Response to QUADAS-2 tool for quality assessment in diagnostic meta-analysis

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We are grateful for the comments on systematic review and meta-analysis by Dr. Huang and Huang (1). Quality Assessment of Diagnostic Accuracy Studies (QUADAS) is a currently recommended diagnostic accuracy trial quality evaluation tool adopted by Cochrane Library diagnosis trial system evaluation group. The group member revised QUADAS launched QUADAS-2 in 2011 (2,3). QUADAS-2 was composed mainly of 4 components, including case selection, the experiments to be evaluated, gold standard, and case process as well as progress (2,3). All components were performed with bias risk assessment. Besides, clinical applicability assessment was carried out for the first 3 components. Signature problems were included the bias risk assessment. The identification problems in the design of these studies were related to the potential for bias, which helped the evaluators to judge bias risk. There were no signature problems in the judgment of clinical applicability (4). The latest version should be selected for application and analysis in the research. Due to my negligence, I paid no attention to the updating of analysis software. As a result, QUADAS was still utilized in the research. The inconsistency between the cited literature and the contents of the text was a writing error. I was terribly sorry about that.

RevMan 5.3 was adopted to analyze the relevant data of the included articles. The software analysis usually utilized forest map and funnel plot to display the analysis results. Forest map clearly showed the research result of each article and the corresponding articles matching CI (5,6). It seemed that the analysis methods were introduced in data extraction and analysis sections. Actually, the analysis principle of RevMan 5.3 was introduced. Which articles could be included was explained and judged based on the influences of the included articles on the sensitivity and heterogeneity of the overall analysis results. In fact, it was still one part of data extraction. In terms of the problem of the basic information of articles and the basic characteristics of the subjects not being displayed in *Tab. 1* of the original article, they were collected at the stage of data acquisition and extraction. However, future key points were also limited by the length of the article during result presentation. Therefore, some significant data showing great influences on the results of articles were selected and presented. During article retrieval, we did search for them in numerous databases. Due to the limitation of image size, the database called PubMed was shown in *Fig. 1* of the original article without the supplement of "*et al.*". I was really sorry about that.

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Footnote

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Ethical Statement: The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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