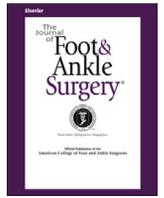




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

The Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery

journal homepage: www.jfas.org

Letters to the Editor

Regarding Zha et al. “A bibliometric analysis of global research production pertaining to diabetic foot ulcers in the past ten years”

Regarding the article by Zha et al (1), “A bibliometric analysis of global research production pertaining to diabetic foot ulcers in the past ten years,” the authors said that, “All of the reference data used in our study were retrieved from the WoSCC [Web of Science Core Collection] and the data retrieval strategy was topic: diabetic foot ulcer* OR diabetic foot wound*; time span: 2007 to 2018 (retrieved data March 22, 2018); and document type: article, review, proceedings paper. A total of 4580 references were retrieved.” Diabetic foot ulcer* or diabetic foot

wound* means (diabetic and foot and ulcer*) or (diabetic and foot and wound*). The authors used the incorrect keywords for their study. Further, based on the method used (1), 6183 documents, including 4500 articles, 754 reviews, and 289 proceedings papers, were found in WoSCC. These results show a huge difference (35% of 4580 documents) from the results in the original report by Zha et al (1).

The WoSCC includes Citation Indexes and Chemical Indexes. SCI-EXPANDED, SSCI, A&HCI, CPCI-S, CPCI-SSH, BKCI-S, BKCI-SSH, and ESCI

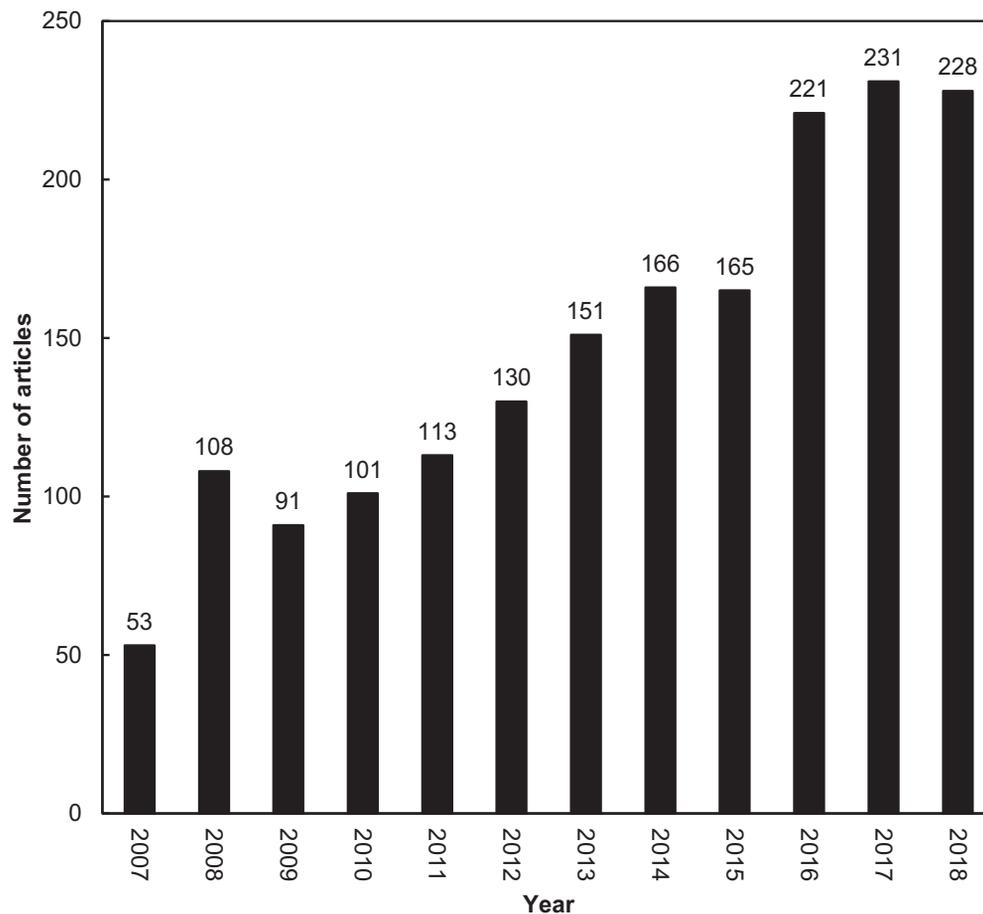


Fig. Annual number of articles on diabetic foot ulcers indexed by SCI-EXPANDED from 2007 to 2018.

were in Citation Indexes. CCR-EXPANDED and IC were in Chemical Indexes. It is unsuitable to use all of these different levels of databases. ESCI complements the highly selective indexes by providing earlier visibility for sources under evaluation as part of the rigorous journal selection process of SCI-EXPANDED, SSCI, and A&HCI (2,3) (http://wokinfo.com/products_tools/multidisciplinary/esci/). WoSCC: Chemical Indexes and A&HCI, CPCI-S, CPCI-SSH, BKCI-S, and BKCI-SSH are inappropriate for the report by Zha et al (1).

A total of 3126 documents were found in SCI-EXPANDED and SSCI (updated on February 5, 2020) from 2007 to 2018 with the use of keywords such as “diabetic foot ulcer,” “diabetic foot ulcers,” “diabetic foot ulceration,” “diabetic foot ulcerations,” “diabetic foot ulcera,” “diabetic foot wound,” and “diabetic foot wounds” including in the document title, abstract, author keywords, and *KeyWords Plus*. However, the WoSCC is designed for researchers to find literature, not for bibliometric studies (4). Fu and Ho (5) pointed out that the documents searched with *KeyWords Plus* were likely to be irrelevant to searched topic. Due to biases from the WoSCC, Fu et al. (6) were the first to propose use of the “front page” (including the article title, the abstract, and the author keywords) as a filter to improve the bibliometric method. In all, 2615 documents (84% of the 3126 documents) were found, including 1767 articles (68% of the 2615 documents), 421 meeting abstracts, 274 reviews, 69 editorial materials, 55 proceedings papers, 50 letters, 17 news items, 14 corrections, 3 reprints, and 1 book review. Further, 511 documents (16% of the 3126 documents) did not include any search keywords in their “front page.” It can be concluded that using the “front page” as a filter can avoid introducing unrelated articles for analysis (6).

The document type—article—basically contains all of the research ideas, results, and discussion. Thus, the articles are usually considered for bibliometric analysis (7). In total, 1767 articles on diabetic foot ulcers were extracted that had been published from 2007 through 2018. The articles distributed over the years is presented in the Fig.

Zha et al. (1) used inappropriate searching strategies to publish a bibliometric article in the *Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery*. This may result in misleading the journal readers. From my perspective, the authors should have used more appropriate search words for greater accuracy.

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