

# Writing energy economics research for impact

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We highlight the importance of effective writing in energy economics for generating impact from research. Our study shows that 20 percent of the future impact of research, measured by subsequent citations to a research article, are derived from non-topic aspects of how research is structured and written.

Our working sample is all articles published in *The Energy Journal* between 1996 and 2013. For these articles we measure citations received after publication as an indicator of research impact. To determine non-topic drivers of this impact we include 19 features of how an article is written.

These features include the initial information that a potential reader sees when deciding what article to read. For this, we highlight the importance of title construction and abstract readability. We next examine the article itself and explore the importance of the readability and writing style of the article. An active voice in writing, use of visual aids, and writing towards the least sophisticated rather than the most sophisticated potential reader of the article, is highly recommended. We also show the importance of references within the article. These should be plentiful (with justification), recent, and include significant references drawn from peer journals, including *The Energy Journal*. Lastly, we show the importance of research teams with experienced authors who have generated research impact in the past.

Our article is written as a guide for future writers and is of benefit to those seeking to publish in energy economics journals, but also those engaged in wider writing in energy economics. Our writing approach blends statistical analysis with prior published advice on writing effectively in energy economics, to offer a refined and tailored approach for energy economics writing. The overall message of the article is that the normal drivers of impact matter - topic, research question, and testing - but also that how research is presented and structured makes a difference in how a research study will be perceived.

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