Reviewer’s report

Title: Channel and acupoint specificity on acupuncture regulation of hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal cortex axis function

Version: 2
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Reviewer: Shuman Liu

Reviewer’s report:

Xiaojun. et al studied the specificity of channel and acupoint on acupuncture regulation of hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal cortex axis function. The study provides a new platform for exploration of the mechanisms of nerve regulation through acupuncture. They set up UCMS rats model, applied electrophysiological assay, behavior test and molecular biological techniques to prove that the acupoints recorded for the specificity activation on SRNs in PVN are also the acupoints for the regulation on HPAA function. Overall, the study was coherent and the problem was well defined.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. I searched online and found one similar abstracts- Study of the specificity of acupoints in acupuncture activated the neurons in paraventricular area of hypothalamus- published on Chinese Journal of Basic Medicine in Traditional Chinese Medicine, 03, 2013. I could not download the full text of this abstract, so I could not judge if duplication occurred or not. But I suggest acquiring answer from the authors. I attached the webpage including the abstract in case it will be needed.

2. Fig.6. Effect of regulation of acupuncture on CRH and GR protein expression in PVN. The figure legends are not clear and direct. Again, the bands of Actin comparing with GR bands are not equally in different lanes with naked eyes. The author should correct it in the proper way. I attached one similar Figure downloaded online for the authors’ future reference.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. The language is not very good, but kind of acceptable.
2. Results-the language is redundant. The author laid out all results.
3. The author should supply the catalogue number of reagent and kit used in this study.
4. Spelling errors
   • such as Methods-Records of the spikes of SRN in PVN and the activation effect of the different acupoints-the last paragraph-……as frozen slices(20 ul)
   • Such as Results- P<0.05
Discretionary Revisions

1. Limitations of the study were not mentioned in this paper. But it would be directory for the next step exploration. It would be fine if the author add it in this paper.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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.