

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Call for Clarification on the Novelty of a Bibliometric Analysis of AC Joint Injury

Dear Editor

The recently published article by Basralian et al.¹ *Acromioclavicular Joint Injury: A Bibliometric Analysis of the 50 Most Cited Articles* shares notable similarities to a previously published article by Kilkenny et al.² *A Bibliometric Analysis of the Top 50 Cited Studies Related to Acromioclavicular Joint Instability*, published in the Journal of Orthopaedics in 2024. We hope the similarities and differences outlined in this letter prompt discussion about the appropriateness of this study and whether it adds meaningfully to the existing literature.

On review, the Basralian et al.¹ article shares multiple overlapping elements with the previously published work by Kilkenny et al.² that are central to our concerns.

SimilaritiesAbstract

- Both articles share the same study scope: The top 50 most cited articles on AC joint injury.
- Use of bibliometric analysis with nearly identical bibliometric variables.

Introduction

- Notes disparity in AC joint injury between men and women.
- Highlights a high incidence in athletes.
- Introduces bibliometric analysis in a similar fashion.
- Both state that no prior bibliometric analyses on AC joint injury have been conducted.

Methods

- Use of similar search terms in respective databases (Scopus vs Web of Science).
- Nearly identical inclusion and exclusion criteria (English language, full text availability, biomechanical studies, anatomic/cadaveric studies, review articles, and meta-analyses).
- Data collected using the same bibliometric variables (citation number, journal type, country of origin, level of evidence, etc).
- Similar selection process from initial search result to remaining top 50 studies.

Results

- Both present data in publications per year, country of origin,

journal type, and level of evidence with very similar designs for each figure.

- Both identify USA and American Journal of Sports Medicine as leading contributors.

Discussion

- Both note the lack of a consensus standard of care for AC joint injury.
- Emphasis on the predominance of Level IV evidence.
- Note study is limited by using citation count as a metric and potential exclusion of recently published high-quality papers.
- Both acknowledge language limitations.

Conclusion

- Note low scientific quality of papers in the literature and call for future studies with Level V evidence.

Notable differences

- Basralian et al.¹ goes in depth on specific surgical techniques and complications; Kilkenny et al.² focuses on demographics and advocates for more inclusive research on female patients.
- Kilkenny et al.² use VOSviewer for bibliographic coupling and keyword co-occurrence analyses; Basralian et al.¹ do not.
- Basralian et al.¹ provides greater granularity per its breakdown by study type and citation density.

While there are notable differences, the similarities in study design, scope, methodology, results presentation, and conclusion raise concerns about its novelty and significance. Given the significant overlap with the previously published work by Kilkenny et al.², we would appreciate it if the authors could provide further insight into the novelty and original contributions of their manuscript.

Sincerely,

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2. Kilkenny CJ, Farooq F, Hurley ET, Daly GR, Dowling GP,

Whelehan SP, Mullett H. A bibliometric analysis of the top 50 cited studies related to acromioclavicular joint instability. J Orthop. 2024;58:46-51. doi:10.1016/j.jor.2024.06.037.

Answer:

To answer the authors of the letter - the work for our study was completed in January/February 2024 and the manuscript was completed in March 2024, prior to the Kilkenny study being published. Our paper was submitted to a separate journal at that time, and later was submitted to ABJS. Between the submission to the prior journal and the submission to ABJS, we did not perform a new literature review, and therefore were unaware of the Kilkenny paper having been published. I agree that there

are significant similarities between the papers and overall I cannot say that there is a significant amount added to the literature compared to the Kilkenny paper. This is more a matter of simultaneous research being done, with one study published prior to the other one.

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