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Letter

Comments on "A systematic review of the scalp donor site for split-thickness skin grafting"

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These comments refer to a paper recently accepted for publication in *Archives of Plastic Surgery,* "A systematic review of the scalp donor site for split-thickness skin grafting" Oh [1].

The author tried to provide information on the surgical techniques, management, and complications of scalp skin grafting through a systematic review.

In the conclusion of this meta-analysis–like systematic review, the author wrote that the rate of early complications of the scalp donor site was 3.82% (117 of 3,062 patients), and that of late complications was 5.19% (159 of 3,062 patients). The author mentioned that these rates were calculated using the "above-mentioned problems," but in Table 1, the sum of early com-plications of the scalp donor site was 123 instead of 117, while that of late complications was 190 instead of 159. I would like to know the reason for these discrepancies and the exclusion criteria, if any were applied.

In the Methods section, author primarily searched in PubMed (publication date 01/01/1964 to 12/31/2019) with the keywords of "scalp [AND] skin [AND] grafting [AND] donor" which retrieved 290 articles. In Fig. 1, however, the publication dates are shown from 1977 to 2019 and it is stated that 285 articles were screened. I would like to know the exact publication dates and the number of articles searched.

It is generally accepted that a single database is not sufficient to retrieve all references for systematic reviews [2,3]. Needless to say, the number of the articles retrieved should be reproducible in systematic reviews or meta-analyses.

I searched for the same combination of keywords during the same period (1977–2019) in PubMed and Scopus, and found 354 and 93 results, respectively. Excluding 27 duplicates, 420 papers were left. Compared with the author's search, more than 120 additional papers were found.

Finally, I must also point out that in PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) flowchart, unlike what is shown in Fig. 1, the direction of the arrow is outward when articles are excluded, but inward if papers are added [4].

Notes

Conflict of interest

Kun Hwang is an editorial board member of the journal but was not involved in the peer reviewer selection, evaluation, or decision process of this article. No other potential conflicts of interest relevant to this article were reported.

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