

Medical Perspectives and Validation Studies

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Editorial:

Seven years ago the Scholar program set out to help novice researchers in the clinical setting design and execute research projects.¹ Two types of research projects that participants migrated towards were medical perspective and validation studies. Each are highly valuable contributions to the medical literature but both have unique hardships to publish that are not always obvious to a new researcher.

A medical perspective at its core is a mixture of a review on a subject with the author(s) opinion added.² Variability often can be found in the breadth and depth of the included literature. Likewise, the opinion of the author(s) can be represented in the form of speculation or theorizing. It is the opinion element that makes perspective pieces hard to sell to a journal, reviewer and the readership. Medical perspectives are often invited or commissioned manuscripts to leaders in the field. Is this fair and why? Additionally, what happens when the medical perspective topic has virtually no published research leaders in the field?

In this issue Knapp and Esper that found just that niche when looking into “OMM in Space: Considerations for osteopathic manipulative medicine in space applications”.³ As such in this case the novice author(s) can be a leader representing the perspective of a field that needs to be explored further. Scholar tips our hat to the forward-thinking medical student and their faculty co-author!

Validation studies are another ever evolving topic in the medical literature. No official consensus on what meets the criteria to be considered a validation study has been created; virtually all agree that they are important. In traditional sciences, such as chemistry, a validation study literally means repeating what the methods say to do and getting the same or nearly the same results. An excellent example of this can be found in Organic Syntheses.⁴

In this Journal, after a proposal is accepted, another laboratory seeks to duplicate the methods and results. Comments are provided by the those replicating the published data. However, even with short synthetic projects, cost is a factor. To be accepted and funded by the journal, cost of any one reagent is capped (currently \$500 per reagent).

In the medical field, there is no parallel journal design. Likewise, grants are rarely available for replicating or validating in its entirety a medical study. As, such validation studies in the medical field are not common and are often done by statistical methods and meta-analysis.

In this issue we are proud to offer our first validation study in the form of a Meta-analysis.⁵ In this study author looked into “OMT’s potential to decrease the length of stay on the elderly that are hospitalized for pneumonia is validated based the available studies”.

References:

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