

The Journals World Cup 2005: Impact Factors for Sport Science

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A journal's impact factor is the rate at which its recent articles have been cited. The median impact factor for journals in sport science is 1.0, which is similar to that of many other biomedical disciplines. This year's medal winners for improvement in impact factor, with an increase of at least 70%, are Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine (now on 2.8), Journal of Sports Sciences (1.7), and Journal of Sport Management (0.7). Journals showing an increase of 30-69% are High Altitude Medicine and Biology (2.0), British Journal of Sports Medicine (1.9), Australian Journal of Physiotherapy (1.5), Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy (1.4), Journal of Clinical Psychology (1.3), Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport (1.1), and Clinics in Sports Medicine (1.1). About 17 journals showed an increase of 10-29%, those more closely identified with sport science being Sports Medicine (3.3), Journal of Applied Psychology (2.9), Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise (2.8), Journal of Biomechanics (2.4), Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports (2.2), European Journal of Applied Physiology (1.6), Pediatric Exercise Science (1.6), Psychology of Sport and Exercise (1.3), Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport (1.1), Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research (1.1), Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness (0.9), and Journal of Sport and Social Issues (0.6). Well-known journals that have changed by less than 10% include Journal of Applied Physiology (3.0), Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews (2.5), American Journal of Sports Medicine (2.4), and International Journal of Sports Medicine (1.4), Journals falling by more than 10% include Physical Therapy (1.7), Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology (1.2), and Journal of Athletic Training (1.1). KEYWORDS: academic, citation, publication, research.

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Notwithstanding my previous public pronouncements about the misuse of the journal impact factor, I have been unable to resist sharing the latest ratings with you. Once again I am obliged to publish an incomplete list, to comply with the policy of acceptable use of the organization that compiles the impact factors, Thomson Scientific. See my [previous article](#) for more information on this and other issues related to the impact factor.

This year I have presented the impact factors in a manner that highlights changes since the previous year. Values of the impact factor range over more than two orders of magnitude, so changes are probably best expressed as percents. (For those of you with an interest in statistical analysis, the impact factor would probably have acceptable uniformity of error after log transformation). After calculating and examining the percent changes since last year, I

decided to identify five bands of change, as shown in the Abstract and in Table 1. Most of the changes were positive, indicating growth in our discipline, although I don't know how this growth compares with that of other disciplines.

The median value for the impact factor of journals in sport science is 1.0. In other words, if you published a paper in the median journal in 2003 or 2004, it was cited on average only once in all journals in 2005. When I viewed median impact factors for other disciplines at the citations site, I was somewhat surprised to learn that sport science is similar to health care, applied physics, rehabilitation, surgery, general medicine, orthopedics and zoology. The highest median impact factors are found in the disciplines of virology (2.7) and genetics (2.6), while history and philosophy of science (0.4) and some branches of engineering (0.3) have the lowest. A related citation statistic is the

aggregate impact factor, which is the average citation rate of papers in each discipline. The rate for sport science is 1.6, which means the average recent paper was cited 1.6 times last year. Aggregate rates for the other disciplines ranged from 8.5 down to 0.1. The only meaningful conclusions that I can make from such data are (a) most of us don't get cited as much

as we would like, (b) citation-wise, sport science is similar to many long-established and respected disciplines, and therefore (c) we needn't feel inferior to other academics.

Update June 30, 2006: an [editorial](#) in the journal [PLoS Medicine](#) is critical of Thomson Scientific's process and product.

Table 1: Impact factors for sport- and exercise-science journals in 2005. "<1.0" implies a value between 0.1 and 1.0. A journal without an impact factor is not in Thomson Scientific's science or social sciences databases, either because the journal is too new or the factor is too low. "???" indicates a journal apparently removed from Thomson Scientific's databases this year. Colors indicate changes in impact factor since 2004, as follows:

