Welcome to the Society for Occupational Health Psychology Newsletter!

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Editor's Welcome

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Note from the Editor

Welcome to the seventh issue of the *Newsletter of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology*. Our line-up of articles again shows variety. Jonathan Houdmont, in our Across-the-Pond feature, wrote a history of our sister organization, the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology. Bengt Arnetz contributed the first of two Research Resource articles, his covering low-intensity stressors in first responders. Since low-intensity stressors can serve as a backdrop for high-intensity stressors, the article is relevant to many researchers who study stress at work. Jennifer Wallin, Kathleen Considine, and Jeannie Nigam contributed the other Research Resource article, which also continues our series related to activities at NIOSH. It covers concerns involved in engaging businesses and their employees in research. This issue continues our series on graduate programs in OHP. Readers will see an article by Cristina Rubino and Aleksandra Luksyte on the University of Houston's program. This issue also includes an article about my experience creating a *Wikipedia* entry devoted to OHP. Chris Cunningham contributed a report on the Society's budget.

The sixth issue of the *Newsletter* carried a feature written by Lindsay Sears, Kalifa Oliver, and Hannah Peach about the impact of the recession on a metropolitan area in South Carolina. Unfortunately, in producing the *Newsletter*, a sizable chunk of the article was omitted. This still-timely article has been reprinted, in full, in this issue.

For six months, Maria Karanika-Young, Leigh Schmidt, and I have been asking occupational health psychologists, in these pages and elsewhere, to complete a survey bearing on the journals that are important to the field of OHP. In this issue we publish the results of the survey.

I encourage our readers to consider writing an article for a future issue. If you have an idea for an article, please start by emailing a proposal to me at ischonfeld@ccny.cuny.edu.

Thank you!

Irvin Sam Schonfeld, Editor
City College of the City University of New York

Guidelines Regarding the Submission of Articles

If you would like to submit an article to the *Newsletter of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology*, please consider these guidelines. We welcome variety in the articles we publish. Articles you submit can bear on practice, research, policy, or teaching. If you are a newcomer to the field of occupational health psychology, a student, or a veteran researcher or practitioner, we encourage you to submit an article. Our aim is to publish two newsletters per year. **Please email your proposals and submissions to: The Editor, Irvin Sam Schonfeld, ischonfeld@ccny.cuny.edu**

Short reports

You can submit a short report (1300 words or fewer) on research findings, practice, or policy issues. You can also submit a brief literature review. When you write a report for the newsletter, please consider that our readership is diverse, and ensure that the report will be accessible to readers outside your specialty area.

Reports about education and organizations

The newsletter staff welcomes articles about teaching OHP at the undergraduate or graduate level. We also welcome articles about your organization's OHP-related activities. If you are engaged in an OHP-related activity as part of a solo practice, and you think the newsletter's readership would be interested, consider writing an article about the activity.

Other reports

The newsletter also publishes conference announcements, continuing education announcements in OHP or related areas (e.g., epidemiology, statistics, etc.), or reports on national or international news that pertain to OHP.

Solutions for Engaging Businesses and their Employees in Research Studies
Research Resource

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Introduction

Applied research in the workplace is critical to understanding the health and safety concerns of employees, and has contributed immensely to helping assure safe and healthy work conditions. In comparison to household surveys, workplace surveys face substantial and unique challenges. In 2002, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), in conjunction with Research Triangle Institute (RTI), initiated the National Employee Well-being Survey (NEWS) to examine the relation between work organization and employee health and well-being with a strong focus on depression as an outcome. The study examined the relation of traditional job stressors (e.g., excessive workload) and nontraditional stressors (e.g., harassment, discrimination, and responsibilities outside work) to depression.

The purpose of this article, however, is to discuss the barriers the project team encountered in recruiting businesses and participants as well as the measures that were taken to overcome the barriers. Based on our experience in conducting this study, we provide suggestions that may help researchers anticipate and overcome barriers to gaining access to business and recruiting employees.

Identifying and Contacting Businesses

At the start of business recruitment, eligible respondents consisted of employees who were (a) hired within the past 6 months, (b) between the ages of 18 and 40, and (c) working in support staff positions. Companies that were eligible for the study needed to be large enough to have a reasonably sized pool of new support staff in order to make data collection efficient and provide the needed sample of 2,500 employees. We initially planned to recruit 20 large businesses, but a number of unexpected events (e.g., downsizing, hiring freezes, and mergers) resulted in smaller-than-anticipated samples of eligible employees at each business. It was, therefore, necessary to target additional businesses in order to recruit the desired number of employees.

Telephone contacts with sampled businesses were initiated by RTI Institutional Contactors (ICs). The calls were sequenced in three stages: Verification Call, Point-Of-Contact (POC) Call, and Business Recruitment Call. The objective of the Verification Call was to confirm that the business was eligible to participate in the study. Next, the IC obtained the name of a knowledgeable POC and spoke with him or her in order to introduce the study and its objectives. The IC explained the role that the POC would play in the study, and described a package the POC would receive in the mail following the call. The final call was the Business Recruitment Call during which the IC confirmed receipt of the package, reviewed the role of the POC, and attempted to secure a commitment for the organization's participation (through verbal informed consent).

Gaining Business Cooperation

Approaching businesses to recruit subjects presented substantial and unique challenges. While the business entity can be perceived as the "gatekeeper" to employees, objections presented by businesses are unlike those posed by household gatekeepers. For example, businesses are concerned about privacy from an entirely different perspective than individuals. Businesses may have concerns about the potential for damaging their reputation if questionable working conditions are revealed in the research results, or they may have proprietary programs they prefer to keep private to help them maintain an edge in recruiting and retaining employees. The process of responding to those objections is unlike what would be done when contacting a household. The recruiter needs to partner with an organization and a hierarchy, not just with an individual. Businesses, furthermore, have routinized means of communication (e.g., monthly meetings) that the research team must accommodate.

The ICs experienced difficulty in gaining access to appropriate contacts at selected businesses. When a POC was identified for a selected business, the ICs also encountered reluctance to participate due to concerns regarding lack of resources, legal requirements, confidentiality, and the perceived burden of the data collection effort. Follow-up contact with the POCs was difficult and, as a result, the ICs had difficulty confirming receipt of the information packet and securing participation.

The most frequent barrier encountered once a POC was identified was the businesses' desire *not* to have a site visit for employee recruitment. To address this concern, we revised our protocol to offer additional options to the site visit. Businesses could take advantage of a number of recruiting options including: (a) recruiting packets (similar to what a respondent would receive in person) mailed directly to the employee at an address provided by the business; (b) receiving a bulk supply of packets that the business would distribute among eligible employees; (c) having the project team e-mail employees an electronic version of the packets, and (d) access to a project website where all necessary forms could be downloaded. The project website also served as a way to legitimize the study since both the POC and employees could pull up the site while on the phone with project staff to view details about the study including a message from the primary investigator, information about IRB approval, and the Federal Assurance of Confidentiality.

Recruitment of Employees

As stated above, the recruitment of subjects began by identifying eligible companies and then enlisting the companies' support in identifying eligible employees in select occupational categories. The companies were further relied upon to notify employees of on-site recruiting meetings and to distribute materials (e.g., study brochures and consent forms) describing the project. In short, employees were able to indicate consent to participate through a variety of mechanisms: (a) on-site recruiting meetings held by NIOSH, (b) by accessing and responding through the project website, or (c) by mailing the employer-distributed consent form to RTI. Additionally, prospective participants were able to call the project team directly to discuss concerns and obtain additional information concerning the study. All participants were assured that their names and responses were protected by a Federal Assurance of Confidentiality and would not be disclosed without their consent.

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Research Triangle Institute
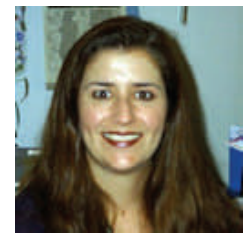
Kathleen Considine
Research Triangle Institute

Jeannie A. S. Nigam
NIOSH

> "… businesses are concerned about privacy from an entirely different perspective than individuals. "

Solutions for Engaging Businesses and their Employees in Research Studies (cont'd)

(Continued from page 2)

Gaining Employee Cooperation

There are several strategies that can be employed to maximize employee cooperation rates. Prior to calling them for interviews, we sent advance letters to participants to describe the study and how the information they provide would be used. These letters served as a reminder that the recipients had agreed to participate, assured them of the confidential nature of their responses, and reminded them of a monetary incentive for participation (which has been shown to improve response rates).

It is also helpful to obtain multiple modes of contact information for respondents if the study is longitudinal. During the consent process, in addition to asking the respondents to provide multiple contact phone numbers (e.g., work, home, cell phone), they were asked to provide the name and phone number of an alternate person to contact in case interviewers were unable to reach the respondent using any of the original numbers provided. These procedures are especially beneficial when following a sample that may leave their jobs, move, and/or change phone numbers over the course of the study.

