



Letter to the editor: citations for the case report on idiopathic hypertrophic pachymeningitis by Kosuke Tsuchida et al.

Shi-jun Li¹

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Dear Editor:

I read the case report on rapidly progressive fatal idiopathic hypertrophic pachymeningitis with brainstem involvement in a child by Kosuke Tsuchida et al. [1]. I am surprised to find that the authors said that, in their discussion, there were five pediatric cases of hypertrophic pachymeningitis to date in the literature according to the citations [1–6] (Table 1). However, after I have read these citations, I discovered that the conclusion in Table 1 the authors reached is different from that shown in Table 2.

Based on Table 2, I have found that there are only three pediatric cases according to the citations offered and the other two cases come from adults. Moreover, the contents of the citations are not accurate with respect to the content of the case report. I go to the website of PubMed and input “pachymeningitis.” Then, I find that there are five pediatric cases reported in the literature to date except this case report: the first case comes from a 13-year-old female with aplastic anemia [7], the second case comes from a 10-year-old child with unknown etiology [5], the third comes from a 3.5-year-old child after head trauma [3], the fourth case comes from a 4-year-old boy following tuberculosis [2], and the fifth comes from a 2-year-11-month-old child following tuberculosis as well [8].

Thus, I wonder how the authors reached the conclusion by using the wrong citations in their discussion. Perhaps, it is due to the wrong sequence number of the citations or the authors cite the conclusion directly from other original work(s). However, I think that complete and accurate citations should be part of being ethical in scientific works, though incomplete or inaccurate citations are not uncommon occurrences and one might ignore this phenomenon and even think that such a mistake in a case report and in many others changes nothing in the conclusion of the manuscript(s).

Since the citations imply to readers that the authors have indeed read the cited publications, they must be consistent with the content of the cited literature. If the authors did not search and read the original works and made a conclusion, this is kind of dishonest, for scientific findings must be based on credible evidences.

Nowadays, when it is easy to do electronic searches and arrangement of literature, there is no excuse for such mistakes in citations. I think that the authors should use citations completely and accurately.

Table 1 What the case report shows [1–6]

Sequence number of citation(s) in the case report	Age of patient(s) in the citation	Etiology of pachymeningitis
6	3.5-year-old	Unknown
9	10-year-old	Unknown
10	13-year-old	Aplastic anemia
11	2-year-11-month-old	Tuberculosis
12	4-year-old	Tuberculosis

✉ Shi-jun Li
lishijun@csu.edu.cn

¹ Department of Pediatrics, the Second Xiangya Hospital, Central South University, Changsha 410011, Hunan, China

Table 2 What the citations actually show [2–6]

Sequence number of citation(s) in the case report	Age of patient(s) in the citation	Etiology of pachymeningitis
6	4-year-old	Tuberculosis
9	3.5-year-old	Unknown
10	60, 36, and 19-year-old	Unknown
11	10-year-old	Unknown
12	23-year-old	Unknown

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The author has no conflict of interest.

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