

Specialization, Thesis, and Publishing in Orthopedics and Traumatology: The Importance of Associations and Journals from Theses to Publications

At the end of medical education in our country, approximately 85.7% of graduates choose to specialize in a specific field through the Medical Specialty Exam (TUS).^[1] While personal interest and ability, societal perception of the field, and family influence play significant roles in the choice of specialty,^[2] factors such as professional and financial satisfaction, workload from on-call duties, working hours, and career opportunities also have a substantial impact. In a study published in 2021, orthopedics and traumatology ranked in the middle among 41 specialty areas.^[3]

A large portion of scientific publications in orthopedics and traumatology is based on specialty theses completed during residency training. One of the primary reasons for this limitation is the insufficient infrastructure for musculoskeletal system research in our country. Another significant factor is that residents often begin their training without prior familiarity with research methodologies. One of the most effective strategies to overcome this limitation is to direct undergraduate students toward musculoskeletal system research at an early stage. This could lead to increased interest in the field after graduation. However, the high clinical workload in training hospitals and the lack or absence of a standardized research program make it difficult for residents to allocate time for scientific work.^[4] Additionally, the interest of supervisors in scientific research plays a critical role in motivating residents. A study conducted in Istanbul reported that to ensure the preparation of high-quality theses, it is essential to manage the thesis writing process in a disciplined manner with a clear timeline and to include a "Research Education" rotation in the programs.^[5] Despite the presence of long-established universities, Turkey's influence in international orthopedic publishing remains limited. Recent bibliometric analyses show that academic productivity is not at the desired level, despite the large number of university clinics in our country.^[6,7]

In this issue of our journal, we address topics such as soft tissue foreign body injuries, gluteus maximus and fascia lata tendon transfer in patients undergoing hip arthroplasty, mitochondrial dysfunction, autophagy, and inflammation in patients receiving methotrexate treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, the importance of collaboration in osteoarthritis, a rare case of pyoderma gangrenosum in hip arthroplasty, and strategies to prevent proximal femur fractures in geriatric populations.

As seen in these publications, national associations and journals have a strategic role in academic publishing. Based on this perspective, the following points can be emphasized:

These findings highlight the need for national academic associations and their official journals to take on more effective leadership roles. Association and journal management should:

- Establish a stable and merit-based academic environment for research,
- Encourage talented undergraduate and specialty students to pursue academic careers,
- Promote training in research methods, statistics, and scientific writing,
- Facilitate access to research infrastructures both within and outside the country,
- Support student research communities and young academics.

Furthermore, international collaborations and interdisciplinary studies play a critical role in increasing academic impact. Journals can act as a bridge in these projects, enhancing the visibility of young researchers.

The production and publication of high-quality research, which forms the foundation of scientific publishing, cannot be achieved through individual efforts alone; it requires coordinated strategies involving associations, journals, educational institutions, and research communities. Therefore, identifying current barriers through a comprehensive root cause analysis will give new momentum to musculoskeletal research.

A student who becomes involved in the research ecosystem early in their career not only produces strong scientific results but also becomes proficient in presenting these findings, preparing them for publication, and selecting the appropriate journal. In this way, a much healthier academic environment can be established in the field of orthopedics and traumatology in our country.

Sincerely,

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Editor

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