Letter to the Editor

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One of the strengths of JHES is the extensive range of topics covered and the diversity of the scientific disciplines represented by its contributors. The strengths of JHES are summarised by Mochida (2003). However, this wonderful diversity of background means that the Editor of the Journal must work hard to weave together submissions for publication written by contributors who may have quite different expectations of content and the level of required detail. It is this issue of the required level of detail for submissions to JHES that I would like to raise as a point of discussion.

I am aware as a result of my own submissions for publication (for Journals including: JHES; International Journal of Clothing, Science and Technology; Ergonomics; Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health; and others such as conference proceedings) and experience in reviewing articles submitted for publication (as casual reviewer for Journals including: JHES; The Journal of the International Society of Biometeorology; The Journal of the Textile Institute) that requirements vary extensively from Journal to Journal as well as expectations varying among countries. As part of the submission and review process, I have sought to clarify in my own mind the characteristics of scientific papers that contribute to:

- i) successful acceptance of submissions with no revision required (which requires careful statements of requirements by the Journal and adherence to these recommendations by the author), and
- ii) why some papers are cohesive comprehensive presentation of findings contributing to knowledge both in the year published and for many years from publication, while others fail to satisfy the reader and fade from view (seems to reflect the presence survival of detail which allows reconsideration of content as scientific knowledge advances).

These attributes are two that I believe journal contributors value. Publications are generally based on some test of a hypothesis or theory followed by interpretation of this hypothesis. As a reader and reviewer, it is the statement of the aims of the investigation and the statement of what statistical analysis is to be undertaken to test the hypothesis and meet the aims that I use to assess the strength of the published paper. Over time, this information grows in importance as the state of scientific knowledge advances. When I review volumes of JHES I note that this information is at times buried in the paper and difficult to find, and at other times not present at all. If a paper does not state the aims, method of analysis and interpretation of findings in the context of the literature it is not possible for the reader to apply their own intellect and knowledge of their own field to the findings. I also want this information so I can evaluate and be convinced by the authority of the author(s).

It is with great pleasure I have followed the evolution of JHES under the care of its Editors (first Drs Osada and Matsubara and more recently Dr Kakituba). From its earliest publication to the Journals current status as a journal that can be accessed internationally via a search engine. For me, as an English speaking scientist, JHES also provides invaluable insight into the diversity of research being undertaken in Japan and importantly access to some of this work. As the next step in the development of JHES I am writing to recommend that:

- i) a formal statement of statistical analysis be included in the methods section (in some cases while this information is present it is difficult to find),
- ii) there should be inclusion of more than just a statement of significance in the results section (e.g. strength of correlations is of importance to the reader as it allows comparison with the findings of others while level of significance

alone does not), and

- iii) discussion of findings should also include consideration of the practical implications of results (I am sure we all agree that in some cases statistical significance does not reflect practical importance and this should be discussed).

Should these recommendations be adopted it may be useful to include example papers on the JHES website for reference to by potential submitters.

Reference

Mochida, T. (2003) Presidential address. *Journal of the Human Environment System* **6**(2): 49.