

MARKING THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF KINESIOLOGY – SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM AN EDITORIAL POINT OF VIEW

Željka Jaklinović-Fressl and Dragan Milanović

University of Zagreb, Faculty of Kinesiology, Zagreb, Croatia

Editor's note

The year 2021 is the year of the 50th anniversary of the international scientific journal *Kinesiology* published at the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb, Croatia. In the half a century of its existence the journal has gone through a very dynamic development and some rough but also some joyful times.

Period 1971—1989

The idea of starting a new journal that would publish scientific and professional articles in the field of kinesiology was established in the late sixties of the last century by several enthusiasts employed at the College of Physical Education in Zagreb, involved in the work of the Institute of Kinesiology. The reason for starting this journal was the fact that there were no adequate opportunities to publish scientific and professional papers by researchers dealing with kinesiology and related sciences at that time. Due to the limited possibility of publishing papers, kinesiology, as a science of movement and physical exercise, was not recognized among the academic community as an independent research and scholarly field. The first issue of the journal, originally called *Kineziologija* (until 2001), was published in the Autumn of 1971 at the very moment of the attempt to introduce a new scientific field in the Yugoslavian science nomenclature. However, the latter was not successful—it took exactly thirty years before kinesiology became recognized not only in Croatia but also worldwide. The journal's contribution to that acceptance was indubitably crucial.

The first Editorial Board members were: Vladimir Horvat (Editor-in-Chief), Miloš Mraković (Editor), Krešimir Štruka (Secretary) and EB Members: Miloje Gabrijević, Radovan Medved, Konstantin Momirović, Živko Radan and Slavko Delfin. The Advisory Board was mainly composed of experts and scientists from the College of Physical Education in Zagreb.

In the beginning, it was a journal that primarily enabled the dissemination of the results of the most important scientific research conducted at the Zagreb Faculty of Physical Education by its scholars and students. Articles in the first 15 issues of the journal were published in the Croatian language, but each contained a title and abstract translated into English, German and Russian languages. Also, the articles were published with a list of references, which distinguished *Kinesiology* from most Croatian journals in the area of social sciences, where kinesiology was classified (and has remained classified) as a new research field.

Over the years the journal grew into a recognizable scientific journal with a distinguished international Editorial Board and a wide audience in kinesiology and cognate and adjacent, mainly inter- and multidisciplinary, scientific communities, so ever more international contributions were published. The significant contribution of the journal to the publishing of the research results from the fields of social and biomedical sciences, primarily from the Theory and Methodology of Sports, Physiology of Sports and Physical Exercise, Psychology of Sports and Physical Exercise, Biomechanics, Kinesiological Anthropology, Sports Medicine, Kinesitherapy, Recreation and Kinesiological Education, was recognized by the then first world citation databases, thus making the journal more visible and accessible.

The scope of the journal embraced, and still embraces, articles that investigate and evaluate changes in human, especially athletes', physical performance relevant traits, abilities and skills that occur under the influence of programmed targeted physical exercise processes from various biological, health, psychological, social, educational, ethical, economic, historical, and cultural aspects. In fact, the journal's scope always reflects the scope of the scientific area of kinesiology, which is in some scientific communities understood and called sports sciences or kinanthropology

Since its beginning the journal has been led by four Editors-in-Chief (Prof. Vladimir Horvat 1971-1978, Prof. Miloš Mraković 1979-1988, Prof. Ankica Hošek-Momirović 1988-1989, and Prof. Dragan Milanović 1990 to the present day). From the initial, mainly domestic membership, the Editorial and Advisory Boards were broadened to include internationally renowned scholars and researchers from kinesiology and a variety of scientific fields related to kinesiology.

Period 1990—2000

In the early 1990s the journal survived almost a three-year-long period of discontinuation of publishing before restarting in 1992. The reasons for this discontinuation were numerous, both intrinsic and extrinsic, but probably the main one was the Homeland War during which Croatia managed to defend its independence and break its ties with Yugoslavia. During that time, general social and historical circumstances for academic, research and publishing work were, due to the War, at very least difficult.

