Celebrating 50 years, 50 years of knowledge sharing and learning from a field moving forward

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Introduction

At the end of the 50th anniversary year of this journal, we would like to take this opportunity to look back over the 49 volumes, 190 issues, and 1,191 articles that have preceded this year. As an applied field, human resource management (HRM) is closely embedded in the social, legal, and economic context in which the phenomena of interest occur. The historical roots of both practice and scholarship in HRM have been thoroughly traced by scholars (e.g., Kaufman, 1999, 2008). As a profession and function that emerged from the desire to mitigate industrial unrest, and to promote productivity and to enhance the quality of working life through the application of behavioral science, HRM has grown alongside the ever-evolving legal and regulatory environment surrounding the employment relationship. Over the years, the profession and the scholarly field have coevolved, with one informing and influencing activity in the other, although sometimes not so successfully as we would wish (Rynes, Colbert, & Brown, 2002; Rynes, Giluk, & Brown, 2007).

The journal Human Resource Management (HRM) has played a significant role in the landscape of academic journals in the field and has had the opportunity to publish articles on groundbreaking topics by many of the thought leaders in the discipline over the course of the last half-century. In reviewing that body of work, we set out with the following questions: Where did we come from? How has the work we publish changed over the years? What trends are discernible in content, method, and scope of the work?

“We build too many walls and not enough bridges.”
Isaac Newton

HRM is a bridge journal. The vision for the publication is to be a place where authors from diverse disciplines can write about people management, very broadly speaking. Traditional HRM topics such as recruitment, selection, compensation, and training, and related but broader concerns such as organizational decline, Japanese management, and corporate entrepreneurship (to name just a few), all fall under the umbrella of work published in HRM during the last 50 years. Authors from all over the world share points of view that open up our thinking far beyond the traditional human resource management domain. Special issues have focused the HRM reader on topics that may not be found in
a traditional HR textbook, such as HRM in small and medium-sized enterprises (2003, Volume 42, Issue 4), HRM in the military (2007, Volume 46, Issue 1), and HRM and knowledge processes in organizations (2009, Volume 48, Issue 4). This is what we hope to see more of in the next 50 years. As the Isaac Newton quote suggests, we want no walls; we want to bridge disciplines and people. HRM has a proud tradition of reaching out to academics and practitioners as well as senior consultants (Rynes et al., 2007). The journal opens its pages to the world of HRM, which is broad and rich with insights. When this is done, bridges are needed; people need to talk to each other about topics that are new.

In the review presented in this article, we begin to see that over the last 50 years, HRM has successfully evolved through a rich bridge-building process. The editors have laid the groundwork for a journal that can address both rigorous, academic requirements and the needs of the real-world manager. Our goal in this article is to summarize what the field has learned from the many authors who have contributed their work to the journal.

**Methodology**

We began our review by examining every article in all the issues published since Volume 1, Issue 1 in 1961 up to Volume 49, Issue 6 in December 2010. In this 50-year period, the journal published 1,191 scholarly articles, plus numerous editorials, guest editorials, book reviews, and interviews. For the purpose of this review, we focused on scholarly articles, which includes the executive forum and practice articles that were especially frequent in the early days of the journal, while it was still called Management of Personnel Quarterly. We recorded information about each article. In addition to the citation and author information, we also recorded the topic, any keywords used, the general research question or stated purpose of the article, and whether it was conceptual or empirical, practice-focused, or a review of the literature. For empirical or descriptive articles, we also recorded the methodology used, the sample, and the context of the study.

Our review of the published literature suggests there were four quite clear stages in the life of the journal in the first 50 years. The period 1961–1971 may be described as a “practice-focused” period in which the emphasis is much more strongly on practice over the creation or testing of theory, which is a preoccupation of more recent years. The period 1972–1982 may be called a “theory development” period in which we observe the gradual evolution of norms with respect to reporting of research, the application of scientific methods, and the testing or building of theoretical frameworks. The period 1983–2000 is very clearly a period in which authors and editors alike focused on “strategic HRM.” A very deliberate focus was adopted by then-editor Noel Tichy, and this is an orientation that has played its part in the changing nature of HRM as a field of study and as a profession. Finally, the most recent period, 2001–2011, may be referred to as one involving “globalization of HRM.” The reasons for these characterizations will become clearer with insights about the changing nature of the journal and its content in the following paragraphs.

