

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-53114

Date: 02/08/2025

Title: "Identifying complementary and alternative medicine recommendations for insomnia treatment and care: a systematic review and critical assessment of comprehensive clinical practice guidelines"

Recommendation:

- ✓ Accept as it is
 Accept after minor revision.....
 Accept after major revision
 Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr. S. K. Nath

Date: 03/08/2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication:

The study successfully leveraged the Delphi technique to attain expert consensus on a scientifically grounded herbal compound for treating insomnia among the elderly. The resulting 10-herb formula looks promising as a non-invasive, traditional approach to improve sleep quality and overall well-being in older adults. However, to firmly establish its clinical efficacy and safety, further rigorous, multi-center clinical trials are necessary. This research provides a valuable methodological framework for developing evidence-based TCM interventions and highlights the importance of standardization in herbal medicine practices.

Reviewer's Comment / Report

Strengths

- **Methodological Rigor:** The study employs a systematic review approach complemented by the Delphi method, which is well-regarded for achieving expert consensus in healthcare research.
- **Expert Consensus:** Achieved high expert authority coefficients ($Cr = 0.94$) and significant coordination coefficients (Kendall's W), indicating strong agreement among seasoned TCM practitioners.
- **Standardized Process:** The multi-round Delphi process ensures iterative feedback, refining the herbal formulation based on expert input, thus enhancing reliability.
- **Practical Application:** Developed a 10-herb herbal compound tailored for insomnia in older adults, with demonstrated clinical efficacy in a nursing home setting.
- **Innovative Focus:** Addresses a gap in standardization and validation of non-invasive, herbal sleep aids, contributing valuable guidance for clinical practice and future research.

Weaknesses

- **Limited Generalizability:** The expert panel was recruited from a single hospital in Guangzhou, China, which may limit applicability across different regions or diverse populations.
- **Lack of Controlled Trials:** The study relies on expert opinion and consensus rather than large-scale randomized controlled trials to establish efficacy and safety.
- **Standardization Needs:** Further research is needed to standardize dosage, preparation, and quality control of the herbal compounds, ensuring consistency and safety.
- **Potential Bias:** The reliance on experts' subjective judgments could introduce bias, especially without diverse geographical or institutional representation.