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GENERAL RADIOLOGY

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Reply: Beyond publication rates: improving the quality and impact of radiology residency research

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Dear Editor,

We thank the authors for their valuable and constructive comments on our article.[1,2] The points highlighted in their letter strongly support one of the primary objectives of our study: improving the academic training ecosystem in radiology.

The high proportion of retrospective studies identified in our research, together with publication trends showing residents as first authors, confirms the need for mentorship mentioned in the letter. In particular, the approximately 5.5-fold increase in radiology residency quotas since 2022 is expected to disproportionately increase the number of residents relative to faculty members.[3] Furthermore, according to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Türkiye ranked first worldwide in 2024 for the number of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography examinations per 1,000 population, as well as the number of examinations per MRI scanner.[4] Given this escalating clinical workload, maintaining a sustainable balance between residency education and clinical service obligations is becoming increasingly challenging. This imbalance may be associated with reduced academic productivity and could plausibly affect the quality of scientific output in radiology. Therefore, effective mentorship practices, together with strengthened institutional research infrastructure, are likely to become even more critical in the future.

We suggest that proposals to encourage prospective and multicenter projects, along with the establishment of a national thesis registry and standardized thesis guidelines, would substantially improve the quality of academic output. In addition, addressing the low representation rate (1.6%) in subspecialties such as imaging physics and obstetric radiology should be a priority in residency training policies. These fields are essential for ensuring radiation protection, quality assurance, and maternal–fetal safety. Notably, our study found that despite being the least chosen topic, imaging physics and radiation safety had the highest publication rate, at 51.0% (25/49).[1] This suggests considerable academic potential in this area, possibly related to the availability of standardized datasets and objective measurement parameters in physics-based research. Residents should be actively encouraged to pursue research in this area.

In conclusion, we thank the authors once again for their insightful contributions. We believe that such dialogue will meaningfully enhance the academic quality and discourse within the Turkish radiology community. Their suggested parameters for future research are highly valuable for expanding the existing literature. Finally, we reiterate that residency theses should not be viewed merely as graduation requirements, but as foundational opportunities to foster scientific thinking, research skills, and sustained academic engagement.

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Conflict of interest disclosure

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