

Scholarly Journals in Obstetrics and Gynecology: Their Role in Evidence-based Maternal and Women's Health

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Abstract

This short communication highlighted the role of Obstetrics and Gynecology (OBG) journals in enabling evidence-based maternal and women's health through a preliminary search of PubMed database for articles analyzing obstetrics and gynecology journals and found five studies: on Spanish contribution in authorship, study designs, mislabeling of case-control studies, quality of randomized controlled trials, and citation accuracy.

There is dearth need to evaluate the role of OBG journals through more systematic studies on reporting and publication characteristics in order to encourage Evidence-based OBG practice, education and research.

Keywords: Gynecological research; Gynecological journals; Gynecological publications; Evidence-based obstetrics and gynecology.

This short communication paper was aimed to highlight the role of Obstetrics and Gynecology (OBG) journals in enabling evidence-based maternal and women's health through a preliminary search of PubMed database for articles analyzing obstetrics and gynecology journals.

Spanish contribution

García-García et al (2005) performed bibliometric analysis of 779 Spanish scientific works published in OBG journals during the period 1986-2002 by

applying customary rules of bibliometrics: Price's Law of increase in scientific literature, Bradford's Law of scattering of scientific literature and Lotka's Law of author productivity, and analyzed participation index (PaI), the collaboration index and the superior (%SUP). "Spanish productivity in the field of obstetrics and gynecology was found to be increased in the period 1986-2002, and the journal with the largest number of originals is Human Reproduction (Bradford's first area), with 217 articles and that with the highest PaI is Menopause. The total number of authors is 1829, who are responsible for 3938 authorships. The majority of the studies were carried out in hospitals (47.62%) and universities (23.36%).

Study designs

Funai et al (2001) analyzed the study designs of 1517 articles published in four journals: American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology (AJOG), Obstetrics and Gynecology (O&G), Gynecologic Oncology (GO), and Fertility and Sterility (F&S). The clinical research articles were reported at 90.4% (observational articles- 68.2% and experimental articles-14.1%), and AJOG had more animal studies at 10.7% followed by F&S at 4.2%. F&S had more controlled clinical trials, whereas O&G had more randomized controlled trials compared to other three journals.

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Mislabeling case-control studies

Grimes (2009) reviewed 124 articles from four OBG journals (American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Fertility and Sterility, Journal of Reproductive Medicine, and Obstetrics & Gynecology) for "case-control" studies to estimate the frequency of mislabelling and found that the 30% of articles labelled as "case-control" in the title that were not case-control studies, and this frequency varied from 13% to 36% in the four journals, with a 2.8-fold difference in frequency.

Randomized controlled trials

Schulz *et al* (1994) reviewed 206 parallel group randomized controlled trials from the 1990 and 1991 volumes of four journals of obstetrics and gynecology, and found that only 32% of the reports described an adequate method for generating a sequence of random numbers, and only 23% contained information showing that steps had been taken to conceal assignment until the point of treatment allocation. Only 9% of trials described both sequence generation and allocation concealment.

Citation accuracy

Roach *et al* (1997) reviewed three journals: American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology to determine error rate in references and found that the lowest error rate was 55.6% from the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and the highest was 66.7% from

the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, most of which were either in the title of the article or in the authors' names.

There were five studies on analysis of OBG journals: on Spanish contribution in authorship, study designs, mislabelling of case-control studies, quality of randomized controlled trials, and citation accuracy. There is dearth need to evaluate the role of OBG journals through more systematic studies on reporting and publication characteristics in order to encourage Evidence-based OBG practice, education and research.

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