

Letter to the Editor Regarding “Research Trends of Acupuncture Therapy on Knee Osteoarthritis from 2010 to 2019: A Bibliometric Analysis” [Letter]

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Dear editor

Recently, Li et al¹ released a paper in the *Journal of Pain Research*, entitled “Research Trends of Acupuncture Therapy on Knee Osteoarthritis from 2010 to 2019: A Bibliometric Analysis.” Many of the related results mentioned in the original paper¹ are inaccurate due to improper methods being used. Li et al¹ stated in methods that “All data in this study were obtained from the Web of Science on 1 March 2020. The data search strategy included the topic ‘knee osteoarthritis’ and ‘acupuncture therapy’, with the publications period of the literature ranging from 2010 to 2019. In addition, the countries, categories and language of publications were not been restricted. The specific search strategies and results are shown in Table 1.”

It is not possible to repeat results in the original article¹ using the same methods. In total, 658 articles were found.

Web of Science (WoS) includes

1. Web of Science Core Collection (1985-present)
2. BIOSIS Previews (1994-present)
3. Chinese Science Citation DatabaseSM (1989-present)
4. Derwent Innovations Index (1963-present)
5. Inspec[®] (1969-present)
6. KCI-Korean Journal Database (1980-present)
7. MEDLINE[®] (1950-present)
8. Russian Science Citation Index (2005-present)
9. SciELO Citation Index (2002-present)

Web of Science Core Collection includes

1. Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI-EXPANDED) –1997-present
2. Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) –2001-present
3. Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI) –2003-present
4. Conference Proceedings Citation Index—Science (CPCI-S) –1998-present
5. Conference Proceedings Citation Index—Social Science & Humanities (CPCI-SSH) –1998-present
6. Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) –2015-present

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Web of Science Core Collection: Chemical Indexes include:

1. Current Chemical Reactions (CCR-EXPANDED) –1985-present
2. Index Chemicus (IC) –1993-present

Firstly, the search terms Li et al¹ used were repetitive. They only had to use “Knee Osteoarthritis” OR “Acupuncture” since the publications searched out by different keywords like “Osteoarthritis, Knee”, “Knee Osteoarthritis”, “Knees Osteoarthritis” and “Osteoarthritis, Knees” is same and the publications searched out by “Acupuncture Therapy” is a part of the publications searched out by “Acupuncture.” Secondly, authors should select the appropriate databases for their study as there are several levels of databases as described above. For example, searching keywords by using SCI-EXPANDED for bibliometric analysis is a suitable method. Web of Science Core Collection: SSCI, A&HCI, CPCI-S, ESCI, CPCI-SSH, CCR-EXPANDED, and IC are inappropriate for “Research Trends of Acupuncture Therapy on Knee Osteoarthritis from 2010 to 2019: A Bibliometric Analysis”.

We use SCI-EXPANDED with searching keywords ((Knee Osteoarthritis) and (Acupuncture or Electroacupuncture) and (Treatment or Therapy)) from 2010 to 2019. Language and document type of publications were not restricted. The method resulted in 293 papers.

In my opinion, Li et al could have provided more accurate information if they had understood Web of Science beforehand. Moreover, Li et al used only 343 papers published between 2010 and 2019 for their analysis. From a statistical point of view, it is not appropriate to use such a limited number of publications for bibliometric research.

Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

Reference

1. Li R, Sun J, Hu H, et al. Research trends of acupuncture therapy on knee osteoarthritis from 2010 to 2019: a bibliometric analysis. *J Pain Res.* 2020;13:1901–1913.

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