Due to the nature of the recruitment process, respondents readily volunteered to participate, and we didn't experience many challenges when the call was made to conduct the interview. Nevertheless, prior to the initial call a lead letter was sent to remind the employee that an interviewer would be calling soon to complete the interview. If the proposed interview time was inconvenient, an alternate time was scheduled based on the employee's availability. About 79% of all the interviews were completed in less than 10 call attempts, which is much lower than the average. In the rare case of a refusal, a targeted letter was sent which stressed the importance of the study and one additional contact was made with the employee by an interviewer specially trained in refusal conversion procedures. If the employee still refused then the case was closed and no further contact attempts were made.

Additional Suggestions

An important step all business surveys should consider is conducting a pilot study prior to data collection in the main study. Implementing a pilot study prior to the main study can help predict the length of time needed to establish a POC within a business, determine the length of time required to gain corporate approval, and identify other potential barriers that could affect participation rates among businesses. Post-recruitment debriefings with businesses and project staff provide additional insight into the reasons for business non-response and what might be done differently to improve business and employee cooperation in the future.

Conclusion

A sizeable body of literature exists on conducting health-behavior surveys. Yet, this article makes a unique contribution to the literature by describing the combined challenge of conducting interviews with individuals and recruiting participants through businesses. Based on our experience with this study, we recommend the following:

(1) Allow sufficient time at all business recruitment stages. It can take months for a POC to navigate all the necessary channels to gain approval for the organization's participation.

(2) Business recruiters need to be experienced in order to move past gatekeepers, automated systems, and call screening devices. Household surveys are often pre-tested before the main study is implemented. Businesses should not be treated any differently.

(3) Plan for a pilot study to test your procedures and inform data collection in your main study.

(4) Offer businesses and participants more than one avenue to participate (i.e., on-site/in-person recruiting meetings, contact through the web or distributed hard copies of study materials).

"The recruiter needs to partner with an organization and a hierarchy, not just with an individual."

Extra, Extra, Read all about it!

Irvin Sam Schonfeld

The City College of the City University of New York

At the end of April and the beginning of May, while preparing to publish the sixth issue of the *Newsletter*, I got in touch with the unit of APA that publishes *PsycINFO*. I wanted the *Newsletter* to be covered. Covered, that is, by another APA database that is housed in the office that publishes *PsycINFO*. APA publishes *PsycEXTRA*, a database devoted to the so-called "gray literature," or documents such as "newsletters, newspapers, magazines, and technical and annual reports, government reports, consumer brochures, standards and more" (Introducing PsycEXTRA!, 2004). APA launched *PsycEXTRA* in 2004 for the purpose of creating a database devoted to difficult-to-find documents that are nonetheless of value to researchers and practitioners. Much of the literature is outside the peer-review world. Of course, *PsycINFO* covers peer-reviewed journals.

PsycEXTRA includes citations and abstracts and, when possible, entire articles. APA partnered with EBSCO in creating *PsycEXTRA*. The database is available at APA PsycNET through an annual site license and at many university libraries.

PsycEXTRA now covers the *Newsletter of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology*, including back issues.

Reference

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Across the Pond:
A History of the European Academy of Occupational Health

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"But a dream's just a dream in one empty heart. It takes more than one to rev it up and go. So let's get it running, we're two for the road."
— Bruce Springsteen

In the early 1990s, Raymond, Wood, and Patrick's (1990) call for training in a new discipline, which they named "occupational health psychology" captured the imagination of a band of academics and practitioners on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In North America, enthusiasm for the new discipline led to the creation of a regional representative body for the discipline: the Society for Occupational Health Psychology (SOHP). On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, in parallel to North American developments, Raymond and colleagues' call paved the way for the emergence of the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology (EA-OHP). This article charts the evolution of the Academy, describes its raison d'être, and sets out possible future directions for its activities.

Historical emergence

In 1987 Tom Cox (University of Nottingham, United Kingdom) founded what was to become the first scholarly journal dedicated to the discipline of occupational health psychology. *Work & Stress* invited submissions on a variety of topics concerned with work, health, and organizations, and soon established itself as an academic publishing outlet of choice. Following the initial success of the journal, Tom observed growing international enthusiasm for the new discipline. With some foresight, he realized that in the same way that a stool requires three legs of equal length for stability, the long-term sustainability of occupational health psychology would be facilitated by progress on three strands of activity: research, education, and professional practice, and that an organization would be required to shape developments in each.

Tom initiated two activities. First, he developed a curriculum for a master's degree in occupational health psychology. The 12-month full-time program opened in 1996 at the University of

Nottingham and continues to operate today. Having established master's level educational opportunities in the discipline, Tom turned his attention to the development of a European representative body. In 1997 discussions commenced between the University of Nottingham and the departments of Occupational Medicine at Skive Syghus and Herning Syghus (Denmark). Those discussions led to the establishment of an organizing committee, empowered by an enabling document signed in 1998, dedicated to creating "an institution [that is] urgently needed in Europe to bring together and support those concerned for research, teaching and practice in relation to psychological, social and organisational issues in occupational health, and to promote excellence in such activities" (European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology, 1998). The Academy was formally constituted in 1999 at the First European Workshop on Occupational Health Psychology in Lund, Sweden, organized by the Universities of Lund and Kristianstad. In the years immediately following its inception, the Academy operated out of the Institute of Work, Health & Organisations in the care of a team led by Tom Cox and actively supported by a pan-European team of individuals and institutions.

From the start, the Academy's activities have operated around three working groups: research, education, and professional practice. Each is chaired by an occupational health psychologist with expertise in the area; the current chairs are, respectively, Annet de Lange (the Netherlands), Stavroula Leka (United Kingdom), and Peter Kelly (United Kingdom). Over the years these working groups have provided a forum for individuals to discuss topics of importance to the development of occupational health psychology in Europe. In recent times the Academy's strengthened financial position has permitted the introduction of a small grant program. Members are invited to apply for funds to support research, education, and professional practice.

Conference activities

Without a doubt the highest profile of the Academy's activities is its conference series that offers a metaphorical campfire for all to gather round. Conferences have been held in Lund, Sweden (1999); Nottingham, United King-

dom (2000); Barcelona, Spain (2001); Vienna, Austria (2002); Berlin, Germany (2003); Porto, Portugal (2004); Dublin, Ireland (2006); and Valencia, Spain (2008); with future events scheduled for Rome, Italy (29-31 March, 2010) and Zurich, Switzerland (Spring, 2012). The success of the conference has developed exponentially; attendance has grown from approximately one hundred delegates at the first conference to many times that number at more recent gatherings. Over the years the demographic makeup of delegates has changed; whereas the early conferences were almost exclusively attended by academics, recent conferences have attracted practitioners, postgraduate students, and local occupational safety and health specialists keen for exposure to the discipline. Along with the APA/NIOSH/SOHP biennial *Work, Stress, & Health* conference series, the Academy's biennial conference constitutes a key part of the occupational health psychology calendar. SOHP and EA-OHP work collaboratively through the forum provided by the International Coordinating Group for Occupational Health Psychology to ensure the coordination of conferences; from 2010 onwards each will hold its conference in the spring of alternate years.

Publishing initiatives

The Academy regards the publication of works on research, education, and practice in occupational health psychology as vital to its outreach activities. To these ends, an historic agreement was reached in 2008 with the publisher Taylor & Francis that enabled all Academy members to receive a free personal subscription to *Work & Stress* which, since the year 2000, has officially been associated with the Academy. This move served to enhance access to literature that had previously largely been the preserve of those with access to institutional libraries. A similar agreement has been reached between the SOHP and American Psychological Association with respect to the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. Since January 2009, members of each organization have been entitled to join the other as an International Affiliate Member for a minimal fee and, in doing so, receive a subscription to both journals at a fraction of the face value. Other Academy publishing ventures have included the conference proceedings (available at eaohp.org) and …

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Across the Pond (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4) … an annual book series that operated from 2006 to 2008 (available at nup.com).

In 2009 the international publisher Wiley-Blackwell commissioned the first volume in a biennial book series *Contemporary occupational health psychology: Global perspectives on research and practice*. Due to be launched at the Academy's 2010 conference in Rome, Italy, and published by Wiley-Blackwell on behalf of the EA-OHP and the SOHP, the biennial series aims to (a) publish authoritative, "stand-alone" reviews in the field of occupational health psychology; (b) publish new empirical research, where it is appropriate to do so, to enable contributors to advance the field in ways that are not typically possible within the confines of the traditional journal article—this applies particularly to developments in professional practice, education, and training—; (c) attract contributions from an international constituency of established experts that, in time, will become citation classics; and (d) include topics that are of contemporary relevance to the interests and activities of occupational health psychology researchers, practitioners, and post-graduate students. In sum, the series aspires to nothing less than to emerge as *the* major reference work of choice

for those with an active interest in occupational health psychology. Also published by Wiley-Blackwell and scheduled to be launched at the Academy's 2010 conference is the first student textbook of occupational health psychology. Endorsed by the Academy, the book constitutes the first attempt to produce a textbook for students of the discipline that seeks to provide an overview of key theoretical perspectives as well as research and practice.

Where next for the Academy?

