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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 58631

Title: Homoeopathic Interventions for the Management of Myopia among Young Adults Aged 18-30 Years: A Systematic Review

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

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

Reviewer's ID: Bilquees Hamza

Detailed Reviewer's Report

This manuscript presents an "empty" systematic review conducted according to PRISMA 2020 and PRISMA-S guidelines, evaluating the safety and effectiveness of homoeopathic interventions for managing myopia in young adults aged 18–30 years. The authors conducted a comprehensive search across multiple databases (including PubMed, Cochrane CENTRAL, ClinicalTrials.gov, WHO trial registries, and AYUSH portals) for literature published between 2020 and 2025. Out of 27 records identified, 25 were screened after deduplication, and 3 full-text reports were assessed in detail. Ultimately, zero studies met the strict eligibility criteria, primarily due to non-extractable subgroup data, improper age cohorts (e.g., pediatric populations aged 7–16 or 8–16), lack of control groups, or unverified secondary reporting.

Because no primary studies met the inclusion parameters, formal risk of bias appraisals (RoB 2, ROBINS-I, JBI), quantitative meta-analyses, and GRADE certainty evaluations could not be performed. Instead, the authors constructed an evidence-status map to illustrate the methodological gaps in candidate studies. The discussion emphasizes that uncorrected adult myopia can progress clinically during university or early career years, but current evidence fails to support homoeopathic remedies (such as *Ruta graveolens* or *Physostigma*) for structural myopia or axial length attenuation. The authors conclude that homoeopathy should not be recommended or substituted for conventional optical correction

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(spectacles, contact lenses) and regular optometric surveillance. Overall, this empty review serves a valuable purpose in identifying a distinct clinical evidence gap.

Detailed Suggestions for Improvement

1. Title, Formatting, and Typographical Errors

- **PRISMA Identification Flowchart Formatting:** In Section 3.1 and Figure 1 (lines 143–153), the text contains raw placeholder/table structural artifacts (e.g., PRISMA phase | Flow, IDENTIFICATION | Database/register records: 8). Reformat this text into a standardized graphical PRISMA 2020 flow diagram box.
- **Line-by-Line Typos and Grammatical Edits:**
  - Line 11: Correct the phrasing "Twenty to twenty-five, three to five years, published..." to clearly state the database time frame (2020–2025).
  - Line 11: Clarify the acronym "STI:" or replace it with a standard heading like "Results:" in the abstract.
  - Line 152: Correct the phrase "syntheses... were constructed around inexistent studies" to "syntheses could not be performed due to the absence of eligible studies".
  - Line 178: Fix the typo in "refractive error" (the word 'error' uses Cyrillic characters in line 230).
  - Line 309: Correct the date range typo "2015-2020" to match the actual study search range "2020–2025".

2. Search Strategy and Screening Protocol Transparency

- **Dual-Reviewer Screening Clarification:** Section 5 (Limitations, line 308) notes that screening was performed by a single reviewer, which introduces selection bias. Address how quality control was maintained during single-reviewer screening, or explicitly recommend dual independent screening for future review updates.
- **Database Search Inconsistencies:** The text notes that Scopus and Web of Science were accessed via general searches and Google Scholar due to access restrictions (lines 306–308). Clearly separate formal database searches from supplementary web searches in Table 2 to maintain PRISMA-S compliance.

3. Methodological and Discussion Refinement

- **Clarifying the Logic of Empty Reviews:** In Section 4 (Discussion, lines 198–201), strengthen the explanation of why an empty review is scientifically meaningful. Explicitly highlight that an empty review establishes a baseline of "no available evidence" rather than "evidence of no effect," protecting patients from unproven therapies while establishing parameters for future trial designs.

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- **Methodological Guidance for Future Trials:** Section 4 provides extensive guidelines for future trial designs (lines 265–292). Reorganize these recommendations into a concise, structured bulleted list or summary box highlighting key requirements: cycloplegic refraction, axial length measurement, minimum 12-month follow-up, and intent-to-treat analysis.

4. Reference List Standardization

- Standardize all citations in lines 337–423 to follow a uniform style (e.g., APA 7th edition). Ensure all journal articles include valid DOIs and that institutional/governmental website citations (e.g., FDA, NCCIH) include complete access dates.

Recommendation for the Editor

- **Decision:** Accept with Minor Revision
- **Justification:** The manuscript addresses a relevant research question regarding the evidence base for alternative interventions in adult myopia. The methodology strictly adheres to PRISMA standards for identifying, screening, and reporting an empty systematic review. The conclusions are scientifically sound, appropriately cautioning against substituting conventional optometric care with unverified treatments. Revisions are minor and primarily involve fixing typographic errors, improving the formatting of the PRISMA flow diagram, standardizing reference entries, and refining screening transparency.