts are desk-rejected if they do not align with the journal's positioning. Ensuring alignment with the journal's scope is crucial for manuscript acceptance. Authors should carefully consider whether their research directly contributes to understanding the antecedents or consequences of satisfying or dissatisfying consumer experiences, as this is a core focus of the journal.

Authors are reminded that we welcome articles with a business-to-business or government-to-consumer orientation and those based on emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI). However, if AI was used to prepare any part of the manuscript, please describe how and where. For example, in the following paper, we ensured that the body of text and references sections adhered to APA 7th edition citation standards using Grammarly and ChatGPT. AI should not be the primary authoring tool. It is not a substitute for writing; AI should only help to check grammar and style and be treated as an additional resource.

The journal publishes consumer behavior, hospitality and tourism management, and human resources papers. While building theory in these fields, these papers must incorporate satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior and their antecedents or consequences. Frequently, we

receive papers on these constructs that fall short of adequate measurement and theoretical integration.

In recent years, we have accepted papers on the following topics (this list is exhaustive).

- Brand love and hate (e.g., Madadi et al., 2021).
- The influence of human capital in corporations on consumer satisfaction (e.g., Chauradia et al., 2021).
- Life satisfaction, existential well-being, and human flourishing (e.g., Routledge et al., 2021).
- Positive and negative word of mouth in personal and digital networks (e.g., Kara & Tugrul, 2024).
- Consumer grudgeholding, retaliation, and other dysfunctional consumer behaviors (e.g., Nordstrom & Egan, 2021).
- Consumer loyalty and commitment (e.g., Curtis et al., 2011).
- Consumer *Schadenfreude* or *Glückschmerz* (feeling pain at someone else's luck, success, or accomplishments; e.g., Hornik & Rachamim, 2023)
- Service recovery, complaint resolution, and complaint management (e.g., Nowak et al., 2023).
- Senior complaining behavior (e.g., Meiners & Leeson, 2024).
- Satisfaction with the sharing economy (e.g., Frechette & Wingate, 2022).
- Consumer forgiveness and reconciliation (e.g., Bath & Bawa, 2023).
- Theory development in CSD&CB (e.g., Larsen & Wright, 2020).
- Cross-cultural variations in CSD&CB (e.g., Wei, 2023).
- The roles of trust and confidence in CSD&CB (e.g., Celuch et al., 2018).
- Complimenting behavior (e.g., R et al., 2022).
- Social relationships and CSD&CB (e.g., Bapat & Williams, 2023).
- Perceived trustworthiness (e.g., Celuch et al., 2018).
- Methodologies for CSD&CB, quantitative and qualitative (e.g., Wright and Larsen, 2023).
- Consumer experience and CS/D&CB (e.g., Ferber & Vaziri, 2024).

Authors should familiarize themselves with recently published papers to discover new trends and directions in CS/D&CB research. To meet the journal's expectations, authors should cite relevant articles from previous issues of the JCS/D&CB. This will help position their paper alongside prior research in the journal and the broader field. Doing so demonstrates a thorough understanding of the current research landscape and indicates active engagement with the journal's scholarly discourse. Citing these articles also reflects an awareness of the journal's scope and thematic focus. Utilizing the journal's archive is highly recommended. It can help authors identify influential studies pertinent to their research themes. Papers that do not cite previous research from the JCS/D&CB send a strong message. They communicate that the authors are unfamiliar with the journal and its contents.

Using Theories and Methodologies from Adjacent Fields

The JCS/D&CB welcomes well-conceived and executed studies that draw on theories and methodologies from other fields. This interdisciplinary approach can provide fresh perspectives

and innovative insights into consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior. We have previously accepted papers that relied on methodologies or theories from various disciplines. Anthropology studies like Swan et al. (2003, 1995) and Wright et al. (1995) have utilized ethnographic methods. These methods provide rich, contextual insights into consumer behavior. Routledge et al. (2021) applied entrepreneurship theories to explore consumer satisfaction in the context of new ventures and innovative products. Literary criticism techniques were employed by Durgee (1999) and Wright et al. (1996) to interpret consumer narratives and experiences. Cohn (2016), Fitzpatrick et al. (2004), and Friend and Rummel (1995) used phenomenological approaches. They explored the lived experiences of consumers. Johnson and Ross (2015), Goodwin et al. (1991), and Wright et al. (1999) applied sociological theories to examine how social structures and interactions influence consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior.