**Topics of Interest**

A part of the story of the evolution of HRM content is observed in the topics and reflected in the choice of keywords. We coded the topic of every article published and also recorded all of the keywords, where present. Because keyword choice is quite inconsistent, at least prior to the establishment of the electronic submission system in 2005, we also coded each article for topic. However, since there are conceptual overlaps in topics, and articles often use multiple keywords, it is difficult to create an objective or quantifiable description of content. Therefore, our approach here will be necessarily impressionistic. Having said this, clear themes do appear to emerge across the four periods.

**1961–1971: Practice-Focused**

The first period (1961–1971) during the life of the journal is characterized by almost no internationalization, a heavy emphasis on
practice-focused papers, relatively modest empirical work, and a lack of standardization in the scholarly work that is presented. The very first article, by Eugene Emers (1961), was a conceptual piece on how managers might assume a more vigorous leadership role. As the first article, it set the tone for the journal going forward. The dominant themes for articles published during this period were leadership and supervision, training and development (including management development), labor relations, and employee motivation. Close attention to industrial relations issues and management and leadership practices that could mitigate some of the challenges posed by unions is a dominant theme characterizing the context from which HRM as a field has emerged. Concern with what management skills were required and how these could be developed to benefit both employers and employees best were a focus of the published work during this early period of the journal’s life.

The first period reflects the era following the peak of the US labor movement in the 1950s. Ever since this time, union representation in the United States has been in decline. The focus on industrial relations issues during this period reflects a search that had started many years earlier, for a better way to manage organizations that might promote productivity, innovation, and industrial efficiency, and reduce conflict, strife, and exploitation of power by both sides of the industrial relationship (e.g., John Commons). Although this was also the era of much equal opportunity-focused employment regulation in the United States (e.g., Equal Pay Act, 1963; Civil Rights Act, Title VII, 1964; Executive Order 11246, 1965), there were only two articles that focused on discrimination in employment: Purcell (1962): “Management Versus Jim Crow” and Northrup (1964): “Equal Opportunity and Equal Pay.” Perhaps the lag between enactment of the various laws and regulations associated with equal employment rights on the one hand and scholarly writing on the subject on the other hand reflected the delayed impact of these laws upon employment practices of the period. However, in the second period, we see a greater attention to this familiar theme.

1972–1982: Theory Development

The second period in our analysis runs from 1972 until 1982. The year 1972 is a clear break point in the history of the journal because this is the point at which the name was changed from Management of Personnel Quarterly to Human Resource Management. This change in title belies a shift in focus from labor relations and personnel to manpower, organizational behavior, employee education, and the effective utilization of human resources observed in the field as a whole (Connellan, 1972). Among the topics covered, the standout trend during this period is equal employment opportunity (EEO) and diversity-related issues (Albrecht, 1978; Burack & Pati, 1974; Cohen, 1974, 1976; Fogen, 1979; Fox & Renas, 1977; Golombok, 1977a, 1977b; Harel & Cottledge, 1982; Herbert & Yost, 1978; Higgins, 1977; Linenberger & Keaveny, 1981; Missirian, 1978; Pati & Reilly, 1977; Posner & Schmidt, 1982; Raizada, 1981; Slevin, 1973; Staudohar & McCluney, 1974; Work, 1980). Clearly, this reflects the slightly delayed impact that the new legislative context had upon the profession, and the challenges it faced in the 1970s.

