



# MENTORSHIP TRAINING

Manuscript Writing: Concept Elements  
& Getting started

Jonathan Kayondo, 4<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2020



*Credit: Stack Cartoon vector*

# Ms concept note: The What?

## What is an Ms Concept note?

- A brief outline of the key aspects of your Ms prepared before embarking on the full writing
- Provides an idea of the planned Ms/ direction

# Ms concept note: The What cont..?

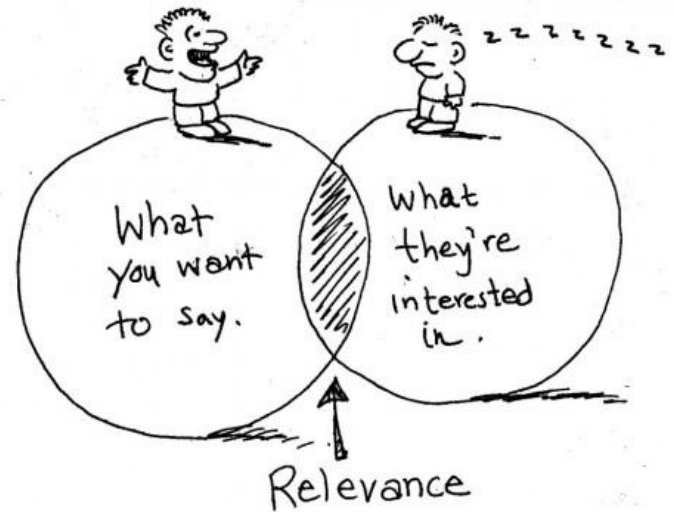
## Ms Concept note components

- Comprise:
  - Proposed Ms/study topic
  - Ms topic rationale
  - Data collection methods used
  - Required data analyses
  - Required data visualizations/ presentations
  - Writing/publication strategy & timelines e.t.c.

# Ms concept note: The whys?

## Why compile an Ms Concept note?

- Helps with gathering feedback/guidance from colleagues/co-authors before delving too deeply into the writing
- Desired feed back on:
  - Relevance
  - Feasibility
  - Worthiness of Ms topic
- Helps save time by enabling focusing writing effort to the absolute essentials



# Ms concept note: The whys cont..?

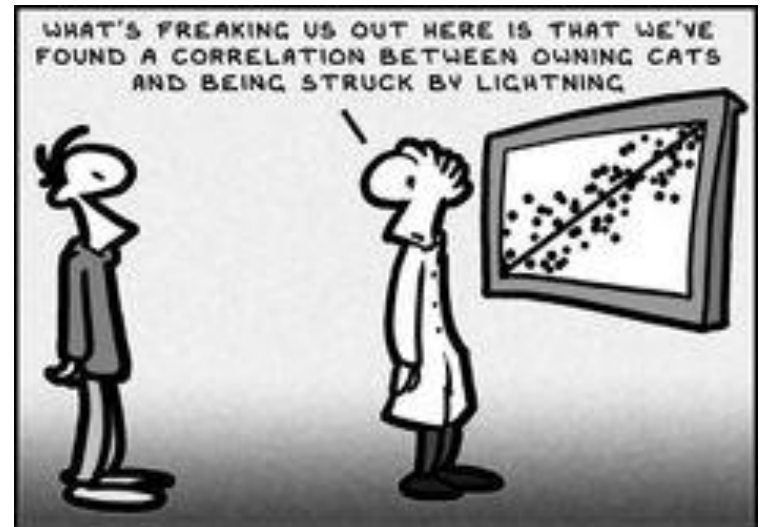
## Why compile an Ms Concept note?

