Reviewer's report

Title: Reliability and Validity of a Pattern Identification Questionnaire for Korean Stroke Patients

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Reviewer: Scott Mist

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Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions
Abstract (Methods) lists five PIs but the entire article only talks about four.
Background:
First sentence of second paragraph, “…(TKM) has been the major axis…” I am unclear about what is meant by the word “axis”.
Third sentence of fourth paragraph, “However, the reliability and validity…” This is a confusing sentence. Please rewrite to improve understanding.
Fourth sentence of fourth paragraph, “We evaluated the reliability and validity …” Is this the same questionnaire from reference 6? If so, the name should be included in the previous sentence. If not, then I don't understand why the authors included the sentence with the 6th reference.

Materials and Method:
Fifth sentence of first paragraph, “The patients were diagnosed …” If you write it out in long form, the sentence reads, “The patients were diagnosed based on one of four patterns for pattern identification by two physicians.” It would be clearer if you dropped “…for PI…” from the sentence. In the same sentence, I am wondering if the same two physicians diagnosed all 2904 participants over a three and a half year period. I am guessing not. Also did you do anything to assure the reliability of the diagnosticians? You should also report how frequently the diagnosticians were in agreement.

Statistical methods.
Third sentence of first paragraph, “Patients who exhibited a …” this is confusing. There have been no mentions of blood stasis patterns. If originally blood stasis was one of the possible PIs, then please change previous talk about four PIs to five and at this point mention that it was dropped due to a small sample size. However, you might want to include the information about blood stasis and state that the sample size was too small to be significant. By not informing the reader of this earlier in the paper, the reader gets the impression that in TKM there are only four PIs for non-traumatic stroke.
Fifth sentence of first paragraph, “To test the discriminant validity, …” I don’t understand this sentence. Particularly what “operationalization” means in this context as well as “other operationalization.”

Validity analysis

The third sentence of the first paragraph, “The mean FHP score was …” This and the following sentence could be combined to make the information clearer. Something like, “The mean score of each PI was significantly higher than those of the other patterns…”

The last sentence in the last paragraph, “The overall classification accuracy …” did the predictive function take into consideration the distribution of the PIs or did it assume an equal distribution? Also are the individual PIs assessed individually or is the classification rates listed for an omnibus model?

Discussion and conclusion

Last sentence of first paragraph, “Meanwhile, the test-retest reliability …” How quickly does the PI change in stroke? If it changes rapidly then the authors should address how closely the questionnaire and the two acupuncturists diagnosed the patient. If the PI doesn’t change quickly, the argument has less validity and probably shouldn’t be mentioned.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.