

## EDITORIAL

### “And Now, the Time Has Come . . .”

The *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* (fondly known as *JOHP*) has been in existence for 10 years now, and it has been a privilege and a pleasure to serve as its editor for the past 6 years. During that time, I have had the opportunity to watch developments in the field of occupational health psychology, as well as the operation of the journal, and this is an ideal opportunity to share some thoughts about both.

#### *JOHP* Comes of Age

Despite the fact that the journal is still in its early stages, it is with real pleasure that I can report that *JOHP* is alive and well. Over the past six years, more than 100 articles have been submitted to *JOHP* each year. Although editorial decisions rejecting manuscripts are never easy or fun, it is worth noting that generally between 20 and 30 high-quality manuscripts have been published per year. On average, authors have received feedback on their manuscripts within eight weeks of submission.

One further aspect of the journal that is especially pleasing and worth sharing concerns the international nature of *JOHP*. Examining the content of the journal will reveal that despite the fact that *JOHP* is published by the American Psychological Association, approximately 50% of articles published in *JOHP* originate from outside of North America; likewise, there is very strong international representation on the editorial board and among the reviewers. This faithfully reflects the growth and diffusion of the field of occupational health psychology and its flagship journal and suggests a very positive future for occupational health psychology research. One last indication that *JOHP* has now come of age is that I have recently received confirmation from ISI that the journal will soon be included in their data on citation information and journal impact.

#### Observations on the Field of Occupational Health Psychology

Having had the opportunity to read all the articles submitted to *JOHP* over the past six years, I have thought a lot about the state of occupational health psychology, trends in the field, and the research that is likely to make the greatest advances in the future. Allow me to share just a few thoughts. I have chosen to limit myself to what I regard as the most intriguing and pressing conceptual and methodological issues, in an effort to bring greater attention and future consideration to them.

First, the title of the journal, since its inception, has been *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. Yet a cursory examination of the journal's content during my tenure shows that it does not actually focus on occupational health psychology. Instead, the factors most likely to be included in research are those that focus more on work stress and strain or

the absence of work stress and strain (e.g., absenteeism, boredom, depressive symptoms, effort–reward imbalance, emotional behavior, fatigue, financial difficulties, incivility, injuries, job loss, job strain, lack of resilience, negative affect, noise levels, overtime, posttraumatic stress disorder, role stress, sexual harassment, trait anxiety, work–family conflict, and workplace violence).

These topics are undoubtedly important, but they do not necessarily reflect occupational health psychology. I cannot help but think that one of the next major advances in the field will come from research that conceptualizes and operationalizes a fuller range of occupational *health* psychology. I suspect that recent advances in the area of positive organizational behavior and positive psychology might be especially useful. I have no doubt that this shift will require more than one article, most likely from more than one researcher or group of researchers, and I encourage readers to take up this challenge in their future research.

Another intriguing issue is that the overwhelming majority of occupational health psychology research remains quantitative and survey-based, derived from cross-sectionally collected self-report data. Through this methodology, a significant body of knowledge has been developed. However, I have no doubt that knowledge in the field will be enhanced significantly by a move toward a methodological focus that emphasizes the use of well-controlled intervention studies within organizations; given the nature of organizational field research, both experimental and quasi-experimental designs have an important role in such research. Not only would this extend the body of knowledge on occupational health psychology, but the results from organizationally based intervention studies will also expand the extent to which this knowledge is useful to employees and the organizations that employ them. Such research would, of course, benefit from multiple methods and researchers familiar with the context in which they are conducting and framing their research—comments such as this, however, should never be seen as calls for objective measures, longitudinal data, or mixed-method research merely for their own sakes.

### Thank You!

Being an editor, one quickly learns just how much of a journal's success is owed to the many people who work so hard to keep the journal functioning. First and foremost, I express my gratitude to the six people who served as associate editors during the past six years. Initially Joe Hurrell, Chaya Piotrkowski, and Steve Sauter and later Mike Frone, Paul Spector, and Lois Tetrick each made meaningful contributions to *JOHP*. I know I went to them for reviews too frequently, yet they never balked, and they were always available to give sage advice. Second, *JOHP* benefited immeasurably from the reviewers, who offered their expertise and time for precious little reward. It really is true that *JOHP* simply could not function without their contribution. Third, I have been fortunate to have five incredible people work with me as editorial assistants: Anthea Zacharatos, Kate Dupré, Alysha Williams, Erin Reid, and Amy Christie. Those who

know me well or have seen my office will recognize that the absence of administrative disasters is largely a credit to their diligence and dedication. Fourth, Queen's School of Business graciously provided funding for the running of the editorial office throughout the past six years. Fifth, Kathie Baker from the American Psychological Association was always available to assist the editorial assistants and me, as were Carolyn McLaughlin and Leigh Sauter. Kurt Leininger provided invaluable support as *JOHP* moved into the electronic era. Last but by no means least, the existence of any academic journal depends entirely on a group of dedicated researchers who choose to share the results of their efforts through the journal. I hope that their trust in the editorial process was always upheld and owe them a substantial debt of gratitude.

#### On a Personal Note

I would be remiss if I did not grab this opportunity to express my real gratitude for being allowed to have served as editor of *JOHP* over the past six years. During this time, I have been inspired by interacting with all those involved in the various aspects of putting a journal together. I come away from this experience personally enriched by the quality, the values, and the dedication of all these people.

#### And Now, the Time Has Come . . .

It is now time to relinquish editorial responsibility. In doing so, it is a professional and personal pleasure to turn the reins over to Lois Tetrick, incoming editor of *JOHP*. I have known and respected Lois for two decades and am convinced that she will take the journal to new heights. I look forward to supporting Lois and her editorial team, and I know you will continue to support both Lois and *JOHP* by continuing to submit the results of your research to the journal, readily agreeing to review manuscripts for the journal, frequently citing articles published in *JOHP* in your own research, and, of course, ensuring that both you and your institutional library have a subscription!—Julian Barling