Studies that apply economic theories, information systems concepts, neuroscientific techniques, environmental sciences perspectives, and organizational behavior frameworks are also encouraged. These diverse approaches can enhance our understanding of consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior. These approaches could offer valuable insights into various areas. For example, these approaches can enhance our understanding of several areas. These include consumer decision-making processes, satisfaction with digital products, the neural basis of consumer satisfaction, environmental impacts on post-purchase behavior, and how company practices influence satisfaction and complaint handling. We welcome papers from these and other fields. However, these studies must be grounded in the literature and theories of the borrowed disciplines. They need to be both conceptually and empirically sound. The key is demonstrating how these interdisciplinary approaches can enhance our understanding of consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior. Authors should clearly articulate the relevance and potential contributions of their chosen theoretical or methodological approach to the journal's core focus.

Success with High-Quality Review Papers

Review papers may be empirical or non-empirical. Good review papers are almost always accepted. They tend to rank among the most cited articles from our journal (e.g., Lang & Hyde, 2013; Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2006). We have published various types of reviews, including scoping reviews (e.g., Nowak et al., 2023a), integrated reviews (e.g., Dahl & Peltier, 2015; Nowak et al., 2023b), empirical meta-analyses (e.g., Curtis et al., 2011; Wright & Larsen, 1993), systematic reviews (e.g., Arora et al., 2021), typology reviews (e.g., Naylor, 2016), scale reviews (e.g., Hausknecht, 1990), literature reviews (e.g., Srivastava & Karlo, 2018), longitudinal reviews (e.g., Diwanji, 2022; Wright & Larsen, 2023), bibliometric reviews (e.g., Egan & Aron, 2022), and other reviews (e.g., Aron, 2016; Stevens, 2023).

A good review paper synthesizes previous studies and draws meaningful conclusions about consumer experiences. It examines the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, which can lead to complaining behavior. It thoroughly examines previous work and contributes significantly to the discipline. It does more than summarize the literature to generate hypotheses. Sometimes, the review leads to the development of a new conceptual model (e.g., Lang & Hyde, 2013; Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2006), confirms existing relationships (e.g., Curtis et al., 2011), or challenges accepted wisdom (e.g., Wright & Larsen, 1992). Furthermore, such reviews frequently explore new paths forward (e.g., Dahl & Peltier, 2015; Nowak et al., 2023b) or illustrate how historical research influences contemporary studies

(e.g., Diwanji, 2022). Importantly, all good reviews synthesize numerous studies to present interesting, novel, and often surprising results.

Cross-Cultural CS/D&CB Research

Cross-cultural studies are a key area of interest for the JCS/D&CB. Several significant cross-cultural studies have been published in the journal over the years. Cardenas (2012), for example, investigated gift-giving practices in a collectivist environment, yielding novel insights. Blodgett et al. (2006) provided alternative explanations for cross-cultural complaining behavior, particularly focusing on retail return policies in different countries. In a subsequent study, Blodgett et al. (2015) expanded on these findings. They concluded that situational factors, like the “likelihood of success,” have a greater impact on cross-cultural complaints than cultural differences. Badghish et al. (2018) examined the complaining behaviors of Saudi nationals and Filipino temporary migrants in Saudi Arabia, highlighting significant differences related to the temporary status of the Filipino group. Ganglmair-Wooliscroft and Wooliscroft (2010) demonstrated varying meanings of emotional terms among different English-speaking groups, underscoring the importance of conceptual equivalence. Wright et al. (1999) utilized cultural factors—such as high context and ingroup orientation—to explain embedded markets in France and the United States.

Storytelling

In 1993, the founding editor of the JCS/D&CB, H. Keith Hunt, called for more storytelling in CS/D&CB research.

As little children, most of us loved to listen to stories and tell stories. Too many of us set storytelling aside as childish as we “mature” into adults and scholars. I propose that it is only in the story context that the richness of CS/D&CB comes into focus. We can pass out all the questionnaires we want, but we will not really understand “what happened” or “what they think” until we hear consumers’ stories in their own words.

We need to write the stories down. The stories then become case histories. From a multitude of stories, we can draw inferences about human behavior, inferences in which we are confident because we have heard (or read) that story theme so many different times that it is accepted as valid... Ten or twenty years from now the stories will still be there. As we learn more and understand more, we will gain additional, fresh insights from those same stories. (Hunt 1993, p. 41).

Storytelling can add depth and complexity to CS/D&CB studies, making ideas easier to understand. For example, Aron and Kultgen (2019) and Thota and Wright (2006) used storytelling to help readers better understand the studied concepts. Storytelling is a feature of good qualitative research (see Wright & Larsen, 2023, for a review) and has been used very effectively in the past. Storytelling effectively breathes life into a manuscript.

