Letter to the Editor

Problem with 'A review of 24 patients with bronchial ruptures: is delay in diagnosis more common in children?'

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Keywords: Intellectual property; Specialty thesis; Dispute

I read the article regarding bronchial ruptures published in EJCTS in March 2003 with great interest [1]. To note, the published article astonishingly overlaps with the same patient group and fails to either cite or acknowledge the thesis titled "Tracheobronchial Ruptures in Blunt Chest Trauma", written in 1998 by Yildirim E. [2].

The specialty thesis regarding 21 patients with tracheobronchial ruptures was written 5 years before the article (including 24 patients with the same injury) was published in 2003.

In the thesis, the same group of patients was evaluated as a whole and the outcomes were given in many tables regarding diagnostic tools, treatment options, surgical techniques, hospital stay, complications, etc.

On the other hand, the article has divided the same group of patients into two major groups (<15 years vs >15 years) and then has presented the results comparing the two groups.

The only major difference was the three patients with bronchial injury who were allocated additionally into the study group between 1998 and 2003.

It seems the article is based to a great extent on the same patients included in the specialty thesis.

References


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Reply to Letter to the Editor

Reply to Yildirim

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Atatürk Center for Chest Diseases and Thoracic Surgery, where I was employed as co-consulting surgeon of a surgical team, is an old institution in Ankara, Turkey. Naturally, large series of different entities related to thoracic surgery have been recorded over more than 40 years.

Among these entities, the topic 'Traumatic Tracheobronchial Ruptures (TTBR)' has always attracted special attention. Likewise, Dr Cetin, chief of the surgery division, had already published them twice in 1974 and 1984, which have been cited as the eighth and ninth references in the thesis of Yildirim [1].

In 1992, Dr Cetin entrusted me the responsibility of continuing to collect the data of patients with TTBR treated in our institution and publishing them on a regular basis.

In 1995, 3 years before the thesis of Yildirim was written, I and a group of authors presented on this topic at the 23rd National Congress of Turkish Association of Respiratory Research held between 11 and 14 June 1995 at the Hilton Convention Center, Istanbul, Turkey [2]. This was the third publication of the TTBR series before the thesis was written.

In 1998, Yildirim wrote his graduating thesis largely based upon this regularly updated data and documents on TTBR. Therefore, there was an overlap in patient groups for the first time in 1998 because the thesis largely drew from the patient groups mentioned in our presentation in 1995.

Later, we presented the same details but updated the patient groups yet again at the World Congress on Lung Health and 10th ERS Annual Congress held between 30 August and 3 September, 2000, in Florence, Italy [3]. Neither the first nor the second presentation has been the subject of any claim of intellectual property yet.

Lastly, the same but re-updated patient groups of TTBR was published in this journal in 2003 [4], where I studied the topic from a different perspective definitely not comparable either to our previous publications or to the thesis.

Naturally, I used our own regularly updated original database instead of an old-fashioned copy from 1998.