



## Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis in the Field of Parasitology

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### Dear Editor-in-Chief

Over the recent years, the number of systematic reviews and meta-analyses published in journals has been growing significantly. The editors are usually interested in such articles, as they are supposed to be informative and may get good citation numbers, which helps to improve the ranking of the journal. A systematic review which is usually written by “leading researchers” and “experienced authors” in specific scientific areas should cover and analyze the latest and most complete data available on a subject and aim to help scientists in the field to find answers to certain questions (1). However, in many systematic review papers, the authors try to extrapolate their interpretation of data which is originated from a tiny part of available yet valuable information on the subject of interest. In fact, the data used in such works are far from representing the real picture of the matter, and a large body of documents and gray literature such as journal and seminar papers and theses (especially in non-English languages) may inadvertently be neglected.

This deficiency sparks an argument that research works on the subject are introduced inaccurately. Therefore, if employment of a methodology, namely “systematic review” could not help in this regard, it would scientifically be more appropriate

to implement another method such as a comprehensive literature review. Albeit systematic review and meta-analysis are excellent approaches to evaluate and summarize current knowledge and answer different questions, the tools are readily prone to misapplication, hence misinterpretation of the data, and driving the readers to the wrong conclusions. For this, the search must be extensive enough to guarantee retrieval of the most relevant information (2).

To conclude, for the sake of science and to fulfill their mission, the scientific journals in the Digital Age must practice a sound and prudent processing procedure of articles, most importantly through proper peer-reviewing of the submitted manuscripts (3, 4). An example for all is a potentially valuable paper by Khamesipour et al (5) which has not obviously been reviewed by relevant referees upon the submission, as it suffers from some issues which would have readily been corrected should the authors had been noticed through a proper peer-reviewing process normally implemented by journals.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.



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