- Helps with assessing readiness, data completeness, e.t.c.
- Helps with identifying the key needs before embarking too deeply into the writing
- The appropriate stage to identify authorship roles and contributions

# Key Section Elements of a Manuscript Concept Note

# Introduction-1:

- What is your Ms topic/ study area about and why?
  - Provide context of your study problem
  - Sets of logically constructed argument about the problem to be addressed by the findings/objective of the planned Ms study





# Introduction-2:

- Key aspects:
  - Describe rationale for the topic/study area
  - Explain how it makes important contribution to the field or advances knowledge
  - State the research question clearly
  - Explain the theoretical framework the study is based on

# Background-1:

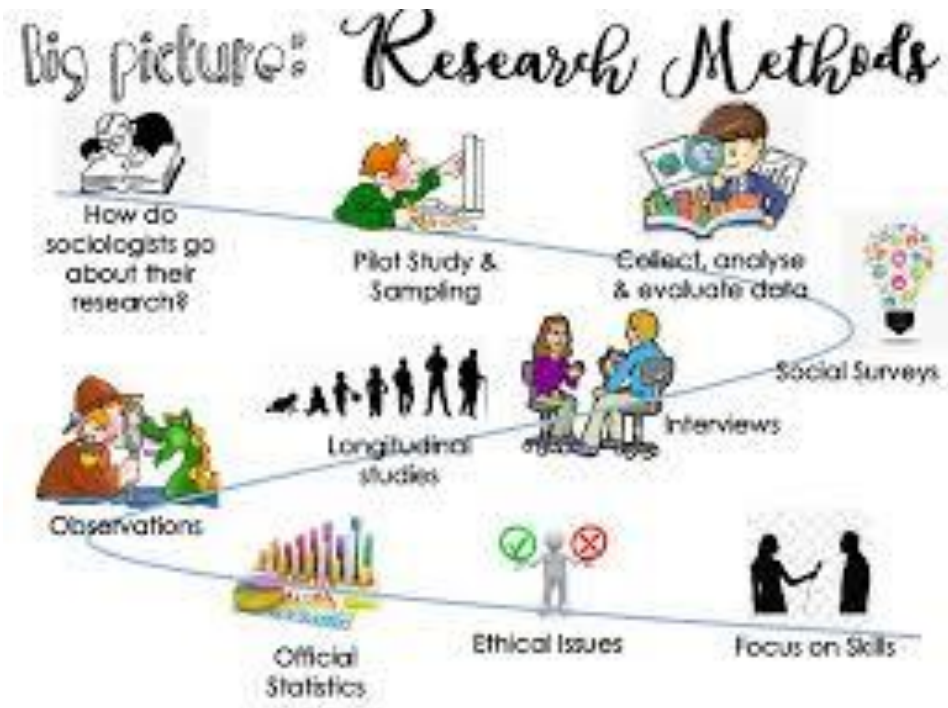
- Provide some background of the problem or issue your research aims to:
  - Understand or resolve
  - Cite some studies/ literature to support your arguments

# Background-2:

- Key aspects:
  - A statement explaining the theoretical framework the study is based on including **any hypotheses**
  - A statement/s summarizing current state of knowledge on the topic, citing a few studies as deemed appropriate
  - NB: Don't review yet all studies ever published on the topic-just the main ones.

# Methods-1:

- A few statements describing what was or will be done/ when, where, and how in context of the selected Ms topic and hypotheses:
  - Must be very specific to your study
  - Data collection instruments- was it:
    - a survey?,
    - field observations,
    - lab experiments?
  - Setting/ environment

