DDS: A Decade of Distinguished Scholarship

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Published online: 5 June 2020

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As we have now been involved as Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor of *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* for almost a decade, we would like to reflect on the many changes that have occurred in order to thank the many associate editors, authors, and reviewers for helping shape DDS into its current form. Emmet Keefe and his daughter, Meghan, who joined DDS as Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor in 2008, enthusiastically revitalized the journal. Although the opportunity for Jonathan to become editor was rooted in Emmet's tragic and untimely death in 2011, Emmet's leadership provided the impetus to innovate and expand according to his philosophy of quality, integrity, and creativity, which through improvements and steady work, has enhanced the stature, reach, and influence of DDS. We are both certain Emmet would be thrilled by DDS's progress in recent years.

New Features

One of the most satisfying aspects of being editor is the freedom to add new features, which provide outlets for scholars with expertise in specific areas and also open up fresh readers with matching interests. Based on our original affiliation with the Gastrointestinal Research Group, several features are aimed at involving students, trainees, fellows, and young faculty, sometimes with their first published work. Others provide perspective on the origins of medical advances, that can often be traced to a few publications that fundamentally changed the field. We also now have four case conference series covering a variety of disciplines and several leading institutions. Of particular note are the Special Issues that

cover an area of interest in depth and breadth, serving as a definitive resource. The special features are listed in Table 1, in chronological order of appearance.

Editors

One of the most gratifying aspects of DDS is the superb quality of its editors, which serve as the interface between the journal and our contributors. All are faculty based at prestigious institutions who have not only a command of the field but also have a sharp eye for managing submissions, ensuring a consistently high level of quality for our published work. Current and past editors are listed in Table 2.

Articles

DDS continues to print high-impact articles in all fields of GI, whether luminal, liver, basic, translational, or clinical. Table 3 lists the 10 most highly cited articles published in DDS in the years 2010–2019. Gratifyingly, the list contains examples of every type and category of article that DDS publishes, including reviews and original articles. Although the total number of published articles has remained relatively constant, the number of original articles has decreased due to the increasing number of published editorials, reviews, and special sections (Fig. 1). Also notable is that the number of submissions has increased almost every year since 2008, with each recent year now setting a record high for the number of submitted articles received (Fig. 2).

Reviewers

A journal is only as good as its reviewers, since these anonymous volunteers are essential to perpetuate the process of peer review, the key principle that underlies the scientific method. With the number of submissions increasing yearly as shown in Fig. 2, each editor has handled an increasingly

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Table 1 Special features listed in descending order of length of publication in DDS

Feature name	Editor(s)
Stanford Multidisciplinary Seminars	George Triadafilopoulos
UNM Clinical Case Conferences	Dennis McCarthy
Special Issues	Robert S. Bresalier
Mentored Reviews	Frank Friedenberg
Paradigm Shifts in Perspective	Jonathan Kaunitz
Profiles and Perspectives	Lawrence S. Friedman
Fellows and Young GIs	Deborah D. Proctor, Jill Deutsch, Jared Macklin, Uyen Kim To
DDS Citation Classics	Jonathan Kaunitz
Multidisciplinary Seminars: IBD	Matthew Hamilton, Gary Lichtenstein, Uma Mahadevan, Fernando Velayos
DDS-SIRC Cooperative Conferences	Augusto Lauro

large load of submissions. DDS is fortunate to have a dedicated cohort of reviewers who have helped editors evaluate the submissions that have been sent out for review; as an example, in 2019, 1241 reviewers completed 2292 manuscript reviews. We deeply thank our reviewers for continuously increasing the quality and impact of the accepted submissions.

Editorial Board

Another key element necessary for a journal's success is its Editorial Board. Ours is composed of 129 globally-based leading academics who have meaningfully contributed to DDS, either by contributing editorials, helping with peer review, recommending associate editors, attending Editorial Board meetings, and contributing original articles and features. These many distinguished, expert, and influential Editorial Board members have also been instrumental in the growth of the journal's stature and influence in the past decade.