A second trend is the scholarly analysis of increasingly advanced HR practices that were becoming prevalent during the period. Some of these, like management by objectives (MBO) (e.g., Aplin & Schoderbek, 1976; Aplin, Schoderbek, & Schoderbek, 1979; Carvalho, 1972; Hollmann, 1976; Kleber, 1972; Mayer, 1978; Odiore, 1974; Schuster & Kindall, 1974; Sokolik, 1978; West, 1977), performance appraisal (e.g., Cohen, 1980; Edwards & Goodstein, 1982; Fisher & Thomas, 1982; Kahalas, 1980; Kearney, 1978), and employee participation in decision making (e.g., Leidecker & Hall, 1974; McDaniell & Ashmos, 1980; McDonnell, 1976; Melcher, 1976) were not strictly new practices but became subjects of great interest during this period. Scholars contributed deep descriptions of these tools and their implementation, theorized on how they might impact behavior, and, on
occasion, empirically analyzed this impact (e.g., Edwards & Goodstein, 1982; Fisher & Thomas, 1982).

A third trend is a move away from purely descriptive, practice-based articles and an increased influence of industrial psychology and organizational behavior research approaches to HRM issues. Coupled with a broad interest in improved quality of work life, this scientific turn is evident in articles on job performance and motivation (e.g., Deci, 1973; Mantell, 1973; Monczka, 1973; Morton, 1975; Reif, 1975; Ruch, Hershauer, & Wright, 1976; Rummler, 1972; Tucker, 1972), behavior change (Alander & Campbell, 1975; Beatty & Schneier, 1972; Patten, 1974; Plax & Lacks, 1976; Rogers, 1973; Ward, 1972; Wilson, 1973), job enrichment (e.g., Alber, 1979; Monczka, 1973; Patten, 1977), and employee stress management (e.g., Ford & Hartje, 1978; Norton, Massengill, & Schneider, 1979; Ogilvie & Porter, 1974; Quick & Quick, 1979; Rogers, 1975), among others. Throughout this period, there is also an increasing formalization in terms of the presentation of scholarly articles toward consensual standards for structuring and presenting scientific results.

A fourth trend at this time lays the foundations for the emergence of the next period in the life of HRM, the strategic HRM period. This is exemplified by a growing attention to manpower planning (Bassett, 1973; Burack, 1977; Walker, 1972, 1974), HR accounting (Flamholtz, 1973; Fleming, 1977; Savitch & Ehrenreich, 1976), and strategic issues more generally (Briscoe, O’Neill, & Cook, 1982; Devanna, Fombrun, Tichy, & Warren, 1982; Henderson, 1977; Tagiuri, 1980). These were certainly not the first strategically focused articles in HRM; in fact, strategic issues have been present in this journal since its earliest days (e.g., Vetter, 1964). However, there was a growing interest during the 1970s and early 1980s that resulted in a significant transformation to the journal in 1983.

1983–1999: Strategic HRM

The beginning of the third period in the life of HRM is clearly signposted by the editor, Noel Tichy, with the following statement in the Editor’s Note (1983a, p. 1): “This is the inaugural issue of a newly focused Human Resource Management. The journal’s focus will shift dramatically to be strategic with the aim of fostering communication and dialog among scholars and executives around human resource management concerns.” In addition, the journal was now to be published by John Wiley & Sons. The new editorial board was striking in several respects. It had grown from 4 members to 20 members, and included numerous leading scholars, such as Mary Anne Devanna (Columbia University), Lee Dyer (Cornell University), Charles Fombrun (University of Pennsylvania), Jay R. Galbraith (Jay Galbraith Associates, Inc.), Douglas T. Hall (Boston University), Rosabeth Moss Kanter (Yale University), Steven Kerr (University of Southern California), Peter Lorange (University of Pennsylvania), Ian C. MacMillan (New York University), David O. Ulrich (University of Michigan), and Andrew H. Van de Ven (University of Michigan). The strategic orientation of many of these scholars, and the work subsequently published in the journal, makes clear that, as editor, Noel Tichy would be bringing a new direction. This new direction would align with, and even lead, thinking in the field of HRM over the next two decades.

The period began and ended with special issues on the topic of strategic HRM. In the first issue of 1983, scholars, including several from the editorial board, outlined the issues facing HRM as a strategic partner in organizations. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, in the first article in Issue 1–2 of Volume 22, identified the seven frontiers for strategic human resource management (increasing organizational flexibility; continuing innovation; managing culture and strategy change; tactical planning; shift from “product” to “use” orientation; influencing the broader human resource environment; and strategic planning for the HR function). The special issue continues with contributions from Ulrich (cooperative strategy), Tichy (organizational transformations), Galbraith (strategy and planning), Schlesinger (normative issues in HR strategy), Fossum and Parker (the role of HRM in strategic planning), Lorange and Murphy (strategic alignment), Fombrun (strategy and culture),
Christiansen (strategic implications of labor relations), Devanna and Warren (technical change), and Phillips (change management).

