Dear editors:

On behalf of my co-authors, it is my honor to submit the edited version of manuscript NO. 51713 for possible publication in *World Journal of Meta-Analysis*. And we have revised the manuscript according to the current reviewers' comments.

Reviewer #1:

This is an interesting report presenting a bibliometric analysis Chinese research into Ulcerative Colitis from 1978 to 2017
Comments
1. From the medical and clinical point of view this article is lacking important information comparing directly an increase in UC incidence in China and the number of publications, as well as exponential growth of medical publications. Without such analyses the article has only limited value.
Answer: Many thanks for the reviewer's pointing out that our study is lacking information comparing directly an increase in Ulcerative colitis (UC) incidence and the number of publications. Because the literature of epidemiological surveys based on the general population is absent in China so far. Therefore, the prevalence of UC in China can only be estimated approximately according to the retrospective study.

Question 2, 2. The authors should elaborate more on the bibliometric analysis definition, description and analysis and perhaps also comment on scientometric analysis.
Answer: Many thanks for this nice advice, we agree with him or her that we should elaborate more on the description of bibliometric analysis. And we have added an explanation about the bibliometric analysis in our revised manuscript on page 5.

Question 3, 3. An important and relevant paper: Azer SA, Azer S. What can we learn from top-cited articles in inflammatory bowel disease? A bibliometric analysis and assessment of the level of evidence. BMJ Open. 2018 Jul 12;8(7):e021233. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2017-
Answer: We are really very grateful to the reviewer for his/her pointing out that the previous study named 'What can we learn from top-cited articles in inflammatory bowel disease? A bibliometric analysis and assessment of the level of evidence' should be cited and discussed. But our research is significantly different from this study. Because the previous study only focuses on the 50 top-cited articles in IBD, but our research analyzed all the publications between 1978 to 2017 only if it meets the enroll criteria. And the aim of our study is to demonstrate the trend and distribution of the publication in a wider range, and it contributes to the blank of bibliometric analysis of UC in China.

Review #2:

This manuscript in aiming to describe distribution characteristic of literatures for ulcerative colitis in China. The aim is interesting but methodology seems to be insufficient for international journal level.

1, Literatures written in Chinese should be excluded from the analysis or be analyzed separately because international scientific journal cannot read these articles as usual.

Answer: SinoMed is an open access database which is available to every in the world. Most of the publications have an English Abstract. Furthermore, only this database can provide us with a comprehensive profile of UC change during the last four decades. Pubmed can not do it because there are only quite a few papers published 20 years ago in PubMed.

2, Evidence levels of literatures should be divided according to the Oxford (UK) CEBM Levels of Evidence published its guidelines published in 2009: 1a: Systematic reviews (with homogeneity) of randomized controlled trials 1b: Individual randomized controlled trials (with narrow confidence interval) 1c: All or none randomized controlled trials 2a: Systematic reviews (with homogeneity) of cohort studies 2b: Individual cohort study or low quality randomized controlled trials 2c: "Outcomes" Research; ecological studies 3a: Systematic review (with homogeneity) of case-control studies 3b: Individual case-control study 4: Case series (and poor quality cohort and case-control studies) 5: Expert opinion without explicit critical appraisal, or based on physiology, bench research or "first principles"

Answer: Many thanks for reviewers put down these criteria. SinoMed can automatically classify papers according to the Oxford (UK) CEBM Levels of Evidence.

3, Descriptions "Evidence based study" or publication to "core journal" is very obscure in page 7. These descriptions should be written in methodology section and definition of core journal is needed.

Answer: Many thanks for reviewers put down these criteria. SinoMed can automatically classify papers according to the Oxford (UK) CEBM Levels of Evidence.

4, Name of authors and region of Chinese country is not interesting for international journal readers. If these issues are mandatory author should choose submission to other domestic journals.

Answer: We agree with the reviewer that the name of authors is not interesting for international journal readers, and we have deleted the result which addressing the name of authors of Chinese country. But the result which addressing the region of Chinese country was retained, because the regional distribution of these publications was unbalanced. In addition, along with the increasing morbidity of IBD in China even in Asia, the epidemiologic research and bibliometric analysis of UC in China is crucial in the world range. And the trend of literature and researches

also instructive to clinicians and scientists in other countries.

Review #3:

Question 1- "This section described the process of data acquisition, the inclusion and exclusion criteria and the statistical approach used to analyze the data generated," Delete this sentence – Answer: Many thanks for the reviewer's nice advice, and we have deleted the sentence according to the reviewer's comment.

Question 2 "Publications were explored from the Chinese periodical database SinoMed" PubMed is the broadly accepted database: write if the articles published by Chinese researchers of PubMed appear in SinoMed too - Write the strings you used to search – Answer: Many thanks for this advice. As for the suggestion of the database selection, the reviewer suggests us to choose PubMed to analyze instead of SinoMed. As aforementioned, the focus of our study is to complete the prevalence and epidemiologic data in China, thus the accurate number of Chinese publication is needed. However, only a few Chinese journal which is included in the PubMed database. Therefore, it is more reasonable to use SinoMed instead of the PubMed database.

Question 3. An important and relevant paper: Azer SA, Azer S. What can we learn from top-cited articles in inflammatory bowel disease? A bibliometric analysis and assessment of the level of evidence. BMJ Open. 2018 Jul 12;8(7):e021233. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2017- Answer: Many thanks for this nice advice. We have addressed this issue in the method section

Question 4 "4,641 papers met the requirements of evidence-based articles" How did you precisely define these requirements? – Answer: Many thanks for this question. The classification of evidence-based study in our research is automatically classified by the database, and thus the requirements are not defined by the researchers, we only extracted the data later.

Question 5 "Chinese Journal of Coloproctology", "World Chinese Journal of Digestology", "World Chinese Journal of Digestology" etc. are not on PubMed: you have to focus your research on journals indexed on PubMed.

Answer : SinoMed is an open access database which is available to every in the world. Most of the publications have an English Abstract. Furthermore, only this database can provide us with a comprehensive profile of UC change during the last four decades. Pubmed can not do it because there are only quite a few papers published 20 years ago in PubMed

We believe that our findings could be of interest to the readers of *World Journal*

of Meta-Analysis. And each author meets the journal's criteria for authorship and agrees on the content of the manuscript.)

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Thank you very much for your attention to our manuscript.

Best regards.

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