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Letters to the Editor

Letter to the Response by Hyvönen et al. on Moisture Damage and MCS



To the Editor,

The article “Moist and mold exposure is associated with high prevalence of neurological symptoms and MCS in a Finnish hospital workers cohort” by Hyvönen et al. [1] was criticized by Pekkanen et al. [2]. Hyvönen et al. gave their response “Response to the Critics by Pekkanen et al.” [3]. My name (T.P.) and contribution were misleadingly attached to the article [1] and to the response to the critics [3]. The aim of this letter is to correct the misleading information given by the two articles. My actual contribution was as follows:

I analyzed the data [1], clarified the choice of statistical methods, and gave instructions for reporting the results. I wrote Section 2.4 Data analysis. I had no role in writing, checking, or editing the manuscript, in interpretation of the results, or in conclusions. Unfortunately, the writers ignored my comments and instructions, and the errors and the inconsistency between the described methods and the reported results took place. Thus, I am not responsible of the deficiencies and errors in the article. Unfortunately, my name was erroneously mentioned in the Acknowledgment section without asking my permission.

Pekkanen et al. [2] observed problems with the statistical analyses and discrepancies with reporting in the article of Hyvönen et al. [1]. The critical comments were justified. I explained the comments in detail to Hyvönen et al. and promised to clarify the statistical points and answer to the statistical critics.

I wrote a separate, independent statement, but I had no other role in writing or editing the letter “Response to the Critics by Pekkanen et al.” [3]. Unfortunately, Hyvönen et al. changed my statement without asking my permission: they removed an important part of my text and added a new table (Table 1), which they had

constructed by themselves. In the removed part, I agreed with the critical comments given by Pekkanen et al., such as the Data analysis and the Results sections were not consistent with each other and the text of logistic regression was incorrect. In the removed part, I also indicated that I was not responsible of the deficiencies and errors in the article. The new Table 1 combined misleadingly my name to their conclusions.

In summary, I am an independent biostatistician and my name was now erroneously connected to the errors, interpretations, and conclusions of Hyvönen et al. Therefore, I find it important to make it clear that my name was misused and my statement was manipulated, that is, ethical rules were violated in many ways. This case may be an example that serves as a warning to the writers, independent biostatisticians, and other independent contributors.

References

- [1] Hyvönen S, Lohi J, Tuuminen T. Moist and mold exposure is associated with high prevalence of neurological symptoms and MCS in a Finnish hospital workers cohort. *Saf Health Work* 2020;11(2):173–7.
- [2] Pekkanen J, Karjakainen J, Lampi J. Letter to the paper by Hyvönen et al. on moisture damage and MCS. *Saf Health Work* 2020;11(3):378–9.
- [3] Hyvönen S, Lohi J, Tuuminen T. Response to the Critics by Pekkanen et al. *Saf Health Work* 2020;11(3):380–2.

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