

Response to peer-review report

To whom it may concern,

We would like to thank the reviewers for their insightful comments and critiques to improve the quality of this study. We have adhered to their recommendations, and our point to point responses can be found below.

1. Study search period now reflects specific dates.
2. Study inclusion and exclusion criteria now include specific criteria, and we clarified that only case studies of prospective and retrospective nature were utilized. As per our data search, randomized controlled trials of the subject do not exist.
3. Only case studies were included in our analysis, and an assessment of quality of studies has now been included.
4. Figure 1 has been changed to PRISMA style flow diagram.
5. Exclusion criteria have been described and added to the Figure 1 flow diagram.
6. For Figures 2 and 3, both fixed and random effects models were generated and were comparable. With no significant differences between models, the fixed effects models were included. If it would be of benefit, we can also include the random effects models, though we were concerned about redundancy of data.
7. The study performed by Dhadham et al included a large number of samples. Though it has the propensity to skew results, the results of the study were congruent with all other studies analyzed.
8. Egger bias, Begg-Mazumdar bias, and funnel plots were provided for bias assessment and showed no significant bias. The reference for Egger bias evaluation has been included in our citations.
9. Further limitations of the study have now been included
10. Figure 5 is only 1 representation (assessment) of bias. In addition, each sub-section of the results section contains bias assessment.
11. The conclusion has now been revised to improve clarity and increase cohesiveness of the study.

In addition, references 30 and 30 do not contain either PMID or DOI, and as such, the first page of the articles have been uploaded as image files.