Reviewer's report

Title: Effects and Treatment methods of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine for Premenstrual syndrome/Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder: Systematic Review

Version: 5 Date: 2 July 2013

Reviewer: Margaret Diana van Die

Reviewer's report:

The authors are to be commended for the improvements made to the manuscript.

There are several points that have been misunderstood, however, notably:

ii) Results section: 17. The range of improvement should be included, and ii. It should be specified unambiguously how this compares to the comparator/s. (ie were all the interventions significantly superior to the controls?)

For example, acupuncture treatment improved overall symptoms in all studies [Range 49.6 to 63.8%]; all studies found AT to significantly outperform placebo.

For the herbal interventions, all but one study found a significant effect over placebo...

iii) It appears that study 10 (in table 3) is an analysis of a sub-population of study 11. This needs to be stated within the manuscript as well as highlighted in the table. (Apologies for my mistake with numbers!)

Eg. Ma and He studies on VAC BNO 1095 are reporting on the same study. Ma reports on a sub-population of the alrger study by He et al. VAC BNO1095 (40 mg/day, 70% extract Agnucaston®) was superior to placebo over 3 cycles for total PMS symptoms measured on the PMTS (p <0.001), PMSD scales (p <0.05), and clinical efficacy rates (p <0.001)

Discussion

ii) the findings of this study should be compared with comparable reviews on these interventions – including (but not restricted to) the following:


What this means is two or three sentences are required, such as “Our findings were consistent with those of comparable reviews of acupuncture and herbal interventions for treating PMS/PMDD.1-5” Then summarise the findings of those reviews to highlight the similarities/differences with your findings.

iv) The authors should include the strengths of the current study (and what it contributes to the literature that the other reviews did not include).

This means something like, “Our review differs from previous reviews in that we have included herbal interventions as well as acupuncture and moxibustion. We also include a risk of bias assessment....” etc

v) references are needed for the case studies referred to in the sentence:

“All acupuncture interventions, the outcome results showed improvements better than the control groups thus our findings were consistent with case studies examining herbal interventions and acupuncture.”

As previously noted, the standard of English expression at times obscures the meaning.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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'