The year 2006 marked a turning point in the Academy's history. Following legal negotiations initiated two years previous, the Academy was awarded charitable status under English law. This development empowered the Academy with legal status, and elevated it from a loose network of like-minded individuals to an externally regulated organization whose activities are governed by an appointed board of trustees. Charitable status served to enhance financial transparency; the Academy is required to submit an annual financial report to the Charity Commission that is available for public scrutiny. Most importantly of all, charitable status ensures that the Academy's activities are organized around fixed-term elected positions rather than named individuals; going forward, as its "founding fathers"

gradually disengage, the Academy's long-term sustainability will be contingent upon such an arrangement.

As the organization enters its second decade and a new generation of occupational health psychologists emerges, a colossal but rewarding task awaits those who seek election to the various Academy committees and become involved in its activities. The Academy, along with its North American counterpart, has a responsibility to facilitate and shape the continuing evolution of research, education, and practice in occupational health psychology, both regionally and globally. Although it is widely recognized that the integration of activities across these domains is necessary to sustain the discipline, thus far research activity has outstripped developments in education and professional practice. That is a matter for regret; in the absence of formalized career pathways that have their foundation in established education and training provisions which lead to professional recognition, the next generation of OHP practitioners may struggle to establish themselves. It is to the integration of research, education, and practice, with a view towards the discipline's consolidation and establishment as a career of choice that we must now turn if we are to meet further on up the road.

"… whereas the early conferences were almost exclusively attended by academics, recent conferences have attracted practitioners, postgraduate students, and local occupational safety and health specialists keen for exposure to the discipline."

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About the author

Jonathan Houdmont is a Lecturer in Occupational Health Psychology within the Institute of Work, Health and Organisations at the University of Nottingham (United Kingdom). He is director of the Institute's Masters in Occupational Health Psychology and Masters in Workplace Health. He is Executive Officer of the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology and has been the Academy's conference coordinator, having led the delivery of international conferences in Berlin (2003), Oporto (2004), Dublin (2006), and Valencia (2008).

The 2010 EA-OHP Conference will be held on March 29—31 in Rome, Italy.

Low-Intensity Stress in High-Stress Professionals

Research Resource

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First responders (e.g., emergency responders, law enforcement professionals, military personnel, and disaster relief workers) play a vital role defending the nation, participating in peacekeeping operations, and maintaining civil society (Benedek, Fullerton, & Ursano, 2007). They are, however, at risk of exposure to myriad traumatic stressors with potentially adverse effects on their mental and physical health, occupational and social functioning, and job performance (Marmar et al., 2006; Arnetz et al., 2009). But amidst all the high-intensity, job-derived stressors, they are also exposed to low-intensity, or low-grade, stressors. The term low-grade stressor refers to non-life-threatening experiences. These may include stress caused by preparations for future critical incidents, concerns about a colleague's or team's ability to perform duties, organizational problems, and work-family conflict.

Although common but far less dramatic than traumatic events, low-intensity stressors can potentially be remedied with the help of organizational change or interventions. Furthermore, evidence is mounting that low-intensity stressors may adversely affect the first responder's mental well-being. The body's psycho-physiological response system, which includes the cortisol-secreting adrenal glands, is designed to manage short-term and defined threats, not sustained, difficult-to-define, low-intensity stressors. First responders may prove less resilient when exposed to high-intensity, short-duration job stressors because their resources are drained by background low-intensity stressors.

Only a limited amount of data bearing on low-intensity job-derived stressors among first responders is so far available. The little research that exists has targeted organizational and supervisory factors and, to a lesser degree, work-family conflict (Heart, Wearing, & Headey, 1993). Furthermore, despite many similar job duties among first responders, research has typically targeted specific groups (e.g., police and military) rather than examining stressor similarities across groups (McCreary & Thompson, 2006).

As part of a larger multi-year research effort concerning stress, health, and performance, my colleagues and I carried out structured focus-group interviews with a total of seventeen first-line, non-supervisory first responders representing all major branches of Swedish first response agencies, including police, defense, Coast Guard, and EMS. We wanted to find out a number of things about this sample:

- The extent to which they attributed a link between health and well-being, on one hand, and job-derived stress, on the other.

- How they defined job-induced, low-intensity stress

- How stress is affected by number of years of experience and prior job- and non-work-related trauma as well as by partners' perceived competence

The focus-group interviews yielded major themes reflecting the job conditions that contribute to low-intensity stress. Some of these themes were anticipated. For example, first responders were concerned about the impact of any organizational change that expands their duties. However, other themes were less obvious. For example, they mentioned the long hours when nothing happens, yet they must remain mentally sharp and prepared to manage the worst possible situation. A firefighter mentioned the challenge of being awakened in the middle of the night and having to go from "0 to 100" in a matter of seconds. Long periods of being physically inactive were also perceived as a stressor by first responders working in undercover surveillance. One respondent noted that "alarms make up 5% of my time....and that is the exciting part, the core of my job." Others found the job exhausting when a whole day went by in which nothing of significance happened. Another theme concerned the setting of high self-imposed standards that frequently resulted in feelings of underperforming.

Not being familiar with a partner's skills was another source of low-intensity stress. No good way exists for establishing the competence and likely behavior of a partner with whom a first responder has not previously worked. Gender was a topic the mixed-gender groups approached with some hesitation. Both firefighters and police reported many ongoing discussions in their departments about the sufficiency of admission tests. For example, were women firefighters strong enough to pull out a heavy male firefighter in full protective equipment trapped in a burning house? Others argued that even male firefighters could not pull out obese firefighting colleagues trapped in a burning house.

Most police preferred mixed-gender teams because they perceived women officers to be better at applying verbal skills to de-escalate heated confrontations with the public. First responders also reported that they felt respect for their profession was decreasing. For example, they saw the public increasingly protesting and questioning their activities. The client/target population was also becoming more threatening, with crimes against first responders more violent. Threats to their families were not uncommon, which caused them to feel less secure. The unpredictability of the situations to which first responders were exposed was also mentioned as a low-intensity stressor.

First responders also discussed how job-induced stressors affected their health, well-being, and off-duty behavior. Difficulties winding down, poor sleep, lack of exercise, and compensatory eating and drinking were common complaints. Furthermore, many participants reported that job-derived stressors resulted in their being more irritated and on edge at home with their families. They also faced difficulties sharing their experiences with significant others who "had no idea about today's realities." Such difficulties further alienated first responders from their families and sources of social support.

A final area of interest was the strategies used by first responders to recover from job-induced, low-intensity stressors. Defusing, i.e., reflecting over the past workday with colleagues, was very common. Exercise, spending time alone in nature, and being involved in various team sports, often as instructors, were also common. So was spending downtime with the family.

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"… low-intensity stressors can potentially be remedied with the help of organizational change or interventions.

Low-Intensity Stress in High-Stress Professionals (cont'd)

(Continued from page 6)

Overall, themes that recurred in the focus-group interviews represented different aspects of security—physical, psychological, and professional. Low-intensity stressors, perhaps typically not part of occupational stress research among first responders, nevertheless play an increasingly important role in the health and well-being of first responders. Most likely, occupational health and stress research involving workers in other industries would benefit by examining low-intensity stressors, which potentially could worsen the effects of high-intensity stressors. We used the themes derived from the focus groups to design a survey of low- and high-intensity stressors, health, and performance among first responders. We plan to distribute the surveys to a larger and more representative sample of first responders. We hope that data from this future study will provide a better understanding of the complex interaction between high- and low-intensity stressors, and their effects on health and performance. What we learn from the future study promises to be useful in designing intervention strategies to improve first responders' health and performance. We are also incorporating these results into a recently NIMH-funded study on the feasibility and efficacy of using imagery training to counteract stress and trauma-related mental and behavioral disorders. The study is being conducted in close collaboration with the city of Detroit Police Department.

Summary

First responders are exposed not only to high-intensity stress, e.g., responding to a 911 call, but also sustained, low-intensity stress. Low-intensity stress occurs, for example, when first responders must be constantly prepared for a dramatic event that rarely or never occurs. Using focus groups, we were able to identify common low-intensity stressors among different first responders, as well as how they perceived the impact of the stressors on their health and performance, and the means they used to recover. This knowledge was applied to the design of a questionnaire assessing low- and high-intensity stressors among first responders as well as health and performance. Occupational health and stress research involving other job sectors could benefit from considering not only the typical work and organizational stressors, but also the less dramatic, but important, low-intensity stressors.

> "The focus-group interviews yielded major themes reflecting the job conditions that contribute to low-intensity stress. Some of these themes were anticipated. … However, other themes were less obvious.

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Safe-in-Sound™ Award for Excellence and Innovation in Hearing Loss Prevention

Claire Slupski
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Hearing loss is a major problem in the United States. One way to address this problem is to reward companies that have excellent programs for preventing hearing loss and to learn from their experiences. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), in partnership with the National Hearing Conservation Association (NHCA), has created an award to be given each year to organizations and businesses with the best hearing loss prevention programs. This award is called *Safe-in-Sound™* and will be presented at the 35th NHCA Conference in February 2010 in Orlando. One award will be given in the manufacturing sector, one in the service sector, and one in construction. An additional award will be given for an innovation in hearing loss prevention, which could be a new product, training program, software program, or other effective idea. For more information on the award and how to submit nominations please see www.safeinsound.us. If you know of any companies with great hearing loss prevention programs, encourage them to apply. We look forward to hearing from you!

