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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-57860

Title: Can Digital Neurophenotyping and Artificial Intelligence Transform the Evaluation of Cranial Osteopathic Interventions?

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✔,		
Techn. Quality		✔,		
Clarity	✔,			
Significance	✔,			

Reviewer Name: Dr. Bilqees Hamza

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The manuscript titled **"Can Digital Neurophenotyping and Artificial Intelligence Transform the Evaluation of Cranial Osteopathic Interventions?"** provides a rigorous conceptual commentary on a highly contested domain of complementary and manual medicine. The scope of this study addresses a profound methodological crisis in cranial osteopathy: the reliance on subjective self-reporting, palpatory endpoints, and the historical lack of reproducible, objective physiological outcome measures to validate its clinical efficacy.

By bridging the gap between osteopathic manual therapy and cutting-edge digital health technologies, the paper explores whether the integration of multimodal wearable biosensors, continuous neurophysiological monitoring, and machine learning can provide a scientifically credible biomarker infrastructure. The text is well-framed around evaluating the "craniosacral rhythm" and systemic autonomic shifts, transforming subjective manual assessments into quantifiable, high-dimensional data streams.

The study outlines an advanced translational research framework that conceptualizes how "digital neurophenotyping" can capture dynamic neurophysiological states with high ecological validity. The author synthesizes an multi-layered sensor paradigm to monitor the central and autonomic nervous systems during and after cranial interventions:

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- **Autonomic and Physiological Tracking:** Utilizing continuous heart rate variability (HRV) analysis, photoplethysmography (PPG), and electrodermal activity (EDA) sensors to capture shifts in parasympathetic tone and sympathetic regulation.
- **Central Neurophysiological Monitoring:** Integrating continuous electroencephalography (EEG) and functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) to evaluate changes in cortical electrical activity, sensorimotor rhythms, and localized cerebral hemodynamics.
- **Behavioral Phenotyping:** Deploying actigraphy-based sleep monitoring and digital cognitive assessment batteries to track long-term longitudinal changes in sleep architecture and executive functioning.

The manuscript highlights that when these rich, temporally dense datasets are fed into advanced machine learning architectures (such as deep neural networks, random forests, and unsupervised clustering algorithms), artificial intelligence can isolate systemic therapeutic signatures from background physiological noise. This computational pipeline allows for the detection of subtle, non-linear biometric variations that traditional statistical methods routinely fail to capture.

The paper displays strong analytical depth by remaining objective about the controversial standing of cranial osteopathy while providing a sophisticated technological solution to its evaluation. Rather than attempting to validate the disputed mechanical movement of cranial bones directly, the text pivotally reframes the therapeutic mechanism around neuro-autonomic regulation, central sensitization, and the modulation of the glymphatic/fluid dynamics system.

The primary contribution of this work is its forward-looking, cross-disciplinary roadmap. It outlines a clear path forward from basic signal acquisition to phenotypic modeling, ultimately laying the groundwork for decentralized, double-blinded, sham-controlled clinical trials. This approach shifts the conversation from a stale debate over touch-based validation to an advanced, data-driven framework that aligns manual medicine with modern digital neurology and precision medicine.

Suggestions for Improvement

- **Incorporate a Visual Neurophenotyping Architecture Flowchart:** Add a detailed, multi-tiered pipeline diagram illustrating the flow of data from the patient to the final clinical insight. The chart should visually demonstrate the inputs (Wearable Sensors, EEG, Actigraphy), the processing layer (Feature Extraction, Artifact Removal), the AI layer (Machine Learning Models, Non-linear Classifiers), and the target outputs (Objective Biomarkers, Autonomic Signatures).
- **Introduce a Structured Physiological Marker Matrix:** Include a comprehensive summary table that pairs specific cranial osteopathic targets (e.g., down-regulation of sympathetic tone, improved

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fluid circulation, reduction of somatic pain) with their exact digital neurophenotyping equivalents (e.g., High-Frequency HRV bands, fNIRS oxygenation levels, EDA amplitude reductions) and the appropriate sensor types.

- **Structure the Commentary with Formal Academic Subheadings:** The manuscript is currently written as a long, continuous essay with minimal structural interruption. Reorganize the body of the paper using explicit subheadings—such as **"The Methodological Impasse of Manual Medicine," "Multimodal Digital Sensor Paradigms," "Machine Learning Frameworks for High-Dimensional Biosignals,"** and **"A Translational Roadmap for Future Trials"**.
- **Elaborate on the Pathophysiological Mechanisms of Action:** Expand the theoretical discussion regarding *how* manual contact triggers neurophysiological changes. Provide deeper, literature-supported explanations of mechanoreceptor activation (C-tactile afferents), the resulting oxytocinergic and vagal responses, and how these pathways tie directly into the expected changes in HRV and EEG alpha/theta power.
- **Address the Critical Sham-Control and Placebo Confound:** Dedicate a distinct section to discussing the historical difficulty of creating an effective "sham" intervention in manual therapies. Explain how wearable biosensors and AI can be used to compare true cranial manipulation against light-touch controls, identifying unique physiological patterns that indicate a true therapeutic effect beyond the placebo response.
- **Formulate a Technical Limitations and Ethical Challenges Section:** Add a subsection addressing the data-related obstacles of this approach. Discuss issues such as movement artifacts during active manual therapy, the challenges of normalizing baseline data across heterogeneous patient groups, patient data privacy with continuous wearable tracking, and the danger of over-fitting machine learning algorithms to small sample sets.
- **Clarify the Role of Digital Cognitive Assessments:** Expand on the section discussing behavioral phenotyping. Specify which cognitive domains (such as working memory, processing speed, or attentional control) are expected to shift following an intervention, and name standard digital platforms or metrics that could be integrated into the study workflow.
- **Perform a Complete Spacing and Line-Break Cleaning Pass:** Review the formatting of the document text to eliminate technical fragments and inconsistent line endings. Ensure clean spacing after all periods, uniform paragraph breaks, and a standardized layout across all pages.
- **Standardize In-Text Citations Format:** Ensure all reference citations within the text are consistently formatted according to a single style manual (such as APA 7th edition or Vancouver style), removing any raw editorial tracking numbers or incomplete bracket systems.

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- **Verify and Unify Reference Metadata in the Bibliography:** Conduct a thorough review of the final reference list. Ensure that all citations are complete and contain all necessary metadata—including all co-author names, volume numbers, issue numbers, precise page ranges, and active Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs).

Recommendation for Publication

I recommend this manuscript for **publication with minor revision**. The article provides a highly sophisticated, forward-thinking, and intellectually engaging commentary that successfully links an older therapeutic discipline with modern computational neurology. The conceptual synthesis of machine learning and wearable biometrics is exceptionally strong. Once the author adds an architectural workflow flowchart, introduces a structured physiological marker table, and reorganizes the continuous text into formal academic subsections, this paper will serve as an excellent, high-impact framework paper for journals focusing on medical informatics, integrative medicine, or biomedical technology.