↑ ≥70%	↑ 30-69%	↑ 10-29%	↑↓ 0-9%	↓ 10-29%
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<1.0	ACSM's Health and Fitness Journal	1.7	Gait and Posture
2.9	Acta Physiologica Scandinavica	2.0	High Altitude Medicine and Biology
<1.0	Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly	1.0	Human Movement Science
	American Journal of Medicine and Sports	4.0	International Journal of Epidemiology
1.1	American Journal of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation		International Journal of History of Sport
4.6	American Journal of Physiology - Endo & Metab		International Journal of Performance Analysis in Sport
3.6	American Journal of Physiology - Heart & Circ	1.0	International J of Sport Nutrition & Exercise Metabolism
2.4	American Journal of Sports Medicine	<1.0	International Journal of Sport Psychology
<1.0	Applied Ergonomics	1.4	International Journal of Sports Medicine
<1.0	Applied Psychological Measurement		International Review for the Sociology of Sport
<1.0	Applied Psychology-International Review		International Sports Journal
1.7	Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	<1.0	Isokinetics and Exercise Science
<1.0	Athletic Therapy Today	<0.1	Japanese Journal of Physical Fitness and Sport
1.5	Australian Journal of Physiotherapy	<1.0	Journal of Aging and Physical Activity
1.0	Aviation Space and Environmental Medicine		Journal of Applied Behavioral Science
1.1	Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers	<1.0	Journal of Applied Biomechanics
<0.1	Biology of Sport	3.0	Journal of Applied Physiology
1.9	British Journal of Sports Medicine	2.9	Journal of Applied Psychology
1.1	Canadian Journal of Applied Physiology	<1.0	Journal of Applied Sport Psychology
1.5	Clinical Biomechanics	1.1	Journal of Athletic Training
2.8	Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine	2.4	Journal of Biomechanics
2.3	Clinical Nutrition		Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies
1.1	Clinics in Sports Medicine	1.3	Journal of Clinical Psychology
	Current Sports Medicine Reports		Journal of Comparative Physical Education & Sport
<1.0	Deutsche Zeitschrift fur Sportmedizin	2.2	Journal of Electromyography and Kinesiology
	Electromyography and Motor Control	3.0	Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health
<1.0	Ergonomics		Journal of Exercise Physiology Online
1.6	European Journal of Applied Physiology	??	Journal of Human Movement Studies
2.2	European Journal of Clinical Nutrition		Journal of Human Performance in Extreme Environments
	European Journal of Sport Science	<1.0	Journal of Leisure Research
	European Sports History Review	1.7	Journal of Motor Behaviour
2.5	Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews	3.7	Journal of Nutrition

1.9	Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine	1.6	Pediatric Exercise Science
1.4	Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy		Pediatric Physical Therapy
<1.0	Journal of the Philosophy of Sport	<1.0	Perceptual and Motor Skills
	Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance		Physical Educator
4.3	Journal of Physiology	1.7	Physical Therapy
1.1	Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport	<1.0	Physical Therapy in Sport
1.1	Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology	<1.0	Physician and Sportsmedicine
1.2	Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	<1.0	Physikalische Medizin Rehabilitationsmedizin Kuror.
0.6	Journal of Sport and Social Issues	1.3	Psychology of Sport and Exercise
	Journal of Sport Behavior	<1.0	Quest
??	Journal of Sport History		Research in Sports Med (was Sports Med Train Rehab)
0.7	Journal of Sport Management	1.1	Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport
<1.0	Journal of Sport Rehabilitation	2.2	Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports
	Journal of Sports Chiropractic and Rehabilitation	<1.0	Science and Sports
0.9	Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness	<1.0	Sociology of Sport Journal
	Journal of Sports Science and Medicine		Sport History Review
1.7	Journal of Sports Sciences	??	Sport, Education, and Society
	Journal of Sports Traumatology	<1.0	(The) Sport Psychologist
1.1	Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research		Sports Biomechanics
	Journal of Swimming Research		Sports Exercise and Injury
<1.0	Journal of Teaching in Physical Education	3.3	Sports Medicine
1.0	Leisure Sciences	<1.0	Sports Medicine and Arthroscopy Review
	Leisure Studies	??	Sports Medicine Standards & Malpractice Reporter
	Measurement in Physical Education & Exercise Science	<1.0	Sportverletzung-Sportschaden
<0.1	Medicina dello Sport		Strength and Conditioning
2.8	Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise	<1.0	Strength and Conditioning Journal
	Medicine and Sport Science		Women in Sport & Physical Activity Journal

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