

In Scientific Literature, We Trust!

Abhay Nene¹

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Text books have always been the traditional and definitive seat of learning for us as orthopedic postgraduates.

However, as we move forward from our student lives, orthopedic surgeons begin to rely more on more on research papers and journal articles to update new information on their specific fields of interest.

It soon becomes the norm for practicing orthopedic surgeons to read interesting articles in popular journals and then intuitively translate their conclusions to information and knowledge which is then transmitted to their junior peer as “standard teaching.”

Concurrently, contributing to scientific literature, conducting our own research, and publishing it, has remained a huge attraction for doctors.

It not only pushes us up in the academic circuit, but also potentially enhances our career progression In many institutions, it has become mandatory to publish for promotions!

As a result over the last few decades, the clamor to have research papers published in journals has multiplied and as a result, the number of journals available to print your research work has also multiplied It is pure demand supply mathematics.

But then what happens to quality?

The deep question is – does an exponential increase in the published literature, not have an adverse effect on the quality of each publication?

And now with a situation where there is some journal on the other available to publish whatever you have written, the deeper question remains – “can we blindly rely on everything we read in scientific journals.”

As a logical derivation, from the above discussion, the obvious answer is No!

The impact of transferring conclusions – from inadequately conducted research papers which have been published in haste by journals to fill up their pages – as knowledge to young peers, can be far reaching, as you can imagine.

As postgraduates, there is little effort made to teach us how to analyze a scientific publication and to look into loopholes and flaws in the research methodology, and determine truly if a paper and its conclusions are worthy we need to inculcate this education quickly, to our peers and of course ourselves – and control this potential side-effect of the publication boom that we are in!

Happy reading!

Author's Photo Gallery



Dr. Abhay Nene

Access this article online

Website:
www.jocr.co.in

DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.13107/jocr.2022.v12.i011.3438>

¹Lilavati and Breach Candy Hospitals, Hinduja Surgical Specialty, HN Reliance, Global, Wockhardt, Apollo Hospitals, Wadia Childrens' Hospital, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.

Address of Correspondence:

Dr. Abhay Nene,
Lilavati and Breach Candy Hospitals, Hinduja Surgical Specialty, HN Reliance, Global, Wockhardt, Apollo Hospitals, Wadia Childrens' Hospital, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.
E-mail: abhaynene@yahoo.com

Submitted: 10/07/2022; Review: 14/08/2022; Accepted: October 2022; Published: November 2022

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.13107/jocr.2022.v12.i11.3438>

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Abhay Nene
Spine Surgeon
WeAreSpine

Declaration of patient consent : The authors certify that they have obtained all appropriate patient consent forms. In the form, the patient's parents have given their consent for patient images and other clinical information to be reported in the journal. The patient's parents understand that his names and initials will not be published and due efforts will be made to conceal their identity, but anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Conflict of interest: Nil **Source of support:** None

Conflict of Interest: Nil
Source of Support: Nil

Consent: The authors confirm that informed consent was obtained from the patient for publication of this case report

How to Cite this Article

Nene A. In Scientific Literature, We Trust! Journal of Orthopaedic Case Reports 2022 November;12(11): 114-115.