

# COMMON REASONS WHY SCIENTIFIC PAPERS ARE REJECTED

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Orientation Training for RSIF PhD Scholars (2022)

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology



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## Outline

- Common Reasons (11)
- Specific Reviewer comments

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## Common reasons...

- 1) The study did not examine an important scientific issue
- 2) The study was not original – that is some else has already done the same or a similar study
- 3) The study did not actually test the author's hypothesis
- 4) A different study design should have been used

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## Common reasons...

- 5) The results have only a local relevance and not international interest
- 6) The sample size was too small
- 7) The study was uncontrolled or inadequately controlled
- 8) The statistical analysis was incorrect or **inappropriate** – repeated measures, pseudo-replication, spatial autocorrelation, assumption of statistical test not plausible

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## Common reasons...

- 10) The authors have drawn unjustified conclusions from their data
- 11) The paper is so badly written that it is incomprehensible - inadequate “packaging” of the text

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## Specific reviewer comments

### Manuscript 1

#### **Reviewer #1**

The field survey component of this paper cannot be said to represent Kenya. All collections were carried out in a quite geographically limited southern coastal strip of the country (see Figure 1). Collections were also carried out over less than one year (Nov 2013 to April 2014). The spatial and temporal restriction of samples limits what inferences can be drawn from it, and this should be acknowledged ....

#### **Reviewer #2**

The significance to the study of some parameters measured/assessed, and consequent conclusions drawn, e.g. ... are not adequately explained, or explained at all. In fact some variables mentioned in the Results and Discussion, are not even mentioned in the Material and Methods.....

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# Specific reviewer comments

## Manuscript 2

### Reviewer #2

The paper reports a well-conducted trial .... The results are similar to what has been shown before, and the procedures are common practice across the world. Therefore the findings are of local interest only, and an international research journal is an inappropriate outlet for this work.

### Reviewer #1

In the current report, the second question is fairly muted and not given as much attention as the first, but both hypotheses mirror and support previous results and thus add very little to our understanding of both.

# Specific reviewer comments

## Manuscript 3

### Reviewer #2

Overall, the experiment is very low in replication (only 3 per treatment and plant species), which is somewhat alleviated by sampling each replicate repeatedly over time.

**Response:** *We clarify that the number of replicates = 3, considered the amount of work required in the data collection phase of the experiment. Many variables were repeatedly taken from each plot for 6 time points. Besides, the experiment being a split-plot the residual degrees of freedom for error for the sub-plot was 16 which were sufficient for reliable estimate of the mean square error*

# Specific reviewer comments

## Manuscript 4

### Reviewer #1

The text needs to be thoroughly revised with the assistance of a native English speaker. The study reports interesting data but suffers from flawed statistical analyses and poor presentation.

### Reviewer #2

- The English needs substantial improvement.
- The results section repeats data that are presented in tables, this should always be avoided.

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# Questions and Answers

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# Thank you



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