Wikipedia, Me, and OHP

Irvin Sam Schonfeld
Editor, *The Newsletter*
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"Danny, what are you doing on the new computer?"

"Dad, I'm looking up an article about *Romeo and Juliet* for my theater class."

"Are you using the *Encyclopedia Britannica* online?"

"No. I'm using *Wikipedia.*"

"What's that?"

"It's an online encyclopedia that readers contribute to. All my friends and classmates use it. I started using it towards the end of high school."

"Is it any good?"

"Dad, it's great. I found all kinds of stuff. You can look up Shakespeare. The Poisson distribution. The role of Grandpa George's Eighth Air Force in Europe during the Second World War. *Wikipedia* even has an article about Hank Bauer, your favorite New York Yankee. It's got something on everything. Or almost everything."

The question I asked my son in 2005, "Is it any good?", was answered for me in an article written by Jim Giles and published in *Nature* that same year. The accuracy of *Wikipedia* stacks up well against the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. *Wikipedia* has the added advantage of being free and easily available from all kinds of platforms (AOL, Mozilla Firefox, Explorer, etc.).

I learned from my son and his friends that high school and college students consult *Wikipedia*, and frequently refer to it in papers they write for their teachers. Sometimes they use it but don't cite it.

It was January 2007. I had been named editor of *The Newsletter* a year and a half earlier. I thought it would be a good idea to create a *Wikipedia* entry for occupational health psychology (OHP). Such an entry could introduce college students, like those at CCNY, the institution at which I teach, to our discipline.

I began by considering the entry points. I weighed industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology and health psychology, and concluded that a good point of entry for a *Wikipedia* beginner like me would be health psychology because that *Wikipedia* entry was, at the time, shorter than the I/O entry. (I say "at the time" because all *Wikipedia* entries are fluid and change as individuals contribute and make adjustments.)

I edited the *Wikipedia* entry for health psychology (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_psychology)—it needed editing—and then augmented the entry by adding a paragraph devoted to OHP. I observed that the health psychology entry included a section near the end that listed doctoral programs in that discipline. The section inspired me to add another section that enumerated doctoral programs in OHP. Some time later, I added a paragraph on OHP to the *Wikipedia* entry on I/O psychology (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industrial_and_organizational_psychology).

However, I was unsatisfied with what I had done. I decided to begin an OHP entry from scratch. I started slowly in May and June of 2008. First, I created an occupational health psychology stub. A stub represents a bare beginning. It includes a couple of informational sentences and sometimes imports an existing *wiki* template. I imported a sidebar template that would run to the right of the text, down the side of the page. This sidebar lists the main divisions of psychology, and allows a reader to pass through from the page I created, via links internal to *Wikipedia*, to articles about the various divisions within psychology (e.g., personality psychology, clinical psychology). I left the stub untouched for about two months; instead I devoted time to augmenting and editing the *Wikipedia* entry concerned with the college at which I teach (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CCNY).

Then in September 2008, I went to work on the OHP entry. Every day I added one or two sentences to the stub or edited what I had previously written. I decided not to do more because I was pressed …

Irvin Schonfeld

The City College of the
City University of New
York

"My enthusiasm for *Wikipedia* has ... taken me around the world."

Wikipedia, Me, and OHP (cont'd)

(Continued from page 8) ... for time. Gradually, the stub grew, and the entry I created was no longer a stub. It became a full-blown entry with *Wikipedia* footnotes. I began to learn the *Wikipedia* syntax in much the same way one learns computer programming. When I made mistakes I either figured out the solution myself, or looked up the right answer in one of the online help facilities.

Then I got into an argument.

I quarreled with one of the *Wikipedia* veterans who frequently navigate the encyclopedia with the help of the *Wikipedia* "watchlist," looking for entries that reflect bad grammar, misstatements, rule violations, and vandalism. I had decided to edit the template for the psychology sidebar by adding occupational health psychology to the list of divisions within psychology. My inserting OHP into the template for the sidebar would allow a college student visiting a different psychology entry to notice our discipline, and with a mouse click pass through to the OHP entry.

The veteran editor reversed my edit, removing OHP from the sidebar. Then I reversed his move. Then he re-reversed my edit. We were engaged in a game of editorial Ping-Pong that lasted several weeks. I was furious (this sometimes happens in *Wikipedia* editing). I am embarrassed to admit that I said some harsh things to the veteran editor on a *Wikipedia* page where editorial disagreements get hashed out.

In the end I lost the argument about the sidebar but discovered an alternative solution. Wikipedia editors tend to be conservative, and reluctant to make changes in longstanding templates, particularly brief ones like the template for the sidebar where there is little room to expand. There is also the larger, more flexibly constructed psychology template that can be placed on the bottom of most psychology entries. I was able to insert occupational health psychology into that psychology template without opposition. Oddly enough, the editor and I later became allies on an unrelated sidebar dispute.

I continued to develop the OHP entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupational_health_psychology). Before going on, I should underline the fact that the two most important kinds of links found in *Wikipedia* articles are internal links, which take the reader via a mouse click to other *Wikipedia* pages, and external links, which take the reader outside of *Wikipedia* to just about anywhere on the Web. As I developed the OHP entry, I placed in the text external links to (a) the journals occupational health psychologists read (e.g., *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and *Work & Stress*) and (b) two important OHP organizations, the Society for Occupational Health Psychology and the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology.

Then I got into a scrape with a second *Wikipedia* editor. By this time, I had learned that *Wikipedia* editors—there are thousands of them—watch *Wiki* pages very carefully; they constitute a kind of DEW line. The editors pounce on rule breakers and writers who add wrong information. One of the rules that this second editor insisted on enforcing is the *Wikipedia* protocol that specifies that wherever possible a writer should place internal links in the text. My placing external links in the text was wrong. She told me that if there are no *Wikipedia* entries for a concept, journal, or organization, I should create stubs for them; I should not pour external links into the text. External links should be placed at the end of a *Wikipedia* entry.

I learned a lot from my earlier editorial conflict. It is better to work things out than to fight. I re-edited the OHP entry a little at a time. For example, I removed from the OHP entry an external link to the journal *Work & Stress*. Then I created a new *Wikipedia* entry for *Work & Stress*. In a third step, I inserted in the place where the external link stood an internal link to the new *Work & Stress* entry. I created 15 separate entries (for 13 journals and the SOHP and the EA-OHP), all of which started life in *Wikipedia* by my having placed external links in the text of the OHP entry. Because the work involved in creating a new *Wikipedia* entry is tedious, I decided to do no more than create one new entry on any one day. The second editor was helpful, directing me to a model that made it easier for me to create new entries for the journals. I also placed external links at the end of each new entry to help put the reader in touch with the world outside *Wikipedia*.

The internal links I agreed to create are part of the vastly larger fabric of *Wikipedia*. Those links make it easy for a reader to move around the encyclopedia, to move back and forth to look up topics. I realized that it is not enough to place links in the OHP entry to take readers to related topics. I made sure to visit a variety of other relevant *Wikipedia* pages (e.g., the existing entry for workplace stress that I had no hand in starting) and insert internal links that can deliver the reader to the OHP entry. My aim was to create a tapestry of links to and from the OHP entry.

All this effort did not dampen my enthusiasm for *Wikipedia*. If anything my enthusiasm grew. I edited and expanded the entry on school violence (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_violence). I continue to use the watchlist to monitor changes in the *Wikipedia* entries I either started or contributed to. The watchlist alerts me when a rare individual vandalizes an entry—relatively few visitors to *Wikipedia* entries are vandals but they do exist. The watchlist makes undoing the vandalism easy, a mere click of a mouse. I also try to improve upon some contributors' problematic writing, including my own past contributions.

I also used my membership in LinkedIn to encourage members of the SOHP LinkedIn group to join my effort to elaborate the OHP *Wikipedia* entry, though without much success.

My enthusiasm for *Wikipedia* has also taken me around the world. I joined the French chapter of *Wikipedia*, and started an entry called "Psychologie de la santé au travail" (http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychologie_de_la_sant%C3%A9_au_travail), the French expression for OHP, making sure to cross-link the English and French OHP pages. Another nice feature of Wikipedia is that one can easily link an entry in one language to parallel entries in other languages.

All this effort began because I decided that I wanted to expose college students like my son, his friends, and the students at City College to occupational health psychology, a new and exciting discipline within the broader field of psychology. Perhaps some of the readers of this article will consider contributing to *Wikipedia*.

References

Giles, J. (2005). Internet encyclopedias go head to head. *Nature, 438*, 900-901.

> "As I developed the OHP entry, I placed in the text external links to (a) the journals occupational health psychologists read (e.g., the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and *Work & Stress*) and (b) two important OHP organizations, the Society for Occupational Health Psychology and the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology."