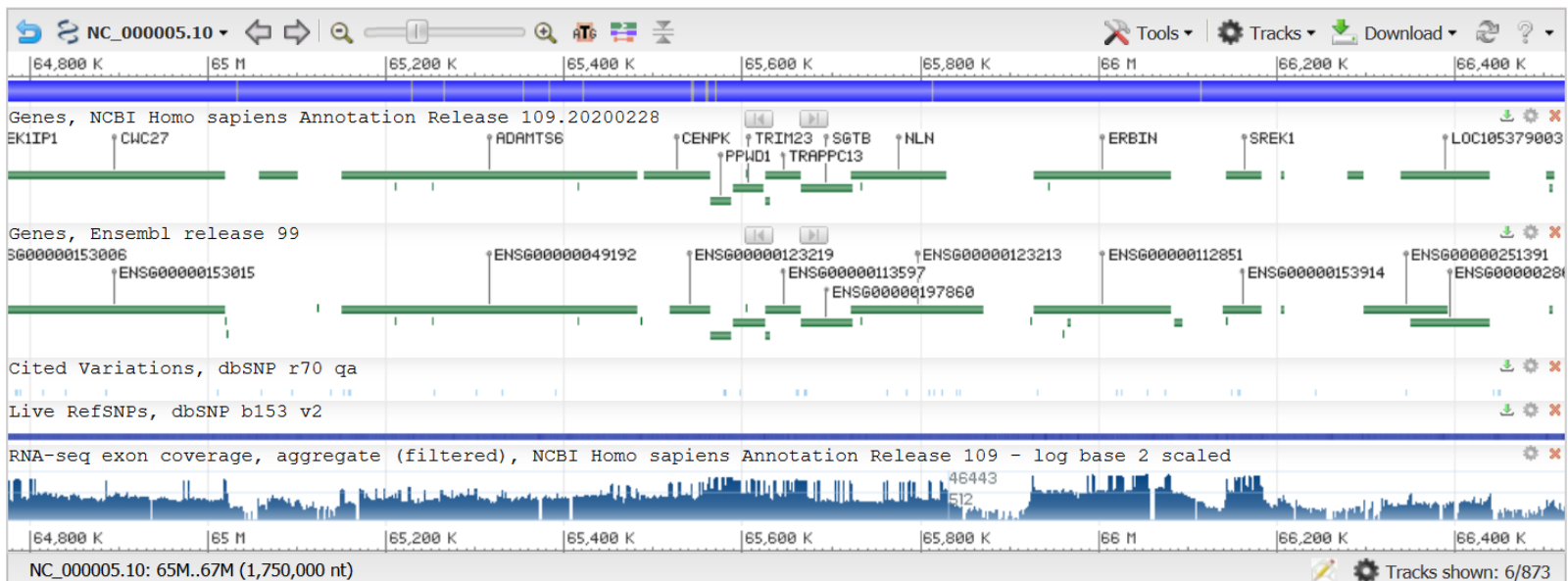


# Methods-2:

- Key aspects:
  - Some details on methods, techniques, instruments
  - Sketch of experimental design/ set up if possible
  - Some support on the validity of the analysis methods and instruments
  - Planned analysis methods and programs and why they have been chosen
  - Any required supplementary support (Resources or expertise)

# Results-1:

- A few statements made in the context of the selected Ms topic describing:
  - What you intend to find out
  - how to project/display it



*Credit: NCBI Genome Data Viewer*

# Results-2:

- Key aspects:
  - Some highlight on what expected to be the primary results/findings
  - What will be peripheral findings
  - Statements on how the result outputs will be displayed
    - Tables, charts, figures e.t.c.
  - Any additional requirements (further experiments or technical support)

