Reviewer's report

Title: Characteristics of randomized controlled trials of yoga: a bibliometric analysis

Version: 4  Date: 22 July 2014

Reviewer: Donna M Dryden

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Should be addressed.

1. While technically correct, when I requested the interquartile range I was expecting the authors to present the 25 & 75 quartiles (e.g., sample size 59, IQR 30, 79). This gives readers a better idea of the variability of the data than the simple IQR (e.g., IQR 62) or the range 8-410). Please present the lower and upper quartiles. You then don't need to report, for example, the “most common sample sizes were 60, 30 and 40”.

2. The numbers don’t add up. There are 312 RCTs published in 366 articles (last sentence above Bibliometrics section). In the next section you say that of the 366 articles, 82 were duplicate publications – this means there were 284 RCTs? Which is it?

3. You state that future RCTs need to follow available guidelines for designing interventions and control conditions; however, you don’t know whether the RCTs you included in your analysis have done this because you didn’t look. It would be more appropriate for you to say that this is an important “next step” in order to determine the methodological quality of the current body of RCTs in this area (i.e., take the 312 RCTs you found and assess their risk of bias, nature of outcomes, etc).

4. A recommendation to conduct systematic reviews of RCTs for important health conditions is good; however, it seems out of place to recommend that the SRs be well conducted. You don’t know whether existing SRs have been well done or not; it’s beyond the scope of what your analysis found. You make the point (valid) that more RCTs are needed for certain important health conditions. This is in keeping with the scope of your paper.

Minor comments that the authors should consider

1. PRISMA is a set of reporting guidelines, not standards for conducting SRs and meta-analysis. It’s not important or accurate to state that this analysis was conducted in accordance with PRISMA.

2. Typo in third sentence under literature search “no randomized” should be ‘not randomized”. Same in the next sentence. Check the whole manuscript.