This period in the journal’s history ends with a special issue on strategic HRM as well. Editor Mark Huselid and colleagues present a set of illuminating case studies on companies such as Herman Miller (McCowan, Bowen, Huselid, & Becker, 1999), Lucent (Artis, Becker, & Huselid, 1999), Praxair (Harris, Huselid, & Becker, 1999), Quantum (D. Barber, Huselid, & Becker, 1999), and Sears (Kirk, Rucci, Huselid, & Becker, 1999), with an additional contribution from Brockbank (1999). These two special issues may be defining in the strategic orientation of the period, but there were numerous significant contributions throughout the 16 years that we are labeling the strategic HRM period in the life of HRM. The two most commonly used keywords of this period were business strategy (17 mentions) and strategic planning (13 mentions).

Unsurprisingly, given the economic dynamism of this period, there was a strong interest in issues associated with downsizing (Cameron, 1994; Feldman & Leana, 1994; Freeman, 1994; McCune, Beatty, & Montagno, 1988; Mishra & Mishra, 1994; Mone, 1994), employment security (Kochan, MacDuffie, & Osterman, 1988), and restructuring (De Meuse, Vanderheiden, & Bergmann, 1994). In addition, there was a dramatic growth of interest in the practice of HRM in multinationals (MNCs; e.g., N. J. Adler & Jelinek, 1986; Bartlett & Yoshiihara, 1988; Bird, Taylor, & Beechler, 1998; D. J. Campbell, Campbell, & Chia, 1998; Doz & Prahalad, 1986; Galbraith & Kazanjian, 1986; McFarlin, Sweeney, & Cotton, 1992; Mendenhall, Dunbar, & Oddou, 1987; Nonaka, 1988; Prahalad, 1990; Pucik, 1988; Snell, Snow, Davison, & Hambrick, 1998).

A third trend that emerges in this era reflects a growing self-consciousness within the field and the profession about the nature of HR roles (Beatty & Schneier, 1997; Beer, 1997; Christensen, 1997; Kochan, 1997; Lake, 1997) and professional competencies (Brockbank, Ulrich, & Beatty, 1999; Gorsline, 1996; Kochanski, 1996; Lawson & Limbrick, 1996; Losey, 1997a, 1999; Mansfield, 1996; Morris, 1996; Ulrich, Brockbank, & Yeung, 1996), and more broadly a concern with the future of the field itself (Alvares, 1997; Anderson, 1997; Bowen & Siehl, 1997; Brockbank, 1997; Burke, 1997; Losey, 1997b; Ulrich, 1997a). One emblematic article by Anthony Rucci (1997) is entitled “Should HR Survive? A Profession at the Crossroads.” It is probable that the involvement of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), which joined the University of Michigan as a partner in the journal (Ulrich, 1997b), had some influence on this increasingly reflective orientation.

This reflexive attitude was further reinforced by a special issue on the topic of HR education, whose publication coincided with a conference organized by Bruce Kaufman (Georgia State University) and David Lewin (UCLA) on innovations in teaching in HRM and industrial relations. The special issue contained 14 articles focused on the history of teaching in the field (Kaufman, 1999), and exemplars of university- (P. S. Adler & Lawler, 1999; Heneman, 1999) and industry-based (Gonzales, Ellis, Riffel, & Yager, 1999; Stockman, 1999) development of HR professionals (see also, Forman & Cohen, 1999). The issue also drew a clear line from the earlier work on professional competencies to the role played by educators in support of professional development (e.g., Baill, 1999; A. E. Barber, 1999). Thus, the period may be characterized by two very strong dynamics: a strong desire for legitimacy and a place in determining the strategic direction and competitive success, and clear concern over the best ways in which to attain this objective through development of critical new competencies.