Occupational Health Psychology at the University of Houston

Cristina Rubino and Aleksandra Luksyte

University of Houston

Background and overview

At the University of Houston (UH), the Ph.D. program in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology offers the option for graduate students to focus on occupational health psychology (OHP). Overall, OHP efforts at the University of Houston are concerned with understanding and improving employee well-being. Lois Tetrick (now a member of the faculty at George Mason University) helped to start the OHP minor at UH when she was program director of the I/O Psychology PhD program. Based on her initiative, and with the collaboration of the UH Department of Industrial Engineering and the School of Public Health at the Texas Medical Center, the program was launched. Being located in Houston, a city with one of the largest and finest medical centers in the world, has further contributed to the program's ability to develop and improve the science and practice of OHP. The program has been supported by the Psychology Department, and has contributed to the department's overall focus on health. The department currently allows graduate students who are enrolled in the I/O Psychology doctoral program to collaborate with faculty outside of I/O (e.g., social psychology) whose research concerns health.

Faculty

Currently, four out of seven of the I/O Psychology faculty at UH conduct OHP-related research and teach courses pertinent to the domain of OHP. Dr. Lisa Penney conducts research on workplace stress, counterproductive work behavior, work-life balance, the role of emotions in the workplace, and emotional labor. Dr. Christiane Spitzmueller specializes in research on workplace stress, and is interested in understanding how the interaction between workplace stressors and individual differences affects workplace incivility. Dr. Spitzmueller, in collaboration with her graduate students, has begun to explore the consequences of migration experiences for work-related health and well-being. Dr. Alan Witt, who also serves as director of the I/O Psychology doctoral program, conducts research on the work-family interface, the role of organizational support, and customer service. Dr. Derek Avery focuses his research on the role of workplace diversity and its consequences for outcomes such as emotional exhaustion and counterproductive work behavior. All faculty members whose research interests encompass OHP-related topics integrate OHP into their teaching and mentoring of graduate students, as well as in their collaborative research efforts with one another and their graduate students. In addition, both graduate students and faculty have collaborated with faculty in other areas of psychology, including Dr. Qian Lu, of the social psychology program, and Dr. Mary Naus, of the clinical program, two faculty members who conduct research on health and well-being.

OHP-related coursework

Approximately half of the graduate students enrolled in the I/O Psychology Ph.D. program take courses bearing on OHP-relevant topics. The courses help the students develop the content expertise needed to conduct OHP-related research. Courses offered include an Introduction to Occupational Health Psychology, Leadership, Employee Attitudes and Surveys, Health Psychology, Employee Motivation, and Withdrawal Behaviors in the Workplace. Furthermore, students are encouraged to take courses in public health, epidemiology, and industrial engineering to gain breadth of knowledge.

Graduate student research

Graduate students actively conduct OHP research. To provide an overview of OHP research efforts, below is a list of projects, both completed and ongoing, that are examples of research at the UH (note that the list is not exhaustive):

- Alex Milam has had a long-standing interest in OHP-related topics since starting graduate school. His master's thesis concerns the role of dispositions in employees' experience of workplace incivility. He presented the findings from his thesis in 2006 at the meeting of the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology in Dublin. He has since published an article based on this work in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.
- Aleksandra Luksyte and Carolina Rivera conducted research on immigration-related stressors (e.g., problems with English language proficiency, legal status, etc.) among Latino laborers. Their findings have implications for the management of the work-family interface among Latino workers. Specifically, they demonstrated that among Latino workers, having supportive and understanding families mitigates the stressor-strain relation. …

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OHP at the University of Houston (cont'd)

(Continued from page 10)

- Cristina Rubino conducted research for her master's thesis on workplace stressors as predictors of healthy and unhealthy eating behaviors among university employees.
- Ari Malka conducted research for his thesis on the role of negative affect in job satisfaction. In collaboration with researchers at the University of Frankfurt, he identified mediating mechanisms through which negative affectivity influences attitudes.
- Kathryn Keeton, Meagan Tunstall, and Cristina Rubino have conducted work on mentoring relationships in the workplace.
- Cristina Rubino, Aleksandra Luksyte, Sara Perry, and Sabrina Volpone conducted research on mechanisms that may explain the job stressor – burnout relation. This research culminated in an article published in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.
- Sara Perry, Kori Callison, and Emily David are working on research regarding the consequences of customer service experiences on employee strain.
- Emily David currently has an R&R under review at the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* examining the effects of supervisor-subordinate racial-ethnic similarity and emotional exhaustion on employee commitment. Additionally, she recently presented a paper at the Academy of Management Conference in Chicago describing how supervisor and subordinate personalities interact to affect subordinate emotional exhaustion.

Applied opportunities

Graduate students and faculty members have collaborated on applied projects through the UH's Center for Applied Psychological Research and a UH collaboration with the University of Frankfurt in Germany. Through the Frankfurt collaboration, a group of students and faculty with OHP interests have, for example, conducted research on workplace harassment for the World Health Organization and research on employee health and well-being for the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Malaria, and Tuberculosis. Other applied activities include work for the City of Houston, ExxonMobil, and Saudi Aramco.

Conference presentations

UH students and faculty have presented their OHP research at national and international conferences, such as the recent Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology conference in New Orleans, this year's European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology conference in Santiago de Compostela (Spain), and at the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology's meeting in Valencia (Spain). At least seven graduate students have also had papers accepted at this year's APA/NIOSH/SOHP Work, Stress, and Health conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Please note that the UH I/O Psychology Doctoral Program is also hosting this year's Industrial Organizational/ Organizational Behavior (IOOB) Graduate Student Conference. The IOOB conference provides a great opportunity for I/O Psychology and Organizational Behavior graduate students to present some of their completed and ongoing research on OHP and other topics. As the IOOB conference is organized and managed by graduate students, all the participants have the opportunity to present their research projects in an intellectually stimulating and non-threatening environment among their fellow students and professors. For more information about the upcoming IOOB conference, visit the following website:

http://www.psychology.uh.edu/
GraduatePrograms/IOP/ioob/index.html

Learn more about OHP at the University of Houston

If you are interested in learning more about OHP at the University of Houston, the I/O Psychology Program Website is a good starting point:

http://www.psychology.uh.edu/GraduatePrograms/IOP/

> "… students are encouraged to take courses in public health, epidemiology, and industrial engineering to gain breadth of knowledge."

Recreation and Wellness Center for
students, faculty, and staff

M.D. Anderson Library

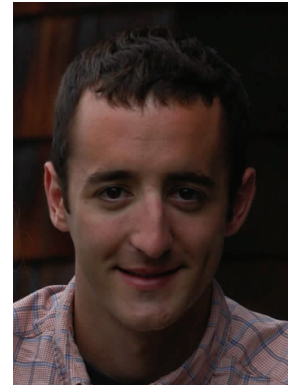## SOHP Treasurer's Report — August 2009

Christopher J.L. Cunningham

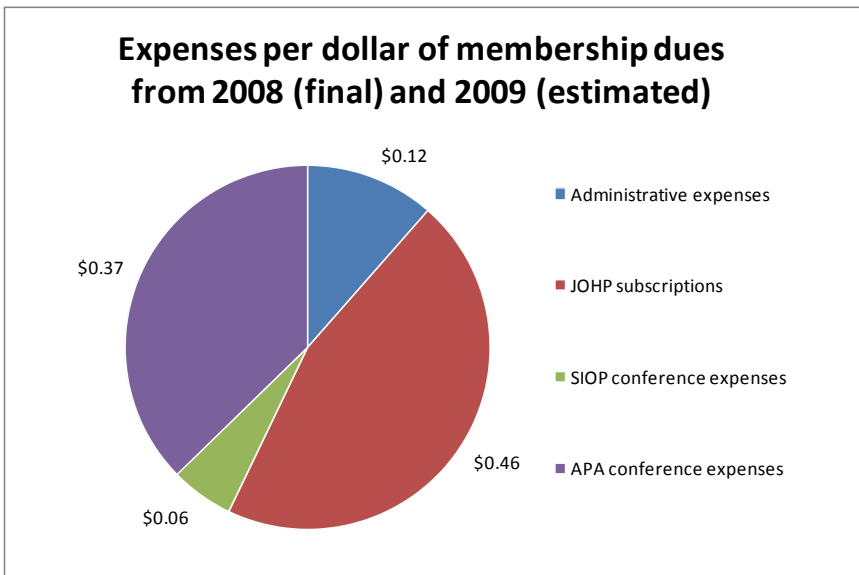The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

As the current secretary-treasurer for SOHP, I thought members would be interested in learning how membership dues are used to support core SOHP operations and member benefits. I have summarized this information by major categories of expenses:

- *Administrative expenses* include recurring costs for SOHP website management, support for joint SOHP-EA-OHP meetings, minor recurring costs for mailings/printing, and bank-related charges

- *JOHP subscriptions* pay for print-versions of the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, a central benefit of SOHP membership

- *SIOP conference expenses* include costs associated with our hosting of the annual SOHP social/networking reception at this annual international I-O Psychology conference

- *APA conference expenses* include all costs associated with (a) our co-sponsorship with Divisions 5 and 14 of a social networking event at the annual APA conference and (b) our efforts in supporting program planning, special conference events, and the SOHP award competition for the bi-annual Work, Stress, and Health conference.