During 1992 the members of the new Editorial Board: Editor-in-Chief Dragan Milanović, Editor Vladimir Medved, EB members Milan Blašković, Dubravka Ciliga, Vladimir Findak, Radovan Medved, Mirko Relac, Viktor Šnajder, Nada Vođine[a]c, secretary Željko Pintar and technical editor Zdenko Jajčević, all affiliated with the Faculty of PE, united their efforts to re-create and restore the publication of *Kineziologija*, a **Croatian** journal for the scientific and professional issues in the field of kinesiology. The joint publishing efforts of the Association of Physical Education Teachers of Croatia and the Faculty of Physical Education were financially supported by a Croatian Ministry of Science, Technology, and Informatics grant. Since the 27(1995)1 issue, the Faculty of PE has been the exclusive publisher of the journal, supported by the Croatian Ministry of Science and Technology and the Zagreb Sports Association.

A new editorial concept was soon published in the journal's preamble, which said that the journal "accepts an interdisciplinary approach to scientific and professional issues and welcomes articles dealing with problems in kinesiology and other related sciences whose research problems correspond to the content of kinesiology as a science." The primary interest of the journal was to publish scientific, but also practically applicable professional articles. The new mission of the journal was to provide conditions for scientific work, publishing, and communication with the world, but also to promote scientific orientation in the field of kinesiology and its sub-disciplines of kinesiological education, kinesiology of sports, kinesiological recreation (referring to physical recreation and recreational sports) and kinesiotherapy.

Since 1994, there has been a strict implementation of the editorial rule that each article must pass an international review (at least one reviewer must be a foreign citizen). All the published contributions have been subjected to a strict double-blinded reviewing process completed by numerous respectable national and international referees. From 1992 to 1999, the new editorial sections (Sports, Education, Sport Recreation, Information Services) were introduced and section editors were assigned.

In 1995 the Editorial Board (EB) became international (13 Croatian and nine foreign members) and new editorial sections (Individual Sports and Activities, Physical Education, Recreation/Leisure, Kinesiological Anthropology, Training Methods, Sports Medicine and Sports Physiology, Biomechanics, Sports History, Book Reviews) were introduced, which, with minor changes, have been kept until today. In the same year, the journal was recognized and acknowledged by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia as an international scientific journal, which was a step forward since the new status attracted more authors from neighbouring new countries.

In order to make the published findings and information visible to a wider international audience, i.e. to leave a regional stage, the so-called scientific periphery, and join the family of truly international journals, during the following five years the journal was published in two languages—Croatian and English—as separate parallel issues. This period was especially strenuous for the executive editors (Vladimir Medved, Zoran Žugić, Milan Čoh, with the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Stjepan Heimer), translators, proof-readers and language editors (Elizabeth Harrison-Paj, Darija Omrčen, and Željka Jaklinović) and technical support staff, but it was also a period of intense learning and organizational upgrading. The number of professional papers dropped significantly due to the policy of the Editorial Board to encourage original scientific contributions and to welcome the inclusion of reviews as well.

The visual design of both the cover and inner pages was variable during the period 1990-1997. Since the 29(1997)2 issue the visual identity of the cover has assumed a rather stable and recognizable form through the sketches of athletes from various sports authored by the academic painter Anton Vrlić. In the period 1997-2004 the sketches and their arrangement were a constant, whereas colours of the cover were changed for every volume. The colour (sky blue), arrangements of sketches and fonts on the cover, adopted in 2004, have remained unchanged up to the present time.

In 1999 a regular practice was introduced to organize meetings of the journal's EB and Advisory Board (AB) members jointly with the organization of the International Conferences on Kinesiology. The first such a meeting was held in 1999 as part of the 2nd Conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia. An ever greater number of EB and AB members and journal's friends and advocates attended every new meeting (2002 and 2005 in Opatija, 2008 in Zagreb and so on). These gatherings presented a forum for vivid, sometimes intriguing discussions, evaluations, and valuable suggestions on how to improve the quality of the journal and its international status.