2000–2010: Globalization

The previous period had already demonstrated a connection with the increasingly global economic environment. However, until the year 2000, the journal’s content did not strongly reflect globalization in terms of scholarly research itself. What has become evident in the last decade is not only that the field appreciates the internationalization of the phenomena of interest, but that much of the research on these phenomena is being performed by
scholars around the world. The increasingly international editorial board and editorial team are illustrative of this. Currently nearly half of the editorial team (editor-in-chief, executive editor, associate editors) are affiliated with non-US universities. Most new appointments to the editorial board in recent years have come from outside of the United States, and we expect this trend will continue.

While the journal has reached a different level of globalization during the last ten years, the topics covered have broadened as scholars have tapped new contexts in which to study HRM. Some of the special issues during the period are indicative of the broadening context for research in HRM: International HRM (von Glinow, 2002); HRM in the Public Sector (Gowing & Lindholm, 2002); HRM in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (Tansky & Heneman, 2003); HRM and Leadership in the Military (Cycyota & Ferrante, 2007); HRM in Asia (Yeung, Warner, & Rowley, 2008); HRM in India (Budhwar & Varma, 2010); and HRM and Information Technology (Kaplan & Lerouge, 2007; Stanton & Coovert, 2004). At the same time, familiar threads continued such as diversity management (22 articles), “the future of HR” (16 articles), international HRM (16 articles), the nature of professional and managerial competencies (10 articles), and the role of HRM in entrepreneurship and innovation (10 articles).

These periods, and the dominant topics of interest throughout, are analogous to rings on a tree’s trunk. They offer a useful picture of the evolution of scholarly attention to practical issues in the HR domain. Just as the legal, economic, competitive, and technological environments have evolved, so have the questions that have been addressed by researchers. While this qualitative review provides half of the story of the evolution of our journal, the other half of this story is revealed in the methods and contexts for research, which we turn to next.

**Bridging Research Methods and Learning Models**

HRM was recognized by Rynes and colleagues (Rynes et al., 2007) for the way in which its contributions bridge research and practice. Even though the journal has always published a mix of conceptual, empirical, and practical articles, in this review we examined how the content of the journal has evolved over time. Our examination of the first 49 volumes identified four broad categories of articles: practice-focused, conceptual, empirical, and review.

Practice-focused articles provide insights from the field. They present information that is typically grounded in the experiences of individuals who are often experienced leaders, consultants, or scholars, without seeking to build or test theory. Practice-focused articles may, however, suggest potential challenges or insights that researchers should address. In the most recent period in the journal, practice-focused articles are found in the Leadership Forum section of the journal. Conceptual articles are focused on developing theoretical concepts and frameworks and typically include testable formal propositions. Empirical articles may be either descriptive or theory testing in orientation. More recently in the journal, empirical articles are expected to either inductively develop new theoretical frameworks or present rigorous deductive theoretical tests. Finally, review articles offer integrative summaries of the state of the art, drawing on a body of research, and often identifying not only what we know at that time, but also what are the gaps and future opportunities.

Figures 1A and 1B summarize the distribution of articles across the four categories in terms of the number, and proportion of articles for the four periods that we have identified. Over the last 50 years, the journal has published 632 empirical articles, and just over half as many (335) practice-oriented articles. Strikingly, purely conceptual (181) and literature review papers (39) are a distinct minority. Looking at the trend over the four periods that we have identified, we see that initially practice papers dominated, with 136 (67%) in period one and 121 (56%) in period two. There has been a decline in practice-focused articles in the third and fourth period, which is matched by a steady growth in the number and proportion of empirical articles from 66 (33%) in period one and 82 (38%)
in period two to 239 (58%) in period three and 245 (69%) in period four. Interestingly, purely conceptual articles blossomed in period three (129 papers, 31%), while review papers have always represented a minority. Just 39 articles out of 1,187, or 3.29% over 50 years, might be described as purely review articles. It is clear there has been a shift in the type of article, reflecting the evolution of the scholarly field. However, while purely practice-oriented articles currently make up only 10% of the total content of the journal, all published articles are expected to include a thoughtful and meaningful “practical contributions” section.

