

Editorial

The Journal of Occupational Health from 1959 to 2016

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Historical origins of the *Journal of Occupational Health* (JOH) can be traced back to a series of events last century which paved the way for research and preventive efforts in Japanese occupational health¹⁾. Japan's first official legislation to protect the health of workers (the Mines Act) was promulgated in 1905, for example; followed by the Factory Act of 1911, which was enforced in 1916²⁾. In 1921 the first research institute to study the medical and psychological aspects of worker's health (the Kurashiki Institute for Science of Labor) was founded, followed 8 years later by formation of the *Japan Association of Industrial Health* (JAIH) which held its first meeting in 1929. Gito Teruoka (1889-1966), foundation Director of the Kurashiki Institute, was elected first Chairman of the JAIH Board and had done much to establish both organizations³⁾. International outreach in occupational health was also expanding during this time, with Tomoyoshi Ishikawa from the Industrial Hygiene Section of the Institute of Public Health, being one of the first Japanese researchers appointed to the Editorial Board of an American occupational health journal (in 1936)⁴⁾.

Japan experienced a dramatic recovery following the Second World War, and the immediate postwar period was seminal in the development of modern occupational health for a few reasons⁵⁾. Firstly, it was accompanied by some major advances in workplace protections including the Labor Standards Law and the Workmen's Accident Compensation Insurance Law, which were both promulgated in 1947⁶⁾. Secondly, the academic dissemination of research was also expanding around this time, with the JAIH first publishing an association journal in 1946, and the National Institute of Industrial Health publishing a

bulletin of research findings from their institute beginning in 1958⁷⁾. The JOH was officially launched by the JAIH in February of the following year (1959) with a dual title: *Sangyō Igaku / Japanese Journal of Industrial Health*⁸⁾. Bogo Koinuma (1891-1980) was appointed founding Editor-in-Chief, although he would only remain in this role for the first 4 issues of the journal in 1959. Koinuma had originally graduated in medicine from Tokyo Imperial University (later, the University of Tokyo) in 1917 and had become a Professor at Nagoya Medical University in 1935. Koinuma moved to Nippon University in 1956 and would later serve as 3rd President of the JAIH for 11 years, between 1959 and 1969⁹⁾.

Interestingly, although Sangyō Igaku mainly published manuscripts in Japanese, Volume 1 in 1959 did include two English-language articles written by Osamu Nishikaze from the Research Institute for Tuberculosis in Hokkaido University^{10,11)}. The journal's Editorial Board went through various changes over the following decades, and a full list of Editors-in-Chief from 1959 to 1994 is shown in Table 1. The JAIH had also changed its name to the *Japan Society for Occupational Health* (JSOH) during this period after combining with the Japan Society of Industrial Medicine in 1971³⁾. The 1970s would ultimately prove to be a defining era in Japanese occupational health, particularly following enactment of the Industrial Health and Safety Law of 1972¹²⁾. Government bulletins with technical guidelines for assessments were also introduced during this decade (in 1976)¹³⁾, and the University of *Occupational and Environmental Health, Japan* (UOEH) was established in 1978⁵⁾. Later (in 1981), the UOEH began holding annual symposiums with a particular emphasis on occupational health and preventive medicine¹⁴⁾.

By the early 1990s, Japanese occupational health was expanding its international outreach and the proposal for an English-language version of the official JSOH publication was being seriously considered¹⁵⁾. Tentative steps were taken, with an English-language version of the Instructions for Authors being included from 1991 onwards, with the intention of attracting new manuscripts from overseas¹⁶⁾. By early 1993, Yasuhiro Takeuchi (Editor-in-

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Table 1. Editors-in-Chief at *Sangyō Igaku / Japanese Journal of Industrial Health* (1959-1994)

Tenure	Editor-in-Chief
1959	Bogo Koinuma
1959-1966	Hiromasa Kita
1967-1969	Syukich Matuoka
1970-1971	Haruo Kondo
1972-1974	Nozomi Takemura
1975-1977	Akira Koizumi
1978-1980	Yutaka Yamaguchi
1981-1983	Takayoshi Kitayama
1984-1986	Yutaka Hosoda
1987-1989	Shinya Watanabe
1990-1992	Yasuhiro Takeuchi
1993-1994	Akio Sato

Chief, 1990-1992), had described his vision for an international periodical in the field¹⁷⁾.

Following much effort from Takeuchi and Akio Sato (Editor-in-Chief, 1993-1994), a new direction was officially announced in 1994 which would encourage the publication of English-language manuscripts¹⁸⁾. In the following year (1995) the journal's name changed to a dual-language title: (*Sangyō Eiseigaku Zasshi / Journal of Occupational Health*) with both English and Japanese-language manuscripts being accepted during this period. Its physical appearance was also revised¹⁹⁾, expanding from B5 to A4 in size and having an updated cover design. The change to an English-language format was apparently successful in attracting international manuscripts, with the Editor-in-Chief reporting an increase in submissions from one original article of this type in 1993, to 9 such articles within two years²⁰⁾. It is important to note that publishing in journals with impact factors had also become an increasingly relevant criteria in the selection of Japanese university professors by the mid 1990s²¹⁾.

Even so, the journal remained an official JSOH publication and therefore still needed to serve the requirements of its fee-paying Japanese membership. For these reasons, it was officially split into two separate publications from January 1996 onwards: an English-language version (the JOH) and its Japanese-language counterpart (*Sangyō Eiseigaku Zasshi*)¹⁹⁾. A preliminary website was also commenced in the same year²²⁾. Because they represented a continuation of the original periodical, both journals continued their numbering from Volume 38 in 1996 and share identical volume numbers to the present day. *Sangyō Eiseigaku Zasshi* initially published 7 issues per year (including one issue which featured material from the annual JSOH conference), while the JOH published 4 issues per year²³⁾. By the turn of the Century however, demand was such that the JOH expanded to a bimonthly pe-

Table 2. Editors-in-Chief at the *Journal of Occupational Health* (since 1995)

Tenure	Editor-in-Chief
1995-1998	Akio Sato
1999-2002	Kazuyuki Omae
2003-2005	Akio Koizumi
2006-2008	Tatsuya Takeshita
2009-2011	Norito Kawakami
2011-2014	Shigeru Sokejima
Since 2014	Akizumi Tsutsumi

riodical in 2000; which may have reflected an increasing interest in occupational health research during this time. By 2007, for example, there were at least 22 Japanese journals publishing in the field of occupational safety and health²⁴⁾.

In 2016, the JOH remains an English-language journal and *Sangyō Eiseigaku Zasshi*, a Japanese language periodical (with English abstracts). Both continue to be official publications of the JSOH and are listed on the United States National Library of Medicine's PubMed/Medline database. The current Editor-in-Chief is Akizumi Tsutsumi from Kitasato University in Japan, with Eiji Shibata (Japan) as Vice Editor-in-Chief and Ichiro Kawachi (United States) as International Associate Editor. A complete list of JOH Editors-in-Chief from 1995 to the present day is shown in Table 2. The entire back-catalog of journal articles from 1959 onwards is freely available online via the *Japan Science and Technology Information Aggregator, Electronic* (J-STAGE) website²⁵⁾, and JSOH members also receive printed copies of each journal as part of their membership benefits.

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