

Note on Skin of Color (SOC) in the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology

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Description

As one of the least diverse medical specialties, the field of dermatology has directed considerable efforts to promote racial and ethnic diversity among clinicians and trainees over the past decade [1-6], as well as to increase educational materials on treating skin of color (SOC) [7-9]. Such initiatives aim to address the inadequate exposure and training many dermatologists report receiving regarding diseases in SOC [10], which contributes to the dermatologic health disparities experienced by many patients of color [11]. The current underrepresentation of SOC in textbooks and CME events [8] has ignited an interest in assessing SOC content in published dermatological literature, which serves as an additional educational resource for treating SOC populations. A recent study by Wilson et al. developed prespecified criteria to analyze SOC and diversity and inclusion content in 52 high-impact, peer-reviewed dermatology journals from January 2018 to October 2020 [12]. This present study aims to utilize these same criteria to evaluate SOC representation in articles published by the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology over the same time period.

The Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology is an international, open access, peer-reviewed scientific journal that publishes original research

articles, review articles, case reports, and correspondences; the journal's scope includes cosmetic dermatology, hair regrowth, and alopecia, and contributions range from basic science research to novel, clinical findings. From January 2018 to October 2020, the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology published 10 research articles, 6 review articles, 3 case reports, 1 short communication, and 1 editorial note. Conference announcements and editorials published during this time period were not included in the analysis.

Based on the prespecified criteria developed by Wilson et al. and summarized in Table 1, 19.0% of the reviewed publications classified as SOC content, compared to the mean of 16.8% SOC articles published across the 52 other peer-reviewed dermatology journals assessed in the initial study conducted by Wilson et al. This places the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology as publishing a relatively higher proportion of SOC-relevant literature than 37 of the 52 aforementioned journals. Half (50%) of the SOC contributions in the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology published during the time frame of interest were classified as Tier 2, and the remaining SOC articles were evenly divided between Tier 1B (25%) and Tier 1E (25%) (Table 2). SOC articles included a research study exploring the effects of different temperature treatments on curly hair [13] and case reports on Folliculitis Decalvans and Pigmentary Mosaicism which featured SOC patients [14,15].

Table 1. Pre-specified criteria for evaluating skin of color relevance in dermatological literature

Tier	Criteria
1A	Title specifically addresses skin of color, skin type, race, or ethnicity
1B	Title specifically addresses a country/continent with a population majority of Fitzpatrick skin type III-VI Case reports from a country/continent with a population majority of Fitzpatrick skin type III-V
1C	Title specifically addresses socioeconomic or health disparities relevant to under-represented SOC populations
1D	Title specifically addresses issues regarding diversity and inclusion in field of dermatology
1E	Case reports presenting a SOC patient in a country with population majority of Fitzpatrick skin type I-II
2	Title specifies pigmentary skin or hair diseases particularly relevant to Fitzpatrick skin types III-VI

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Table 2. Journal of cosmetology and trichology skin of color articles tier percentages from 2018-2020

Year	Total Articles	Tier 1A	Tier 1B	Tier 1C	Tier 1D	Tier 1E	Tier 2	Total SOC Articles	% SOC Articles
2018	8	0	1	0	0	1	2	4	50.00%
2019	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
2020	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	21	0	1	0	0	1	2	4	19.00%

As a scientific journal, original research evaluating the efficacy and safety of novel treatments and therapies comprise a significant proportion of content in the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology. Given the scope and intention of most scientific journals compared to more clinically oriented journals, Wilson et al. (2021) found that the clinical research and literature on average featured greater amounts of SOC content than basic science research. The Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology thus exceeded expectations as a scientific journal by publishing a higher than average proportion of SOC articles from January 2018 to October 2020 compared to the 52 dermatology journals included in the original study by Wilson et al. Of note, all of the SOC articles published by the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology during this timeframe of interest were published in 2018. Therefore, we simultaneously commend the journal's past and ongoing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in their published research while also encouraging the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology to continue publishing SOC content.

Moving forward, we recommend that the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology includes the keyword "skin of color" for case reports and other publications featuring patients of color; doing so may help clinicians seeking to broaden their training with SOC through literature more efficiently find relevant articles. We also recommend the journal encourages authors to avoid race-based medicine by including Fitzpatrick skin type when clinically presenting patients of all skin types. Finally, we encourage the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology to maintain their impressive percentage of SOC content above 17.0% for future issues, evaluating submissions with the prespecified criteria utilized in this study. The Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology fields international research submissions that pertain to several important and niche branches of dermatology. By contributing SOC-relevant research and findings, the Journal of Cosmetology and Trichology can continue promoting diversity and equity in dermatology and serve as a valuable resource for clinicians furthering their education through dermatological literature.

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