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Negotiation on the assessment of research articles with academic reviewers : application of peer-review approach of teaching / Prashant Kumar, Imran Rafiq and Boulent Imam

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Abstract

This study provides an insight into the dominant negotiation processes that occur between the authors of research articles and academic reviewers at the peer reviewing stage. Data of reviewers comments and authors responses on 32 science and engineering based journal articles covering four decision categories (accept as is, accept with minor revisions, major revisions and reject) were collected. A commonly practised peer-review approach in teaching was applied to analyse the data and to identify the key negotiation attributes, their frequency of occurrence, authors' reaction and approach to negotiate with the reviewers. Six main negotiation attributes were identified. Technical quality was the most frequent (31% of all instances) attracting mixed reactions from the authors. The remaining attributes constituted suggestion (20%), explanation (20%), restatement (15%), grammar (13%) and structure (~1%). With the exception of 'explanation' where authors had to counteract to clear misunderstood concepts or contents by the reviewers, the other attributes were of highly collaborative nature and were willingly accepted by the authors. All these negotiations were found to help authors

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in improving the overall quality, clarity and readability of their manuscripts, besides forcing them to rethink about unclear contents. The negotiation trends emerged here can help the academic researchers to improve the quality of their articles before submission to the peer-reviewed journals. It can also provide a link through which their classroom teaching experience involving supervision of peer review negotiations among students can be utilised in writing their research articles and negotiating with academic reviewers. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)