Several conclusions reached at the first meeting of the international Editorial Board in Dubrovnik in 1999, realized in the year 2000, were actual turning points in the internationalization of the journal. First,

the name of the journal was changed from *Kineziologija* to *Kinesiology* and a new subtitle was introduced: The International Journal of Fundamental and Applied Kinesiology. The most important decision was to publish thereafter in the English language. This decision somewhat distanced the journal from the Croatian readership in the following period, but it was necessary to comply with the Zagreb Faculty of Kinesiology and the editors' unanimous consensus and commitment to pursue the international standards of scientific publications. To make this change in the editorial policy less abrupt, each article was for some time provided with an extended abstract in the Croatian language to satisfy the needs of those scholars who were less proficient in English. The practice of publishing extended abstracts was abandoned with the 41(2009)2 issue, after which time only the Croatian translations of the original abstracts were published.

Period 2001—2021

The period of the last two decades in the existence of a truly international journal has been characterized by an upward quality trend.

A significant contribution to the positive trend and the journal's full-text visibility to the international audience was the inclusion of the journal in HRČAK (eng. hamster), the Portal of Croatian Scientific and Professional Journals in 2006 (<https://hrcak.srce.hr/kineziologija>). Free on-line full texts of all the articles published since 1971 are now available at the cited link. The project of hard copies' digitalization started in 2020 and was completed in the late Spring of 2021. The journal is open access. The articles are distributed under the terms of the license Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0). The printed hard copies were also available, although the circulation numbers were gradually dropping from 750 in the year 2000 to 250 in the last years. Since volume 52, issue 2, the journal has been published exclusively online.

In the same year, the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport re-evaluated the quality of scientific journals. *Kinesiology* journal was ranked third among the social sciences journals, which resulted in increased financial support for the journal and, which is more important, in the engagement of a research fellow—Junior Editor Daniel Bok in 2008.

Confirmation that the journal has grown into a high-quality world scientific publication arrived in 2008, when it was included in the Web of Science, i.e., indexed in the largest citation databases (Science Citation Index Expanded and Social Science Citation Index), and in 2009 with the inclusion in the Scopus citation database. The Web of Science Impact Factor for the period 2020-2021 is 1.452. The current verified IF positions *Kinesiology* journal on the very edge of entering the third quartile.

Table 1. WoS IF history

Year	Kinesiology IF
2011-2012	0.238
2012-2013	0.405
2103-2014	0.333
2014-2105	0.585
2015-2016	0.553
2016-2017	0.961
2017-2018	0.767
2018-2019	1.383
2019-2020	1.225
2020-2021	1.452

The Editorial Board of the journal has constantly been working to increase the visibility and quality of the journal by improving the preliminary review process and focusing on selecting and including the most cited scientists in the review process of each article.

A significant increase in IF has also resulted in increased interest of scientists around the world for their publication in the journal *Kinesiology*. Therefore, the dynamics of receiving new papers from 2016 to 2019 shows an exponential increase in the number of papers received, counting from 174 to 300.

Table 2. Submission and publication rates

Year	Papers submitted	Papers published	Publication ratio (%)
2000-2007	272	177	65.07%
2008-2011	234	82	35.04%
2012-2014	371	100	26.95%
2015-2017	398	75	18.84%
2018-2020	746	120	16.09%