Impact

The Journal Impact Factor (JIF) has become the de facto “coin of the realm” when it comes to ranking the relative worth of journals. Many scientists are unaware that the

JIF was initially developed as a tool for librarians seeking to order the journals of the most value to their clients. A simple formula, consisting of dividing the number of citations calculated at a time in year X to articles published in years X-1 and X-2, and dividing that number by the number of “citable items” published in years X-1 and X-2 yields an average number of times that each “citable item” was cited following its publication. “Citable items” are defined as publications of a certain length and number of literature citations in their bibliography. The problem with this formula, as has been extensively discussed [1–4], is that truly groundbreaking discoveries sometimes take several years to be accepted by the scientific community and hence be cited by others, and thus would be mostly missed by the JIF. Furthermore, reviews, guidelines, statistical summaries, and methods papers are highly cited not due to their paradigm-shifting discoveries, but due to their overall value and utility to other authors. Further complicating matters is that the JIF is a simple mean that does not account for outliers. The frequency curve of citations/item is non-ideally distributed, generally with a long tail, and thus is subject to distortions of the simple arithmetic mean by a small number of highly cited publications.

Another issue that affects the JIF has to do with affiliation with a scientific society. DDS is not owned by or formally affiliated with any scientific society. The advantages of society affiliations are numerous, including the publication of highly cited guidelines and major clinical trials, being able

Table 2 Current and emeritus editors of DDS since 2010**Current editors**

Associate editors (listed in descending order of the duration of service to the journal)

Robert Bresalier^a
 Ramsey Cheung
 Ali Tavakkoli
 Mitch Schubert
 Roy Orlando
 Sun-Young Lee
 Ajay Goel
 Anthony Lembo
 Ali Rezaie
 Takeshi Saito
 Wing-Kin Syn
 Hamed Khalili
Editorial advisors
 George Triadafilopoulos
 Rhonda Souza
Guest editors
 Rupjyoti Talukdar
 Javier Santos
 Guy Groblewski
 Edward Wolf

Editors emeriti (including guest and special section editors)

Michael Fuchs
 Bernd Schnabl
 Aida Habetezion
 Wael El-Rifai
 Henry Lin
 David Rubin
 Olivia Martinez
 Robert Schade
 Edmund Bini
 Edward Whang
 Vikesh Singh
 Walter Park
 Million Mulugeta
 Jill Smith
 Jung-Hwan Yoon
 Steve Han
 Andrew Stolz
 Jay Pasricha

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to vet its editors through an extensive committee network, having large and active publicity staff, and being featured in the society's meetings, giving it the imprimatur of quality valued by authors. Absent these advantages, DDS must fight for recognition among the many other journals in the field. To us, this is a worthy challenge that can be transcended with attention to excellence, innovation, fairness, integrity, and respect for the needs and exigencies of our editors, reviewers, and authors. Furthermore, this lack of affiliation or ownership gives DDS a nimbleness to quickly adapt and expand, a feature that we particularly value.

Figure 3 lists key bibliometric statistics for DDS from 2008 to 2018 in order to give an indication of how far the journal has progressed since Emmet and Meghan took over in 2008. These data are compiled annually by Scimago and Clarivate Analytics, using either simple formulae or advanced algorithms designed to gauge how a journal measures up against its peers. The leading indicator, the JIF, has increased 86% from 2008 to 2018, an encouraging gain. Its closest cousin is the Scimago "Cites per document—2 years", which has a formula similar to the JIF, although the number diverges somewhat, likely due to variations of factors used to calculate the score. The Scimago Journal Rank or SJR uses an iterative process that not only takes into account the number of citations per article but also the prestige of the journals that cite the article. The SJR has placed DDS in the first quartile of GI-Liver journals for the years 2016–2018. Other bibliometrics include the Clarivate InCites Journal Citation Report Influence Factor that has also nearly doubled since 2008. These bibliometric measures are described in detail in several publications [5, 6]. We will leave it up to the reader to assess the relative standing of DDS among its peers in the biomedical literature, noting that as flawed as the JIF is, no consensus has been reached about a suitable replacement. As a Springer Nature journal, we will adhere to the sound advice of our publisher [1–3] by not emphasizing or further publicizing our JIF to our readers.

