

Lack of rigor in bibliographic analysis

It is never exorbitant to repeatedly draw attention to or emphasize the details stated in a publication's guide on how to write a scientific article, whatever the specialty. On the first pages of each of their issues, all medical journals specifically state their publication criteria. Follow these criteria. They are clear, instructional, and precise.

Each point is important. All that it takes is one oversight of these criteria for the journal reviewer to misunderstand the article, thereby returning it to the author for revisions. For our journal, **Revista Brasileira de Cirurgia Plástica/Brazilian Journal of Plastic Surgery (RBCP)**, these exchanges can occur up to four times before the article is disqualified from publication.

Whatever the content to be published, the author should know his or her unique contributions to the article, so that he or she may justify its publication in consideration of what is already published in the literature.

Several years ago, we prepared a guide that we offer to interested parties. To receive this guide, ask the secretary of the **RBCP** at the Brazilian Society of Plastic Surgery.

This guide is simple, educational, and to the point: a type of manual for a better understanding. According to the ideas of the particular article, there are other degrees of structural complexities, which are not, at present, the subjects of this editorial. In particular, this editorial focuses on one of the most important points: accurate bibliographic analysis.

It is important to know whether there are articles with similar content already published and who the authors of those articles are. Nothing prevents someone's unique experience of an already known issue from being published, as long as the previous authors are recorded in the bibliography of authors who have been previously published. The priority right must always prevail. Omitting the names of authors of studies that are already published on a topic reflects a poor quality of research. From this, uncomfortable situations will always arise. Some omitted authors are offended, but do not act on it, while others voice their concern of not having been cited. This is an international problem. Solutions include a letter of apology issued to the omitted author by the author who omitted the citation and (or) editorials such as this to emphasize the importance of citation. In fact, no one likes that omissions occur, whether by premeditated negligence or not, in an article of which the author had not been thorough in conducting a bibliographic analysis.

However, every time that this happens, an editorial has to be written about the topic, specifying the names of those involved.

After five years as editor of the **RBCP**, I have seen two similar episodes occur, which resulted in letters of apology and justification, and which could have been avoided if the authors had been more thorough in their bibliographies.

This editorial reports the same type of problem: lack of rigor in bibliographic analysis. Auersvald et al.¹, of Paraná, Brazil, published an article in **RBCP** titled "Hemostatic net: an alternative for the prevention of hematoma in rhytidoplasty." In the index of articles included in volume 37, issue number 5 of the journal of *Aesthetic Plastic Surgery*, published in 2013, Cabas Neto et al.² of Espírito Santo, Brazil, gained approval to publish an article entitled, "Reducing the incidence of hematomas in cervicofacial rhytidectomy: new external quilting sutures and other ancillary procedures." The formerly mentioned authors on this topic were not cited by the latterly mentioned authors. In other words, the same basic principles had already been published by Auersvald et al.¹, but Cabas Neto et al.² did not cite their previous study.

This overstepped the boundaries and the editor of the journal of *Aesthetic Plastic Surgery*, who was responsible for the Cabas Neto et al.² publication, was also expected to come forth and call attention to the issue with an editorial.

This problem may seem uncommon due to the tolerance of those omitted from citation, which results from authors not performing a thorough bibliographic analysis. Therefore, it is important to always report these occurrences to increase the rigor of research and reduce bibliographic inaccuracies. Before an article's finalization, it is essential to always cite the author who was the first to publish on a given topic and who gave rise to a series of other articles, based on the priority law. In Brazil, as a matter of nationalism, is it always necessary to research Brazilian authors who have already published on the same or similar topics; this practice is also required by other specialist journals outside of Brazil.

In the near future, with advances in technology, we predict that documenting a particular topic on computers and pushing some buttons will suffice for an accurate bibliographic analysis without human error, such as in this case.

Ricardo Baroudi

Editor

REFERENCES

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2. Cabas Neto J, Rodriguez Fernandez DE, Boles M. Reducing the incidence of hematomas in cervicofacial rhytidectomy: new external quilting sutures and other ancillary procedures. *Aesthetic Plast Surg.* 2013;37(5):1034-9.