# Writing & publication strategy-1:

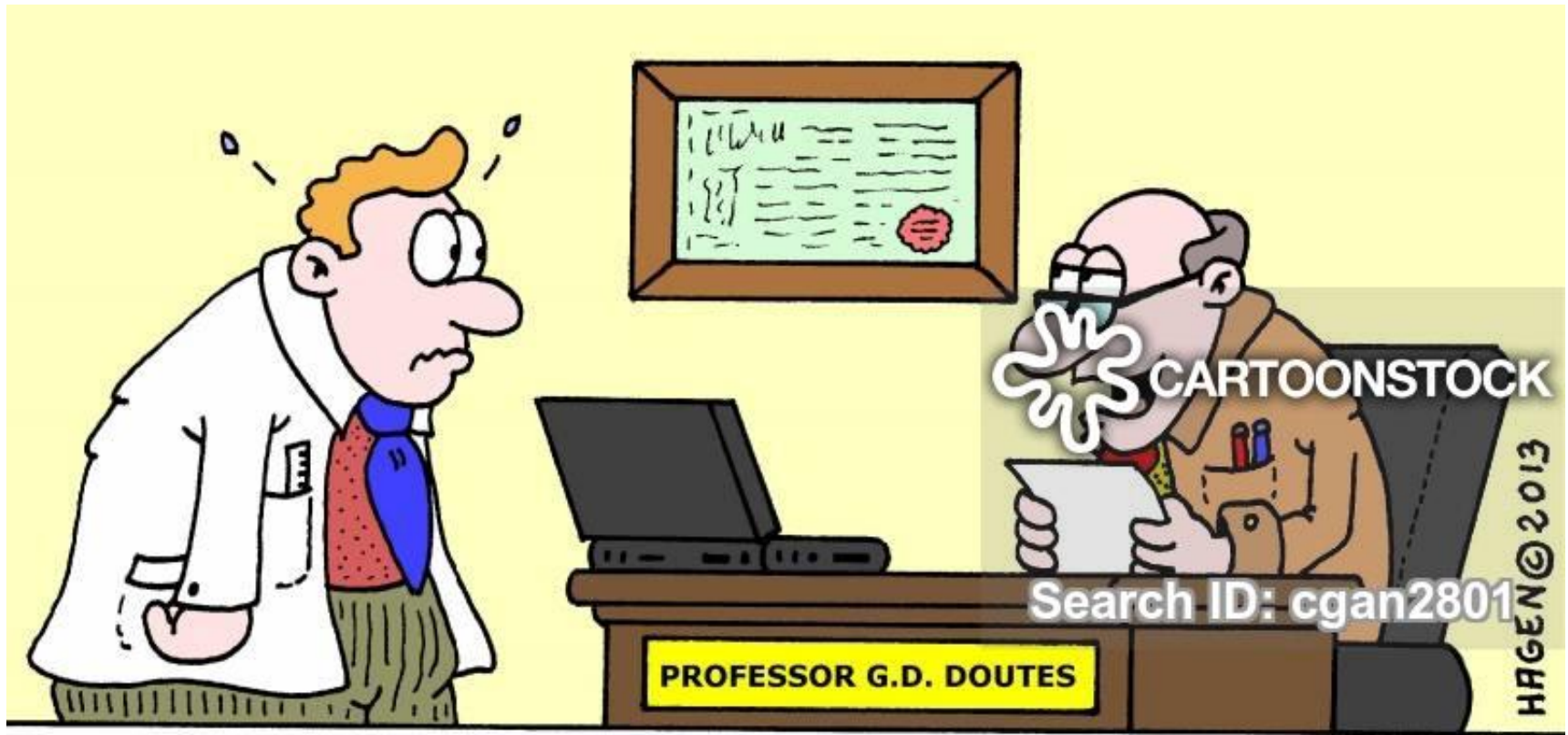
- Considerations
  - Who will be involved and contributing what?
  - What is the target journal?
  - Who is footing the publication costs?
  - What are the time-lines?



# Writing & publication strategy-2:

- Key aspects:
  - Propose authorship and roles here in terms of section contributions(could be actual drafting, subject matter expertise, statistical support, ms review e.t.c.)
  - Propose time-lines key writing milestones/targets to set it rolling-e.g:
    - Planned dates for 1<sup>st</sup> draft, 2<sup>nd</sup> draft and submission

# Getting Started



**Good try Dr Brown, but an editorial in your Chess-Club Newsletter is not what I would call a peer-reviewed journal publication...**

## The Steps-1

Could be:

1. Look through the data sets you have
1. Pull out potential ms topics to focus on
1. Identify some research questions that can be answered, or tool or method that can be shared
1. Write a concept on a particular topic / research question chosen for sharing with co-authors/ mentors/ supervisors.

## The Steps-2

Could be..cont..:

5. After fine-tuning concept- divide up the task of writing- as per roles
5. Create a google drive space for the Ms effort-and in there deposit all the required writing resources- e.g. reference articles, data sets etc.

# Good luck on your authorship journey



May you never need to defend your scientific paper as vigorously!



May you be spared from bothersome reviewers!

*Credit: CartoonStock*