

ANSWERING REVIEWERS

Feb 28, 2015

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 16239-review.doc).



Title: Thrombocytopenia as an inexpensive, valuable predictor for the recurrence of hepatocellular carcinoma: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Author: Qing Pang, Kai Qu, Jian-bin Bi, Su-Shun Liu, Jing-Yao Zhang, Si-Dong Song, Ting Lin, Xin-Sen Xu, Yong Wan, Ming-Hui Tai, Hao-Chen Liu, Ya-Feng Dong, Chang Liu

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 16239

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated.

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer

Thanks for giving us an opportunity to improve our paper. We have read the suggestions by the editor and reviewers carefully. We have revised our manuscript bit by bit according to the suggestions.

Reviewer (1): Reviewed by 02457750

Comments : Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review again for your journal. The manuscript is very well written but needs some corrections to be acceptable for publication: 1- This is a prognostic meta-analysis and Newcastle-Ottawa checklist is not appropriate for quality assessment. I recommend using Oxford Center for Evidence Based Medicine checklist for prognostic studies. 2- The authors based their analyses method (fixed or random effects models) on the amount of heterogeneity. It is not methodologically correct and I do recommend to perform analyses all by random effects model. 3- please change fixed effects model to fixed effect model.

Answer: Thanks very much for giving us these constructive suggestions. We have improved our manuscript according to the suggestions in the revised version.

1. This is a prognostic meta-analysis and Newcastle-Ottawa checklist is not appropriate for quality assessment. I recommend using Oxford Center for Evidence Based Medicine checklist for prognostic studies.

Answer: Thanks for this professional recommendation. We discuss together and agree with the reviewer. We have used Oxford Center for Evidence Based Medicine tool in the revised manuscript. "There was one individual inception cohort study with > 80% follow-up and thus was assessed as level 1b by using the Oxford Center for Evidence-based Medicine tool. Others were retrospective cohort studies and were identified as either level 2a/2b or level 4."

2. The authors based their analyses method (fixed or random effects models) on the amount of heterogeneity. It is not methodologically correct and I do recommend to perform analyses all by random effects model.

Answer: Thanks for this recommendation. We have resumed to perform the analyses all by random effects model and resumed to draw all the forest plots by random effects model.

3. Please change fixed effects model to fixed effect model.

Answer: We have changed fixed effects model to fixed effect model.

Reviewer(2): Reviewed by 02458583

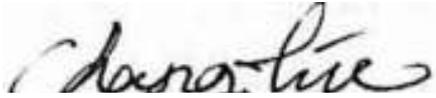
Comment: Very well written review. Just I wanted to make sure whether random effect model has been used if $I^2 > 50\%$. If the authors' cohort has been published with all the data, it cannot be published again besides this meta-analysis.

Answer: Thanks for your positive comment. We verify that random effect model has been used provided $I^2 > 50\%$. In addition, according the suggestion by the reviewer, we have removed our cohort and resumed to perform this meta-analysis in the revised manuscript. We resumed to make the forest plots, performed sensitivity analysis, determined the publication bias, and performed subgroup and meta-regression analyses after removing our own cohort.

3 References and typesetting were corrected.

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chang Liu', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chang Liu, MD, PhD

Dept. of Hepatobiliary Surgery

The First Affiliated Hospital of Medical College

Xi'an Jiaotong University

Xi'an 710061, China

Fax: +86-29-82654746

E-mail: liuchangdoctor@163.com