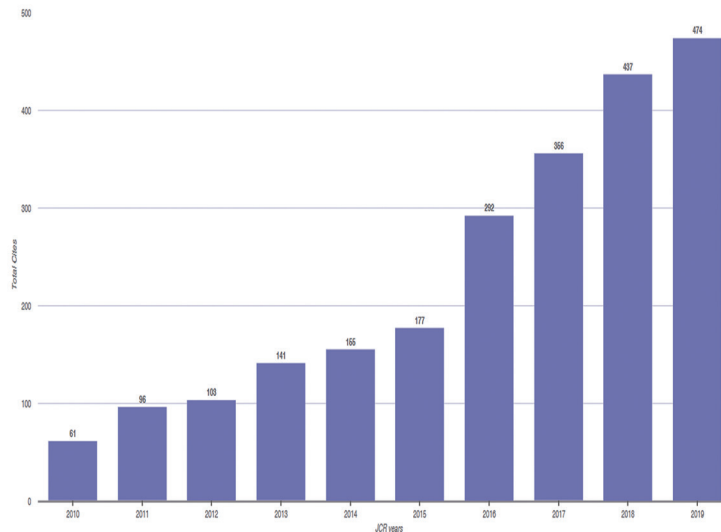


Figure 1. Total number of citations in the Web of Science per year over the period 2010–2019.

The number of citations to journal articles is also growing exponentially. Namely, the number of total citations of the magazine has increased from the initial four to 508 citations in 2020.

On the list of the most successful Croatian scientific journals indexed in SCOPUS (165 in total) the journal *Kinesiology* is ranked seventh but is the best among the social sciences journals. According to the Scopus SJR SCImago Journal & Country Rank for the year 2020, *Kinesiology* is in Q2 in the category Physical Therapy, Sports Therapy and Rehabilitation, and in Q3 in the category Sport Sciences. Scopus CiteScore for the year 2020 is 2.6.

The journal *Kinesiology* has become the most important scientific product of the Faculty of Kinesiology, with which it can successfully represent the Faculty, but also the University of Zagreb and the entire Croatian scientific community throughout the world.

TOMORROW

The future may be uncertain, but it does not need to be so entirely—foundations built in the past are visible guideposts to the journal's tomorrow. Whether the upward quality trend will continue, depends on many factors, most of which are out of the control of the editors and other people involved in publishing the journal. Primarily, it depends on the rate of submissions and, above all, on their quality. Only from a fairly large pool of quality enough contributions can the editors and reviewers select the best ones that will be interesting to a wide expert readership. Also, the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Kinesiology has a great responsibility to secure financial support in future for the publication of the journal, which is not a low-cost undertaking. Up till now the issue of introducing either submission, administrative/technical or publication fees have been avoided. It is sincerely hoped that, with the financial support from the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education and the University of Zagreb, fees will remain off the journal's agenda.

What is known for certain is that the editors and technical support are firmly committed to continue with investing their efforts and knowledge into the journal's publication (Jaklinović-Fressl, et al., 2000). In the future we will strive to secure a growing trend in the journal's impact factor and possibly reach the WoS

IF of 2.00. To accomplish that aim, the editorial work must intensify especially in the areas of plagiarism and double publication detection as well as of text preparation; also, recruiting of as many renowned scientists as possible and including them in the reviewing process is essential to secure a large pool of competent referees; further, compliance with the already proclaimed editorial policy must be adhered to in order to support and/or invite review submissions. The number of administrative and secretarial fellows within the journal's professional team should be increased and financed by State funds.

Scientific journals are always indispensable, even though some consider them a somewhat obsolete means of communication for dissemination and exchange of information within the scientific, academic, and professional communities from a local to a global level. They are also valuable as a means of assessing someone's research and scholarly work (the academic reward and promotion system). Therefore, each scientific domain and coherent research community tends to establish a journal as a forum for its concepts, research reports, inferences, and achievements to instigate the circulation of knowledge. There is almost no point in doing research if researchers cannot inform other people what they have found or inferred.

Members of the Editorial Board are determined to preserve the multifaceted profile of the journal and multi- and interdisciplinary approach to editing it since such an approach, they consider, reflects the true nature of scientific issues researchers encounter in the worlds of sport, physical exercise, and human movement in general (Bartlett, 1998). It requires hard work from the journal executives, who are well prepared and capable to welcome every quality enough research paper or review reporting on findings, inferences, detecting lawfulness, modelling, and application of research results in the fields of: physical education, performance sports of all standards, physical recreation and recreational sport, adapted physical activity, kinesitherapy or physical therapy, regardless of the approach used.

Hoping to read your contributions soon, dear Reader.

References

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