Because our costs as a society fluctuate from year to year, due primarily to the timing of the bi-annual APA-NIOSH-SOHP conference that we help to support, the information that follows is based on data from 2008 (actual) and 2009 (estimated). In 2008, total revenues to SOHP were $5,825.27 and so far in 2009, renewals have totaled $4,360.00. Total final expenditures in 2008 were $2,117.37. For 2009, with the Work, Stress, and Health Conference upcoming, expenditures are estimated to be about $8,119.00. To help you understand how your membership dollars are being spent, here is a summary of expenditures over 2008 and 2009, per dollar of income from membership dues:

Christopher Cunningham

Expenses per dollar of membership dues from 2008 (final) and 2009 (estimated)

- $0.12 — Administrative expenses
- $0.46 — JOHP subscriptions
- $0.06 — SIOP conference expenses
- $0.37 — APA conference expenses

For you pie-chart purists out there, you will notice that these slices total just over $1.00. For those of you who are still reading, this means that for the 24 months of 2008 and 2009 SOHP is expected to bring in $10,185.27 and expend $10,236.59. You might be asking, "How can SOHP possibly stay afloat when our costs exceed our income?" One way we work to ensure the continued survival of SOHP is by managing a small surplus from years when our income exceeds our expenses. This is precisely what we did in 2007 and 2008, and this has allowed us to cover our heightened 2009 costs.

The primary ways of supporting the continued health and functioning of SOHP are to (a) increase the number of members and (b) make sure that all existing members regularly renew their memberships. So far in 2009 our revenues are below where they were last year. If you have not already renewed your SOHP membership, please make sure to do so soon, either directly through the SOHP website or along with your registration to the upcoming APA-NIOSH-SOHP Work, Stress, & Health Conference in Puerto Rico (November 2009). Please also make an effort to let your colleagues and students know about SOHP and its objectives (you can start by pointing them to www.sohp-online.org).

If you have any questions about this brief report please feel free to contact me directly at cjlcunningham@gmail.com. Also, please note that future financial summary reports (e.g., for 2009 and beyond) will be shared during the first quarter of each new year, so they can be based on complete financial records from the previous fiscal years.

Identifying Publication Outlets in Occupational Health Psychology:
An Opinion Survey

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The dissemination of research is a core part of the research process. The proliferation of academic journals can make it difficult for researchers to identify relevant titles, reduce the accessibility of research, or make it difficult to match the message to the audience. Some of the essential criteria that researchers use to decide where to publish their work include the relevance and prestige of a particular journal. As such, a number of rankings of academic journals exist that serve as indicators of journal quality, and in turn, of publication quality.

Researchers commonly use ISI Thomson's journal impact data (http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/science_products/scholarly_research_analysis/research_evaluation/journal_citation_reports), which ranks all journals in the social sciences on the basis of their impact, Anne-Wil Harzing's list of business journal rankings (http://www.harzing.com/jql.htm), the UK Association of Business Schools *Journal Quality Guide* (http://www.the-abs.org.uk/?id=257), and the Australian and New Zealand business schools' *Business Journal Rankings* (http://www.griffith.edu.au/library/support-for-research/reporting-analysis/journal-rankings).

The main criticism of using such databases in the service of research in occupational health psychology is that the volume of research in the relatively new discipline of OHP is small compared to the volume in other areas of psychology. As a result, the impact of journals specific to OHP tends to be smaller than the impact of journals serving larger disciplines within psychology. Consequently, OHP scholars' specialization and expertise will tend to be unfairly reflected in overall evaluations related to their publications.

The over-reliance on journal prestige can be misleading or counter-productive when rankings developed for the social sciences in general or other disciplines are used to evaluate published OHP research. Researchers have developed alternative ways to evaluate publication impact, for example, *Publish or Perish* (http://www.harzing.com/pop.htm) and *Hirsch's h-index* (Hirsch, 2005). These methods evaluate the impact of a particular publication on the field, *once it has been published*. Prior to publication, however, there remains a need to identify the publication outlets mostly used by scholars in OHP in order to minimize delays and maximize publication relevance.

This current study examines the publication outlets considered by occupational health psychologists, as perceived by OHP scholars themselves. It looks at overall contribution to the discipline in order to identify the core OHP journals, and attempts to describe them in terms of theoretical rigor, methodological rigor, and relevance to practice. It also seeks to categorize the titles into core OHP research journals, allied-discipline journals that publish OHP research, and practitioner journals.

Methods

A survey was developed to assess a range of OHP-relevant journals from the perspective of self-described OHP researchers and practitioners. We included as many English-language titles as are available in the area, and selected from a range of existing journal listings in order to develop a repository of titles used by OHP scholars. We also conducted a manual scan of titles referenced in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and *Work & Stress*. At the same time, it was necessary to keep the survey as short as possible. A total of 62 titles were included in the final survey (see Appendix 1, http://sohp-online.org/V72009Appendix1.pdf).

Part 1 of the survey asked respondents to rate the titles on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) as outlets for OHP publications in terms of (i) the journal's overall contribution to OHP, (ii) theoretical rigor, (iii) methodological rigor, and (iv) relevance to practice. Part 2 asked respondents to place the journals into three categories: OHP-research journal, allied-discipline journal that publishes OHP research, and practitioner journal. Respondents were asked to rate only the journals with which they were familiar.

The survey was distributed online. An invitation to participate and frequent reminders were sent via the EA-OHP, SOHP, and Academy of Management Organizational Behavior Division mailing lists as well as through the SOHP and EA-OHP newsletters. The survey remained active for 6 months. In total, 102 responses were returned, of which 65 (63%) were useable (the remainder were deleted due to non-completion). Respondents' tenure in their current organizations ranged from 1 to 31 years, with a mean of 7.05 (*SD* = 6.63). Their involvement in OHP research, education, or practice ranged from 1 to 39 years, with a mean of 9.02 (*SD* = 9.02).

Results

Because respondents could only rate journals with which they were familiar, there was a considerable percentage of missing data (between 21.54% and 98.45%). Respondents' geographical distribution was balanced; 45.1% listed European affiliations, while 41.2% listed a U.S. affiliation, with a small number (5.9%) listing other locations such as Canada, Mexico, Australia, and Africa (the remaining respondents listed no identifying information).
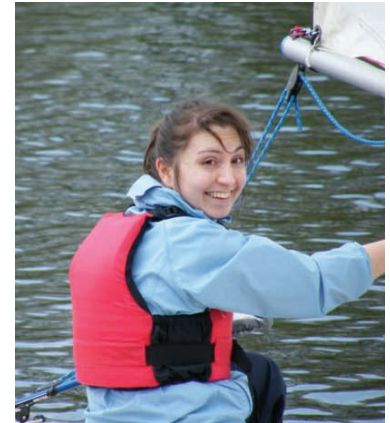
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Identifying Publication Outlets in OHP (cont'd)

(Continued from page 13)

When examining overall contribution to OHP, it was important to take into account not only respondents' ratings of a particular title, but also the number of respondents who had rated that title (a measure of familiarity or the journal's reach). To achieve this, we devised a weighting scheme based on the standardized mean rating (M) and standardized number of respondents who scored a particular title (N), $M + M \times N$ (called the combined measure or CM). We also applied a cut-off of a minimum of 10 respondents rating each title, which resulted in 36 journals included in the analyses (shown with an asterisk in Appendix 1; see the previous page for the web site URL). To assess the strength of the relationship between familiarity and ratings, we correlated M with N and found $r = .34$ ($p < .05$), which supports the case for weighting the scores by the number of people who rated a particular journal. (Readers can also view raw scores in Appendix 2, available at http://sohp-online.org/V72009Appendix2.pdf.) Table 1 presents the 20 journals with the highest scores for overall contribution to OHP based on this combined measure, along with number of respondents, means, SD, sums of all ratings, and SE.

Table 1. The 20 most highly rated titles on overall contribution to OHP, based on the CM score, and their rankings on theoretical and methodological rigor and relevance to practice (based on the M).

