Descriptive versus Analytical Studies in a Clinical Setup
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Sir,
This is in reference to the article, “The psychosocial impact of acne vulgaris” published in Indian J Dermatol 2016;61:515-20.

The authors have done a commendable job to assess psychosocial impact of acne vulgaris. However, I have a few concerns regarding the type of study and methodology being adopted in the present study.

First, the authors have written in their material and methods that the study done was a hospital-based, prospective, cross-sectional study done in the dermatology outpatient department.

The epidemiologic studies are either descriptive or analytical studies. Descriptive studies include case reports, case series reports, cross-sectional studies, surveillance studies, and ecological studies whereas analytical studies are either experimental or observational. Case–control and cohort studies are the type of observational studies out of which the latter is usually the prospective study.

Hence, how can a study be “cross-sectional, i.e., descriptive” and “prospective” at the same time? They have recruited a total of 100 consecutive patients, newly diagnosed as acne vulgaris, of age 15 years and above in the study. Hence, this is a cross-sectional study which gives the snapshot of the situation for the particular period. In a cross-sectional study, the investigator measures the outcome and the exposures in the study participants at the same time.

However, in a cohort study (written prospective in this article), the participants do not have the outcome of interest to begin with. They are selected based on the exposure status (acne vulgaris) of the individual. They are then followed over time to evaluate for the occurrence of the outcome of interest (psychosocial in the present article).

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Nil.
Conflicts of interest
There are no conflicts of interest.

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Prospective Study Design
Conundrum: Disease Registry for Cutaneous Leishmaniasis
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Sir,
This is in reference to the article titled, “Cutaneous leishmaniasis in a nonendemic area of South Rajasthan: A prospective study,” published in Indian J Dermatol 2016;61:521-4.

The authors have done a commendable job to describe clinicoepidemiological profile of the cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) from South Rajasthan, which is a nonendemic area of Rajasthan.

However, the authors have written in the title of their study that they have done a prospective study.

Although the present study was conducted over a period of 4 years (2010–2014), it does not qualify to be called as a prospective study, as in a prospective cohort study, the participants are selected based on the exposure
status of the individual. Thus, some of the participants may have the exposure and others do not have the exposure at the time of initiation of the study. They are then followed over time to evaluate for the occurrence of the outcome of interest.\textsuperscript{[2]}

For conducting a prospective study, the authors should have first defined the population that will be included in the cohort which they have not. Second, no participants are classified as exposed or unexposed by the authors based on the potential/suspected exposure of interest for CL. Further, the authors needed to have collected the information on the important variables regarding this study both at baseline and during follow-up and finally study the outcomes.

This study qualifies for setting up of a “Disease Registry” for CL. Disease registry is a collection of information about individuals, usually focused on a specific diagnosis or condition. Participation in a registry is likely to increase what we know about a specific condition, help health-care professionals improve treatment, and allow researchers to design better studies on a particular condition, including development and testing of new treatments.\textsuperscript{[3]}

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Nil.

**Conflicts of interest**
There are no conflicts of interest.

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