

## Editorial: LLCs progress

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The journal is now in its 21<sup>st</sup> issue, with 134 papers published since the first edition and an increased publication output from three to four issues per year since 2015. The publication of the 22<sup>nd</sup> issue in April 2016 is therefore a good time to review progress.

### Readership

*Website visits* to access, read and download papers show continuing progress with an increase from almost 14,000 sessions in 2014 to nearly 15,500 sessions in 2015.

*Abstract downloads* exceed 1,000 for 48 papers - one at 6,995 - and exceed 500 for 115 papers.

*Individual readership registrations* overall continue to expand, with currently 2,075 ever-registered users. This figure includes, since the beginning of February 2016, 340 active Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (SLLS) members whose subscriptions automatically bring them full reading rights.

*Library subscriptions*, which give library users full access to all papers, are holding steady at 37 across the world, 10 of which also subscribe to hard copies of the journal.

### Submissions

Submissions remain constant, pushing towards a steady 30 under review at any time, which is sufficient to sustain four issues per year. The SLLS annual conference is a major source of submissions to the journal. Submission numbers for Dublin last October reached an all-time high, and have now been superseded by numbers for this year's conference in Bamberg.

### Citations

Citation is, of course, only the final stage of a long engagement process with any paper – beginning with downloading an abstract, to reading the full study, before finally deciding whether to cite it. Citation figures reveal the 'tip of the iceberg' of engagement with any paper. Citations, in our case as derived from

Google Scholar, show that out of a total of 134 papers published since April 2009, 12 have received 20 or more citations to date, 25 have 10 or more, 44 five or more, 54 three or more and 71 two or more.

Those papers with 20 or more citations are listed below. The exact number of citations is shown in brackets. Volume and issue numbers are also listed, followed by type of publication, where applicable – Study Profile (SP), or included in a part or full Special Issue (SI).

1. *The HILDA Survey: A case study in the design and development of a successful Household Panel Survey* (52) – 3.3 SP
2. *Understanding Society: Design overview* (41) – 3.1 SI
3. *The Panel Study of Income Dynamics: overview, recent innovations and potential for life course research* (34) – 3.2 SP
4. *Socioeconomic gradient in early child outcomes: evidence from the Millennium Cohort Study* (31) – 2.1 SI
5. *Attrition in US and UK Longitudinal Studies of Health and Ageing* (30) – 2.2 SI
6. *Children's educational attainment and the aspirations, attitude and behaviours of parents and children through childhood* (30) – 2.1 SI
7. *The role of attitudes and behaviours in explaining socio-economic differences in attainment* (29) – 2.1 SI
8. *Social class returns to higher education: chances of access to the professions and managerial salariat for men in three British cohort studies* (24) – 2.2
9. *Handling attrition and non-response in longitudinal data* (21) – 1.1
10. *Does mothers' employment affect children's development: evidence from the children of the British 1970 birth cohort and the American NLSY29* (21)
11. *Family socialisation, economic self-efficacy and the attainment of financial independence in early adulthood* (20) 1.1

### 12. *Developmental trajectories of body mass index through the life course: an application of latent class growth (mixture) modelling* (20) 2.3

The most frequently cited papers, with the exception of the HILDA study, were all published in the journal's first three volumes (2009-2010, 2011 & 2012), which shows, understandably, that time since publication is a crucial factor in building citations. The data also show that citations go on building well beyond the immediate period in the year or two after publication. In confirmation of this last point, all but 13 of the 44 papers with zero citations were published in Volumes 5 and 6.

## Research domain

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the journal, apportioning citations to the coverage of the four journal domains/sections is problematic. However, by multiple counting of content references in each paper, a crude estimate can be obtained. The somewhat surprising, but satisfying, result was that for those 44 papers with 5 or more citations, the numbers were evenly spread between: 'Social and Economic Sciences', 17; 'Health Sciences', 17; 'Behavioural Sciences and Development', 18.

Only 'Statistical Sciences and Methodology' dropped behind the others at 7, but that may have been partly because, although methodology had been a significant feature of the paper, it had not been mentioned in the title.

## This issue

Three *Comment and Debate* sections have now been published:

- *Social class differences in early cognitive development* (July- October 2015),
- *Population Sampling in longitudinal studies* (October 2015)
- *Allostatic Load* (January) 2016)

The April issue will see the fourth debate in the *Comment and Debate* series. *Life course approach and longevity risk* opens with a discussion paper from David Blane and colleagues and is followed by four contributions from experts in the field. Three research papers on diverse topics complete the issue: *Transmission of cultural capital and status attainment* – Werner Georg; *Children's behavioural and emotional development and physical activity* – Lucy Griffiths and colleagues; *Socioeconomic disadvantage, children's behaviour problems and early aspirations* – Eirini Flouri and colleagues.

## Conclusion

The indicators point toward steady progress toward meeting the journal's key aims. LLCS is filling a gap in the research literature by:

- becoming recognised as a platform for international longitudinal and life course research reporting, as reflected in the website visits and citations;
- achieving its objectives in supplying both an interdisciplinary and a more specialised publication platform for longitudinal and life course research;
- matching publication needs across the three substantive research domains in terms of which the journal's reviewing and, to a lesser extent, publication output, is organised;
- reflecting the main research areas of life course science.

Study profiles and special sections comprising papers linked by shared longitudinal and life course study themes, have particular appeal, while Methodology and Statistic needs to be strengthened

Overall we can conclude that the production, coverage and quality targets are meeting the standards set when the idea for it was first conceived.