Concluding Comments

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our editors, authors, reviewers, and readers, who have helped bring DDS to its current status of an increasing presence in the GI journal

Table 3 The top 10 most cited articles published in *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* in the years 2010–2019

1. Kappelman MD, Moore KR, Allen JK, Cook SF: Recent Trends in the Prevalence of Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis in a Commercially Insured US Population. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2013, 58(2):519–525. [238]
2. Lewis JR, Mohanty SR: Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease: A Review and Update. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2010, 55(3):560–578. [213]
3. Arteh J, Narra S, Nair S: Prevalence of Vitamin D Deficiency in Chronic Liver Disease. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2010, 55(9):2624–2628. [206]
4. Malaguarnera M, Vacante M, Antic T, Giordano M, Chisari G, Acquaviva R, Mastrojeni S, Malaguarnera G, Mistretta A, Volti GL *et al*: Bifidobacterium longum with Fructo-Oligosaccharides in Patients with Non Alcoholic Steatohepatitis. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2012, 57(2):545–553. [194]
5. Song JN, Bai ZG, Han W, Zhang J, Meng H, Bi JT, Ma XM, Han SW, Zhang ZT: Identification of Suitable Reference Genes for qPCR Analysis of Serum microRNA in Gastric Cancer Patients. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2012, 57(4):897–904. [182]
6. Sheen E, Triadafilopoulos G: Adverse Effects of Long-Term Proton Pump Inhibitor Therapy. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2011, 56(4):931–950. [161]
7. Codling C, O'Mahony L, Shanahan F, Quigley EMM, Marchesi JR: A Molecular Analysis of Fecal and Mucosal Bacterial Communities in Irritable Bowel Syndrome. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2010, 55(2):392–397. [154]
8. Wang HB, Wang PY, Wang X, Wan YL, Liu YC: Butyrate Enhances Intestinal Epithelial Barrier Function via Up-Regulation of Tight Junction Protein Claudin-1 Transcription. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2012, 57(12):3126–3135. [149]
9. Peterson KA, Thomas KL, Hilden K, Emerson LL, Wills JC, Fang JC: Comparison of Esomeprazole to Aerosolized, Swallowed Fluticasone for Eosinophilic Esophagitis. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2010, 55(5):1313–1319. [145]
10. Softic S, Cohen DE, Kahn CR: Role of Dietary Fructose and Hepatic De Novo Lipogenesis in Fatty Liver Disease. *Digestive Diseases and Sciences* 2016, 61(5):1282–1293. [135]

Numbers in [brackets] denote the total number of citations as of April 9, 2020. Data provided by Clarivate Analytics

Fig. 1 Number of items published by DDS 2010–2019. Note the marked decline in the number and percentage of original publications over this timespan

universe. We would especially like to thank our publisher's representative, Melissa Ramondetta of Springer Nature, for providing the wide latitude and support for creating new features while upholding the journal's integrity through upholding all

of our efforts to improve the journal's scientific content, scope, and rigor. We look forward to continuing serve the scientific and clinical community with articles that provide insight into scientific observations and improve the care of our patients.

Fig. 2 The number of submissions received by DDS/year since 2008

Fig. 3 Selected bibliometric data for Digestive Diseases and Sciences 2008–2018. JIF: Clarivate Journal Impact Factor; SJR: Scimago Journal Ranking; Cites/2 year: Scimago Citations per Document (2 years); INF: Clarivate Influence Factor. For details see text

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