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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-58112

Title: Phenotypic Identification of Candida Isolates Among Clinical Samples at a Tertiary Care Hospital in Western Rajasthan.

Recommendation:
Accept as it is □□□□..
Accept after minor revision□√□□
Accept after major revision □□□□□
Do not accept (*Reasons below*) □□□

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		√		
Techn. Quality		√		
Clarity			√	
Significance		√		

Reviewer ID: JP085

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

This cross-sectional study investigated the species distribution and phenotypic identification of Candida isolates obtained from various clinical samples in a tertiary care hospital. A total of 400 samples were processed, of which 74 (18.5%) were positive for Candida species. The study found Candida albicans as the predominant isolate (62.16%), followed by Candida tropicalis (29.72%). The use of conventional methods along with MALDI-TOF MS improved the accuracy and speed of species identification.

Strength:

1. Clinically relevant topic in medical microbiology and infectious diseases.
2. Adequate sample size with a variety of clinical specimens.
3. Use of advanced diagnostic technique for accurate species identification.
4. Provides useful epidemiological data on Candida infections.
5. Highlights the increasing importance of non-albicans Candida species.
6. Results are clearly presented and clinically applicable.

Weakness:

1. Antifungal susceptibility testing was not performed, limiting clinical applicability.
2. Single-center study with limited generalizability.
3. Short study durati.
4. No molecular characterization of isolates.
5. Risk factors and patient outcome analysis were limited.
6. Some grammatical and formatting errors are present.
7. Discussion could include more comparison with recent national and international studies.

Overall assessment:

The manuscript provides valuable information regarding the epidemiology and species distribution of Candida infections in a tertiary care setting. The incorporation of MALDI-TOF MS strengthens the

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diagnostic aspect of the study. However, the absence of antifungal susceptibility testing and molecular analysis reduces the overall scientific impact. The study remains useful for clinicians and microbiologists involved in fungal infection surveillance and management.

Recommendation: Manuscript accepted for publication after minor revision.