On Publishing Qualitative Research

A commonly heard observation is the challenge of publishing qualitative versus quantitative research in leading publications. Most major journals explicitly encourage submissions representing all forms of research methodology, and HRM is no exception. Some examples of the many qualitative contributions that have been published in HRM include Vashdi, Bamberger, Erez, and Weiss-Weilik’s (2007) study of briefing and debriefing in military settings and Theus’s (1995) study of the sudden departure of senior leaders.

What is the balance of qualitative and quantitative empirical studies (as well as “mixed” methods, combining the two) that have been published in HRM over the 50-year period, and has this balance changed? Figures 2A and 2B show a surprising result: over the entire 50 years, the number of quantitative and qualitative articles we have published is almost exactly equal, at 292 quantitative articles (46.20%) versus 289 qualitative papers (45.73%), and 51 mixed-method articles (8.07%). The data shown in Figures 2A and 2B suggest that it is only in the most recent period that quantitative methods have significantly outnumbered qualitative methods. We might speculate that this also relates
to a move toward theory testing over theory building in our field. A second reason for the growing proportion of quantitative methodology may also be the expanding skill-base of researchers, with growing numbers of PhDs in the field, trained in quantitative methods. A third potential explanation might be that faced with growing international competition for publication and increasing journal standards, quantitative research has a comparative advantage over qualitative in the review process. Such a comparative advantage might rest in clearer standards for evaluating validity, and/or more widespread understanding of the standards for assessing quantitative versus qualitative research, at least among those serving as reviewers.

**Context, Sampling, and Data Collection**

The context for research has also evolved over the years, reflected in a dramatic increase, particularly in the most recent period, in the number and proportion of articles that use data from, or study contexts outside the United States (see Figures 3A and 3B). In the first period, spanning ten years and 66 empirical papers, just one (1.52%) was conducted outside of the United States That article, the first “international” article published by *HRM*, was on the subject of the management systems in Israeli Kibbutzim (Golomb, 1968, Volume 7, Issue 2). Following a fairly steady growth over the first 40 years, the proportion of international papers has increased dramatically during the last ten years, with 108 out of 245 empirical papers (44.08%) reporting studies involving non-US subjects. The number of countries represented in this growing international body of work has grown from one (Israel) in the first period to three in period two (Canada, Japan, and Israel) to 21 countries in period three, and finally studies from 40 countries in the most recent period. At this point, the journal
reflects the continued internationalization of the practice of HRM, the growth in the profession, and the global expansion of the scholarly field. At the time of writing, the editors can report no let-up in this process and we anticipate that soon, US-centric studies will represent the minority of all studies published in HRM. Since this process mirrors the globalization of the business and economic sphere, as well as the internationalization of the membership of professional bodies such as SHRM and the Academy of Management (AOM), this transformation seems to be healthy for the production and dissemination of new knowledge.

In addition to the split among methodological categories, our review also highlighted the most favored empirical methods in articles that have been published over the years. These are summarized in Table I, which shows that

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<th>Number of Articles</th>
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<td>Survey</td>
<td>268</td>
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<td>Case study(ies)</td>
<td>204</td>
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<td>Interviews</td>
<td>129</td>
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<td>Secondary data analysis</td>
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<td>Longitudinal studies</td>
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<td>Field studies</td>
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FIGURE 3A. Number of U.S. Versus International Articles in HRM, 1961–2011.

a survey methodology is the most popular technique for data collection, followed by the case-study approach, with interviews being the third most common approach. Relatively uncommon approaches in the journal over the 50 years include secondary data, longitudinal studies, and experiments.

The samples used continue to focus in the majority of cases on commercial settings, either organizational level, managerial level, or employee level of analysis (84.65% of studies). However, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of studies of commercial organizations in the most recent period (from 91.21% in period three to 75.51% in period four), coupled with an increase in the proportion of studies involving universities/university students (doubling from 5.02% to 11.43%), public-sector organizations (from 3.35% to 8.98%), and military organizations (up from just 0.42% to 4.08%). Figures 4A and 4B summarize the distribution of articles by research context.