	Overall contribution (OC) to OHP						Rankings			
	N	M	SD	Sum	SE	CM	OC (CM)	TR (M)	MR (M)	RP (M)
J of Occupational Health Psychology	51	4.7	0.6	241	0.1	6.0	1	3=	5=	2
Work & Stress	49	4.6	0.6	226	0.1	5.5	2	6=	5=	3
J of Applied Psychology	52	3.6	0.8	189	0.2	3.3	3	1	1	9=
European J of Work & Organizational Psychology	38	3.9	1.0	147	0.1	2.8	4	11=	10=	4=
J of Occupational & Organizational Psychology	37	3.8	0.8	140	0.2	2.6	5	3=	3=	6=
Scandinavian J of Work, Environment & Health	23	4.0	0.6	92	0.2	2.0	6	5	3=	9=
J of Organizational Behavior	37	3.5	1.0	130	0.2	1.9	7=	6=	5=	11=
J of Vocational Behavior	35	3.6	0.8	125	0.1	1.9	7=	9=	8=	15=
International J of Stress Management	23	3.9	0.9	89	0.2	1.7	9	18	18=	11=
Accident Analysis & Prevention	20	3.8	1.0	76	0.3	1.4	10	19=	18=	1
J of Safety Research	12	4.1	0.7	49	0.1	1.3	11	15=	14=	4=
J of Occupational & Environmental Medicine	22	3.6	0.7	78	0.1	1.0	12	19=	18=	17=
Occupational & Environmental Medicine	14	3.7	0.7	52	0.3	0.8	13	15=	12=	19=
Applied Psychology: An International Review	33	3.1	0.8	102	0.2	0.7	14	13=	14=	15=
Stress & Health	12	3.7	1.1	44	0.2	0.5	15=	8	14=	11=
Academy of Management J	45	2.7	1.1	122	0.2	0.5	15=	2	2	14
International J of Occupational & Environmental Health	14	3.6	1.0	50	0.2	0.5	15=	9=	8=	6=
American J of Public Health	15	3.5	0.8	52	0.2	0.4	18	15=	12=	6=
Human Relations	28	3.0	0.7	85	0.1	0.3	19=	13=	17	19=
Health Psychology	19	3.3	0.9	62	0.1	0.3	19=	11=	10=	17=

Note. N = number of respondents who scored that particular journal; M = mean ratings on a 1-5 scale, with standard deviations (SD); Sum = sum of scores of all ratings; SE = standard error; CM = combined measure; TR = theoretical rigor; MR = methodological rigor; RP = relevance to practice. Rankings on OC were based on the CM; rankings on TR, MR, and RP were based on M. Stress & Health was scored by 9 respondents on TR, MR, and RP, but was included here because it was scored by >10 respondents on OC.

We then examined these 20 titles in terms of theoretical rigor, methodological rigor, and relevance to practice as rated by the respondents, and ranked them on the basis of their mean ratings (see Table 1). Appendix 2 (which can be viewed at http://sohp-online.org/V72009Appendix2.pdf) shows the raw data for theoretical and methodological rigor, and relevance to practice (number of respondents who rated each title, mean ratings, SD, sums of all scores, and SE). These rankings do not represent the highest mean ratings on these measures out of all the titles considered, but only the rankings for the 20 titles highest in overall contribution to OHP.

We also asked respondents to place the journals with which they were familiar into three groups. Table 2 reports the percentages of respondents who categorized the journals into OHP research journals, allied discipline journals that publish OHP research, and practitioner journals. Perhaps due to the length of the survey, the percentage of missing data for this part of the survey was high and thus we decided to use overall contribution to OHP (as in Part 1), rather than the OHP research journal category (as in Part 2), as an indicator of the 'core' OHP journals. Finally, we asked respondents to list any additional journals that did not appear in the survey. Twenty-seven titles were suggested (available from the authors).

Identifying Publication Outlets in OHP (cont'd)

Table 2. Categorization of journals into OHP research journals, allied discipline journals that publish OHP research, and practitioner journals. (Only those sorted by at least 10% of the respondents are shown, as reported in parentheses.)

OHP research journals	Allied discipline journals that publish OHP research	
J of Occupational Health Psychology (43%)	*J of Applied Psychology (35%)*	*Health Psychology (17%)*
Work & Stress (41%)	*Academy of Management J (34%)*	*J of Business Psychology (16%)*
Scandinavian J of Work, Environment & Health (20%)	*Academy of Management Review (33%)*	*American J of Public Health (15%)*
European J of Work & Organizational Psychol. (19%)	*Personnel Psychology (28%)*	*European J of Work & Org. Psychology (15%)*
International J of Stress Management (17%)	*Applied Psychology: An International Review (26%)*	*Human Factors (15%)*
Stress & Health (16%)	*J of Organizational Behavior (25%)*	*J of Occupational Psychology (15%)*
Int. J of Occupational & Environmental Health (14%)	*J of Vocational Behavior (25%)*	*Human Performance (14%)*
J of Occupational & Organizational Psychology (13%)	*Human Relations (25%)*	*Leadership Quarterly (14%)*
J of Applied Psychology (12%)	*Psychological Bulletin (25%)*	*Research in Organizational Behavior (13%)*
J of Safety Research (12%)	*Org. Behavior & Human Decision Processes (25%)*	*J of Occupational & Environ. Medicine (12%)*
J of Occupational & Environmental Medicine (11%)	*J of Management (23%)*	*Psychological Methods (12%)*
Occupational & Environmental Medicine (10%)	*J of Occupational & Org. Psychology (23%)*	*Scandinavian J of Work, Environ. & Health (12%)*
	Administrative Science Quarterly (21%)	*American J of Epidemiology (11%)*
	American Psychologist (20%)	*Human Resource Management (11%)*
Practitioner journals	*Organizational Research Methods (19%)*	*Occupational & Environmental Medicine (11%)*
American Psychologist (11%)	*J of Personality & Social Psychology (18%)*	

Discussion

The survey results indicate that the three most highly rated journals in terms of their overall contribution to OHP were the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *Work & Stress,* and the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. The *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology*, the *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, the *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, the *International Journal of Stress Management*, and *Accident Analysis & Prevention* were also among the top ten for their overall contribution to OHP, and most were also classed as OHP research journals.

In terms of theoretical and methodological rigor for those 'core' OHP journals, the *Journal of Applied Psychology* and the *Academy of Management Journal* were placed first, followed by a cluster of titles more specific to OHP and work psychology (e.g., the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *Work & Stress,* the *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology*, the *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology,* the *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health,* and the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*).

With respect to relevance to practice, the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *Work & Stress,* the *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, and the *Journal of Safety Research* were most highly ranked by the respondents.

When trying to identify the best outlets for our work, it is important to balance journal quality with the journal's degree of focus on OHP. As one of the respondents succinctly commented, "[t]he critical challenge in this kind of survey is separating the 'core' OHP journals from the 'good' journals." The titles that were regarded as having much to contribute to OHP are not always the ones that are most highly ranked in terms of theoretical or methodological rigor, or relevance to practice. As anticipated, the main outlets for OHP research were confirmed as the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and *Work & Stress*; both were ranked highly in terms of reputation and quality.

More broadly, OHP publication outlets seem to consist of a group of titles that are more generic but do not specialize in OHP, as well as journals that are specific to OHP. The former consists of journals related to work psychology (e.g., the *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*), some reputable journals in psychology and the social sciences (i.e., the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, the *Academy of Management Journal*), and some specific to medicine, occupational health, and safety (e.g., *Occupational & Environmental Medicine*, the *Journal of Safety Research*). This stands as an acknowledgement that OHP lies in the interface of a number of broader disciplines such as applied psychology, health psychology, occupational psychology, occupational health, public health, and management.

The survey did not seek to assess journal quality – objective ways to achieve that already exist and are commonly used. Rather, it sought to identify the journals used by OHP scholars and relied on their views and familiarity with these titles (also reflected in the similarity of the ratings). The results of this opinion survey can be used to inform scholars' publishing strategies, but would not be appropriate for assessing the quality of the journals surveyed.

Identifying Publication Outlets in OHP (cont'd)

Inevitably, this small study suffers from a number of limitations. Most importantly, we should bear in mind that no significance tests were performed on the data. We do not know (i) whether the differences in ratings are significant and (ii) whether the results represent the views of the larger population of OHP researchers or just of the few who completed the survey. For example, in considering that the US-based *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* was ranked above the UK-based *Work & Stress*, we may be inclined to take small differences in the ratings at face value; this, however, would detract from the potential contribution of the survey. Further limitations include the small and self-selected sample, respondents' selectivity and unfamiliarity with the journals surveyed, and the fact that only English-language journals were considered. Future investigations can seek to make the assessment more rigorous when distinguishing between the core OHP journals, and examining the significance of differences between rankings, and thus boosting the reliability of the findings. It is important to note that had the journals been ranked on the basis of means or sums rather than weighted by the number of respondents who ranked a particular title, the results would have been slightly different. We decided to use the combined measure as a way to balance the available information. Not all OHP researchers may agree on the importance of taking into account respondents' familiarity with the journals – alternatives may exist and we welcome suggestions.

To our knowledge, this small opinion survey was the first attempt to identify the publication outlets used by OHP scholars, both those specific to OHP as well as those that publish OHP research. We hope that the results of this study will be of value to OHP researchers and practitioners alike, and invite colleagues to share their views through the *Newsletter*.

We would like to thank Robert Sinclair and Toon Taris for their constructive and invaluable comments on this survey.
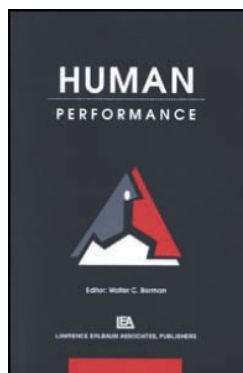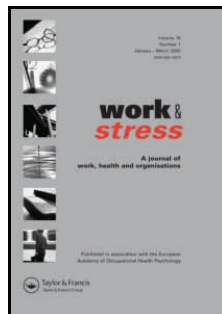
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Global Changes, Local Outcomes: Economic Effects in South Carolina

Lindsey E. Sears, Kalifa Oliver, and Hannah Peach
Clemson University

Polishing their resumes and donning their best business attire, undergraduates at a South Carolina university prepare to meet with their potential new employers at the annual career fair, only to find that none is hiring.