Minor, Yet Important Issues

One essential aspect of this process involves maintaining effective communication during the review phase. During the review process, editors often communicate with authors via email.

However, if your email address is entered incorrectly in the submission form or you have changed institutions and no longer use the supplied email address, we will be unable to reach you. This issue occurs frequently enough to be discussed. Authors need to verify their email addresses at the time of submission and update their contact information as necessary.

Also, keep in mind that the JCS/D&CB is published in the United States. We require that all manuscripts be submitted in U.S. English rather than British English. Consistency in language is crucial for maintaining clarity and professionalism throughout your manuscript.

If you initially wrote your paper in a language other than English and then translated it for publication, remember to translate any text included in tables and graphics, such as charts and figures. This oversight is common and can lower the overall quality of your submission. Make sure all elements of your paper are accurately translated. Doing so will enhance the clarity and impact of your research. It will also make it easier for reviewers to assess your manuscript.

After following these strategies to enhance your manuscript's quality and acceptance rate, aligning your research with the journal's focus is essential. Understanding the journal's objectives ensures that your work fits within its scope. Addressing themes relevant to our readership strengthens your submission.

CHECKLIST FOR AUTHORS BEFORE SUBMISSION

Addressing substantive and practical issues can help streamline the review process and improve your manuscript's chances of acceptance. We provide this checklist to aid in preparation:

- **Ensure Original Contributions:** Articulate how your research provides new insights or theoretical advancements.
- **Update Theories and Methodologies:** Utilize current frameworks and address any limitations transparently.
- **Engage with Existing Literature:** Conduct a thorough literature review that synthesizes and critiques relevant studies. Include relevant citations, especially from reputable journals. Be certain to include relevant citations from the JCS/D&CB.
- **Employ Established Scales:** Use measurement instruments with known psychometric properties or justify the development of new ones.
- **Conduct Rigorous Research:** Develop robust conceptual frameworks and deeply analyze data.
- **Align with Journal Scope:** Ensure your research directly contributes to understanding the antecedents and consequences of consumer experiences. A lack of knowledge about the JCS/D&CB can signal careless preparation. Misalignment in manuscript positioning, failure to cite relevant journal articles or incorrect submission formatting may lead to automatic rejection.
- **Enhance Writing Quality:** Proofread rigorously and adhere to academic writing standards. Familiarize yourself with the journal's requirements and citation practices.
- **Storytelling.** Whenever possible, use stories to richly describe and contextualize CS/D&CB constructs.
- **Practical Considerations:**
 - Verify that your email address is correct in the submission form.
 - Update your submission promptly if your email address changes.
 - Submit your manuscript in U.S. English, not British English.

- Ensure consistency in language throughout the manuscript.
- Translate all text in tables and graphics, such as charts and figures, if applicable.
- Use easy-to-read charts and tables in your paper.
- Review all elements of your paper for clarity and accessibility.

CONCLUSION

Positioning your manuscript appropriately for the *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior* (JCS/D&CB) is crucial for enhancing the likelihood of acceptance. To achieve this, authors must avoid using outdated theories and methodologies that detract from the originality of their research. Submitting work that lacks novelty or fails to offer substantial contributions to the understanding of consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, or complaining behavior can result in rejection.

Attention to detail in manuscript preparation is essential. Authors should ensure compliance with APA 7th edition formatting rules (APA Style, 2024) and verify that in-text citations correspond precisely with the references section. Familiarity with the specific focus and submission guidelines of the JCS/D&CB can significantly improve the chances of success, as alignment with the journal's mission is imperative.

High-quality writing remains a fundamental requirement. Poorly constructed manuscripts may obscure valuable insights and lead to rejection. Authors should strive for clarity and coherence to communicate their research findings effectively. Additionally, attention to minor yet significant details—such as adhering to U.S. English, providing accurate email addresses, and ensuring precise translations of all elements within the paper—should not be overlooked. These seemingly small issues, when combined, often contribute significantly to the decision not to accept a manuscript.

It is essential to recognize that while some problems may be fatal flaws, such as the absence of a second-level interpretation in qualitative research, it is frequently a combination of smaller issues that leads to rejection. By diligently addressing substantive and practical concerns, authors can enhance the quality of their manuscripts.

A successful submission requires a strong theoretical framework, rigorous methodologies, precise writing, and a clear alignment with the journal's focus. By committing to these standards, authors increase their chances of successful publication in the JCS/D&CB and contribute meaningfully to the broader discourse on consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaining behavior. This concerted effort ultimately enriches the academic community and fosters a deeper understanding of these critical areas in consumer research.

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