Editorial: Five Years In

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It has been five years since we launched *Personnel Assessment and Decisions* (PAD). In my introductory editorial (Highhouse, 2015), I said that PAD was founded on the belief that research publication in IO needed to be faster, leaner, and more accessible. I also wanted articles that would be relevant and readable. Specifically, I noted that:

"…we need a journal that publishes research that advances the field, and is of interest to both scientists and practitioners. The open-access format enables practitioners and international scholars to download research articles at will. The format also eliminates the prohibitive costs associated with traditional journals. There are no costs to readers or authors" (p. 1).

I believe that we are well on our way to achieving these goals. The journal has published 63 articles by 219 authors—33% of them are practitioners. 48% of the articles have at least one author who works in an applied setting. As I write this in mid-November of 2020, the journal has 47373 downloads by 2830 institutions in 167 countries. It has truly global reach. By far the most downloaded article has been "Technology in the Employment Interview: A Meta-Analysis and Future Research Agenda" by Blacksmith et al. (2016). Although it has the advantage of being published in 2016, it also happens to be the most downloaded article in 2020, and the most downloaded in the past 30 days!

We have published special issues on workplace discrimination, advanced technologies, and applications of decision theory. And, we have two special issues in progress: one on implications of impression management and one on the future of policing. The special issues address important workplace and societal topics and have been quite popular. We are always interested in hearing your ideas for future special issues (shighho@bgsu.edu).

Less is More

We welcome articles that make contributions to theory; at the same time, though, we do not reject articles for insufficient theoretical contribution. As I said in my first editorial, motivating hypotheses requires reason and logic grounded in the existing literature. Theory testing has its place, but not all studies benefit from theoretical window dressing. I agree with Sackett (2020) who recently observed about IO psychology, "I believe we can shorten papers substantially with little loss."

The philosophy for reviews is similar. When an article is sent out for review, our reviewers are asked to keep them concise, focusing on major issues, concerns, and improvements. Our goal is to be decisive about an article's disposition, and I have asked action editors to retire the tired phrase "high-risk revision." Our approach with a revise-and-resubmit invitation is to develop an article toward its full potential, not to require that authors convince us of its worthiness.

Reproducibility

Relatedly, recent concerns about reproducibility are well-founded, but I think it is important to note that we begin with the assumption that authors are not trying to get away with something. We believe that the vast majority of scholars earnestly desire to be proud of what they present to the world.

We recommend, but do not require, pre-registering articles. The pre-registration process has become simpler,[1] and I have personally found that it keeps me vigilant about thinking through design and analysis issues in advance. In general, we encourage authors to adequately power their studies via good sample size decisions, good measurement, and (where appropriate) valid manipulations.

Impact Factors

We are not expecting a high impact factor at this point in the life of the journal, but we would like to at least have one—please! Although we have been successful with listing in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ.org), our last follow up with one of the major indexing companies resulted in the response: "Unfortunately, I do not have a timeframe I can provide you with." Stay tuned.

We have been told by some scholars that their institutions (or regional authorities) do not support submitting to journals that lack impact factors. This is unfortunate for all stakeholders. For those who would like to build a case for impact, we can point to the broad international reach, the exceptional editorial board, and the recent article in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Highhouse et al., 2020) showing that a survey of SIOP members viewed PAD to be similar in prestige to more established journals

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1 This process is greatly simplified by free services such as AsPredicted.org, which makes pre-registration as simple as possible (http:/datacolada.org/44).

such as *Journal of Personnel Psychology* and *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.

No matter how well-established PAD becomes, it will never have a flashy impact factor. According to Sackett (2020): "All else equal, the more 'O' you slant, the higher the citation rate." We do not slant very O (see Table 1). Impact factors for excellent I-side journals such as *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* and *Human Performance* pale in comparison to their O-side counterparts, such as *Leadership Quarterly* and *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, which have substantially bigger audiences. This is why Sackett cautioned against making comparisons among scholars' *h* indexes in sub-interests of vastly different size. The same caution should be made about comparing journal impact factors.

Gratitude

In reflecting on the first five years, I am filled with gratitude toward those who made this happen. The creation of the journal was a fortunate convergence of events, including: (1) the fearless leadership of Deb Whetzel as IPAC president, along with forward thinking executive board members like Reid Klion, Michael Blair, Jeff Feuquay, and others; (2) the financial support of the legendary Harry Brull; (3) the BGSU library who provided journal hosting expertise as well as the website using Digital Commons software; (4) the BGSU psychology department which supported two consecutive managing editors: Zoe Zhang and Melissa Albert; and, especially, (5) an exceptional group of associate editors and board members who were willing to sign on to this reputationally-risky endeavor. Special thanks to Dennis Doverspike who is handling far more than his share of the editorial duties as section editor of Measurement and Measures.

Finally

I asked the board members to complete some sentences regarding how they and others they know view PAD as a journal (Table 1).[2] I hope that their comments will inspire you to continue to read PAD, and even inspire you to consider submitting your work for publication. That would ensure that PAD is even stronger five years from now.

TABLE 1.
Sentence completions by some of PAD's board members.*

PAD is a place for…	… research that I like to consider when preparing talks for practitioners, [and] when responding to questions from practitioners…
	… studies that need to be disseminated (e.g., practical value; addresses a gap; replications) but are not being picked up by other journals.
	… translational science. It's a place where high-quality science talks to engaged practitioners.
	… stuff that can't or won't be accepted by JAP or PPsych, but seeks an applied audience.
	… no-filler, no-nonsense practical research.
	… applied psychologists to publish solid work without being asked to develop long, rambling "stories."
	… articles that take a chance, that are exploratory, that provoke, and inspire.
The type of articles published in PAD are…	… not overloaded with such a heavy emphasis on theory building that the practical relevance suffers.
	… a blend of high quality deductive and inductive studies advancing practical findings to guide both the science and practice of personnel psychology/HRM.
	… practical and clearly written.
	… ones with a heterodoxy slant.
	… conceptually and empirically rigorous, scientist-practitioner balanced, and accessible.
	… interesting and rigorous, with special issues that are intriguing and informative.
	… innovative and thought-provoking; articles that might not always fit the more high-impact selection-related journals but do deserve to be published.
	… pushing the boundaries of innovation; don't have to be incredibly theoretical.
	… strong, empirical, and without pretense.

2 They were kind enough not to write things like "PAD is a last resort."

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED).

PAD's niche is…	…making peer-reviewed selection and assessment research accessible for everyone.
	…research areas that are not the current hot ones but add value in many ways.
	…serving practitioner-scientists on the front lines of evidence-based personnel decision-making.
	…providing information relevant to practitioners that describes why the issue is important, what the data show, and conclusions that can change how we think of an issue.
	…personnel side with a focus on civil service but without limitations.
	…societal trends and innovative recruitment and selection techniques with strong practical relevance.
	…use-inspired research that is useful for practitioners.
	…the "I" side of IO with the huge advantage of open access.
	… selection research. PPsych has really ceded its role as a primary outlet for selection research. PAD has filled that void.
	…selection and assessment with a greater focus on decision making

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