

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-54587

Date: 30/10/2025

Title: "META-ANALYSIS ON THE PREVALENCE OF CORNEAL ULCER IN BRAZIL (2021–2024)"

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: 30/10/2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication:

The manuscript offers a valuable, up-to-date synthesis of corneal ulcer prevalence in Brazil, emphasizing regional disparities and the importance of standardized diagnostic criteria and surveillance. While the methodological approach is sound, addressing the regional coverage limitations and high heterogeneity would strengthen the findings.

Reviewer's Comment / Report

Strengths:

- Comprehensive Methodology:** The study adheres to recognized guidelines (PRISMA 2020 and MOOSE), ensuring methodological rigor and transparency. The systematic search across multiple reputable databases enhances the reliability of the findings.
- Robust Data Analysis:** The use of random-effects models to synthesize prevalence data accounts for heterogeneity among studies. The inclusion of subgroup analyses (e.g., rural vs. urban, hospital-based vs. community-based studies) provides nuanced insights into regional variations.
- Significant Contribution:** This is the most recent and extensive meta-analysis on this topic in Brazil, filling an important gap in epidemiological data and providing valuable guidance for public health strategies.
- Clear Presentation of Results:** The utilization of forest plots and funnel plots aids in the visual understanding of the pooled estimates and publication bias assessments.

Weaknesses:

- Limited Study Coverage of Regions:** Most included studies originate from Southeast and South regions, with limited data from North and Central-West regions, potentially biasing national prevalence estimates and limiting generalizability.
- High Heterogeneity:** The substantial heterogeneity ($I^2 = 78.03\%$) suggests variability in study designs, populations, and diagnostic criteria, which may impact the pooled estimate's accuracy.
- Lack of Detailed Quality Assessment:** Although the Newcastle–Ottawa Scale was mentioned, detailed scoring or quality ratings for individual studies are not provided, making it challenging to assess the influence of study quality on the results.
- Language and Editorial Issues:** There are some typographical inconsistencies (e.g., spacing, punctuation) and grammatical errors that need correction for clarity and professionalism.

Recommendation:

- Review the entire document for typographical and grammatical errors, particularly in the sections with complex sentences or technical terminology.

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

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2. Provide detailed quality assessments of the included studies, possibly in a supplementary table.
3. Clarify regional limitations and discuss potential implications for national epidemiology.
4. Improve consistency in formatting, especially in the references and figure captions.
5. Consider elaborating on the public health implications of the findings to enhance the manuscript's impact.