All in all, these less traditional contexts have increased from fewer than 10% of published empirical studies to nearly one-quarter of empirical studies between period three and period four. This change may reflect two simultaneous trends within research and practice. Starting with practice, there may simply be more attention paid to managerial issues in less commercial settings. In the United States, the public sector has always been a source of leading-edge HRM (e.g., J. P. Campbell, 1990; Schmidt, Hunter, McKenzie, & Muldrow, 1979; Schmidt, Hunter, Outerbridge, & Trattner, 1986) although perhaps in recent years that leading role has been forgotten. Increasing managerialism in the third sector and nonprofits has led to an increase in studying these domains more generally. A second force for change may be among scholars seeking sources of differentiation, and the opportunity to test existing theory in relatively untrodden pastures. An exemplary case of the latter is found in the
special issues on HRM in the Public Sector (Volume 41, Issue 3, Guest Editors: Gow- ing & Lindholm) and HRM and Leadership in the Military (Volume 46, Issue 1, Guest Editors: Cycyota & Ferrante). Issues such as these have gone far in promoting analysis of HRM outside of the traditional commercial domain.

Contributors

Our review would be incomplete without consideration of the many authors whose works have been published in *HRM* over the last 50 years. As noted in the introduction, approximately 1,200 articles have appeared in the 50 volumes of *HRM* since 1961. These articles were written by approximately 300 authors from around the world. The top 23 most frequently published authors in HRM are listed in Figure 5. Leading the way is Thomas H. Patten Jr., with 13 publications spanning three decades from 1965 through to 1981. Our second most frequently featured author, and Editor Emeritus, is David Ulrich, whose contributions in the period of this review also span three decades, from 1983 to 2008 (and now enter a fourth—see Ulrich, 2011). The list contains many leading scholars in the HRM field who have contributed, and continue to contribute, to our ever-expanding body of knowledge.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the course of half a century of the journal’s existence, HRM-related research questions have been presented, challenged, and debated that have contributed to the development of the scholarly field as well as the profession of HRM. Looking back on 50 years is humbling, as it reinforces the extent to which we as scholars (and editors) are building upon the works of those who have gone before. This review emphasizes the legacy of the 300-plus authors who chose to publish their research and opinions in this journal. That work has shaped and provided new horizons to the field of HRM as a scholarly discipline during this period, and we expect that influence to continue into the future.

Our review has highlighted four distinct periods in the journal’s history, from the publication of applied empirical work in the practice-focused period (1961–1971) to a distinct push toward increased application of scientific methods and a concern with theory development in the second period (1971–1983), an explicit concern with strategy in the third period (1983–1999), and, most recently, a very clear globalization in the source of new knowledge published in *Human Resource Management*.

It is intriguing to consider what the future might bring in terms of trends and patterns for content, research contexts, and the methods used to generate new knowledge. It seems obvious that globalization of both economies and the scholarly profession will continue and perhaps even accelerate further. Three observations suggest this will be the case for HRM research as well. First, our partners at the Society for Human Resource Management continue to internationalize their membership and seek to support the practice of HRM as a profession. This suggests...
that, globally, the phenomena of interest to this journal will continue to be relevant to practitioners in the future. Second, the majority of new members to the Academy of Management now come from outside of the United States. The AOM is the single largest membership organization for management scholars, and includes over 3,000 members within the Human Resources Division; a significant proportion of the research published in this journal comes from the AOM’s HR Division membership. Third, as this international scholarly community continues to grow, pressures on individual academics to publish their research continue to increase around the world. HRM is frequently listed among leading journals in the field in internationally recognized lists such as Financial Times “top forty” management journals, and the Association of Business Schools’ (UK) comprehensive journal ranking. As economies evolve, and the academic profession expands, we anticipate that HRM will continue to grow alongside, as a global outlet for global research. This is something we welcome as a great opportunity.

Finally, we are obliged to pay tribute to all the authors, former editors, former and current editorial board members, ad hoc reviewers, and the production teams who have supported HRM and contributed to the creation and dissemination of knowledge in the field. We hope this review has illustrated the fascinating journey this journal has undertaken since 1961, and perhaps this will be the beginning of the next installment in that story.

Note
1. The reason for this odd number is that there are many authors tied at five publications.


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