The fact that our nation has fallen on hard economic times is no longer shocking news. According to major economic indicators, this is the worst the United States economy has been since the 1930's. National employment trends, however, cause us to miss problems happening at the local level and the ways in which people are coping with the economic downturn. Second only to Michigan, South Carolina's unemployment rate hit a staggering 11% in February 2009, topping the national average of 8.1%. Between January and February 2009, the number of jobless South Carolinians jumped by 15,100, leaving the state with 241,000 job seekers. The downturn has taken its toll on rural workers too, with some counties almost doubling their unemployment rates since January 2008. In other rural counties, such as Marlboro and Allendale, the unemployment rate topped 17.5% and 23.4% in January 2009, respectively.

Organizational Changes

The recent increases in unemployment can be attributed to the across-the-board organizational belt-tightening that people have seen on the news and witnessed in their own workplaces. Companies have frozen hiring and laid off large numbers of workers in order to survive shrinking markets and protect against further risk in the volatile economy. Between November 2008 and February 2009, South Carolina experienced 255 reductions in workforce leaving 27,471 out of work.

"Our alumni counselor is definitely seeing an uptick in alums who have been laid off," commented a career counselor from one university.

Smaller businesses and start-up companies react to economic pressure in similar ways, but feel the pinch of a dragging economy much more quickly than larger firms, according to a local business consultant. The business consultant has observed the number of small business start-up applications decrease by approximately 25% since March 2008.

"The reality is that the market doesn't leave a lot of room [for smaller organizations]," the consultant stated. " Unfortunately, the best thing that a small business can do is to find ways to cut costs, cut slow hours, relocate, or lay off employees. No amount of advertising is going to encourage people to buy now in this market, so most changes that can help will have to be internal."

One worker at a South Carolina homeless shelter has witnessed these effects first-hand. "Companies are cutting worker hours," she said. "One lady had moved out [of the shelter] and was doing really well. Then her hours got cut so she couldn't afford to live on her own." The internal cutbacks in organizations clearly hurt employees.

Unemployment: Finding a Job

Economic effects trickle down through organizations and can affect employees in multiple ways. People who are unemployed, underemployed, financially stressed, or worried about their job security are prone to stress and stress-related outcomes such as depression, anxiety, strain, anger, fear, and apprehension. There are also physiological symptoms associated with these psychological states, such as increased cholesterol and blood pressure levels, sleep-related problems, increased localized body pains (such as headaches,

back and muscular pains), and increased susceptibility to addictions and addictive behavior.

Those who find full-time employment in their field with their desired level of pay and benefits should consider themselves fortunate given the economic backdrop. Most who have lost their jobs must face a job market that is shrinking by the month.

"I've had limited success in the career search, which has been discouraging," commented one woman living in coastal South Carolina. "I've spent quite a lot of time searching and applying for full-time jobs, but I have kind of let go of the idea."

A career counselor from another university advised, "The jobs that are available are very competitive and you need to stand out to get them."

Along with the workload of constantly searching and applying for work, unemployed individuals also face the psychological problems that often accompany unemployment.

"I was laid off last June and was unemployed for four months," lamented an office assistant working in upstate South Carolina. "It's stressful, so I tried to stay busy. I temped, I substituted, and I stayed on the computer constantly looking for openings. Being unemployed is really hard." Clearly, these problems have negative effects on individuals' psychological health.
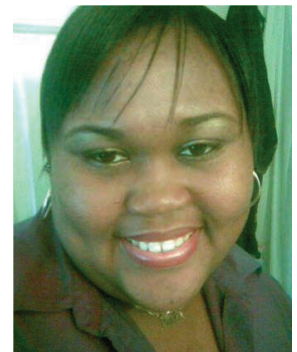
Underemployment: Finding Any Job

In the face of the economic downturn, floods of people have found themselves accepting positions they never thought they would willingly take. When situations become desperate, individuals must settle for contingent or part-time work for which they are often over-qualified and underpaid.
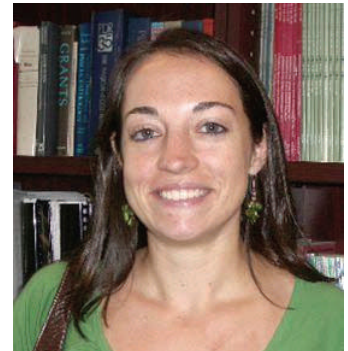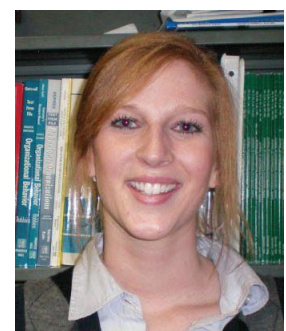
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Photo By Kalifa Oliver

Photo By Kalifa Oliver

Global Changes, Local Outcomes: Economic Effects in South Carolina

In a *New York Times* article highlighting the economic situation in South Carolina, an employment office worker described seeing a recent "heightened sense of desperation. People are just grasping for anything."

"There are some jobs out there," explained one man running a working homeless shelter. "They just aren't jobs that you want. If you're looking for a particular job, you aren't going to find it. It proves that when people come in here and are sincere about getting work, they can find a job. It helps pay the rent."

The same is true for labor force entrants. "I've continued working at my serving job," said a recent college graduate, "But it's at a lower [skill and pay level] than what my education prepared me for."

One college career counselor advises graduating job-seekers to, "be prepared for fewer interviews, more rejections, and perhaps being forced to take a job in which you're underemployed."

Underemployment is not, however, an infallible strategy for landing a job, another counselor warns. "Many industries do not seek employees with higher degrees for entry level jobs because they'd have to pay you more, so you could sell yourself out of the market." Clearly, underemployment is not optimal, but may be the only alternative.

Security: Retaining your Job and Financial Well-being

News of layoffs in the media and rumors of change within organizations generate worry about the survivability of one's organization, and thus, the security of one's job and the income that accompanies it.

"[The economic situation] adds another level of stress and anxiety," explained one woman, "I have to make sure my performance is excellent to please my employer due to fear of losing my job. There is a line of people ready to replace me."

Career counselors echo this strategy and recommend doing your best possible performance, even if you are overqualified or the position is temporary. "By establishing a good reputation, you'll be in a good position when things start to move forward." While ensuring stable employment is a high priority for individuals, the stress brought on by job insecurity is rooted in the threat of lost income.

South Carolinians have already experienced substantial losses of investments and savings, which were compounded by an already-weakened state economy. Even before the economic downturn, South Carolina's poverty rate was ahead of the national average for individuals and families. In 2008, 11.2% of families and 15% of individuals in South Carolina were below the poverty level, while nationally, 9.2% of families and 12.4% of individuals fall below the poverty level. Since income allows people the means to survive, provide for loved ones, and accomplish other life goals, those who have lost money or fear losing income face heightened levels of stress and related outcomes. In the same *New York Times* article, a man was quoted, "It kills me, it eats me up inside," in reference to his recently lost job, as he was relying on his fiancée to pay the bills. "It really bothers me I can't do the things I'd like for her. Sometimes you get where you feel less than a man." These issues can be devastating to one's sense of self-worth at the deepest, most personal level.

Surviving and Thriving

Despite the difficulties faced by South Carolinians, not all individuals are faring as badly as we see on the news; people still manage to survive and look optimistically toward the future. In the face of economic challenges, not all businesses are shutting down, and people have not given up. They are able to preserve hope and find outlets for optimism. So the question is: How do people in South Carolina manage to stay afloat in these difficult times? "I am not affected by the economic downturn. People choose the things they want to spend on, and I refuse to let the crisis affect me, so I just don't worry about it. Everything will work out," said one hairdresser in upstate South Carolina. "You just have to keep on working, keep on smiling and adjust, that's all you can do." A gym owner from Clemson, South Carolina stated, "It gets hard sometimes, but that's the nature of business and the risk you take. I had to increase my prices a little, but I explain why to clients and usually it's okay." A personal trainer chimed in, "You have to plan just a little more, and financially prepare a little more, but you keep working...and hoping because somehow you just know everything will eventually work out." These kinds of sentiments are not rare; others have expressed similar hopes.

At points throughout late 2008 and early 2009, you couldn't have opened a newspaper or turned on a news program without seeing the detrimental effects of the economy on hard-working Americans. In South Carolina, stories of shattered hopes, devastating loss, and personal sacrifice portray a reality for some, and a very real vulnerability for others. There is no doubt that the financial markets have hurt the profitability of business, but there is something to be said for the resilience of the human spirit.

South Carolina restaurant that was forced to close

Photo By Kalifa Oliver

"In the face of the economic downturn, floods of people have found themselves accepting positions they never thought they would willingly take."

Photo By Kalifa Oliver

Recommended Readings

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ABOUT SOHP

The Society for Occupational Health Psychology is a non-profit organization with the purpose of engaging in activities to instruct the public on subjects useful to the individual and beneficial to the community. These efforts are achieved (1) by obtaining and disseminating to the public factual data regarding occupational health psychology through the promotion and encouragement of psychological research on significant theoretical and practical questions relating to occupational health and (2) by promoting and encouraging the application of the findings of such psychological research to the problems of the workplace.

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